

## Office for unity

Thursday, November 30, 2023

### **Meditation text**

Augustine of Hippo comments here on the Gospel of the Good Shepherd.

§5 How is it then that, speaking of good shepherds, you mention only one good shepherd? It is because, in this one Shepherd, you wanted to preach unity itself. And indeed, my brothers, the Lord is going to make use of my ministry to explain his thought to you more clearly; it is always through the Gospel that he instructs your charity, and he seems to be saying: "Listen to what I wanted to teach you with these words: I am the good Shepherd"; if I have spoken in this way it is because all the others, all the good shepherds, are my members. One head, one body, one Christ. So there is the Shepherd of Shepherds, the Shepherds of the Shepherd, and the sheep with their Shepherds under the Shepherd. This doctrine is none other than that of the Apostle: "For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though members, are one body, so is Christ" (I Cor. 12:12). If this is Christ, we can say that Christ, representing in his person all the good shepherds, preaches unity to us by saying: "I am the good shepherd": I am he; I am the only one; with me are all those who dwell in unity. [...]

§10. [Listen, brothers, to my exhortations and my prayers: Love this Church, be in this Church, be this Church. Love the good Shepherd, this beautiful Spouse who deceives no one, who desires the loss of no one. [...]

## **Intercessions**

### ***Prepared by the sisters and brothers from Rome***

*To be adapted according to the location*

1. At the beginning of November, the Reverend Tara Curlewis was installed as the first ecumenical liaison officer in Rome of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Her installation took place in the Waldensian Evangelical Church.

Christ, we pray for the ministry of unity of the Reverend Tara Curlewis and for all the men and women who work in Rome for the unity of your Church in the various representative bodies.

2. For over 30 years, the Anglican Church has been working to spread Alpha, a programme for rediscovering the Christian faith. To prepare and strengthen themselves in this apostolate, some of our brothers have benefited from the Alpha leaders training course in London.

O Christ, give us the impetus to share the joy of getting to know you, especially when Alpha begins in the community parish of Saint Vito in the next few weeks.

3. At the Charis Catholic Renewal meeting in early November, Raniero Cantalamessa reaffirmed that "the passion for Christian unity is in the DNA of the charismatic renewal".

O Christ, may your Spirit make us ever more open to meeting our brothers and sisters, and to working together for the unity of your Church.

4. In the Holy Land, the patriarchs and heads of the Christian churches have issued a statement expressing their solidarity with the Armenian Patriarchate. In recent weeks, the Armenian quarter has faced the arrival of settlers attempting to expropriate their land.

O Christ, you who inhabited this land, give all those who live here today to seek justice and peace.