

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

(Ez 47, 1...12 ; 1 Co 3, 9b...17 ; Jn 2, 13-22)
(Translation from *Vie liturgique* - 09 NOV 2025)
by Father Charles Fillion
09 November 2025

Brothers and sisters, in the time of the prophet Ezekiel, the Temple was the center of religious and cultural life in Israel. It was the sign of God's presence among his people; he dwelt there. It was the only place of pilgrimage and sacrifice. But in 587 BC, the Temple was destroyed by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, and the people were taken into exile in Babylon. It was from there that the prophet Ezekiel, raise the spirits of his people, shared with them a vision he had received from the Lord: the exiled would return to their country and a new sanctuary would be built.

In the second reading, for Paul, the small community of Corinth is the house of God, and its foundation is the person of Jesus. Each disciple must commit themselves carefully to the construction of this house. This community is the temple of God because the Holy Spirit dwells in it. To make his audience understand the seriousness of the behaviour of those who are endangering the unity of the Church of Corinth, Paul chooses a well-known image: the Church is the temple of God.

When Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the Passover feast, he performed a prophetic act. The merchants in the Temple allowed pilgrims to buy animals for sacrifice. Since many of them came from abroad, money changers were necessary. Jesus considered that this trafficking in animals and money defiled his Father's house, which should remain a place of prayer. So he expelled these merchants from the temple. To those who asked him to justify his action, Jesus replied: "Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up." It should be noted here that he did not say that he would rebuild the Temple but that he would raise it up. The allusion to the resurrection is clear.

In the context of today's feast, we can say that the evangelist John sees in the death and resurrection of Jesus the dedication of the new temple of God, which is not a building. The risen Christ is the place of God's presence among us. From now on, God dwells in his people: they are the Body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Brothers and sisters, we are here in this church because we know that God dwells here. It is here that we renew our commitment to Christ. The Eucharistic communion helps us to live as members of the same Body and to become living stones to continue the Lord's work. You know that we have renovations to do in our church. There is a plan to install an elevator-type lift. We need to raise the ground on the south side of the church for proper drainage. On this day when we celebrate the first Catholic church, it will be a good time to help financially with these projects.

Next week, the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface will hold its collection for the Good Shepherd Campaign. The life of the Church in our diocese has been greatly enriched by ten young men ordained as diocesan priests since 2017. Among them, four were born in Canada, four are from Vietnam, and two are from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our priests are at the heart of the life of our Church, not only at the altar and in opening us to the sacramental life, but throughout our spiritual journey. They support our families, children, and elders. They visit the sick, accompany us, and listen to us. They are a fraternal link between Christ and His Church. And they invite us all—lay and ordained—to full, active, and conscious co-responsibility in the liturgy, in the pastoral life and administrative care of our parishes, and in spreading the joy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This year, incredibly, we will have eight candidates at different stages of their formation journey. Two are from Manitoba, three are from Vietnam, two are from Congo, and one is from India through the Voluntas Dei Secular Institute. This means that in the future, most years will see one or two priestly ordinations. These young men, both those who have already been ordained and those who are in the process of being ordained, will contribute significantly to the future of our archdiocese and that of each of our parishes.

Did you know that the cost of training a seminarian is approximately \$50,000 per year? This includes room and board, tuition, medical insurance, and a monthly stipend. For international **seminarians**, it also includes legal and transportation costs to bring them from abroad. The cost of bringing in an international **priest** is approximately \$20,000. This cost includes legal fees, travel, two and a half months of salary paid by the Archdiocese during his inculturation, language classes, if necessary, and an allowance to enable him to purchase warm clothing for his first winter with us.

Priests play an essential role in the life of the Church. It is important that we continue to support seminarians and international priests in their vocations. We invite you to pray for the seminarians as they continue to discern God's will in their lives and their journey toward the priesthood. Yes, at this time of year, there are many organizations that ask for our financial support. We must not forget our parish, our church. Let us continue the Lord's work by being a source of life for those around us.