

Day Six: Welcoming Others

“Go and bear fruit, fruit that will last” Jn 15:16b

Gen 18:1-5: Abraham hosts the angels at the Oak of Mamre

Mk 6:30-34: Jesus’ compassion for the crowds

Meditation: When Jesus feeds the multitudes, he takes the few loaves his disciples have to offer. Jesus calls us to be coworkers with him, making our meager offering abundant.

Prayer: Jesus Christ, we desire to welcome fully the brothers and sisters who are with us. You know how often we feel helpless in the face of their suffering, yet you are always there ahead of us and you have already received them in your compassion. Speak to them through our words, support them through our actions, and let your blessing rest on us all.

Day Seven: Growing in Unity

“I am the vine, you are the branches” Jn 15:5a

1 Cor 1:10-13; 3:21-23: Is Christ divided?

John 17:20-23: As you and I are one

Meditation: Christ prayed that all may be one. Each faith tradition seeks communion with God. When our differences become divisive, however, we break the unity Christ prayed for.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, vivifying fire and gentle breath, come and abide in us. Renew in us the passion for unity so that we may live in awareness of the

bond that unites us in you. May all who have put on Christ at their Baptism unite and bear witness together to the hope that sustains them.

Day 8: Reconciling with all of Creation

“... so that your joy may be complete” Jn 15: 11b

Col 1:15-20: In Him all things hold together

Mark 4:30-32: As small as a mustard seed

Meditation: Salvation through Jesus Christ extends to all creation. God’s plan is still unfolding in the world and through people of good will. God’s kingdom may still seem small, but it is growing.

Prayer: Thrice-holy God, we thank you for having created and loved us. We thank you for your presence in us and in creation. May we learn to look upon the world as you look upon it, with love. In the hope of this vision, may we be able to work for a world where justice and peace flourish, for the glory of your name.

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

ASCENSION – PENTECOST
16 – 23 MAY 2021

*“Abide in my love and you shall bear
much fruit”
(cf. John 15:5-16)*



Christ prayed that “all may be one” as he and the Father are one. Yet we live in a time when we often bring scandal to the name “Christian” by letting our differences become sources of division. With this in mind, we are challenged to pray each day from 16-23 May for the unity of all Christians. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, The Commission on Faith, and Order of the World Council of Churches has published prayers for the week from Ascension to Pentecost, from which these prayers are adapted.

The theme for this year's week of prayer for Christian unity was prepared by the Grandchamp community, a reformed Christian ecumenical community focused on the practice of spiritual retreats drawing on the western monastic tradition. The theme is chosen from Jesus' farewell to the Apostles at the last supper in the Gospel of John (*John 15:1-17*), and the words of Jesus show the relationship between Christ's love of the Father and his love for us as the basis for unity among Christians. Cultivating our relationship with the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit is the foundation that makes unity among all peoples possible.

For each day, try to gather together with fellow Christians (Catholics and Protestants). Begin each day by reading John 15:1-17, focusing on the particular verse for that day. Read the other scripture passages chosen for the specific day, pause in silence, then share personal reflections with one another. Finish with the closing prayer of the day.

Day One: Called by God

"You did not choose me, but I chose you" Jn 15:16a

Gen 12:1-4: The call of Abraham
John 1:35-51: The call of the first Disciples

Meditation: Like the disciples, and Abraham before them, we are called to leave what is familiar and follow Christ to the place God has prepared for us.

Prayer: Jesus Christ, you seek us, you wish to offer us your friendship and lead us to a life that is ever more complete. Grant us the confidence to answer your call so that we may be transformed and become witnesses of your tenderness for the world.

Day Two: Maturing Internally

"Abide in me as I abide in you" Jn 15:14a

Eph 3:14-21: May Christ dwell in our hearts
Luke 2:41-52: Mary treasured all these things

Meditation: Mary pondered the actions of her son and considered them in her heart. For us, spiritual maturity arises from the silent listening of the heart.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, May we receive in our hearts the presence of Christ, and cherish it as a secret of love. Nourish our prayer, enlighten our reading of Scripture, act through us, so that the fruits of your gifts can patiently grow in us.

Day Three: Forming one Body

"Love one another as I have loved you" Jn 15:12b

Col 3:12-17: Clothe yourself with compassion
John 13:1-15; 34-35: Love one another.

Meditation: Christ gives his disciples a model of Christian life when he washes the Disciples' feet. We are called to unity: imitating Christ's humility in mutual compassion for one another.

Prayer: God our Father, you reveal to us your love through Christ and through our brothers and sisters. Open our hearts so that we can welcome each other with our differences and live in forgiveness. Grant us to live united in one body, so that the gift that is each person comes to light. May all of us together be a reflection of the living Christ.

Day Four: Praying Together

"I do not call you servants . . . I call you friends" Jn 15:15

Romans 8:26-27: The Spirit helps us in our weakness
Luke 11:1-4: Lord, teach us to pray

Meditation: When we struggle to pray in private we can say with the Disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray." Our common prayer together can forge the bonds of communion and friendship.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, your entire life was prayer, perfect harmony with the Father. Through your Spirit, teach us to pray according to your will of love. May the faithful of the whole world unite in intercession and praise, and may your kingdom of love come.

Day Five: Transformed by the Word

"You have already been pruned by the Word" Jn 15:3

Deut 30:11-20: The Word of God is very close to you
Mt 5:1-12: Blessed are you

Meditation: Consistent prayer over the Word of God will change us. Hearing Christ's words of Beatitude helps us to see the joy and happiness that lies hidden in pain and suffering.

Prayer: Blessed are you, God our Father, for the gift of your word in Holy Scripture. Blessed are you for its transforming power. Help us choose life and guide us by your Spirit, so that we can experience the happiness which you want so much to share with us.