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January 12, 2023

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Each year from January 18-25 Christians around the world observe the “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.” During this week, we join Jesus’ prayer that his disciples remain one, as he and his Father are one, “that the world may believe” (John 17:21). Praying for Christian unity is the foundation of evangelization, central to Renew My Church, as well as 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 around the world to prepare the theme and text for the Week of Prayer. The theme for 2023, “Do good; seek justice” (Isaiah 1:17), was developed with the assistance of Christian leaders in Minnesota, USA, convened by the Minnesota Council of Churches. We know well that Minneapolis became a flashpoint for calls for racial justice and equity following the murder of George Floyd.

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. As you do, reflect on how our divisions as Christians perpetuate fragmentation and make it harder to bring about racial justice. May our work at building Christian unity be a direct response to Christ’s prayer for oneness among his followers and provide new avenues for addressing together the scourge of racial injustice.

Please take time 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. If possible, join other Christians at a prayer service for unity in your neighborhood or online. Please visit the website of the Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (EIA) [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs \(archchicago.org\)](https://www.archchicago.org/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity) for more information, including a list of prayers, readings, and local ecumenical prayer services.

Wishing you every blessing, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Archbishop of Chicago