



a Kendall Hunt Company

Lateran Basilica, Year A-C, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12

John 2:13-22

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

God our Father,

May your Church always be your holy people, united as you are one with the Holy Spirit.

May it be for all the world a sign of your unity and holiness,

as it grows to perfection in your love.

(Opening Prayer-Mass for the Universal Church)

Opening Life Reflection

The main topic for today is the Four Marks of the Church. To begin, brainstorm with the young people about what is most meaningful to them about their local church building. Write down their responses on a chalkboard or a large sheet of poster paper. Discuss:

- What do the furnishings and objects found in your church building tell you about the church?
- How do the things you find in your church help you to worship?
- What do the people who gather in the church building tell you about church?

Allow time for discussion. On today's feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica we celebrate our freedom to worship as members of the Catholic Church.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from Ezekiel listen to the prophet's vision of living water flowing from the temple.

Read Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- In the prophet's vision, where is water flowing?
- What will the leaves and fruit from the trees provide for the people?
- How does the water flowing from the temple bring new life?

In the gospel today, listen to hear why Jesus is angry.

Read John 2:13-22.

Allow for silence.



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- What does Jesus find when he arrives at the temple in Jerusalem?
- How does Jesus force the money changers out of the temple?
- Why is Jesus angry?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

On today's feast we are reminded that the St. John Lateran Basilica is the cathedral of Rome, which is the cathedral of the bishop of Rome, the pope. The basilica dates back to the time of Constantine the Great in the 4th century, and was dedicated on November 9, in 324 A.D.

The dedication of the basilica has great significance for the life of the Church. Constantine's conversion to Christianity began a whole new era in the growth of the Church. He gave Pope Sylvester I the property on which the basilica was constructed. The emperor encouraged Christians to worship in public and the era of persecution of Christians was brought to an end. Therefore, today's feast celebrates freedom of worship.

In the first reading from the prophet Ezekiel, we are given a glimpse of water flowing through the temple bringing life to every living creature. This vision reveals a restored Israel with a newly rebuilt temple in Jerusalem.

In today's gospel Jesus cleanses the temple by forcing out the money changers. Jesus is angry, which is an image that we seldom see. Today's gospel reminds us that our churches are sacred spaces. In Churches, people gather together respectfully in the presence of God to tell the stories of Jesus and celebrate the new life of the risen Christ.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Why do we celebrate the feast of the Dedication of the Basilica of St. John Lateran?
- How does being free to worship God affect your faith life?
- What does the image of an angry Jesus as seen in today's gospel tell you about Jesus?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Four Marks of the Church

In the celebration of Mass, Christians around the world gather to celebrate that we are one with Christ and with each other. At Mass we profess our belief when we pray: We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. One, holy, catholic, and apostolic—these are the four marks of the Church.

The Church of Jesus Christ is one Church because of its source, God, who is the supreme



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example of unity, the Holy Trinity. We who are the Church work together to be one body, as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are One. We believe the Church is holy because the people of God are one with each other and one with Christ, who sacrificed himself in order to make holy his body the Church. We believe the Church is catholic or universal because Christ is at its head. The church reaches out to and embraces the whole human family. The church's mission is to the whole world. The Church is apostolic because it is founded upon the apostles, whom Jesus sent out to teach in his name. Today's feast celebrates the universal Church which is apostolic, catholic, holy and one.

- What do the four marks of the church tell us about the church?
- Where do you see signs of the church's unity?
- How does the apostolic work of the church continue today?

The Gospel in Life

What can you do this week to show others that the church is universal?

