

Office for unity

Thursday, October 20, 2022

Meditation text

“The Love of Christ urges us on.” (2 Corinthians 5:14)

From the time he journeyed on earth, and even in this present moment, Jesus unceasingly addresses these words to every human being. Jesus’ life, words, and actions are a constant invitation to movement – from one physical place to another, from one group of people to another, from one mindset to another. Above all, amid the problems of the world, Jesus calls us to come to him and to abide in his love, a love which is offered for all the world (cf. Matt. 11:28).

“Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.” This love, in answer to the cries of those who are suffering, compels us to come to him in solidarity and to respond and act for justice. We are summoned to be reconciled in God’s love, and to witness to that love revealed in Christ (1 John 4:9-11).

Reconciliation is a movement toward God and toward each other. It implies a readiness to listen to God and to one another. It is a conversion of the heart, from selfishness and apathy to inclusion and service, acknowledging our interdependence with creation. We confess that, even as we desire with our whole hearts to serve God and our neighbour, we have found ourselves failing, disagreeing, and sometimes walking in opposite directions. We confess that we need the transformative power of Christ’s love to move to a world truly reconciled and united...

We long for a wider movement, the reconciliation and unity of all humanity, and indeed of the entire cosmos. This would be a unity in which God establishes justice, an equal place for all, through which creation may be renewed and strengthened. We rely on Christ’s love as we act and advocate for climate justice.

“A Call to Act Together”, extract from the final message of the WCC 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany

Intercessions

Prepared by our brothers and sisters in Berlin

To be adapted according to the location

1. At the 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which took place in Karlsruhe, Germany, from 31 August to 8 September 2022, a new president, Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria), and a new executive committee were elected.

Lord, we pray that this new team will be led by your Spirit of wisdom and that which was sown at this meeting will bear fruits of unity and reconciliation in all the churches that were represented.

2. In reaction to the abuse scandals of all kinds that have shaken the Catholic Church in Germany, the Church has been engaged for two years in a process called the Synodal Way. The resolutions adopted in this process are causing a lot of tension within the Catholic Church.

Lord, we pray that all those involved in the Synodal Way will be moved by your Spirit of love and truth as they seek a way forward for your Church in Germany.

3. Every year, the historic Protestant churches celebrate Reformation Day on October 31, the date on which Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Catholic church in Wittenberg. Today, this commemoration is the occasion for numerous ecumenical initiatives throughout Germany.

Lord, we pray that this common prayer will deepen the bonds between the Catholic Church and the churches of the Reformation and become a step on the road to unity.

4. The war in Ukraine has caused a deep division between the patriarchates of the Orthodox Church.

Lord, we pray that you will raise up men and women of dialogue, artisans of peace and unity, in the different patriarchates.