

OIKOUMENE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMISSION FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ALBANY, NY

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A TIME ESPECIALLY RECOMMENDED FOR ECUMENICAL GATHERINGS/SERVICES)

*OIKOUMENE IS GREEK FOR "HOUSE" "FAMILY" "PEOPLE" "NATION" "OPEN TO OR PARTICIPATING IN THE WHOLE IN-

“From the Desk of the Director”

“A Litany in Thanksgiving for the gifts of each great Christian tradition:

For the Holy Orthodox Churches:

- for their sacred treasure of mystical experience;
- their awe-inspiring liturgies and sacred icons;
- their long and rich monastic tradition.

For the Roman Catholic Church:

- for its Petrine ministry;
- its many different expressions of holiness in the lives of the saints;
- its passion for the arts, the intellectual life, and social justice.

For the Anglican Communion:

- for its reverent and temperate ways;
- its Catholic heritage and Protestant conscience;
- its yearning to overcome the divisions of Christendom.

For the Lutheran Church:

- for its insistence on salvation by grace alone through faith alone;
- its devotion to the Word of God proclaimed, preached and lived;
- its confession of a God who calls the Church to continual conversion.

For the Presbyterian and other Churches of the Reformed tradition:

- for their witness to the sovereignty of God;
- their confidence in God’s faithful covenant-love;
- their sense of the moral law, expressed in constitutional governance.

For the Baptist Churches:

- for their stress on personal regeneration;
- their insistence on the conscious relation of each mature soul to the Lord Jesus Christ;
- their strong community life.

For the Methodist Church:

- for its power to awaken the Christian conscience to social evils;
- its poetic imagination and rich hymnody;
- its emphasis on the witness of personal experience and the disciplined life.

For the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonites, the Society of Friends, and all Churches committed to non-violence and Peace:

- for their simplicity of life and fervent devotion;
- their Christian Peacemaker Teams;
- their efforts to heal the ravages of war and natural disaster without favoritism.

For the Pentecostal Churches:

- for their openness to the transforming power and varied gifts of the Holy Spirit;
- their vibrant worship and passionate preaching;
- their trust in the healing power of God.”
- St. John’s, Collegeville

“Through developing an attitude of responsibility toward others, we can begin to create the kinder, more compassionate world we all dream of.” –Delai Lama

“For peace in Ukraine and throughout the world, for the well-being of God’s holy churches and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord” –Litany at “Moleben” – Common Prayer for Peace in Ukraine – I.C.C. (2/25/23)

“Mary’s Magnificat is “the most concentrated and adequate articulation of the very heart of the Christian faith.”

–Martin Luther

“As a Christian I want to say at this point: Yes, it is true, in the course of history, force has been used in the name of the Christian faith. We acknowledge it with great shame. But it is utterly clear that this was an abuse of the Christian faith, one that evidently contradicts its true nature.” –Pope Benedict XVI, to c. 300 religious leaders at Assisi (10/4/11)

“How can we, good Jews and good Muslims, good Americans, good global citizens, build paradise here on earth through how we live & behave? –Rabbi Dan Ornstein (guest lecture at An-nur Islamic School – T.U. 2/18/23)

“I cannot be a real Muslim believer and at the same time an anti-Semite who hates the Jewish community, it means betraying a great deal of my faith.” –Imam Hassen Chalghoumi (French “Imam of Peace”) (Jewish World)

During the conflict between Hindus & Muslims in India in the 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi was once visited by a troubled Hindu who had just killed a Muslim man, the only parent of a young boy. His remorse was so great he sought Gandhi’s counsel. The latter advised the man to take the boy and provide a home for him. Furthermore, he should raise him as a Muslim.

“In some cases, our brothers & sisters, friends & neighbors have become the stranger, relegated to the peripheries of our care and concern. Consequently, we find ourselves living in a society and culture that in many and different ways discourages us from reaching across the aisle. It is in this divisive and fragmented reality that our culture of encounter can have a transformative effect, bringing us closer to one another.”

–F. Javier Orozco

“Neighbor is not a geographic term. It is a moral concept.”

–Rabbi Joachim Prinz

“...Outraged by the deeply hurtful proliferations of anti-Semitic rhetoric, both on-line and in person, and the violent attacks on Jewish individuals, homes and institutions, we wish to convey our sincere support to the Jewish people. As Pope Francis has stated, ‘A true Christian cannot be an anti-Semite... We must remain ever vigilant of the various ways in which these dangers arise. In unequivocal terms, we condemn any and all violence directed at the Jewish people....’

–Statement from Committee on Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs (USCCB) (11/22)

[OVER]

F.Y.I. New kosher hotel opens in Albany: Holiday Inn Express, 300 Broadway, Albany

“How far is love, even with many wrong opinions, to be preferred before truth itself without love? We may die without the knowledge of many truths and yet be carried into Abraham’s bosom. But if we die without love, what will knowledge avail?” -John Wesley (founder of Methodism)

“Bishop Matthew Clark was a great person and a holy leader. He was a bridge builder, he was a peacemaker, and he believed in peaceful coexistence...The Catholic-Muslim Agreement that was signed (5/5/03) was unique. It had never been signed by any other diocese. It was a model for other communities...”

-Dr. Muhammad Shafiq (Nazareth College)

“The Rochester Jewish community lost a friend of the state of Israel and of world Jewry....Bishop Clark stood with our Rochester Jewish community and ensured antisemitism was not tolerated in his diocese. May he rest in peace.”

-Eli Futerman (past Pres. of Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester)

“The Federation had a close working relationship with Bishop Clark over the years, including an historic agreement with the rabbis in Rochester (5/8/76), the first one ever in the United States. It changed the way Catholic institutions taught Judaism and increased education about the Holocaust in Rochester Catholic Schools.” -Karen Bresseon – Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester)

NOTE: Bishop Matthew Clark was a priest of the Diocese of Albany when named Bishop of Rochester

>F.Y.I. For the first time since the Reformation, a Catholic bishop took part in the Coronation of a British monarch.

“In 1969 Pope Paul VI went on pilgrimage to Sub-Saharan Africa, the first reigning pope to go there, and went to the place where the martyrs died, Protestant & Catholic together (St. Charles Lwanga & 22 other Catholics & 23 Anglicans; feast-day=June 3). In the case of the Ugandan martyrs, neophytes in their faith, jailed and denied the support of their clergy, they became the leaders instead of those led. Hopefully, their natural espousing of true ecumenism will continue to lead us.”

Fallen Sparrows, Chapter 8 –Rev. Rick Shaw

“Evil will only triumph when good people remain quiet.”

-Gideon Frieder (Holocaust survivor)

“One person of integrity can make a difference.”

-Elie Wiesel (Holocaust survivor)

“Fully Compassionate God on high: to our 6 million brothers & sisters murdered because they were Jews, grant clean and certain rest with You in the lofty heights of the sacred & pure whose brightness shines like the very glow of heaven. Source of mercy: Forever enfold them in the embrace of Your wings; secure their souls in eternity. Adonai: they are Yours. They will rest in peace. Amen.”

“El Maleh Rachamim: Holocaust Commemoration Service – Congregation Gates of Heaven (4/17/23)

CONGRATULATIONS to Peter Crasto-Donnelly, recently elected Chair of the CACC’s Board of Directors.

Saratogians: DID YOU KNOW? There is an interfaith breakfast, open to the public, at WELLSRING (Rt. 9) in Malta, on the 2nd Thursday of every month (7:30-8:30 A.M.). Reservations are not required to attend.

The WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (with 352 member

churches) had their 11th General Assembly, Aug. 31-Sept. 8, in Karlsruhe, Germany. Theme = “Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation & Unity”

From their Message:

“...We confess that we need the transformative power of Christ’s love to move to a world truly reconciled & united....As reconciliation brings us closer to God and each other, it opens the way toward a unity founded in God’s love. As Christians we are called to dwell in Christ’s love and to be one (John 17) Such unity, which is a gift from God, and which arises from reconciliation and is grounded in his love, enables us to address the world’s urgent problems. We will find a strength to act from a unity founded in Christ’s love, for it enables us to learn the things that make for peace, to transform division into reconciliation, and to work for the healing of our living planet. Christ’s love will sustain all of us in the task of embracing everyone and overcoming exclusion....For in Christ, all things will be made new. His love which is open to all, including the last, the least, and the lost, and is offered to all, can move and empower us in a pilgrimage of justice, reconciliation, and unity.”

While the R.C.C. does not belong to the WCC’s we do belong to its Faith & Order Commission (E.g., “Lima Document” on Baptism Eucharist & Ministry) and collaborate in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Kurt Cardinal Koch, head of the Vatican’s Dicastery on Christian Unity, spoke at the General Assembly, quoting Pope Francis: “...the Church must make its unity more visible to make its commitment to the flourishing of the world more credible.”

May 10th is the Day of Coptic-Catholic Friendship. Pope Tawadros II joined Pope Francis in his general audience on that day (a first!) AND, also a rarity, declared 21 Coptic Saints (martyred by ISIS in 2015), as part of our R.C. martyrology (feast day Feb. 15). “These martyrs were baptized not only in the water and Spirit, but also in blood. A blood that is the seed of unity for all of Christ’s followers.” The Coptic Pope visited Albany to dedicate the Coptic Church of St. Mary & St. George in Albany (9/19/18).



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