

HOMILIES FROM ARCHBISHOP JACKELS ABOUT THE SYNOD

16 JANUARY 2022 | SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C

Last year, Pope Francis asked us to give prayerful attention to St. Joseph, Husband of Mary. Here in the Archdiocese, we prayed a devotion we called the Novena of 19s.

On the 19th of each month, from March to November, we asked St. Joseph to pray to God that we might see a deeper unity, humility, and charity in our country and in our Church.

That need was made clear and urgent by a quarrelsome campaign, a disputed election, the 2021 insurrection, racial tensions, and division over Latin Mass, masks and vaccines.

If news pundits are to be believed, our division is greater now than it was a year ago. Does that mean God has yet to answer our prayers... or has said no?

Is more needed? More humble forgiveness? More charitable giving? More prayer for unity? If some is good, then like incense at Mass, garlic in cooking, and seminarians, more is better.

This coming Tuesday we have an opportunity for more prayer for unity. From 18-25 of January is the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, when we beg God for unity...

Between Christian Churches; among Church members; and between Church members and God. We can add prayers for more humility, charity and unity in our country and Church.

In addition to prayer, the practice of synodality might also help, because of what it requires:

- Each person listening to, and responsive to the will of God;
- Each person listening respectfully to what others say they've learned from God;
- Each person respecting differences, maybe even appreciating differences;
- Each person okay with options other than my way, or the highway.

The practice of synodality requires humility and charity for us to co-exist in unity, the same as does living with others at home, or in our town, state, country, and Church. But be clear:

Unity doesn't require uniformity, or for everyone to agree. Differences and disagreements won't result in division, name-calling, and malice if humility and charity are practiced.

Believe it or not, there are Catholics who scoff at Christian unity and synodality, seemingly content with division, or only satisfied with unity on their terms. St. Joseph – terror of those evil spirits, and patron of the Catholic Church – still has a lot of work to do. And so do we.