

## FEAST OF ST. JOHN LATERAN 2014

### THEME: You Are God's Temple in the World

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We Catholics are used to the sacramental sign of a candle signaling the Presence of Christ in the Eucharistic Bread contained in the tabernacle of our churches.

Though it is obviously unrealistic, there is a sense in which each of us should such a similar candle with us when we leave here every Sunday.

We carry the Eucharistic Presence of Christ within us as surely as does that tabernacle.

In fact, we carry the Presence of Christ into our homes, to our jobs, to our neighborhoods and community, into the world – again it is silly to think if it, but imagine if we carried a light reminding us and everyone else of that Presence.

Would we and they act any differently out there if we were constantly reminded that Christ was present within us?

St. Paul, as we heard today, tried to remind his beloved community in Thessalonica of this very thing: **“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”**

Because we are the Temple of God and the bearers of the Spirit of Christ, we carry that Presence and Spirit into every nook and cranny of the world and community in which we move and work and live.

This means that our mission as Christians is not here in this building but everywhere we carry his Presence and Spirit.

In fact, maybe we need to meditate long and hard also on the Gospel given us this day about where and how our real worship of God takes place too.

In John's Gospel Jesus is portrayed going angrily into the temple with a kind of whip and driving the animal sellers and money-changers away.

Now these men were doing nothing wrong; in fact they were providing a necessary service to those worshippers who came to offer sacrifices called for by the Old Testament Law.

Yet Jesus seems to signal the end of that worship and replace it with the sacrifice of his own Body and Blood on the Cross.

Could this text be saying in the new Temple of God real worship happens when we join ourselves to Christ and give our Bodies and shed our Blood in service as he did?

Could it mean that worship without such self-giving joined to that of Christ is not the worship pleasing to God?

Concretely this means, it seems to me, that we come here each week bringing with us all that we have each done in this past week to give of ourselves in service to others and join it to Christ's gift of his own Body and Blood.

This then is what we offer to the Father: Christ's Body and Blood given on the Cross and ours given in the Temple of our own Bodies.

The most solemn command Jesus gives us is in this Eucharist when he says: **"Do this in memory of me."**

But what is the "This" he is telling us to do?

Perhaps it is not merely to break bread and share a cup.

Perhaps he really means for us to remember him by giving our bodies and pouring out our blood as he did!