

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Introduction]

This Sunday is Sanctity of Life Sunday. What a wonderful time to reflect on what the Apostle Paul calls the Body of Christ. We are the body. Each one of us is a special and unique member of Christ’s body. A member, arranged by God, the Master Builder, for the benefit of all. A member who is special and sacred. Because, God, our Master Builder has established Sanctity of Life through the death of His Son and through his body, the Church.

As we look at our Epistle text for today, we will take the time to step through it a little bit at a time. To step through and learn how God, our Master Builder, has taken the steps necessary to build us, his body, his church.

[Verse 12-13a]

The Apostle Paul writes, “¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Co 12:12–13a).

Here we find that in a metaphorical sense each of us are members of Christ’s body. The Church, both corporately and individually, makes up the pieces and parts of Christ. Each of us being individual members and yet each of us not claiming individual identity, but identity in the one body, the one person of Christ.

Additionally, in a mysterious and sacramental sense, we have also been joined together in the one Spirit. The Holy Spirit has given each of us the gift of faith. The gift of the Spirit has united us in something more involved than just a metaphor. Instead, we have been sacramentally and spiritually joined together to form the body of Christ.

In a sense all of our individual identities, strengths, and weakness have all been joined together. Joined together like Legos. We have been built and arranged by God, the Master Builder to form his best creation. Christ the Church. And to establish Sanctity of Life through the death of His Son.

[Verse 14-19]

God, our Master Builder, has assembled each of us according to his purpose and each according to the function he gave to us. None of us has anything to offer individually. However, God arranges us as he chooses. He arranges us in a way that builds up not our own body, but the body of Christ.

The Apostle Paul writes, “¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many... ¹⁶ ...if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.” (1 Co 12:14, 16-19).

If I was building an airplane out of Legos and decided that the only thing important to the airplane was the wings, then I wouldn't be building a plane, I would only be building a wing. To be a body, to be complete and whole, more parts are needed.

God, our Master Builder, knows this. He established sanctity of life. He knows that to be the Church we must have many and varied members. Each of us forming a sacred part of the sanctity of the whole. An individual Lego brick, when set apart and separated out, is very limited. It can't perform its function, it can't build up the Church. However, like Legos, when we are joined by the one Spirit to our fellow members of the body of Christ, then, we can fulfill the purpose that our Master Builder has for us.

However, in selfishness, we act like the metaphorical ear in Paul's letter. Looking to the gifts of our fellow member, instead of looking to the body. We are curved in on ourselves and think that, “if only, I could be more like that other guy, then I could be better.” However, this attitude is self-defeating, because when viewed from the level of the body, without different members we would be lost. We would be unable to function as the body of Christ.

If each part of the body desired to be something other than it was, then the whole body would suffer. We each have individual value, but our value is derived from Christ our body and not from ourselves.

For Christ established sanctity of life through his death and resurrection for all people. As it is, the Master Builder has selected many parts, he has picked all the right Lego bricks and assembled all of these individual bricks into one body, Christ, the Church.

[Verse 21-26]

The Apostle Paul writes, “²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” ...
²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor... ²⁴ ...
But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (1 Co 12:21–26).

God, our Master Builder, has chosen a unique way of honoring each of us. He has given special importance to the weakest of us. He has given special honor to the least honorable of us. He has arranged and assembled the Body of Christ to be full and complete.

However, we live in a world that wants to destroy God’s construction. Like a toddler who comes crashing through a Lego construction site, the sinful world is bent on destruction.

The world tells us that some lives matter, but not other lives. That getting an abortion, or euthanizing is not “actually” taking a life. The world acts like an eye saying to a hand, “I have no need of you.”

Many would argue back, that before birth, a fetus isn’t a life. They like to say that, God, our Master Builder, doesn’t need that Lego. He doesn’t need that part. It doesn’t matter to them what the Master Builder’s plans are. Instead, one brick says to another, you are not worthy of joining the Body of Christ.

All of the parts of the body of Christ are sacred and all of us have been chosen by God. Sanctity of Life means that God, our Master Builder, has given special importance to the weakest of us. The weakest of us like a baby in the womb, or an elderly person unable to care for themselves.

Because, who is weaker than a baby or who is frailer than someone who has been crippled by age, injury, or disease? Yet, God tells us to treat these members of the Body of Christ with special importance.

“The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable” (1 Co 12:22). God has ensured that out of Christian love we defend and support the weak.

He has put it into the Mother’s heart to protect her unborn baby.

He has put it into the heart of nurses, doctors, caregivers, and family members to serve and help those that have been crippled by age, injury, or disease.

He has bestowed special honor on those we consider to be less honorable.

He has done all of this, because, God our Master Builder chose us to be part of Christ’s body. God, our Master Builder has established Sanctity of Life through the death of His Son.

[*Conclusion*]

Our Master Builder established Sanctity of Life so that “there may be no division in the body.” Divisions occur when we do not have the proper concern for one another. We are to care for one another, not fight or destroy one another.

Remember that each of you have a special function in the body of Christ. Each of you are unique and chosen by God. We know this to be true, because we know what happens when one of our fellow members suffers.

When suffering comes to one of our members all of us suffer with them. Like a body part that has gotten a disease the rest of the body feels the affects. Or like a Lego airplane that has lost its landing gear the whole plane gets scraped along the ground. The whole plane begins to break up and fall apart.

We need our Master Builder to continue to build us up. To strengthen us with His Spirit. Faith through the one Spirit connects us together into the Body of Christ.

The Master Builder strengthens your faith by giving you the Word of God.
The Master Builder strengthens your faith by giving you the sacraments.
The Master Builder strengthens your faith by enabling you to share the gospel message with each other and all those around you.

You are a part of Christ’s body, now act like it. Honor the parts that seem less honorable, strengthen the parts that are suffering. Trust in God, the Master Builder to build Christ’s body, the Church with all of the right parts.

Because “you **are** the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1 Co 12:27). Amen.

“Now may the God of peace... equip you with everything good that you may do his will, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Heb 13:20-21)
