

OIKOUMENE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMISSION FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ALBANY, NY

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3 – (JANUARY 18-25, 2023 = WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY)

*OIKOUMENE IS GREEK FOR "HOUSE" "FAMILY" "PEOPLE" "NATION" "OPEN TO OR PARTICIPATING IN THE WHOLE INHABITED WORLD" AND IS THE SOURCE OF OUR WORD "ECUMENICAL," BUT HAS A BROADER SENSE. [PER ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA]

"From the Desk of the Director"

December 18, 2022

One month from today, we will begin the WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY. Enclosed is the Graymoor Service of the Word, with the theme of: Do Good; Seek Justice (*Isaiah 1:17*)
We will use this Service at an ecumenical prayer service at the Pastoral Center's Chapel on Jan. 18, 12:15 pm.

"The ministry of reconciliation is the core mission of the Church...By accepting disunity as an inevitable fact, Christians fall short of what it means to be the Church" and "their prophetic witness to the Gospel of reconciliation is impoverished, and the world is poorly served."

"The unity of the Church matters because the Church is a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the reconciliation that God wills for all people and the whole of creation."

"God in Christ Reconciling: On the Way to Full Communion in Faith, Sacraments & Mission"

-Joint International Commission for Dialogue Between the World Methodist Council and the Catholic Church.

Rabbi A. James Rudin is being honored with the Papal Knighthood of the Order of St. Gregory the Great—only the third rabbi in history to receive the designation. He'll be knighted at Saint Leo University in Florida, where he co-founded the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies.

"We are all blessed by Rabbi Rudin's achievements in promoting dialogue and collaboration among communities of different faiths," Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley of Boston, who will bestow the honor on Rabbi Rudin, said in a statement. "The impact of this work continues to grow as successive generations build on the foundation Rabbi Rudin has established."

Prayer at "Stop the Hate" Vigil at CSR – 9/21/22 (International Day of Peace):

O Divine Creator we cry to you for peace. Peace is our deepest craving.

In a world of fear, a culture of death, a time of division, we stand for a world of faith, a culture of life, a time of unity.

Take all that divides us and all that turns us one against the other.

Change these into an unbreakable love, an unshakeable faith, an unmistakable peace.

Amen.....by David from A World on its Knees—Honest Prayers in Uncertain Times

Prayers offered at the Renewal of the Covenant Between the 2 Cathedrals in the 2 Dioceses of Albany (9/25/22)
O Gracious Father, we thank thee for the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all thy saints, and for the depth of ecumenical devotion found at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. Let all Christians rejoice in those things we hold in common as we work beyond our differences.

Almighty God, in thy mercy behold these two sister churches in the city of Albany, The Cathedral of All Saints and The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. So fill them with thy grace that they may be brought to a union based on the Flesh and Spirit of Christ, our enduring Life; a union based on faith and love, the greatest blessing; and most especially, a union with Jesus and with thee, our Father. We ask this in Christ's Name, who lives and reigns with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Prayer of the Synod:

"...Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right...."

“In my journey...as a Catholic scholar, what have I really learned? First of all, that we cannot keep the Holy Spirit out of the church, no matter how much we try to domesticate the whole enterprise. Secondly, that the church is wiser and more faithful when it listens discerningly to many voices, even those from outside its own boundaries.” -Monika Hellwig, Theologian (1929-2005)

This past May, the 1st interfaith conference was held in Saudi Arabia. American Jewish Committee’s interreligious director, Rabbi David Rosen, was criticized for attending, given Saudi Arabia’s human rights history. But the rabbi replied: “May answer always is that if we Jews had refused the overtures of the Catholic Church 55 years ago and insisted that we want repentance and an apology for Christian antisemitism first, then we would not have seen the wondrous transformation in Catholic-Jewish relations we enjoy today. The Talmud teaches us that we should encourage people to do the right thing even if their motives are not the best.” The Final Declaration from the Conference was “a call from the Muslim world that advocates tolerance, respect, appreciation of diversity, pluralism.”

“Do not praise your own faith so exclusively that you disbelieve all the rest. If you do this, you will fail to recognize the real truth of the matter. God, the omnipresent and omnipotent, cannot be confined to any one creed, for He says, ‘Wheresoever you turn, there is the face of Allah’ (Quran 2:115)
-Muslim scholar, Ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240)

“...We see a lot of fear towards the others, leading even to violent acts which makes us sad, but at the same time, it is an opportunity to affirm the Gospel of love and universal fraternity, brotherhood and friendship. For us in the Church to be also vigilant because this divisiveness along ethnic lines, even tribal linguistic lines, racial lines, what we see in the world has its consequences and has a presence even within the Church. There is a missionary consequence. If the Christian community cannot embrace, the members could not embrace each other as brothers and sisters, the non-Christians looking at them would say, ‘What Gospel is that?’ Communion within the community of Christians is not just for smooth relationships. It has a missionary value.” -Excerpts from an interview with Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle (Philippines) Maryknoll Magazine

“Ignoring the divisions among Christians, whether out of habit or out of resignation, means tolerating that pollution of hearts which makes fertile ground for conflict...For a Christian it is not possible, it is not viable, to go it alone within one’s confession. Either we go together, fraternally, or we do not walk.”
-Pope Francis (5/6/22)

“We are called, then, to work toward the restoration of unity between Christians, not merely through signed agreements but through fidelity to the Father’s will and discernment of the promptings of the Spirit...We can be thankful to God that our Churches are not resigned to past and current experiences of division, but, on the contrary, through prayer & fraternal charity are seeking instead to achieve full communion that will enable us one day, in God’s time, to gather together at the same Eucharistic table.”
-Pope Francis to Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (11/30/22)

“...We are living now in the midst of such tragedies that the mind is appalled...remembrance of the horrors we have already lived through in this short lifetime—the massacre of the Armenians in World War I; the ghastly and obscene holocaust of the Jews, God’s chosen people (and God does not change) during World War II.”
-Dorothy Day

“...Albert Einstein, who opened the universe to our understanding escaped from Germany with a price on his head. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi chief of propaganda showed a photograph of Einstein with the caption ‘not yet hanged’ under it. How much has the world lost because of those highly educated Jews that did not escape...”
-Dr. Michael Lozman, at the site of the Capital Districts Holocaust Memorial (4/28/22)

In Poland to hide Jews during WWII was punishable by death. Pope Francis recently declared as martyrs, and, therefore, as saints, 2 Polish rescuers: Josef & Wiktorina Ulma

As always, I am grateful to our Office Secretary, Lisa Petrocelli, and our diocesan Commission, chaired by David Amico, for their invaluable assistance in our ecumenical/interfaith outreach. THANK YOU to Rev. Donna Elia, who is completing her time on the Commission as our Protestant Observer.

Fr. Jim Kane

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