

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR THE UNITY OF CHRISTIANS
18 - 25 JANUARY EVERY YEAR

Invocations for Unity

From a text devised by Paul Couturier, an Apostle of Unity

Lord, for the low importance we have given to those words that came from your Heart: "I have other sheep not from this fold. I must also bring them; they too shall hear my voice":

We ask you to forgive us, Lord.

For our disagreements with our Christian brothers and sisters, sometimes full of irony, or narrowness of spirit, or exaggeration; for our intransigence and harsh judgments about other Christians and Churches:

We ask you to forgive us, Lord.

For all acts of violence or unkindness against our fellow Christians; for all in the past and sustained to this day for which we are to blame:

We ask you to forgive us, Lord.

For all attitudes of pride and self-sufficiency that our Churches may have shown across the ages to other Christians, and for all our failures of awareness or understanding towards each other:

We ask you to forgive us, Lord.

For the bad examples in our conduct, which have slowed down, diminished or destroyed the effects of grace in the souls of others:

We ask you to forgive us, Lord.

For forgetting to offer prayer, frequent, friendly, fervent, on behalf of our fellow Christians:

We ask you to forgive us, Lord.

Above the frontiers of language, race and nation, through all our rich difference and diversity:

Unite us, Jesus.

With Christians who are persecuted and in need, with our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters across the world and in our midst:

Unite us, Jesus.

Above our ignorance, our prejudices, or any unconscious hostility, through better understanding and ever closer communion:

Unite us, Jesus.

Above our different spiritual and theological traditions, in one spirit, one Bread and one Body:

Unite us, Jesus.

O God, for the increase of your glory:

Gather your scattered people.

O God, for the triumph of good and of truth:

Gather your scattered people.

O God, that there may be but one fold and one Shepherd:

Gather your scattered people.

O God, that justice and peace may finally reign in the world:

Gather your scattered people.

O God, to bring fullness of joy to the heart of your Son:

Gather your scattered people.

Daily Prayer of the Chemin Neuf Community, based on Couturier

Lord Jesus, who prayed that we might all be one, we pray to You for the unity of Christians, according to Your will, according to Your means. May Your Spirit enable us to experience the suffering caused by division, to see our sin, and to hope beyond all hope. **Amen.**

This leaflet is prepared by UNITAS, an ecumenical society supporting the Catholic ecumenical movement and working for the communion of all Christians in visible unity. It may be reproduced free of charge with acknowledgment. Further copies may be obtained from the Secretary, 27 Moor Lane, Newby, Scarborough YO12 5SL

www.unitas.org.uk

www.paulcouturier.org.uk

The walls of separation do not rise as far as heaven
Metropolitan Platon Gorodetsky of Kiev

Daily Intercessions

The prayer for each day can be adapted and inserted into the Prayer of the Faithful at the Eucharist or the Intercessions at Morning or Evening Prayer.

January 18 *The Unity of all Christians*

Father, your Son prayed on the night before he died that we his disciples might be one as the Father and the Son are one. Today we pray for the Unity of all Christians. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church; and grant us the peace and unity which is according to Christ's will.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 19 *The Sanctification of Catholic Christians*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Today we pray for all Catholic Christians. Give Catholics and all Christians together an ever greater holiness and lead us all along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 20 *The Sanctification of Orthodox Christians*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Today we pray for all Orthodox Christians. Give Orthodox and all Christians an ever greater holiness and lead us all along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 21 *The Sanctification of Anglican Christians*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Today we pray for all Anglican Christians. Give Anglicans and all Christians an ever greater holiness and lead us all along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 22 *The Sanctification of all Protestant Christians*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and

draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Today we pray for all Protestant and Pentecostal Christians. Give Protestant and Pentecostal Christians, and all Christians together, an ever greater holiness and lead us all along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 23 *The Sanctification of the Jewish People*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Give us an ever greater holiness and lead us along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ. We pray today for the Jewish people. By faith may they continue with us to grow in the love of your name and arrive at the fullness of redemption.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 24 *The Sanctification of People in other Faiths*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Give us an ever greater holiness and lead us along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ. We pray today for people of other faiths. May we and they be enlightened by your Spirit, walk before you in sincerity of heart, become more perfect witnesses of your love and advance on the way to salvation.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

January 25 *Unity of all humanity in the charity and truth of Christ*

Father, we pray for the Unity of Christians. Forgive us the sin which separates us and maintains divisions among us. May your Spirit penetrate all our souls and draw us closer to Christ in holiness. Today we pray for the unity of all humanity in the charity and truth of Christ. Give all human beings, your children, an ever greater holiness; and lead us along your path, to unity in the love and truth of Christ.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.

These intercessions are based on the Prayers at the Liturgy for Good Friday. The themes were devised in 1934 by the French priest, Paul Couturier, for his relaunch of the Week of Prayer, the purpose of Christian Unity being the union of all humanity with God in Christ: "Father, as you are in me and I am in you, may they all be one, that the world may believe it was you that sent me". St John 17.

Let us not become settled in our divisions. Keep us from considering as normal that which is a scandal to the world and an offence to your love.

Paul Couturier