

OIKOUMENE*

A NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMISSION FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
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*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 8, 2025

-60th anniversary of the ending of the II Vatican Council

Dear Clergy, Religious & Lay friends,

Enclosed please find this year's Service of the Word for Church Unity, with the theme: "There is ONE BODY and ONE SPIRIT. Just as you are called to the ONE HOPE of your calling" (Ephesians 4:4)
There will be an ecumenical celebration of this Service at the Pastoral Center, on Jan. 21 -12:15 P.M.

The ecumenical/interfaith community welcomed our new bishop at his Installation on Dec. 5th.

October 28 marked the 60th Anniversary of II Vatican Council's Declaration on the Relations of the Church to Non-Christian Religions ("Nostra Aetate"). The Evangelist published quotes from the document and comments from interfaith leaders. Also in The Evangelist,(11/13): "OSV News: "In practical terms, how can average Catholics in the pew take positive steps to better understand the relationship between Judaism and Christianity and to counter anti-Semitism? Rabbi Marans – director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee - "Several things. Catholics can know Jews and Judaism better. They can visit synagogues without an agenda and say, 'I'm a Catholic neighbor. I'm interested for a familial reason.' No. 2 – They can reach out when things happen and say, we are with you. No. 3 – They can participate in Catholic-Jewish dialogues....and lastly...they can be the people who counter anti-Semitism when they see it in casual conversation..."

The Pope's Prayer Intention for October was: "Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice & human fraternity."

In the words of Dr. Monika Hellwig: "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." "If the Church wishes to live, it should not be afraid of assimilating elements that come from other religious traditions, whose existence it can today no longer ignore." –Raimon Panikkar (a Catholic priest, pioneer in interreligious dialogue)

7 Deadly Sins:

-Wealth without Work / Pleasure without Conscience / Knowledge without Character / Commerce without Morality / Science without Humanity / Worship without Sacrifice / Politics without Principle " -Mahatma Gandhi

I am grateful to my secretary, Lisa Petrocelli [don't miss her 10/12 interview with Joan Lewis, from Rome on EWTN's "Vatican Insider"] and to the Commission for Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs.

GODSPEED to the 106th and first woman ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: SARAH MULLALLY

-“In the apparent chaos which surrounds us, in the midst of such profound global uncertainty, the possibility of healing lies in acts of kindness and love.”

“Anger never persuades, hostility never heals, and contention never leads to lasting solutions, Too much of today's public discourse, especially on-line, fosters enmity instead of empathy.”

-the late Dr. Russell Nelson, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in a Time article, written at age 101!

Did you know that Graymoor has a bi-monthly journal: ECUMENICAL TRENDS, that reports on current developments in ecumenical & interreligious affairs? Graymoor – P.O.B. 333, Garrison, NY 10524 or 1-845-690-1088

Did you know that my Office published ROOTED IN FAITH III last year? Copies available on-line and thru my office. It outlines Occasions for Ecumenical/Interfaith celebrations/gatherings, activities, etiquette?

Do you check out our diocesan website: www.rcda.org/offices.htm ?

“This Jew wants to go on the record applauding the USCCB. They issued a Special Pastoral Message on immigration on Nov. 12th, expressing deep concern for immigrants living in fear and uncertainty. While affirming the government’s right to regulate borders, the bishops insisted that such policies must always uphold human dignity and family unity. They condemned indiscriminate mass deportations, poor detention conditions, and the erosion of compassion in immigration enforcement. Emphasizing that ‘human dignity and national security are not in conflict,’ the bishops called for meaningful reform, pastoral care, and solidarity with immigrants as an expression of Gospel values and the nation’s moral conscience.”

-Rabbi Matt Cutler – Congregation Gates of Heaven, Schenectady

The Nicene Creed is “of fundamental importance in the journey that Christians are making toward full communion. In this way, we are all invited to overcome the scandal of the divisions that unfortunately still exist and to nurture the desire for unity for which the Lord Jesus prayed and gave his life.”

-Pope Leo, at the site of the Council of Nicaea, where he and the ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, prayed the Nicene Creed during the Nov. 28th service to commemorate the 1700th anniversary of Nicaea [we had our local celebration at All Saints Episcopal Cathedral on Nov. 1: a joint venture of our 2 covenanted Cathedrals]

“In an age when coexistence can seem like a distant dream, the people of Lebanon, while embracing different religions, stand as a powerful reminder that fear, distrust and prejudice do not have the final word, and that unity, reconciliation, and peace are possible.”

–Pope Leo, on Dec. 1, at an interfaith service in Lebanon



Rev. Fr. Jim Kane
Director

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