

Office for unity

Thursday 24th June 2021

MEDITATION

The descent of the Holy Spirit on the Son of God made man

by Saint Irenaeus

When the Lord gave the disciples the power of regeneration into God, He said to them, « Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ». For God promised that in the last times He would pour the Spirit upon His servants, that they might prophesy; this is why He did also descend upon the Son of God, made the Son of Man, becoming accustomed in fellowship with Him to dwell in the human race, to rest with human beings, and to dwell in the workmanship of God, working the will of the Father in them, and renewing them from their old habits into the newness of Christ.

This Spirit (...) as Luke says, descended at the day of Pentecost upon the disciples after the Lord's ascension, having power to admit all nations into life, and to the opening of the new covenant; from where also, with one accord in all languages, they uttered praise to God, the Spirit bringing distant peoples to unity, and offering to the Father the first-fruits of all nations.

This is also why the Lord promised to send the Paraclete who joins us to God. For as a compacted lump of dough cannot be formed of dry wheat without fluid matter, nor can a loaf possess unity, so, in like manner, neither could we, being many, be made one in Christ Jesus without the water from heaven. And as dry earth does not bring forth unless it receives moisture, in like manner we also, being originally a dry tree, could never have brought forth the fruit of life without the voluntary rain from above. For our bodies have received unity among themselves through the water of baptism which leads to incorruption; but our souls, by means of the Spirit.

Intercessions

Prepared by members of the Chemin Neuf Community and Sisters of the Child Jesus from Charcot near Lyon in France.

1 / Lord, we thank you for the intuition and action of Father Paul Couturier, a priest of the diocese of Lyon, who served the unity of the Churches "according to your will, according to your means".

We pray to you for Christians who commit themselves personally and together on this path of dialogue among all the baptized, and on the path of encounter with believers of other religions.

2 / Lord, we give you thanks for the charities in Lyon - such as Our Lady of the homeless, the Prado, Habitat et Humanism and many others - who are committed to the service of our weak and destitute brothers experiencing material, psychological, social and spiritual distress.

We pray to you at this time of local elections, for those who exercise political power. May they let themselves be guided by concern for justice and the common good, may they hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

3 / Lord, we give you thanks for the martyrs of Lyon that we celebrate in this month of June: Pothin, Blandine, and others. They were the seed of Christianity for us.

We pray for Christians who are persecuted for their faith in the world today. May the strength of the Spirit and the fraternal communion of other Churches be for them a source of comfort and hope in the trials they have gone through.

4 / Lord, we give you thanks for the Fathers of the Church including Saint Irenaeus and the many theologians of the Church of Lyon who, still today, help Christians to root their faith in the understanding of the Scriptures and the Apostolic Tradition.

We pray for theologians, for students of the Catholic University of Lyon, for catechists... that they may know, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, how to transmit the message of the Gospel in the context of the present day, so that all people, whatever their age or circumstances, may "hear them speak in their own language".