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**January 17th – 23rd
Christ, the Church's Bridegroom**

“Jesus said: ‘Fill the jars with water’. And they filled them to the brim.” People often think of themselves as very ordinary and the place they live in as fairly insignificant. And yet it was for people like this in a place like that that Jesus worked one of his most famous miracles. One of the keys to this reality was that the servants obeyed Jesus command, in fact they overdid it and they ‘filled the water jars to the brim’. Jesus’ command to us is to love one another as he has loved us. If we follow his command great things will also happen in our lives and in the world we live in. But we also have to use the key and fill our love to the brim. We tend however to measure out our love. This week we are asked to practice

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

To an outsider the relations between Christians over the last few hundred years would seem like the situation of the six blind men of Indostan.

*It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant
Though all of them were blind;
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.*

Each man, the fable runs, took hold of the elephant at a different place, and each concluded from his limited experience what sort of animal this wondrous elephant was. One bumped into its side, so he decided that the elephant was very like a wall. Another took hold of its tusk and therefore concluded that it was very like a spear. A third thought that the elephant was similar to a snake, because he had grabbed its squirming trunk. A fourth who clasped it by the knee thought it was very like a tree. Another felt its ear and thought it was like a fan, and the sixth blind man concluded that it was very like a rope.

*And so the men of Indostan disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion exceeding stiff and strong;
Though each were partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong.*

Christians in their disputes, their differences, their power struggles, seemed blind to the central command of Christ:

'Love one another as I have loved you ...

by this shall all people know that you are my disciples'

This love should extend even to one's enemies. This love should bind the followers of Christ into a unity like the unity of Christ and the Father himself, and most important, this unity would lead the world to believe that Jesus came from the Father. Unfortunately, Christians, like the Jewish nation of old, which was called to be God's servant and a light to the world, became almost a counter sign.

The result is that the world does not believe in Jesus and the Churches have so often become symbols of prejudice, mistrust, misunderstanding, bitterness, power struggles. During the height of the troubles in Northern Ireland a writer said that there are many Protestants and many Catholics there but too few Christians.

**Weekly Masses
Special Remembrance**

Mon. 18th Jan. to Sun. 24th Jan. 2010

Mass at 8.00 and 10.00 each morning, Monday to Friday, is offered for all those whose names are on the list of Mass intentions. If you wish to have someone mentioned specifically - for an anniversary, a recent death, an illness - please leave the name at the Reception Office.

In the Novena Masses on Saturday at 8.00 and 10.00 we remember especially all those who have sent in petitions and those attending the Novena.

Mon. 10 am: Fr. Noel Mullin R.I.P.

Tues. 10 am: Michael Kenny & Parents R.I.P.

Wed. 10 am: Nan Linsell R.I.P.

Thur. 10 am: Dave Ward R.I.P.

Sun. 11am Una & Paddy Finn R.I.P.
Pauline Broderick R.I.P.

THE SICK

Please pray for
Fr. Brian Foley,
Fr. Seán Mullin
Michelle O'Donnell,
Patricia Kelly.

**Feast Days
of the coming week.**

Thur: St. Agnes

**Week of Prayer
For Christian Unity
January 18-25th**

Because of our baptism Christians are already one body and we are called to live in communion. God has made us brothers and sisters in Christ. Is not this the fundamental witness that we are called to? Missionaries sent by different churches to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ were first to recognize the tragedy of Christian division. Europe had got used to divisions between churches but the scandal of disunity seemed dreadful to missionaries who were announcing the gospel to people who had known nothing of Christ until then.

During the coming week:

In The Retreat House:

Jan 18: Priests' Afternoon Retreat

Jan 21-23: Leaders in Learning

Jan 22-24: Greenlough Parish Pastoral
Council

In The Youth Village:

**Parish Missions & Novenas in Ireland &
Abroad.**

*Please share in this Redemptorist
Apostolic Work by praying for its success.*

YOU ARE WITNESSES

Oak House Inter-Church Christian Fellowship, in conjunction with the Redemptorist Community, Esker, Athenry, is holding an ecumenical service for the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at the Redemptorist Monastery, Esker, on Friday January 22 at 8.00 p.m.**

The theme of this year's service is 'You Are Witnesses', and the special preacher will be Fr Gerry Reynolds, well known peace and reconciliation activist of the Clonard Redemptorist Monastery, Belfast.

The aim of this special event is for Christians of all traditions to come together and celebrate their unity; acknowledge their diversity and intercede for the world and for their own mutual enrichment as witnesses to the gospel in their local parishes and congregations.

Oak House is a group of committed Christians, firmly rooted in their own respective tradition, who seek to proclaim and share the healing power of Jesus Christ.

The upcoming service at Esker Monastery is endorsed and supported by Bishop John Kirby and Bishop Trevor Williams, Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland bishops of Clonfert Diocese respectively; Fr. Johnny Doherty, Rector Redemptorist Monastery, Esker; Archdeacon Wayne Carney, Archdeacon of Clonfert; Fr Declan Kelly, administrator of Leitrim and Ballyduggan,; and Rev George Flynn, Rector of Aughrim and Creagh.

There will be refreshments after the service and all are welcome.

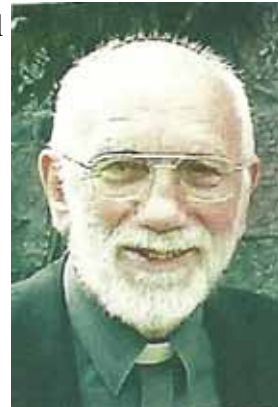
You are witnesses of these things
(Luke 24: 48)

In order to unite with one another, we must love one another;

in order to love one another, we must know one another;

in order to know one another, we must go and meet one another.

These words, known as the "Testament of Cardinal Mercier," are an impetus for the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



Fr. Gerry Reynolds
Redemptorist