

Dear Parishioners,

As promised last week, we continue to dig into Pope Benedict XVI's legacy by considering another of his rich reflections. As we know, the week of January 15-25 is known as the week of Prayer for Christian Unity. As we join our brothers and sisters all over the world to pray for the unity for which Christ himself prayed, let us get some insights from Pope Benedict XVI of blessed memory:

Dear brothers and sisters,

This Sunday falls in the middle of the "week of Prayer for Christian Unity," celebrated every year from 18-25 January. It is an initiative that began at the start of the last century and which has undergone a positive development, becoming more and more an ecumenical reference point where Christians of the various confessions worldwide pray and reflect on the same biblical text. The passage chosen this year is taken from chapter 8 of the gospel of Saint Matthew, which refers to some of Jesus' teachings regarding the community of disciples. Among other things he affirms: "If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mat. 18-19-20)

We understand well, therefore, how important it is that we Christians invoke the gift of unity with persevering fidelity. If we do so with faith, we can be sure that our request will be granted. We do not know when or how, as it is not for us to know; but we must not doubt that one day we will be "one," as Jesus and the Father are united in the Holy Spirit.

The prayer for unity is the soul for the ecumenical movement which, thanks be God, advances throughout the world. Secondly, difficulties and trials are not lacking; but those two have their spiritual usefulness because they push us to exercise patience and perseverance and to grow in fraternal charity.

God is love, and only if we are converted to him and accept his word will we all be united in the one Mystical Body of Christ.

Blessed week of Prayer for Christian Unity to all.

Fr. Augustin