

Father Albert Shamon

A Word for Sunday



St. John Lateran: (R3) John 4:19-24; (R1) Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; (R2) Ephesians 2:19-22.

On November 9 we celebrated the Dedication of St. John Lateran.

In the early Church, worship took place in private homes. With the conversion of Constantine the Great, the faithful became so numerous, homes were too small for worship. So Constantine gave over some of his basilicas to the Church.

Basilica means a king's palace. Every basilica had a courtroom — a large hall, with a dais at one end for the presiding judge, and a pillared hall below divided into three aisles by two rows of columns. Since the teaching function of the Church at this time was a major part of the liturgy, a hall modeled after a courtroom was ideal.

The first basilica given to the Pope was the Lateran Palace. Originally, it belonged to the famous Laterani family. Plautius Lateran lost it and his life by plotting against Nero. Fausta, the second wife of Constantine, inherited it. He used it for awhile as his residence, then gave it to the Pope.

Pope Sylvester dedicated this first basilica to the Holy Savior in 324. In the 12th century it was named St. John, after the monastery of St. John adjoining the basilica. The Benedictine monks, who cared for the basilica, lived there.

The Popes dwelt here for 1,000 years. In 1309, Philip the Fair persuaded the French Pope, Clement V, to move to Avignon. He did. This infuriated the Romans. They burned the Lateran Palace (1308). Clement V and John XXII rebuilt it. But again, in 1360, it was burned. Urban V (1370) rebuilt it.

Naturally, in 1377, when St. Catherine of Siena finally persuaded Pope Gregory VI to return to Rome, he hesitated to go back to the Lateran Palace, to face the fury of the Romans. Instead he chose a fortified spot easy to defend against mobs — Vatican Hill, the burial place of St. Peter. There, St. Peter's was built.

Many think St. Peter's is the first

church in Christendom. It is not. St. John Lateran is. It is the cathedral of Rome and mother church of all the world. Over the main altar are the skulls of St. Peter and St. Paul. Encased in it is the wooden altar St. Peter may have used for Mass while in Rome. Here the five Lateran Councils were held. In 1929, the Lateran Pact with Mussolini was signed here.

Two edifices of note adjoin the Lateran.

One is the baptistry where Constantine may have been baptized. For a long time it was the only baptistry in Rome. It became the model for all other baptistries. It was octagonal in shape. That is why so many baptismal fonts are octagonal in shape today.

The other structure is the "Scala Santa" (the Holy Stairs), a flight of 28 marble steps taken from the home of Pontius Pilate. Our Savior is said to have climbed these stairs during His passion. St. Helena, the mother of Constantine, brought the stairway to Rome; thus it became part of the old Lateran Palace. Today these stairs may be ascended only on one's knees.

Following the example of the Jews who set aside the Temple for worship of God by dedication (cp., Hanukkah 164 B.C.; John 10:22), Christians, as Eusebius tells us, dedicated their churches as early as 314.

The dedication of a church should remind us of our consecration as a temple of the Holy Spirit. To that end, at baptism our bodies were anointed with holy oil.

Paul tried to lift the loose Corinthians out of the mire of immorality by asking them, "Know you not you are the temples of God?"

Since we are by the grace of God, we must strive to become less unworthy temples. As one would not dare to be presented to a king or queen in dirty clothes, how much the more ought one dirtied by sin — be it sins of anger, hatred, envy, lust, covetousness — strive to cleanse the heart, for each is a temple of God.

Father Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side



October Ireland tour roster

Thirty-three people from diverse places composed a cheerful group for my last tour of Ireland. From St. Margaret Mary's came the duo of **Marion Fleming** and **Irene Case**. From St. Mary's, Dansville, came **Beatrice (Petie) Hoffman** (longtime secretary to lawyer Helen Pratt, who was scheduled to come but had to cancel) and her sister, **Margaret Zimmer** from Kenmore, both repeaters from 10 years ago. From St. John's, Humboldt Street, came a cheerful **Dolores Goonan** and her friend **Cecelia McGrath**, a cousin of our Webster Millers. From St. Joseph's, Rush, came **Dorothy Voellinger**, whose son Dan was on our tour two years ago.

Mary Wellers from St. Francis Solanus, Interlaken; **Marguerite Maguire** of Holy Cross, Ovid; and **Mary Murphy** of Blessed Sacrament made a compatible trio. Also from Blessed Sacrament came **Robert Campbell** and **Frank Muratore**, good samaritans and neighbors of Mary Murphy. From St. John's, Greece, came **Tom and Mary Barry Butler**. Mary is a cousin of our Webster Hilda Barry Butler. From Bethesda, Md., came **Ellen A. Ganey**, longtime alumnae secretary of Trinity College, and her companion, **Mercy Sister Teresita** of St. Cecilia's. Sister acted as aide to Ellen, who is quite crippled by arthritis but who sure got around.

From St. Mary's, Geneseo, came two ardent Democrats, **Mary Miskell** and **Ann Duff**. From my own parish of Holy Trinity came **Marian Aman Enders**, who roomed with **Margaret Pollinger** of St. Ignatius, Hornell. This was a return engagement for Margaret, who so enjoyed the tour four years ago that her children insisted she go again. From little Nunda, near Letchworth Park, came a grand trio — **Agnes Gormel** and **Myrtle Scism** of Holy Angels, and **Ruth**

Watkins, who represented the Methodist Church and gave the group an ecumenical air. I was tickled that she had her picture taken in front of the Methodist church in Tipperary to show her friends in Nunda.

From St. Mary's, Canandaigua, came **Art Farren**, one of the founders of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. And from San Antonio and Watertown came **Ray Coggins** who joined us late in Dublin. From Mother of Sorrows came **Emmett Hennessy**, a many-time repeater to Ireland who seems to leave his heart behind with the shamrocks and history of Ireland. Another repeater was the devout **Catherine Ferris** of the Little French Church/St. Joseph's, with her friend, **Mary Louise Garvin** of St. John's, Greece, who was on her 18th trip to Ireland and knows more about it than nearly anyone I know does.

St. Michael's, Lyons, was represented by **Mary Ann Trombino**, who was making her fourth tour of Ireland. She said: "I just love the country." Though her parish is Our Lady of Victory/St. Joseph's, **Eleanor Maguire** is from Ontario. She brought a big, expensive video camera and has hours of scenes of Ireland and the trip. She will edit it for the group to view later. **Pearl Sullivan** of Shadowbrook Drive quietly observed all happenings.

Finally, a tiny, five-foot-tall **Elizabeth Miller**, who was an Auburn Boyle but now lives in Simsbury, Conn., was a special surprise. She glories in being 86 years old, and she is spry as a sparrow, as alert as Mother Teresa, with an optimism that keeps her young and interesting. She told the group that she had gone to Cornell and Pratt Institute in her earlier days, but did not finish. So at the age of 72, with her family all grown, she went to the University of Connecticut and got her degree.

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COURIER-CROSSWORD ANSWERS
(Answers to last weeks Crossword Puzzle)

Across	Down
1. ALL SOULS	1. ALL SAINTS
7. LE	2. LEO
8. PAPA	3. SPANISH
10. LOLA	4. OA
12. TCU	5. UP
14. IN	6. LATVIA
15. EVEN	9. TUNE
16. ARMISTICE	11. LIMBO
18. BSO	13. CECELIA
19. AE	15. ET
20. OHIO	17. SOI
22. LB	21. OWN
24. TD	23. BLT
26. WAIL	25. DA
27. SAMSON	
28. AT	

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