



17 NOVEMBER

DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

Generalate: Solemnity

Institute: Memoria ad libitum

John Baptist de La Salle never had the opportunity in life to visit Rome, though it was his fervent wish to do so. In his last testament the Founder reminded the Brothers that he had sent two Brothers to Rome to ask God for the grace that their Society be always submissive to the Church of Rome. In fact, only Brother Gabriel Drolin remained to open a school and be a presence of the Institute in Rome for 26 years. Finally, De La Salle's wish was realized in part when his remains were transported to Rome in 1937 and enshrined in this Church.

The church itself, the centerpiece of the generalate in Rome, was built in 1936. The solemn dedication of the church took place on 17 November 1951 as part of the year-long celebration of the tercentenary of the birth of the Founder. The anniversary is celebrated in the generalate as a liturgical solemnity.

A memorial tablet explains:

Today, November XVII, MCMLI
H. Eminence Card. Clemente Micara
Bishop of Velletri
Vicar of H.S. Pope Pio XII
for the town of Rome and District
Protector of the Congregation
of the Brothers of the Christian Schools
has consecrated this church
dedicating it to the great Founder
S. John Baptist de La Salle
as solemn conclusion
of the third centenary of his birth
and everlasting remembrance of his proclamation
as special Patron of all Educators.
Superior General Bro. Athanase-Émile

MASS

Out of the dedicated church

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Awesome is God in his holy place, the God of Israel, who gives power and strength. Blessed be God.

PRAYER

God our Father,
from living stones, your chosen people,
you built an eternal temple to your glory.
Increase the spiritual gifts you have given to your Church,
so that your faithful people
may continue to grow into the new and eternal Jerusalem.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ...

READING

I Peter 2: 4-9

A reading from the first letter of St Peter.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: 'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.' To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,' and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.' They stunnble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 95:1-7

R/. Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord.

Come ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.
let us come before God, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord. **R.**

A mighty God is the Lord,
a great king above all gods,
in whose hands are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains as well.
The sea belongs to God, who made it

and the dry land shaped by his hands. **R.**

Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us
for this is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

My house shall be a house of prayer for all people.

Alleluia !

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St John.

John 4:19-24

The woman said to Jesus, 'Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord, receive our gifts. May we who share this sacrament experience the life and power it promises, and hear the answer to our prayers.

Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house in Christ, to be a holy priesthood.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Father, you make your Church on earth a sign of the new and eternal Jerusalem. By sharing in this sacrament may we become the temple of your presence and the home of your glory.

Through Christ our Lord.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

From the Common of the Dedication of a church

READINGS

SECOND READING

From the «Meditations» of saint John Baptist de La Salle, priest.

Med. 188: For the dedication of churches

Reflect that the custom of consecrating churches to God is very holy and very ancient; innumerable holy places were built and consecrated by the apostles and by their successors. God, who is indeed everywhere by his immensity, is nevertheless present in a very special way in those places where he has willed buildings to be in his honor, like so many tabernacles where he has chosen to dwell with people, and be adored and to receive their prayers. It is in these sacred places that God wishes the holiest of actions to be performed and the most august services of religion to be offered.

For this reason we are commanded to attend these ceremonies with respect; destruction threatens those who profane these churches by their irreverence and misbehavior. Reflect, further, that we solemnize the dedication day of churches in order to make reparation to God for all the acts of impiety and the other faults which have been committed there during the year, and also to thank the Lord for all the favors we have received there, as well as to renew the devotion and veneration we owe to the church, which is called the house of God.

Consider how you have acted there, with what spirit you enter the church, and with what dispositions you offer there your prayers to God. Is it with a lively faith in the presence of God and with a genuine sentiment of the respect you owe to this infinite majesty?

Reflect that Jesus Christ is really and truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament reserved in churches. This is why we are still more especially bound to recognize the presence of God in these holy places. God chose them in order to be honored there with a special worship, pleased to give graces more abundantly to those who ask for them with sincere devotion.

If under the Old Law people had to tremble with fear and respect when they entered the Tabernacle, which contained the Ark of the Covenant and the Tables of the Law, with what reverence and thought of our nothingness must we not enter the place where God is, as it were, seated on a throne of love to have mercy on us, and where God is constantly adored by innumerable angels who consider it a great honor to stand in his presence and to pay their homage?

Consider that what should encourage us to have deep sentiments of respect and devotion in these holy places is the thought that this is where God is pleased to give us grace with very special generosity, goodness, and mercy. It is there that this Father of mercies with open arms welcomes the prodigal, where the Good Shepherd brings back to the fold the strayed sheep, where the afflicted find comfort, and where the sick are healed, the weak are strengthened, and the tempted are given new power over their enemies. Finally, this is where God listens favorably to the prayers we offer and is pleased to fill with graces those who have recourse to his goodness.

Let us acknowledge all these truths, and let us resolve again to act with such respect in churches that we may be worthy to receive the divine mercy there and to experience in ourselves all its effects in us.

Let us renew the consecration of the temple of our body and our soul by consecrating to God our heart and all our will after devoutly receiving Holy Communion.

RESPONSORY

Sal 83, 2-3.5

R/. How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of the universe! * My soul longs and wishes the temple of the Lord.

V/. Call the Blessed dwell in thy house: always sing your praises.

*My soul longs and wishes the temple of the Lord.

PRAYER

God our Father, from living stones, your chosen people,
you built an eternal temple to your glory.

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so that your faithful people may continue to grow into the new and eternal Jerusalem.

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