



Memo

Date: January 10, 2022

To: Priests, deacons, brothers, sisters, principals and presidents, parish communicators and chancery staff

From: Fr. Paul A. Burke, J.C.L., chairman of the Archbishop's Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

Re: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25

The International Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is from January 18 to January 25, the Solemnity of the Conversion of St. Paul. This annual Week of Prayer is an opportunity for us all to pray for the unity of Christians as willed by Jesus on the night before he died.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the present Omicron variant with the upsurge of reported cases continues to impact our plans for getting together. Once again, Archbishop Hartmayer would like us to observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity online and in social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). The theme of the week is: "We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him" based on Matthew 2:2. Each day, we plan to air a short video reflection on the Archdiocesan website.

Archbishop Hartmayer is hosting a Vespers Service on the Solemnity of the Conversion of St. Paul, Tuesday, January 25, at 5:30 p.m. in the chapel of our Chancery in Smyrna. The service will be livestreamed. This service is not open to the public.

Please encourage your parishioners to join us online as we pray for Christian unity. Also, you may want to include petitions in the Prayers of the Faithful.

The following are sample petitions that can be utilized in Masses or ecumenical services. They are by no means exhaustive, but are meant to assist those who are planning various activities throughout the week.

For an end to the divisions among Christians: that they pursue Justice to discover new ways to work together to announce freedom, bring healing and promote reconciliation as signs of God's reign...

For all Christian Churches and Faith Communities, that they may pursue Justice in guiding them towards reconciliation and unity in Christ...

For all Christian Churches and Faith Communities, that they may be faithful witnesses to the Gospel call to reconciliation...

For church leaders everywhere during this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, that they may work together and promote unity among Christians ...

For the Church, that God would inspire God's people to continue the quest for Christian Unity and that our hearts be filled with the gift of Jesus' love for all ...

For the leadership of the Church throughout the world during this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, that they may witness to Christ's prayer "That All May Be One" ...

For the various ecumenical dialogues between our church and other denominations, that they bear witness to the quest for Christian unity in Jesus' name ...

For those who bear witness to Christ through the ministry of ecumenism, that they always seek the unity that is found in Christ.

Online Resources

Here are information links to both the Vatican and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) websites for available resources, as well as the Graymoor Franciscans:

Pontifical Council for Christian Unity (Vatican)

<http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/settimana-di-preghiera-per-l-unita/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2022.html>

USCCB – Committee for Christian Unity

<https://www.usccb.org/committees/ecumenical-interreligious-affairs/international-week-prayer-christian-unity>

Graymoor Franciscans

https://geii.org/week_of_prayer_for_christian_unity/index.html