

We're all familiar with the fairy tale about the Three Little Pigs. Perhaps we're most familiar with the versions spawned from the Walt Disney cartoon that dates from the 1930s.

The first little pig builds a house out of straw, the second little pig builds a house out of twigs, and the third little pig builds a house out of bricks.

Along come the big bad wolf, who huffs and puffs and blows down the house of straw ... then he does the same with the house of twigs ... but finally, he meets his match in the house of bricks.

Looking up the story of the Three Little Pigs online, I was surprised that the story is a bit darker than I remembered. The wolf eats the first two pigs; and when he can't blow the third house down, jumps down the chimney and falls into the fire ... where the third little pig cooks and eats the wolf.

Certainly not much of an example of turning the other cheek; or of loving your neighbor as yourself.

In today's second reading, St. Paul begins with:

*Do you not know that you are the temple of God,
and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

In the section leading up to this line, St. Paul discusses the foundations we might use in building our temple. He speaks of:

gold, silver ... , wood, hay, or straw

None of which works very well as a foundation. The first ones may be precious metals, but they're soft and bendable. The others, while useful in building, aren't really good foundation material.

Saint Paul again tells us that there is ONLY ONE foundation to build our spiritual temple on when he tells us:

*no one can lay a foundation other than
the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ.*

Once we realize that we - as the temple of the Holy Spirit - need to be built ON Jesus Christ ... and living our lives IN Jesus Christ ... and following Jesus Christ, we need to consider what we could be doing to build ourselves up spiritually.

Every one of us is a work-in-progress. Nobody here, myself included, has completed building their spiritual temple. Not one of us is perfect.

Just like in building a home, in order to build ourselves into temple of the Holy Spirit; we need materials, a plan, and guidance.

Our spiritual life cannot exist apart from prayer. Whether we pray silently, read Scripture, sing hymns, say memorized prayers, or whatever ... prayer is the construction material which we use to build up our spiritual life.

Next, we need a plan. The surest plan is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In many ways we can find examples of living the Gospel in the lives of the Saints - many of whom had particular spiritualities that are still practiced today. St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Benedict, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila.

And finally we need to ensure that we're getting the right guidance - heading in the right direction. As it says elsewhere in Scripture (*Heb 12:2*) - *keep [your] eyes fixed on Jesus.*

Today as we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ - let us pray that we may continue to build a solid spiritual foundation on Jesus Christ, through His message - the Gospel - and always keeping our eyes fixed on Him - so that we may follow Him as His true disciples.