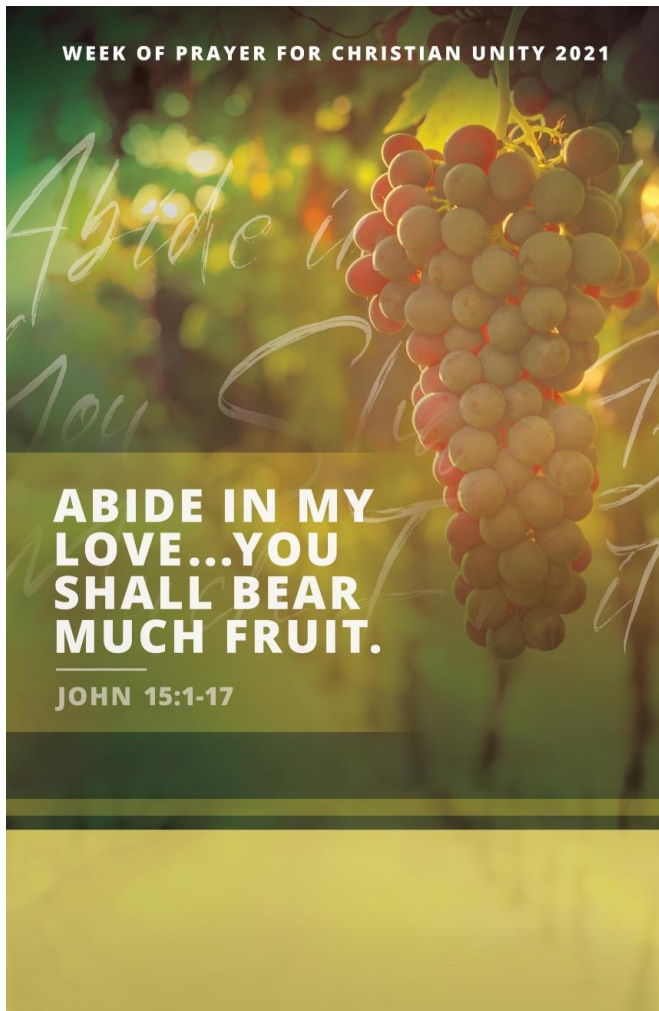




The United States Association of
The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd



PRAYING FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is open to all Christians of various denominations and of different commitments within the church.
29 *The Characteristics of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2021

Actual prayer time is approximately 60 minutes. Gathering and closing may add another 20 to 30 minutes. We booked this for one and one half hours.

Welcome *Mary Mirrione*

Entrance Song: *You are the Vine* (3:20 minutes)

Invitation to Prayer (3:00 minutes)

Mary Mirrione: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always!

All: And also with you.

Karen Maxwell: Brothers and sisters in Christ, this year the theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, chosen by the sisters of the Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland, is: "Abide in my love... you shall bear much fruit."

Mary Heinrich: It is the great desire of God, expressed by Jesus, that we might come to him and abide, remain in him. He waits for us tirelessly, hoping that united to him in love, we will bear fruit that will bring life to all. Faced with the difference of "the other", we risk withdrawing into ourselves and seeing only that which separates us. But let us listen to how Christ calls us to abide in his love, and so bear much fruit.

Karen Maxwell: In the three moments of prayer that follow, we remember the call of Christ, we turn to his love, to him who is the center of our life. For the path of unity begins in our intimate relationship with God. Remaining in his love strengthens the desire to seek unity and reconciliation with others. God opens us up to those who are different from us. This is an important fruit, a gift of healing for the divisions within us, between us, and in the world.

Mary Mirrione: In peace let us pray to the Lord: Lord, you are the Vinedresser who cares for us with love. You call on us to see the beauty of each branch united to the vine, the beauty of each person. And yet, too often the differences in others makes us afraid. We withdraw into ourselves. Our trust in you is forsaken. Enmity develops between us. Come and direct our hearts toward you once again. Grant us to live from your forgiveness so that we may be together and praise your name.



All: Amen.

Litany of Praise (3:00 minutes)

Barbara Matera: You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

All: You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

Barbara Matera: We sing your praise in the midst of the world and among all peoples.

Susan Stuhlsatz-Reese We sing your praise in the midst of creation and among all creatures.

All: You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

Barbara Matera: We sing your praise among suffering and tears.

Susan Stuhlsatz-Reese: We sing your praise among promises and achievements.

All: You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

Barbara Matera We sing your praise in the places of conflict and misunderstanding.

Susan Stuhlsatz-Reese: We sing your praise in the places of encounter and reconciliation.

All: You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

Barbara Matera: We sing your praise in the midst of rifts and divisions.

Susan Stuhlsatz-Reese: We sing your praise in the midst of life and death, the birth of a new heaven and a new earth.

All: You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

First Vigil - Remaining in Christ: The unity of the whole person

Anna Hurdle: Psalm: 103 (3:30 minutes)

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits— who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.



The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

***Patty Verduzco* The Gospel Reading: John 15:1-17 in Spanish (3:40 minutes)**

Yo soy la vid verdadera, y mi Padre es el viñador. Todo sarmiento que en mí no da fruto, lo corta, y todo el que da fruto, lo limpia, para que dé más fruto. Ustedes ya están limpios gracias a la palabra que les he dicho. Permanezcan en mí como yo en ustedes. Lo mismo que el sarmiento no puede dar fruto por sí mismo, si no permanece en la vid; así tampoco ustedes si no permanecen en mí. Yo soy la vid; y ustedes los sarmientos. El que permanece en mí y yo en él, éste da mucho fruto; porque separados de mí no pueden hacer nada. Si alguno no permanece en mí, es arrojado fuera, como el sarmiento, y se seca; luego los recogen, los echan al fuego y arden. Si permanecen en mí, y mis palabras permanecen en ustedes, pidan lo que quieran y lo conseguirán. La gloria de mi Padre está en que den mucho fruto, y sean mis discípulos. Como el Padre me amó yo también los he amado a ustedes; permanezcan en mi amor. Si guardan mis mandamientos, permanecerán en mi amor, como yo he guardado los mandamientos de mi Padre, y permanezco en su amor. Les he dicho esto, para que mi gozo esté en ustedes, y su gozo sea colmado. Este es el mandamiento mío; que se amen los unos a los otros como yo los he amado. Nadie tiene más amor que el que da su vida por sus amigos. Ustedes son mis



amigos, si hacen lo que yo les mando. No los llamo ya siervos, porque el siervo no sabe lo que hace su amo; a ustedes los he llamado amigos, porque todo lo que he oído a mi Padre se los he dado a conocer. No me han elegido ustedes a mí, sino que yo los he elegido a ustedes, y los he destinado para que vayan y den fruto, y que su fruto permanezca; de modo que todo lo que pidan al Padre en mi nombre se lo conceda. Lo que les mando es que se amen los unos a los otros.

Selah* (3:50 minutes)

Intercessions (3:20 minutes)

Lynn Robinson: God of love, through Christ you said to us: “You did not choose me but I chose you.” You seek us, you invite us to receive your friendship and remain in it. Teach us to respond more deeply to this invitation, and grow in a life that is ever more complete.

All: The joy of our heart is in God.

Lynn Robinson: God of life, you call us to be praise in the midst of the world and to welcome one another as a gift of your grace. May your loving gaze, which rests upon each person, open us to receive each other just as we are.

All: The joy of our heart is in God.

Lynn Robinson: God who gathers, you knit us together as one vine in your Son Jesus. May your loving Spirit remain in us in our work with each other in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Grant that together we might celebrate you with joy.

All: The joy of our heart is in God.

Lynn Robinson: God of the one vineyard, you call us to remain in your love in all we do and say. Touched by your goodness, grant us to be a reflection of that love in our homes and workplaces. May we pave the way for bridging rivalries and overcoming tensions.

All: The joy of our heart is in God.

Second Vigil - The visible unity of Christians

Clifford King Harbin: Psalm 85 (3:20 minutes)



Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob. You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin. You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger. Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us. Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations? Will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land. Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.

Shelley Finkler Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-13a (2:20 minutes)

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

Selah* (3:50 minutes)

Intercessions (3:20 minutes)

Lynda Catalano Holy Spirit, you create and re-create the Church in all places. Come and whisper in our hearts the prayer which Jesus addressed to his Father on the eve of his passion: "that they may all be one...so that the world may believe."

All: Lord have mercy.

Lynda Catalano: Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so that suspicions, contempt and misunderstanding cease in the Church. May the walls that separate us fall.

All: Lord have mercy.



Lynda Catalano Holy Spirit, Consoler of all, open our hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation and bring us back from our wanderings.

All: Lord have mercy.

Lynda Catalano: Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, give us poverty of spirit so that we may welcome the unexpectedness of your grace.

All: Lord have mercy.

Lynda Catalano: Holy Spirit, you never abandon the men, women and children who are persecuted for their fidelity to the gospel. Give them strength and courage, and support those who help them.

All: Lord have mercy.

Third Vigil -The unity of all peoples and all creation

Betsy Brown Psalm 96 (2:20 minutes)

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts. Worship the Lord in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The Lord is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity." Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

Kim Ward: Reading: Revelation 7:9-12 (2:20 minutes)

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried



out in a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!” And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing,

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

Selah* (3:50 minutes)

The Lord’s Prayer (2:20 minutes)

Mary Mirrione: With the words that Jesus taught us, let us now pray together:

All: Our Father...

Blessing (2:00 minutes)

Mary Mirrione : Be one, so that the world may believe! Remain in God’s love, go into the world and bear the fruits of this love.

All: May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in faith, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Closing Song Grace be with you all (3:30 minutes)

***(3:20 minutes)** *Selah*. This beautiful, thoughtful, yet mysterious word appears in the Bible 74 times in the Book of Psalms and in Habakkuk. The New American Standard Hebrew Lexicon defines the Hebrew word (הלל) as “to lift up, exalt.” Yet, the question of what *Selah* means has been debated for centuries. Our Bibles are written in English and most the original Hebrew and Greek words can be translated into English. However, there are a handful of words in the Bible that are not, or cannot, be translated. When this happens, what we read is not a translation, but a transliteration. A transliteration is when a Hebrew word is simply sounded out to English so we can read and pronounce it. An example is Hallelujah. Hallelujah is a transliteration of a Hebrew word that literally means, Praise God (Hallel=praise, Jah =God). Instead of being translated as “Praise God,” this word has been left for us to sound out as it would be in the original Hebrew and continues to be a powerful expression of praise. In the same way, *Selah* could have been a request for the reader or listener to pause and think about what has just been said, or it could have been a space for voices to pause and for instruments play alone. We don’t really know for certain. Still, the word *Selah* itself indeed causes us to pause and consider what God may be saying even when we don’t fully understand.



Selah gives us an opportunity to take a moment away from this crazy, busy, non-stop life we all tend to live and consider the immense mysteries and wonders of God. For our prayer today we will use this word to mean we will pause to carefully weigh the meaning of what we have just read or heard, lifting up our hearts in praise to God for His great truths. "All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you; they sing the praises of your name. Selah!" (Psalm 66:4). After each reflection we will offer a Selah time. You may like to listen to this quiet song:

<https://vimeo.com/474784816/8a1c06f88a>

