

A FEAST DAY SPECIAL EDITION
**ECUMENISM AND THE FRANCISCAN
TRADITION**

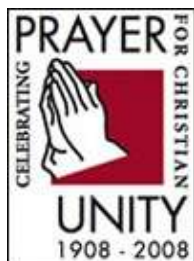


Celebrating 100 Years of Prayer:

January 18 – 25, 2008 marked 100 years since the Society of the Atonement began praying for Christian unity during the first Church Unity Octave. On the Feast of our province, we celebrate Prayer for Christian Unity, recognizing the work of the Holy Spirit.

A Move to Christian Unity – Franciscan Roots:

In 1907, an Episcopal priest and an Anglican vicar explored the possibility of prayer for Christian Unity. The Reverend Wattson and Mother Lurana White, co-founders of the Society of the Atonement, a small group of **Franciscan Sisters and Friars**, founded the Church Unity Octave in 1908, now known as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



The Sisters and the Friars, along with thirteen lay associates, entered the Roman Catholic Church in 1909. Pope Pius X shortly after that gave his official blessing to the Octave and in 1916 Pope Benedict XV encouraged its observance throughout the entire Roman Catholic Church.

Meanwhile, other movements for Christian Unity were also being promoted. For example, in 1935, a Roman Catholic priest, from Lyon, France, advocated a Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January that would foster a "unity that Christ wills, as he wills, and when he wills." In 1964, the bishops at the Second Vatican Council issued the *Decree on Ecumenism*, calling prayer "the soul of the ecumenical movement." Because the ideas developed in 1935 emphasized a more common basis upon which every Christian Church could pray together for unity, representatives from the Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches agreed in 1967 to jointly observe a time of prayer called the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Since 1968, the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity have collaborated annually in selecting scriptural themes and helpful materials to promote prayer for the unity of the Christian Churches.

In January 2008, the Society of the Atonement will mark one hundred years of consistently praying and working for the unity of the Christian Churches.

Sarah Menassa

Promoter of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation
Franciscan Provincial Office 47 Victoria Street, WAVERLEY NSW 2024
Telephone: (02) 9369 9309 Fax: (02) 9369 9322

I humbly suggest that Guardians make a copy of this prayer for use at community meals or in chapel for the week.

Welcome and invocation of the Holy Spirit

C: Let us, together, invoke the Holy Spirit, the light of our hearts, the breath of life and the power of the Father made manifest in the death and resurrection of Jesus. May He continue His work of reconciliation and communion initiated through the preaching of the Apostles. **Amen.**

Let us pray to the Father, that He may send the gifts of His Holy Spirit: that our hearts may be open to His presence, that He may be present in our prayers and lead us to His communion.

- C:** Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Fill our hearts with Your grace!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Free us from doubt and diffidence!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Grant us the faith to continue!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Transform our hearts of stone!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Bring the justice of Christ throughout our world!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Help us to understand that we are brothers and sisters!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Knock down the barriers between us!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Grant us Your gifts in order that we may share them!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Intercede for us, Spirit of the Father, Your ineffable breath goes beyond our work!**
C: Come Holy Spirit! **A:** **Unite all Christians in Christ our Lord!**
- C:** May this be a new and continuous Pentecost for us. May our Churches commit themselves once again to praying for the full unity of Christians, and may our prayers join us to this century of prayer “that all may be one”. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

HAPPY FEAST DAY!!

Source: <http://www.weekofprayer2008.org/index.html>