

THE MORE YOU KNOW



An invitation to more in your P-FIT Program

Be Who You Are!

PFIT Patron Saint Spotlight St. Thomas, the Apostle

It is very fitting that St. Thomas is the patron saint of Module 12 because he is also the patron saint of India, the birthplace of yoga. The Catholic Church in India traces its origin to the preaching of St. Thomas the Apostle, who, according to tradition, came to India in 52 A.D., nearly 2000 years ago, and who was martyred in Mylapore, where his tomb is venerated ever since. Pietra Fitness is all about building our Cathedrals for the Glory of God, and St. Thomas worked to build a heavenly palace for King Gundaphar. Let it inspire you to remember that our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and should give glory to God rather than be made into “palaces” for earthly glory.



OVERVIEW:

- P-FIT Patron
- Be Who You Are
- On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

This resource is provided for you to enhance your training with additional information, tips, and more as you move through P-FIT.

BE PREPARED:

Have you completed the appropriate practicing teaching? Daily Meditation? Do you your reflection questions from the Catechism Course turned in? Have you been practicing Pietra Fitness? Logs? Review Worksheets?

Be Who You Are... the Dwelling Place of God

Lord, make my body healthy and agile, my mind sharp and clear, my heart joyful and contented, my soul faithful and loving." Let my heart, therefore be holy, true to you O Lord our God, so that all may know I belong to You. Have mercy on me, and be with me today as I contemplate the dwelling place of God. Holy Martyrs, pray for us.

The message from our beloved St. Pope John Paul II challenged the youth at World Youth Day in Denver, "Young people, be who you are. Be proud of your Catholic faith." His call and the spiritual awakening many experienced can lead us to ask important questions:

- How can we belong totally to God & be in deepest union with Him while still in the world?
- How can we, as individuals, truly be the person God created each of us to be?
- How can we lead our Catholic lives to the full?



Finding, understanding, and then trying to live the answers to these questions takes patience, perseverance (amidst stumbling), and a lifetime of love. In the Book of Romans, St. Paul provides great insight to help us answer the above questions. He tells us, "By the mercies of God," we must present our "bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1). The passage emphasizes **who we are** because it compliments many passages in which St. Paul tells us we are temples of the Holy Spirit. The concepts of the **temple, sacrifice, and worship** are repeatedly woven into salvation history from the beginning to the end. They are significant at the deepest levels, and are deeply connected to each of us personally. It explains who we are as Christians.

St. Pope John Paul II challenged us to be *who we are*. As 21st century temples of the Holy Spirit, what does this entail? Our bodies as temples is an important part of understanding who we are and what we are called to do. We are called to offer our entire selves as a living sacrifice and keep the temples of our bodies dedicated to God alone. Unfortunately, many Christians today, including many Catholics, are following the way of the ancient Israelites by incorporating non-Christian spiritual practices into their lives. Sometimes this happens unintentionally, but other times Christians may selectively overlook their faith in particular areas of their lives. The Church is calling the faithful to a different approach. We must become educated regarding true Christian worship and how that plays out in the daily sacrifice of our lives.

We are called to be able to articulate this to others because many souls are being led astray through seemingly innocent pursuits. The Church has serious concerns about this as detailed in two documents: *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life* and a letter to US Bishops from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith titled *On Some Aspects of Christian Meditation*. These documents help define and explain the differences between Christian practices and many popular activities and beliefs that conflict with Christian teaching. The information is timely because Christian beliefs, when not being directly attacked, are being watered down and compromised as Christians navigate secular society. Here are a few examples:

- Doctors and health magazines tout the physical and mental benefits of meditation without distinction that there is both Christian and non-Christian meditation, and they are very different in their content and aim. A document in your training manual succinctly summarizes the differences.

Be Who You Are... the Dwelling Place of God cont.

- Alternative therapies and treatments can offer legitimate and effective treatments for health problems, but New Age practices such as energy field manipulation are often integrated into otherwise healthful treatments. The Church wants you to be educated enough that you can discern if and when this is happening to you or a loved one.
- Spiritual energy manipulation is becoming mainstream (including dance instructors using Reiki to “prevent injuries” and popular children’s toys and games whose aim is to collect chi.).
- Large numbers of people seek exercise in ashrams, or yoga studios. Chanting in the ancient language of Sanskrit is common. Translations of chants clearly show the chants to be incompatible with Christian teaching. Yogic chanting should not be said within the walls of the temple (YOU). Many studios feature artwork and/or sculptures of Hindu deities and/or Buddha. The eighth chapter of Ezekiel describes how God feels about the use of these images within the temple (remember... that’s YOU). Kundalini Yoga is a popular style of yoga that seeks to awaken the serpent coiled at the base of the spine. That sounds like a very bad idea, definitely incompatible with being a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Interior design and garden design is permeated with art and statuary that would be considered idolatrous by ancient Jewish standards. While we can certainly appreciate the craftsmanship and beauty found in art from cultures around the world, it is important that the items we choose to display in our homes resonate truth. A vase does not have the same meaning or significance as a sculpture of a deity.
- Themes of movies, music, and even commercials are increasingly offensive in content. Many Christians watch and listen anyway. This content should not be in the temple (YOU).
- Interest in the paranormal and communicating with spirits (as seen on TV programs featuring “ghostbusting” outside of the Church) is causing an upswing in demonic activity in people’s lives. According to a demonologist, approximately , twenty percent of current possessions begin with these types of activities.

There are countless other examples of ways in which we can offend the Spirit within us in our modern times. *What are we doing???* St. John of the Cross asks a great question, : *“Oh soul, created for such heights and called to them. What are you doing? How are you spending your time?”* We each need to bring that question to prayer and meditate on it. *What are we doing? How are we spending our time?*

In a modern, multicultural world, many people love to incorporate international flair into food, décor, friendships, and families, and we should! It is good to appreciate different ways of doing things. As a Christian, however, our appreciation for diversity and culture must fall within the range of the great truths revealed by Christ and His Church. As Christians, we must each remember *who we are*. We are temples of God Almighty, and our covenant with Him means we are not free to do whatever we want without consequence. We must be highly discerning as to what we participate in and what we do not, and we can do so lovingly. As a nation and as individuals, the consequences of sweeping Christianity aside are dire. God has shown time and time again that He lifts His Spirit and protection away from His people when they fall into sin, especially when they adopt pagan spiritual practices. Look around... it’s happening! In Romans 12, St.



Be Who You Are... the Dwelling Place of God cont.

Paul clearly advises us to embrace and love what is good, and to avoid or hate what is evil, overcoming it with good. To do this, we must be prayerful, sacramental, highly discerning, loving, educated about our faith, and articulate. We must beg the Holy Spirit to grow within us and to renew our minds. It is important to take the time to educate ourselves about these various areas, what the church says about them, and then serving others by articulating Christian teaching in a way that is loving and respectful. We are the face of Christ to the people around us, and by His grace, we will act with zeal, joy, and love, attracting ever more souls to Him.

Closing Thoughts

Like the saints, *be constant in prayer*. *Be aglow with the Spirit* ... the true presence of God dwelling in you! *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* Then, holding fast to Jesus Christ, and by the mercies of God, we will leave behind the "tents" of dwelling in which we have wandered on this earth, and we will be *clothed with our heavenly habitation* ... joined to Christ the Temple in the Heavenly Jerusalem where St. John tells us in Revelations:

"I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb." "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God."

We must embrace the call to *"be who we are"* in every area of our lives, without reserve. We are Catholic. We are universal. We are temples of the Living God. *You* are a temple of the Living God. Offer your very life as your worship and your sacrifice, all for the glory of God. *Be who you are*. Be proud of your Catholic faith!!

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go! Let the Adventure BEGIN!

Finishing up your practice teaching, studying for your exam and preparing for your Practical(s), might very well be stirring up mixed emotions. You might even be a little fearful... BUT WAIT! Fear NOT! You are on the threshold of a very exciting time of discovery and blessing. You are about to enter a beautiful community of instructors who are ready and waiting to welcome you into the next chapter of your Pietra Fitness journey. You are about to enter into the mission field of Pietra Fitness apostolate work. You are about to fully experience the Pietra Fitness Lifestyle! Your time in training has prepared you well for the next step after your Practical to - TEACH classes!!

T - Time to build a consistent class schedule (be patient!)

E - Expect people to say No - and keep inviting them to class(es)

A - Allow some time for people to learn more about Pietra Fitness

C - Cultivate your Pietra Fitness lifestyle with Daily Meditation

H - Humility in your practice will keep your heart and mind open to God and His Plan for the mission He has for you.