

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
Sunday January 19th – Sunday January 26th, 2014
Theme: *Has Christ Been Divided?* (1Cor 1:13)
Suggested Morning Announcements for our Catholic Schools

Adapted from Resources for
THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
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Monday January 20th, 2014

Good morning. This is the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* - a special week of prayer for unity among the followers of Jesus in Canada. The theme for this week is the question, “***Has Christ been divided?***” Long ago, St. Paul asked this question to a small Christian community in the Greek city of Corinth. He heard that people were divided and fighting about their favourite leaders in the faith. So St. Paul asked them a question: “Has Christ been divided?” He wanted to remind them that if they truly follow Jesus, they should be united in his love, not divided.

Let us listen to the words of St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians:

A reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (1Cor 1:10-13)

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me... that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. Has Christ been divided?

The word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Today, let us remember that the message of Jesus is to love one another as he has loved us. Let us strive today to live as followers of Jesus, united in his message of love. As Christians, let us be ready to welcome one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, and to welcome all peoples of good will as children of our loving God.

And now, let us unite our voices in the prayer that Jesus taught us:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Tuesday January 21st, 2014

Good morning. Today is Tuesday in the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. Today, we are reflecting on how *all Christians are part of the communion of saints*. Let us listen to the First Letter of St. Peter to one of the early Christian communities:

A reading from the First Letter of Peter (1 Peter 1: 9-10)

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God

At Baptism, Christians are joined to Jesus, who shares with us his gift of holiness. In him, we are one body - this is what it means to be a communion of saints. The communion of saints includes not only the living, but also the first Christians, the great followers of Jesus down through the ages, the humble rich and poor, our friends and relatives who have died... – all are part of the communion of saints. As members of the communion of saints, we rely on one another's prayers and loving help. Let us remember that all baptized Christians share in the holiness of Jesus, and in him, we are members of the *communion of saints*. Let us also make a special effort to treat everyone in our Catholic school community – Christians and all peoples of good will – with the dignity they deserve as children of God.

As God's children, let us pray as members of the communion of saints, using the words that Jesus taught us. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Wednesday January 22nd, 2014

Good morning. Today is Wednesday in the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. This morning we are looking at how the ***Holy Spirit gives each Christian gifts to build up the body of Christ***. Let us listen to the words of St. Paul to the people of Corinth.

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians (1Cor 12:4-7)*

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to all for their particular service. The Spirit's presence is shown in the same way in each person for the good of all.

The word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Every person, no matter how young or old or talented, is a gift to the human family. All of us belong, and without even one of us, the world would not be such a beautiful place. There are unique gifts we bring into the world when we are born – gifts that develop as we grow. At Baptism, each Christian receives special gifts to build up the body of Christ. These gifts come from the Holy Spirit, and are to be used in the service of unity and love. Someone will have a gift of leading others in faith; another, of preaching; another of bringing joy to people; or helping others; or healing; or preaching; or bringing people comfort and peace when they are suffering. Let us take a moment to thank God for all the gifts He has given us to use in the service of unity and love.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us pray,

Holy Spirit, we thank you for the gifts that you have poured into our lives. Thank you for our minds, our hearts and our bodies. Thank you for the talents you have given us. Thank you for the special gifts you planted deep inside of us at Baptism. Thank you for the gifts you give to our classmates and teachers, to our brothers and sisters in the Christian faith. Help us to see the gifts in each other, to honour one another, and live as one body. Together with persons of all faiths, may we live as your children and give glory to you.

We make this prayer to you in Jesus' name.

And let us finish with the prayer all Christians share, using the words that Jesus taught us:

Our Father,

Who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done

On earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

* Catholic Children's Bible translation, St. Mary's Press, 2013.

Thursday January 23rd, 2014

Good morning. Today is Thursday in the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. Today we will reflect on *God's faithfulness*. What does faithfulness mean? It means keeping your promises and being there for others, no matter what happens. This is what God is like – God is always there for all His children, no matter what happens. With God's faithful help, Christians can live as one body in Christ, and peoples of every faith can live in peace with one another.

And now, let us listen to the words of Psalm 36, praising God's faithfulness:

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (Psalm 36: 5-6a,7)

Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep.

How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings. The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

God loves us more deeply than the deepest oceans, and higher than the skies. He created us in love so that we might find happiness living in love as His children. Ever-faithful, He sent prophets to lead His people through the ages; He sent us Jesus to lead us to fullness of life; He sent us the Holy Spirit to unite us, to strengthen us and to help us grow in holiness on our earthly journey to eternal life. We have been made in the image of our faithful God. Let us ask God to make us faithful to one another as members of Christ's body, and faithful in love to all God's children we meet each day.

And let us finish with the prayer to God the faithful Father that Jesus taught us. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Friday January 24th, 2014

Good morning. Today is Friday in the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. Today we will reflect on *the call of all Christians to share the Gospel of Jesus*. Most of the time, we are called to share Jesus' Gospel simply by our example of love. Our loving actions can speak much louder than words. Everybody has a part to play in sharing the message of God's love by their example of kindness. And even though Christians are divided into different faith communities, we can work together in spreading the Gospel's message of love for God and neighbor by practicing justice, promoting peace and showing kindness.

How can I practice justice, promote peace and show kindness to people around me today?
Perhaps I can start by reaching out to someone who is hurting or feels alone.

Let us listen to the words of St. Luke's Gospel*

A reading from the Gospel of Luke (Lk 4: 16-21)

Then Jesus returned to Galilee and the power of the Holy Spirit was with him. The news about him spread throughout all that territory. He taught in the synagogues and was praised by everyone. Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath he went as usual to the synagogue. He stood up to read the Scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.”

Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him, as he said to them, “This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read.”

The Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

What can I do today to show someone that the Good News of God's love has come true?

Let us pray, using the common prayer of all the followers of Jesus:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

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