

CHAPTER 7 PRAYER SERVICE

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Holy Trinity, you are three in one. When we face division in our families, communities, schools, and churches, help us to remember and strive for the unity you reveal. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reader: A reading from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

Now the body is not a single part, but many. If a foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. If they were all one part, where would the body be? But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you," nor again the head to the feet, "I do not need you." Indeed, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are all the more necessary, and those parts of the body that we consider less honorable we surround with greater honor, and our less presentable parts are treated with greater propriety, whereas our more presentable parts do not need this. But God has so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without it, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy. The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: When we look around our local, national, and global communities, it is easy to see discord and division. It is particularly sad to see disunity within our Church, the one body of Christ. Let us pray for an increase in unity. Our response will be, "May we find unity and peace in you."

Reader: We pray for churches that are divided by lines of race, economic status, gender, age, and ability.

All: May we find unity and peace in you.

Reader: We pray for churches that experience division between their leaders and congregations.

All: May we find unity and peace in you.

Reader: We pray for the reunification of Christians across the world.

All: May we find unity and peace in you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Group 1: Christ Jesus,
who gave yourself for the good of all,
we come before you
as brothers and sisters
but we are divided
and at times, even hostile—
tearing one another down.
We approach the altar unworthily
and ask for your forgiveness.

Group 2: Move us, instead, towards
encounter
listening
dialogue
reconciliation, and
a commitment to build your kingdom
for the good of all.

Group 1: Heal us, restore us,
unite your divided family, Lord.
Through the power of the Eucharist, overcome our divisions.

Group 2: Give us sincere hearts that
make us open, not closed,
and willing to encounter,
ready to listen.

All: In your broken body, given for all, may we find unity and peace in you. Amen.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.