Feast of the Dedication of St. John Lateran Basilica: November 9

St. Francis upholds the Church!

One of the more striking features of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran is actually outside the church. If you go to the square across the street, you’ll see a statue of St. Francis of Assisi with his arms outstretched. It commemorates an important moment in church history: the Lateran is where Francis went to ask the pope for permission to start a religious order. If you step back from the statue of Francis, stand behind it, and look at it from a particular angle, between St. Francis’ outstretched arms you see the Lateran Basilica. He appears to be holding it up with his hands. It’s a great image, and a great lesson. A church building is brick and mortar, wood and glass. But, ultimately, it is supported by the arms and the labor of those who love it. The statue outside the Lateran shows in a beautiful way how our arms support this church – how we all, together, lift it up to God. And how we then become God’s building, his dwelling place. (taken from CONNECT: Uniting Word and World)

Giotto’s fresco of
Pope Innocent III’s dream,
upper Basilica of
St. Francis of Assisi
in Assisi

[Adapted by Deacon Dave & Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., Revised July 2017]