SESSION 16
Grace Flowing from the Temple

Last week we considered the theology of the Garden. We discovered a beautiful relationship between the Church and the home.

The Mystical Reality of the Church

- “The Church has been seen as ‘a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’” (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, #4).
- “Christ … established … His holy Church … as an entity with visible delineation … the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ are not to be considered as two realities … rather they form one complex reality” (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, #8).
- “The family is, so to speak, the domestic church” (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, #11).

Let us now consider the Church with “hierarchical organs” and the domestic church. The apostles Peter and John will help us enter more deeply into the mystery.
The Gifts to Peter and John

• “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

• “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? … Feed my lambs” (John 21:15-19).

• “When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home” (John 19:26-27).

• “Joseph did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife” (Matthew 1:24).

The Last Supper

• “The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was lying close to the breast of Jesus; so Simon Peter beckoned to him and said, ‘Tell us who it is of whom he speaks.’ So lying thus, close to the breast of Jesus, he said to him, ‘Lord, who is it’?” (John 13:22-25).

• John is part of the company of apostles united and obedient to its head: Peter.

• The domestic Church is part the universal Church and is obedient to the Pope.

• The domestic Church has a special intimacy with Christ.

The Foot of the Cross

• “Truly, truly, I say to you, the cock will not crow, till you have denied me three times” (John 13:38).

• “When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home” (John 19:26-27).

• “The family is placed at the heart of the great struggle between good and evil, between life and death and between love and all that is opposed to love” (Pope John Paul II, Letter to Families, #23).

Easter Morning: The Race to the Tomb

• “Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb” (John 20:1-10).

• “The future of the world and of the Church pass by way of the family” (Pope John Paul II, Familial Consortio, #75).

• The Church is the guardian of the mystery of salvation.
Breakfast on the Seashore

“Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs … Truly, truly, I say to you … when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go.’ … When Peter saw [John], he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’” (John 21:15-23).

“All other altars crumbled. All our other Temples were destroyed. But the home hallowed by the Pesach Sacrifice and … mutual affection of husband and wife … this home and the spirit of this Jewish home, have remained with us forever. They are what made this people … immortal” (Samson Raphael Hirsch).

“The family … constitutes the basis of society” (Gaudium et Spes, #52).


We must now follow the paths of Peter and John to see the impact of the Church and domestic church on larger society.

The Life of St. Peter

- Originally resides in Jerusalem.
- Makes numerous missionary journeys – particularly to the East.
- Establishes the Church in Antioch, which has primacy among the Orthodox Churches.
- Establishes Church in Rome, which is the seat of the Western Church.
- Writes the 1st and 2nd Letters of Peter while in Rome.
- Martyred on the Vatican Hill outside Rome in the year 67AD.

Rome and the Hierarchical Church

- Rome becomes the seat of the hierarchical Church – residence of Pope.
- Churches are primarily named after the apostles and great saints of Christian history.
- St. John Lateran
- St. Peter’s Basilica
- St. Paul outside the Walls
- St. Mary Major
- St. Lawrence outside the Walls
- The Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem
- St. Sebastian at the Catacombs/Our Lady of Divine Love
Rome and the Domestic Church

- The Holy Family is amazingly hidden in Rome.
- St. Mary Major.
- No major Church for St. Joseph.
- Holy Family is surprisingly hidden in the 152 statues in St. Peter's square: No statue of Our Lady. St. Joseph inconspicuous on left side.
- Pope John Paul II added a mosaic of "Mary, Mother of the Church" in 1981.
- Inside: Pieta and St. Joseph's altar.

Now let us consider the path of St. John. He will lead us from Jerusalem to Asia to Europe, especially France.

The Life of St. John

- Becomes Bishop of Church at Ephesus.
- St. John is exiled to the Island of Patmos where he writes the Book of Revelation, which climaxes with the Wedding Feast of the Lamb.
- St. John writes the 4th Gospel, which includes the Wedding Feast at Cana as the 1st miracle and Mary at the foot of the Cross.
- The empty tomb of St. John is at Ephesus.
- Our Lady is proclaimed the "theotokos" by the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD.

The Transition to France

- St. John consecrates St. Polycarp as the bishop of Smyrna.
- St. Polycarp sends St. Pothinus to become the bishop of Lyon, France. Pothinus is martyred in 177 AD.
- St. Pothinus is succeeded by St. Irenaeus, another disciple of Polycarp.
- St. Denis sent by Pope Fabian to become 1st Bishop of Paris, martyred ~ 250 AD.
- Clovis, the 1st king of a united France, is baptized in 496 AD by St. Remigius.
- France becomes the "eldest daughter of the Church."
The Church in France

- The Churches in France are dedicated to Our Lady and take on a decidedly feminine character.
- Gothic architecture is born at St. Denis in Paris: 80 Cathedrals and 500 large churches are built between 1050 – 1350.
- Reaches culmination in Notre Dame de Chartres, built to house the Sancta Camisa.
- “To us, it is a child’s fancy; a toy-house to please the Queen of Heaven, to please her so much that she would be happy in it, to charm her till she smiled… if you are to get the full enjoyment of Chartres, you must… believe in Mary as Bernard… and feel her presence as the architects did, in every stone they placed, and every touch they chiseled” (Henry Adams).


The Blossoming of Christian Europe

- The culture of France has always been regarded as the highest culture.
- It was decidedly Catholic.
- The Papacy moves to Avignon from 1309-1376.
- Three ecumenical councils are hosted in France: First Lyon (1245), Second Lyon (1274), and Vienne (1311-1312).
- The French played a crucial role in the launching of the First and Second Crusades.
- King St. Louis IX walked barefoot in the snow to receive the Holy Relics from Constantinople and house them in Sainte Chapelle.

Grace Flowing through the Temple

- “Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east… And wherever the river goes every living creature which swarms will live… for this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh… And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail… their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing” (Ezekiel 47:1-12).
- During the Feast of Tabernacles, Israel sacrificed 70 bulls for the sanctification of the 70 nations: “To what do those seventy bullocks… correspond? To the seventy nations.”

Source: Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sukkah, 55b.
The Reality of Ecclesia Domestica

**Ancient Rome**
- Unstable marriages.
- Refusal to enter marriage.
- Below replacement fertility rate.
- Contraception.
- Abortion.
- Infanticide.
- Decreasing population.

**Christianity**
- Consistent moral requirements.
- Stable marriages.
- High fertility rate.
- No contraception.
- No abortion.
- No infanticide.
- Increasing population.


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Grace Flowing from the Church

![Graph showing population of Rome (Millions)](chart.png)


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Small Group Discussion

**Starter Questions**
1. How can your family develop such intimacy with Christ that you can receive his secrets?
2. How can your family become more obedient to the successor of Peter, the Pope?

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“The future of the world and the Church pass by way of the family” (Pope John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio, #75). Not everyone rejoices in this mystery!