

Week beginning 20th January (Monday)

UNITY

**Where there is unity, there
is always victory**

Publilius Syrus

Around the world this week we are celebrating Christian Unity. 'Unity' is a term that is used constantly, but can we say that we are fully united in this world?

Pope Francis repeatedly calls us to pray so that all Christians may once again be a single family, according to God's will 'so that they may all be one'"

We may be different from one another because of our race, nationality, the amount of money we make etc, but we can be united under our one love for Christ. We just have to put in the effort to make it happen.

So today let us reflect;

Do I appreciate people's differences?

How am I showing unity within the school community?

Let us bring together all our thoughts and our feelings and offer them up to our
Father in heaven as we say;

**Our Father, Who art in heaven
Hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen**

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Churches have different kinds of buildings and worship in different ways. However, God didn't plan for everyone to be separate. In the Bible, Jesus spoke about 'unity'.

The definition of unity in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is 'the state of being united or joined as a whole'.

The idea of Christian unity is that Christians are joined together, despite our different church buildings and variations in belief: we are called to work as one, whole unit.

Prayer for Christian Unity

**Almighty and eternal God,
You gather and watch over Your sheep.**

**May all Christians recognize each other
by our being marked with the seal of one baptism
in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Unite us in Your love.

**May we erase all prejudice and discrimination,
seeing all others as our brothers and sisters.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Today is the feast day of Saint Vincent Pallotti. As we heard last week during our assemblies, St Vincent was a man of prayer. He was known for his help to the poor, to labourers, Students, prisoner's and the sick and the dying.

Saint Vincent created the Catholic Apostolate to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world – To make sure that **everyone** had the opportunity to hear the Good news. To awaken Faith and rekindle charity – so to raise awareness in **all** the baptised what our obligations are towards our brothers and sisters and to lead **all** people to unity in Christ. Saint Vincent was a man who believed in Christian unity.



Let us pray together for the intercession of Saint Vincent

Saint Vincent Pallotti,

you were moulded by God, the infinite love. You answered God's call to serve Him.

You were there for those seeking counsel, for the sick, for the youth and the aging,

for the rich and the poor, for people of any profession and walk of life.

**All were important to you. You wanted to inspire each and every one for the Kingdom
of God,**

reminding people of their duty to be apostles and preparing them for this work.

Now we call upon you to intercede for us.

Help us to pray. Help us to pray only for what we truly need,

what we can truly use, what is for our salvation and the honour of God.

We ask you to submit our prayers to God the Father

through Jesus Christ Our Lord

Amen

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As we continue our journey through the Week of Christian Unity let us ask ourselves the question;

How do I see and understand myself, especially in light of my relationship with my brothers and sisters in Christ?

We know that God, not only speaks to us in still small voices, but also through the people and places we least expect. In spite of the turbulence that can sometimes be in our life but also the turbulence of the world at the present time, we also discover acts of kindness, of love, forgiveness and hospitality in places or from people we did not expect.

We have come together as Christians, and therefore as fellow disciples. As we yearn for Christian unity, let us commit ourselves anew to work for this common goal.

‘So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.’

Matt 5:23-24

Reflect on this piece of Scripture, and in a few moments of silence say a prayer for whatever is in your heart.

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There are so many ways that we can go out of our way to be united as Christians.

One way is in prayer.

Prayer can be a powerful message.

Knowing that they are being prayed for can give someone strength when they are down, and make them feel that people are with them in their darkest times.

So let us now pray together for all our brothers and sisters in Christ

**Lord God,
we thank You
for calling us into the company of those
who trust in Christ and seek to obey His will.
May Your Spirit guide and strengthen us
in mission and service to Your world:
For we are strangers no longer
but pilgrims together on the way to Your Kingdom.
Amen.**