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January 12, 2025
The Baptism of the Lord

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity **January 18 to 25, 2025**


To Clergy, Religious, & Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Saskatoon:

During the week of January 18 to 25, our diocese joins with Christians around the world to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. On the occasion of the death of Lazarus, the sisters Martha and Mary are addressed by Jesus: "*I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. **Do you believe this?***" Mary's response is: "*Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.*"

In this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are asked to unite ourselves in our belief in the one Messiah for the world, and our common commitment to belief, prayer, and action to this essential creed for all Christians. For this year, 2025, the prayers and reflections for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity were prepared by the brothers and sisters of the monastic community of Bose in northern Italy. This year marks the 1,700th anniversary of the first Christian Ecumenical Council, held in Nicaea, near Constantinople in 325 AD. This commemoration provides a unique opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the common faith of Christians, as expressed in the Creed formulated during the Council of Nicaea. This faith continues to be alive and fruitful in our day.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2025 offers an invitation to draw on this shared heritage and to enter more deeply into the faith that unites all Christians. Like Martha, the early Christians could not remain indifferent or passive when the words of Jesus touched and searched their hearts. They earnestly sought to give a comprehensible answer to Jesus' question, "Do you believe this?" The Fathers of Nicaea strove to find words that would embrace the entire mystery of the incarnation and the passion, death and resurrection of their Lord. While awaiting his return, Christians around the world are called to witness together to this faith in the resurrection, which is for them the source of hope and joy, to be shared with all peoples. (See World Council of Churches: Resources 2025)

As we prepare to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are asked to reflect on the following questions:

 In all things we are *rooted in Christ*,
in His desire to bring God's love to all peoples.

- i) *How can we live our unity as Christians so as to confront the evils and injustices of our time?*
- ii) *How does Jesus Christ – who is the resurrection and the life – inspire and call each of us in the coming Jubilee New Year to be channels of His Hope, Peace, and Charity for the world?*
- iii) *How can we engage in dialogue - for the sake of increased awareness and insight about one another's experiences of the journey from brokenness to forgiveness, healing, and new life?*

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity not only reminds us that Jesus Christ is the One Saviour of all peoples and nations, but also that there is great blessing and new life when those of many families of faith come together in wonder, praise, and commitment to follow the One true Lord and Saviour.

For further information and resources, please see the attached resource jointly prepared and published by the Pontifical Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, and the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches. For this and other material, you can also go to:

<https://www.weekofprayer.ca/> ...or...

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/resources-for-the-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2025>

Let us pray in the words adapted from the resources available for this week:

*Jesus, who prayed that all might be one,
we pray to you for the unity of all Christians,
according to your will, according to your means.
Strengthen our hearts in expectation and hope
as we work for unity and together seek the harmony of all people and creation.
Let us be burning lamps, until the day of the coming of your Son in glory,
with all his saints in the everlasting kingdom.
Blessed are you, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. AMEN*

As we begin this New Year 2025 and the Jubilee Year of Hope, let us renew our commitment to the goal and work of ecumenism.

Sincerely in Christ,



✠ Most Rev. Mark A. Hagemoen



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in His desire to bring God's love to all peoples.