



Building faith in community

Using readings from the Feast of St. Thomas

Ephesians 2:19-22
John 20:24-29

Ephesians 2:19-22 tells us that you and I are members of the same kingdom – a "country" whose residents include saints in heaven as well as the family ("household") of God that still lives on earth. With citizenship comes certain responsibilities.

St. Paul says, "You form a building." The foundation is the apostles and prophets; the capstone is Jesus. Which part of the building are you?

Are you already deeply involved in ministry? You're a pillar. Are you covering in prayer or financial support the ministries that others do? You're part of the roof. Or maybe you're a window through which others look in and realize that they want to join the Church, or a window sill upon which people lean as they look for God. Maybe you're a fireplace, warming others to the idea of having faith in God, or one of the bricks in the fireplace that keeps danger from spreading.

Are you a carpet that gives comfort to feet that have been walking on hard roads? Are you an altar because of the sacrifices you make for others? Are you a chair that gives others rest? Are you a keyhole that unlocks the love of God in people's hearts? Are you a crystal chandelier shedding the light of truth and giving it a wonderful sparkle? Are you a telephone that helps others connect to God?

Imagine what this building would be like without you. You are needed, my friend! You are very, very important. There are never enough telephones and chandeliers and soft carpets and



other furnishings that make the House of God what it needs to be.

Many try to live on the outside, thinking they can have a good relationship with God without being part of the Christian community. Some only visit and don't help with the chores. And some complain that the building's too large and that nobody reaches out to them.

The only way to experience the support and love of God's household is to get involved in the family. This is how we become a "holy temple in the Lord" rather than a bunch of unconnected people who profess the same faith yet remain strangers. If it seems like the Church has cracks in it, it's because some of the construction materials are missing.

By our love for each other and a spirit of collaboration, we are "being built into this temple, to become a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit." This is how faith grows. Notice that, in John 20:24-29, Thomas overcame his doubts while in community. Although Thomas had missed Christ's first appearance, Jesus did not go to him and appear to him alone. Jesus waited until Thomas re-joined the community.

Never underestimate how very important you are to the community life of your Church!