

Office for Unity
Thursday, March 18th 2021

MEDITATION

Love your enemies by Martin Luther King

My friends, for too long we have followed the so-called workable trail and it has led us inexorably to a more profound disorder and to chaos. Our times are littered with the ruins of communities which have given themselves over to hatred and violence. For the salvation of our nation and the salvation of humanity, we have to find another path. That is not to say that we abandon our striving for justice. Every particle of our energy must be used to deliver this nation from the nightmare of segregation. But along this road we will not give up our privilege and our obligation to love. There is no other way to create a much loved community.

To our fiercest enemies we say: “To your capacity to inflict suffering we oppose our capacity to endure suffering. To your physical force we respond with the force of our souls. Do what you like and we will continue to love you. In all good conscience we cannot obey your unjust laws, for non-cooperation with evil, as much as cooperation with good, is a moral obligation. Throw us in prison, and we will love you more. Send your masked men into our communities at midnight to perpetrate violence and leave us half dead, and we will still love you. But rest assured that we will take you to the point of exhaustion by our capacity to suffer. One day we will win our liberty, but not only for ourselves. We will launch at your hearts and your consciences such a call that we will win you over to our path and our victory will be a double victory.”

Love is the most enduring power in the world. This creative force, so admirably exemplified in the life of our Christ, is the most powerful instrument that humanity can find in the search for peace and security.

Extract from: *The Power of Loving*, by Martin Luther King, Ed. Casterman 1964, p 72f

Intercessions

Prepared by the Ecumenical Team

To adapt according to the place of worship

1. Anne-Cathy Graber, a consecrated sister on the Cgemi Neuf Community, has been officially appointed to the Faculty of Theology in the Jesuit Faculties of Paris as a teacher of theology. The fact that a woman theologian and Mennonite pastor could be recognised as a full member of a Catholic institution marks a discreet but decisive advance in the light of the communion of Churches.

Lord, we bless you for the trust of our Jesuit brothers. May the tireless work undertaken by the teachers of the Centre Sevres continue to bear fruit; and give the students the daring to commit themselves in their turn to work for a Church which is both one and reconciled.

2. The Community Ecumenical Meeting (the French acronym is ROC) which took place three weeks ago was a real moment for thanksgiving. This day was held online and gathered brothers and sisters who are committed members of the Chemin Neuf Community from various different churches.

Thank you, Lord, for the long term and faithful commitment of our brothers and sisters. We thank you for this miracle of unity which we live on a daily basis at the heart of our Community. Strengthen us and give us the courage to follow swiftly the path which the Holy Spirit shows us.

3. On the occasion of Pope Francis' visit to Iraq last week, Christians, Muslims and representatives of other religions were able to meet together at Ur, where Abraham received his call from God. In his review, the bishop of Rome testified: "While we were together under the bright heavens, the same heavens in which our father Abraham sees us, his descendants, it seems to us that this phrase reverberated in our hearts: "You are all brothers."

Lord, you guide the steps of those who walk the Earth with their gaze fixed on Heaven. May this word of Jesus be proclaimed over and over again in our families, our neighbourhoods, our gatherings, our places of work: "You are all brothers." (Matthew 23.8).