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January 8, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Each year between the dates of January 18-25, Christians around the world are called to devote time to pray for unity among all Christians. We know that Jesus prayed for his disciples to remain one, as he and his Father are one, "that the world may believe" (John 17:21). Praying for Christian unity supports the task of evangelization, which is central to *Renew My Church* and one of the core priorities of the Second Vatican Council.

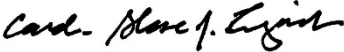
The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the World Council of Churches annually select ecumenical leaders from various geographical regions to prepare the theme and text for the Week of Prayer. The 2018 theme, "Your Right Hand, O Lord, Glorious in Power," prepared by representatives of Christian churches in the Caribbean, is taken from the Book of Exodus (15:6). It reminds us that throughout the biblical narrative of salvation, God is determined to act on behalf of the chosen people. As you gather to pray for the unity that Christ seeks in his Church, know that God is empowering you to contribute to this important endeavor.

During this year's "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity," I strongly encourage you to spend time in prayer for unity among Christ's followers. If you are not able to join one of the many ecumenical prayer services in Chicago, please find a moment each day during this week to ask the Holy Spirit to enter into the hearts of all Christians to assist in drawing us ever closer to one another in Christ.

Please visit the website of the Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (EIA) at <https://eia.archchicago.org/web/ecumenical-and-interreligious-affairs> for more information, including the various prayer services for unity being held around Chicagoland. The EIA staff is available to answer any questions and to offer additional assistance. Thank you for your prayers as together we heed the call to pursue oneness in Christ.

Wishing you every blessing, with kind regards I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Cardinal Blase J. Cupich  
Archbishop of Chicago