

Office for Unity on Thursday, June 16, 2022

Meditation Text

At the service of a unity both given and to accomplished

The New Testament attests that the unity of Christians after the death of Jesus is rooted in the unity of Jesus with God: "Let all be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you" (Jn 17, 21)., The Church as the body of Christ is one: "we are one body in Christ" (Rom 12:5) because Christ is not divided, just as there is one only Spirit.

The unity of the Church is therefore given, prior to any human effort to heal existing fractures and promote full communion between the Churches. As Saint Cyprian of Carthage wrote in the third century: "This sacrament of unity, this bond of an indissolubly concord, is represented for us in the Gospel by the tunic of Jesus, which is neither divided nor torn, but is given intact to the one who is to wear Christ."

The discourse on unity thus takes in a dialectical manner. As soon as we affirm its presence, we must add that it is not yet here. And as soon as we expect it, we must specify that its presence is the basis for our expectation.

Conversion to a broader understanding of the unity of the Church takes place by listening to and appropriating other voices from the universal Church which bear witness to the inexhaustible richness of the Gospel.

Since the unity of the Church refers to the unity of the work of Jesus Christ who died and rose again, it remains both promised and hidden - hidden, because it is covered by the shadow of the cross, promised, because it will only manifest itself fully when the paschal light has dissipated the darkness of humanity's sin.

As at the beginning, the unity of Christians will also be given at the end. Between these two times, the task of the Churches is to make and live unity as a sign of anticipation of the Kingdom to come, under pain of denying its privileged vocation at the service of the world and of humanity.

from the document by the Dombes Group, Communion and Conversion of the Churches

Intercessions

(To be adapted according to location)

In union with our brothers and sisters of the Community of Angers and in the deep desire for Unity between our Churches, we turn to the Lord, and we pray

1) The assembly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, has declared “its full independence” from the Patriarchate of Moscow, after centuries of common history, due to a deep disagreement with Patriarch Kiril, on the war in Ukraine.

Let us pray for all the victims of this fratricidal war between Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox Christians and for the leaders of each of these Churches. May men and women of peace, dialogue and unity rise among them.

2) One of the gifts Catholics can receive from other Christians is their experience and understanding of “synodality”.

Let us pray that the synodal approach undertaken by the Catholic Church will be an opportunity to listen more concretely to the other Churches and thus to listen together “to what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.”

3) In France, the association “Amen-toi” works for the evangelization of the countryside and the unity of Christians through an intergenerational festival that will take place from July 1 to 3.

Let us pray that these meetings will be the occasion for a powerful renewal of regional ecumenical life, in strength and in obedience to the Holy Spirit.