



**Bible Devotions  
for  
Christian Unity**

by **GEOFFREY WOOD, S.A.**

Imprimi Potest:

Bonaventure Koelzer, S.A.

Superior General

Nihil Obstat:

John C. Goodwine, J.C.D.

Censor Librorum

Imprimatur:

✠ Francis Cardinal Spellman

Archbishop of New York

August 22, 1963

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Order No. 1-4

Designed and Printed at  
Graymoor Press, Peekskill, N. Y.

ADY 4485

# Bible Devotions

*for*

Christian Unity

*By* GEOFFREY WOOD, S.A.

CENTRAL OFFICE  
CHAIR OF UNITY APOSTOLATE  
GRAYMOOR, GARRISON, N. Y.

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# Bible Devotions for Christian Unity

By GEOFFREY WOOD, S.A.

Note: The following Bible Devotions may be used for congregational observance of the Chair of Unity Octave. All may be used during the entire Octave—one for each day. Or a choice may be made from among them to solemnize the opening and closing days or alternate days or the Sunday within the Octave. They may also be utilized throughout the year on monthly days of prayer from Christian Unity. The Graymoor Friars hope to add more to this collection in future editions of the Octave prayers. The devotions are independent of the specific daily intentions of the Octave and can therefore be used on any day; the homily provides an opportunity for development of the day's intention if desired.

The narrator may use the pulpit or a lectern in the sanctuary. Another lectern with a Bible should be set up in the center of the sanctuary and near the altar rail facing the people. Three laymen may serve as lectors or readers. Each

will approach the Bible at the proper time and read the passage designated.

The Psalms, antiphons, etc. assigned to the congregation can be recited. However, some of these have been put to simple music and may be sung by the congregation or a choir. We refer the reader to the *Gelineau Psalms*, obtainable from the Gregorian Institute, Toledo, Ohio, for the music to *Psalms* 84 (Bible Dev.1), 133 (Bible Dev.3), 79 (Bible Dev.4), 62 (Bible Dev. 7), and the *Canticle of Simeon* (Bible Dev. 6); to *Songs of Unity*, Grailville, Loveland, Ohio, for the music to the *Canticle of Jeremia* (Bible Dev. 2), the *Charity Antiphon* (Bible Dev. 6), and *Psalm* 132 (Bible Devs. 4 and 8); to *Cantus Populi*, McLaughlin and Reilly, Co., Boston, Mass., for the music to *Psalm* 99 (Bible Devs. 3 and 7). If more singing is desired, appropriate hymns may be substituted for some of the Psalms of a particular devotion or added as recessionals.

It is suggested that some social get-together follow these devotions whenever Protestants or Orthodox join Catholics in their celebration.

## Introduction

(To be used before each Devotion)

*Narrator:* God has a message for all of us who profess allegiance to Jesus as Messiah, Lord, Savior of the World. His message is in the Sacred Scripture. We shall listen to his word and ponder it. In ancient times God said: "Let there be light," and light was made. He spoke, and the heavens were created. The word of God is no idle word. It is "alive and dynamic, more penetrating than any two-edged sword."

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# 1. One Family Under God

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*All recite:* THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Narrator:* Mankind is meant to form one true family under God. The story of our first parents, Adam and Eve, carries this lesson. This arrangement is the key to life, prosperity, and happiness. But man rejected this. He sought an independence far beyond his status of creature. The Book of Genesis describes the consequences of man's rebellion:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity GEN. 3:22-24 and 4:1-9)

*Narrator:* Adam turned against God. Cain turned on Abel. Self-idolization breeds human disintegration. The outcome is inevitable. Let us pray for salvation:

*All recite:* PSALM 84(85)

You have favored, O Lord, your land;|  
you have restored the well-being of  
Jacob.|

You have forgiven the guilt of your  
people;|

you have covered all their sins.|  
You have withdrawn all your wrath;|  
you have revoked your burning anger.|

Restore us, O God our savior,|  
and abandon your displeasure against  
us.|

Will you be ever angry with us,|  
prolonging your anger to all genera-  
tions?|

Will you not instead give us life;|  
and shall not your people rejoice in  
you?|

Show us, O Lord, your kindness,|  
and grant us your salvation.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* The story of Cain and Abel illustrates the bitter consequence of man's rebellion against God. The story of Noah and the Flood teaches us that mankind's growing rejection of his Maker can lead the world back to chaos. But God perseveres. In saving Noah and his family God would establish mankind on a family basis again. But if God is persevering, man remains stubborn. The Book of Genesis tells us so:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads GEN. 8:15-22 and GEN 11:1-9.)

*Narrator:* Self-idolization breeds human disintegration. For our pride and contribution toward the confusion reigning in the world let us manifest contrition:

*All recite:* PSALM 12(13)

How long, O Lord? Will you utterly forget me?|

How long will you hide your face from me?|

How long shall I harbor sorrow in my soul,|

grief in my heart day after day?|

How long will my enemy triumph over me?|

Look, answer me, O Lord, my God!|

Give light to my eyes that I may not sleep in death,|

lest my enemy say, "I have overcome him";

Lest my foes rejoice at my downfall| though I trusted in your kindness. |

Let my heart rejoice in your salvation;| let me sing of the Lord,|

"He has been good to me."

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* From among the scattered nations God established a new family

—that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Through it he would try to draw all men into harmony with himself and each other. But Israel, too, followed its own course and became dispersed. Finally out of the remnant of Israel there appeared Jesus Christ—God himself become man—to set an enduring pattern of true sonship and obedience and to communicate this to all men. Only in whole-hearted union with Jesus can mankind attain true harmony and peace under God and ultimately flourish.

*3rd Lector:* (Reads JOHN 17:1-5 and 17:20-26)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he desires.)

*Narrator:* Let us recite with gratitude and joy PSALM 2:

*All recite:* PSALM 2

Why do the nations rage|  
and the peoples utter folly?|  
The kings of the earth rise up,|  
and the princes conspire together|  
against the Lord and against his  
anointed:|

“Let us break their fetters|  
and cast their bonds from us!”|

He who is throned in heaven laughs;|  
the Lord derides them.|

Then in anger he speaks to them;|  
he terrifies them in his wrath:|

“I myself have set up my king|  
on Sion, my holy mountain.”|

I will proclaim the decree of the Lord:|  
The Lord said to me, “You are my  
son;|

this day I have begotten you.|  
Ask of me and I will give you|  
the nations for an inheritance|  
and the ends of the earth for your  
possession.”

### *Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your apostles: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you” look not upon our sins, but upon the faith of your Church and grant unto her that peace and unity which are agreeable to your will; you who live and reign as God forever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

### *Recessional Hymn* (Optional)

## 2. The Good Shepherd

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*All recite:* THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Narrator:* God chose Moses, the shepherd, to bring the Israelites out of Egypt and lead them to a union with him at Mount Sinai and from there to the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. Later he chose the shepherd David to defeat the enemies of his flock and bring it peace. But the successors of Moses and David neglected their shepherding and Israel was ravaged and scattered. Then the prophet Ezechiel rose up and spoke for God:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity EZECHIEL 34:1-16)

*Narrator:* Let us utter the words given us by the Holy Spirit:

*All recite:* PSALM 22(23)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. |

In verdant pastures he gives me repose; |

Beside restful waters he leads me; |  
he refreshes my soul. |

He guides me in right paths|  
for his name's sake.|  
Even though I walk in the dark valley|  
I fear no evil; for you are at my side|  
With your rod and your staff|  
that give me courage.|  
You spread the table before me|  
in the sight of my foes;|  
You anoint my head with oil;|  
my cup overflows.|  
Only goodness and kindness follow me|  
all the days of my life;|  
And I shall dwell in the house of the  
Lord|  
for years to come.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Jesus, who was welcomed into this world by the shepherds of Bethlehem, fulfills the promise of Ezechiel. He had compassion on the crowds because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Wandering, scattered, defenseless men can only find sustenance and security within the one fold of Christ:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads JOHN 10:1-21)

*Narrator:* Let us make our own the words of Jeremia:

*All recite:* JEREMIA 31:10-14

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,|

proclaim it on distant coasts, and say:|  
He who scattered Israel, now gathers  
them together,|

he guards them as a shepherd his  
flock. |

The Lord shall ransom Jacob, |  
he shall redeem him from the hand  
of his conqueror. |

Shouting, they shall mount the heights  
of Sion, |

they shall come streaming to the  
Lord's blessings; |

The grain, the wine, and the oil, |  
the sheep and the oxen; |

They themselves shall be like watered  
gardens, |

never again shall they languish. |

Then the virgins shall make merry and  
dance, |

and young men and old as well. |

I will turn their mourning into joy. |

I will console and gladden them after  
their sorrows. |

I will lavish choice portions upon the  
priests, |

and my people shall be filled with  
my blessings.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* When Jesus was about to  
leave this earth, he called Peter and



asked: "Simon, do you love me?" Peter replied, "Lord, you know that I love you." Then Jesus said, "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep." Peter speaks to us now from his first epistle, reminding us to be gentle and patient, to give up all selfishness and find our unity in Christ:

*3rd Lector:* (Reads 1 PETER 2:1-10 and 2:21-25)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* In gratitude and hope let us say with the psalmist:

*All recite:* PSALM 94(95)

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord;|  
let us acclaim the Rock of our salva-  
tion.|

Let us greet him with thanksgiving;|  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him|

For the Lord is a great God,|  
and a great king above all gods;|  
In his hands are the depths of the  
earth,|

and the tops of the mountains are  
his.|

His is the sea, for he has made it,|

and the dry land, which his hands  
have formed. |

Come, let us bow down in worship; |  
let us kneel before the Lord who  
made us. |

For he is our God, |  
and we are the people he shepherds,  
the flock he guides.

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* O God, you correct what has gone astray and gather together what is scattered, and keep together what is gathered. We pray you mercifully to pour down upon Christian people the grace of union with you. May they put aside disunity and attach themselves to the true shepherd of your Church. May they be able to give you due service: through our Lord Jesus, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

*Recessional Hymn* (Optional)

### 3. The Temple of God

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*All recite:* PSALM 133(134)

Come, bless the Lord,  
all you servants of the Lord  
Who stand in the house of the Lord.  
Lift up your hands toward the sanctuary,  
and bless the Lord.  
May the Lord bless you from Sion,  
the maker of heaven and earth.

*Narrator:* God condescended to dwell among the Israelites. The Temple was his dwelling place. From this Temple God offered strength and salvation. But the Israelites neglected God, went after idols, and fought among themselves. Considering himself unwanted, God withdrew from their midst. Israel stood alone and was soon overrun; Temple and city were destroyed. Israel then repented and God, having pity on his scattered and desolate people, promised them peace and a New Temple through Ezechiel:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity EZECHIEL 37:21-28)

*Narrator:* Let us praise God with the Israelites of old:

*All recite:* PSALM 99(100)

Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;|  
serve the Lord with gladness;|  
come before him with joyful song.|  
Know that the Lord is God;|  
he made us, his we are;|  
his people, the flock he tends.|  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,|  
his courts with praise;|  
Give thanks to him; bless his name, for  
he is good:|  
the Lord, whose kindness endures  
forever,|  
and his faithfulness, to all generations.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* God promised to dwell once again in the midst of his people. He promised to raise up for them a New Temple. But this Temple would not be a lifeless thing of stone and cedar. God would take on flesh:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads JOHN 2:13-22)

*Narrator:* In thanksgiving for the living Temple which is Jesus, let us recite PSALM 117:

*All recite:* PSALM 117(118)

My strength and my courage is the Lord,|

and he has been my savior.|  
The joyful shout of victory|  
in the tents of the just:|  
“The right hand of the Lord has struck  
with power:|  
the right hand of the Lord is lifted  
up;|  
the right hand of the Lord has struck  
with power.”|  
I shall not die, but live,|  
and declare the works of the Lord.|  
Though the Lord has indeed chastised  
me,|  
yet he has not delivered me to  
death.|

Open to me the gates of justice;|  
I will enter them and give thanks to  
the Lord.|

This gate is the Lord's;|  
the just shall enter it.|

I will give thanks to you, for you have'  
answered me|  
and have been my savior.|

The stone which the builders rejected|  
has become the cornerstone.|

By the Lord has this been done;|  
it is wonderful in our eyes.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Through Jesus Christ God  
now wills to dwell in every man. God

wills to make of every man and of the whole of humanity a living Temple, radiant with divine goodness, peace and power. Let us listen to the words of the apostle Paul as he speaks of the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in Christ:

*3rd Lector:* (Reads EPHESIANS 2:1-23)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* Let us pray that all men may unite within the New temple of God, the Church of Jesus Christ:

*All recite:* PSALM 121(122)

I rejoiced because they said to me,  
"We will go up to the house of the  
Lord."

And now we have set foot  
within your gates, O Jerusalem—

Jerusalem, built as a city  
with compact unity.

To it the tribes go up,  
the tribes of the Lord,

According to the decree for Israel,  
to give thanks to the name of the  
Lord.

In it are set up judgment seats,

seats for the house of David.|  
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!|  
May those who love you prosper!|  
May peace be within your walls,|  
prosperity in your buildings.|  
Because of my relatives and friends|  
I will say, "Peace be within you!"|  
Because of the house of the Lord, our  
God,|  
I will pray for your good.

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* O God, you have united various nations in confessing your name. Grant that those who are reborn in baptism may be one in faith, one in holy deeds: through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.\*

*All:* Amen.

*Recessional Hymn* (Optional)

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\*Prayer from the Mass for the Thursday of Easter Week.

## 4. Charity, the Bond of Unity

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*All recite:* PSALM 132(133)

Behold, how good it is, and how pleasant,|

where brethren dwell at one!|

It is as when the precious ointment upon the head|

runs down over the beard, the beard of Aaron,|

till it runs down upon the collar of his robe. |

It is a dew like that of Hermon,|

which comes down upon the mountains of Sion;|

For there the Lord has pronounced his blessing,|

life forever.

*Narrator:* God loves mankind. God's love touched man through Jesus Christ and this touch can cleanse and save. Baptized and thus united to Christ, Christians share Christ's mission to radiate divine love. Through them God's love must be able to reach out and touch other men, drawing them from



isolation, pettiness and stifling selfishness into vital unity with God:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity JOHN 13:1-17 and 13:34-35)

*Narrator:* We regret that we have been such poor vessels of charity. Let us ask God's help:

*All recite:* PSALM 129(130)

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;|

Lord, hear my voice!|

Let your ears be attentive|

to my voice in supplication:|

If you, O Lord, mark iniquities,|

Lord, who can stand?|

But with you is forgiveness,|

that you may be revered. |

I trust in the Lord;|

my soul trusts in his word. |

My soul waits for the Lord|

more than sentinels wait for the dawn. |

More than sentinels wait for the dawn,|

let Israel wait for the Lord, |

For with the Lord is kindness|

and with him is plenteous redemption; |

And he will redeem Israel|

from all their iniquities.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* When Christians stifle the

Spirit of Love within them, they hold up mankind's salvation. The apostle Paul at the dawn of Christian history pleaded with Christians to realize their opportunities, to fulfill their mission of heroic love, to spread the good odor of godliness in the world:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads GALATIANS 5:13-25)

*Narrator:* Let us take to heart the plea of St. Paul:

*All recite:* PSALM 94(95)

Come, let us bow down in worship;|  
let us kneel before the Lord who  
made us.|

For he is our God,|  
and we are the people he shepherds,  
the flock he guides.|

Oh, that today you would hear his  
voice:|

“Harden not your hearts as at Mer-  
iba,|

as in the day of Massa in the desert,|  
Where your fathers tempted me;|  
they tested me though they had seen  
my works.|

Forty years I loathed that generation,|  
and I said: They are a people of err-  
ing heart,|  
and they know not my ways.|

Therefore I swore in my anger:|  
They shall not enter into my rest.”

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* By stifling the Spirit of Love within them, Christians have not only contributed to world division and strife; they have introduced division and strife into their own circle. World unity is dependent upon Christian unity. Paul from a prison cell calls upon all Christians to remember the necessary link between unity and love:

*3rd Lector:* (Reads EPHESIANS 4:1-6)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* Let us pray for divine assistance:

*All recite:* PSALM 79(80)

O Lord of hosts, how long will you burn with anger|

while your people pray?|

You have fed them with the bread of tears|

and given them tears to drink in ample measure.|

You have left us to be fought over by our neighbors,|

our enemies mock us.|

O Lord of hosts, restore us;|

if your face shines upon us, then we  
shall be safe.|

A vine from Egypt you transplanted;|  
you drove away the nations and  
planted it.|

You cleared the ground for it.|

and it took root and filled the land.|

The mountains were hidden in its  
shadow;|

by its branches, the cedars of God.|

It put forth its foliage to the Sea,|

its shoots as far as the River.|

Why have you broken down its walls,|  
so that every passer-by plucks its  
fruit,|

The boar from the forest lays it waste,|  
and the beasts of the field feed upon  
it?|

Once again, O Lord of hosts,|

look down from heaven, and see;|

Take care of this vine,|

and protect what your right hand has  
planted.

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* O God of infinite  
goodness, who eternally rejoice in the  
unity of peace, you who are the author  
of peace and have proclaimed peace

through angelic choirs, grant in your merciful goodness that by this bond of love with which at your Ascension into heaven you united all your disciples, we may be drawn into ever more profound love for you and our brothers.\*

*All: Amen.*

*Recessional Hymn (Optional)*

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\* From the Mozarabic Liturgy

## 5. The Spirit of Life

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father  
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

*All recite:* PSALM 103(104)

How manifold are your works, O Lord!  
In wisdom you have wrought them  
all—|  
the earth is full of your creatures;|  
The sea also, great and wide,|  
in which are schools without number|  
of living things both small and great,|  
And where ships move about with Levi-  
athan,|  
which you formed to make sport of it. |  
They all look to you |  
to give them food in due time. |  
When you give it to them, they gather  
it; |  
when you open your hand, they are  
filled with good things. |  
If you hide your face, they are dis-  
mayed; |  
if you take away their breath, they  
perish |  
and return to their dust. |  
When you send forth your spirit, they  
are created, |  
and you renew the face of the earth.

*Narrator:* The Scripture tells us that God is the source of all life. He breathed upon an earthen form and it stood up a living, knowing being—a Man. But man proved to have little concern for life. He relished independence, independence even from the source of life, and in reaching for it man died, bodily and spiritually. But God is merciful. Through the prophet Ezechiel he promised that he would breathe again upon mankind:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity EZECHIEL 37:1-10)

*Narrator:* Let us pray for the gift of new life:

*All recite:* PSALM 50(51)

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;|

in the greatness of your compassion  
wipe out my offense.|

Cleanse me of sin with hyssop, that I  
may be purified;|

wash me, and I shall be whiter than  
snow.|

Let me hear the sounds of joy and glad-  
ness;|

the bones you have crushed shall re-  
joice.|

Turn away your face from my sins|

and blot out all my guilt. |  
A clean heart create for me, O God, |  
and a steadfast spirit renew within  
me. |  
Cast me not out from your presence, |  
and your holy spirit take not from  
me. |  
Give me back the joy of your salvation, |  
and a willing spirit sustain in me.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Jesus Christ came among us  
and died. But only to become Firstborn  
of the dead. By the Power and Spirit of  
God he arose from the grave and all  
that it represents. And the Spirit in him  
overflowed upon his friends:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads JOHN 20:1-22)

*Narrator:* Let us manifest gratitude  
to God:

*All recite:* PSALM 32(33)  
Exult, you just, in the Lord; |  
praise from the upright is fitting. |  
Give thanks to the Lord on the harp; |  
with the ten-stringed lyre chant his  
praises. |  
Sing to him a new song; |  
For upright is the word of the Lord, |  
and all his works are trustworthy. |  
By the word of the Lord the heavens  
were made; |



by the breath of his mouth all their  
host. |

Let all the earth fear the Lord; |  
let all who dwell in the world revere  
him. |

For he spoke, and it was made; |  
he commanded, and it stood forth.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Life, peace, goodness, harmony between man and God, harmony among men—these are the fruits of the Spirit that overflow from the Risen Christ. As we listen to the words of St. Luke, let us regret all that we Christians have done to hinder this vivifying and unifying Spirit's work, all that we have done to delay the world's resurrection:

*3rd Lector:* (Reads ACTS 2:1-12)

*Homily* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* Let us call down upon all men the life-giving Spirit:

*All recite or sing:*

Come Holy Ghost, Creator blest,  
and in our hearts take up thy rest.  
Come with thy grace and heavenly aid,

||:to fill the hearts which thou hast  
made:| |

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* O God, you gave the Holy Spirit to your Apostles. Grant your people the fulfillment of their devout prayers. May those to whom you have given faith also receive peace: through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

*Recessional Hymn* (Optional)

## 6. Peace

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father  
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

*All recite:* PSALM 145(146)

Happy he whose help is the God of  
Jacob,|

whose hope is in the Lord, his God,|  
Who made heaven and earth,|

the sea and all that is in them;|  
Who keeps faith forever,|

secures justice for the oppressed,|  
gives food to the hungry. |

The Lord sets captives free;|

the Lord gives sight to the blind. |  
The Lord raises up those who are

bowed down;|

the Lord loves the just. |

The Lord shall reign forever;|

your God, O Sion, through all genera-  
tions.

*Narrator:* The Book of Genesis begins  
by telling us that the Spirit of God hov-  
ered over an unruly abyss and estab-  
lished order in the midst of it. The  
world was created. But Adam rebelled,  
Cain killed Abel; mankind brought dis-  
order into the world. Man became the  
author and the victim of strife. Darkness

descended upon him. But God promised a savior who would save man from himself. He promised through Isaia the prophet a savior who would bring light and peace to the world:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity ISAIA 8:23 and 9:1-6\*)

*Narrator:* Let us thank God for this promise and its fulfillment:

*All recite:* PSALM 114(116a)

I love the Lord because he has heard|  
my voice in supplication,|

Because he has inclined his ear to me|  
the day I called. |

The cords of death encompassed me;|  
the snares of the nether world seized  
upon me;|

I fell into distress and sorrow,|  
And I called upon the name of the  
Lord,|

“O Lord, save my life!”

Gracious is the Lord and just;|  
yes, our God is merciful. |

The Lord keeps the little ones;|  
I was brought low, and he saved  
me. |

Return, O my soul, to your tranquillity,|

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\*In the Revised Standard, American, and Douay translations read 9:1-7.

for the Lord has been good to you. |  
For he has freed my soul from death, |  
my eyes from tears, my feet from  
stumbling. |

I shall walk before the Lord |  
in the lands of the living.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecy of Isaia. He appeared in Galilee, in the land of Zabulon and Nephthali. He came to dispel the darkness of strife. He came to bring mankind peace, unity and love, to create anew the atmosphere of Paradise. All who believe in Christ must be themselves men and women of peace and unity so that the light of Christ may penetrate to every corner of the world. Jesus speaks to us through Matthew:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads MATTHEW 5:1-24)

*Narrator:* Let us pray for charity and peace among all Christians and all men:

*All recite: From the Liturgy of Holy Thursday*

Where there are charity and love, |  
there is God.

The love of Christ has gathered us together. |

Let us rejoice in him and be glad. |

Let us fear and love the living God. |  
And let us love one another with a sin-  
cere heart. |

Where there are charity and love, |  
there is God. |

When we are assembled together, |  
let us take heed, |  
that we be not divided in mind. |

Let malicious quarrels and contentions  
cease. |

Let Christ our God dwell in the midst  
of us. |

Where there are charity and love, |  
there is God. |

Let us also with the blessed see your  
face in glory, |

O Christ our God. |

There to possess an immense and happy  
joy |

for ever and ever. Amen.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Christians have not been truly Christian. The salt often loses its savor. The light is often obscured by pride, righteousness, sensuality. Christians have often been more like Adam, the father of selfishness and strife, than like Christ, our new Adam, the Prince of Peace. Therefore the nations remain in darkness. We must put away strife,

unite in Christ. The admonition of the apostle Paul holds good even today:

*3rd Lector:* (Reads COLLOSSIANS 3:1-15)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* Let us pray with the aged Simeon:

*All recite:* LUKE 2:29-32

Now you release your servant in peace,  
O Lord,|

in accord with your word;|

For my eyes have truly seen your salvation,|

which you prepared in the sight of  
all the nations:|

A light of revelation to the Gentiles|  
and glory for your people, Israel.

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your apostles: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" look not upon our sins, but upon the faith of your Church and grant unto her that peace and unity which are agree-

able to your will; you who live and reign as God for ever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

*Recessional Hymn (Optional)*



## 7. The Water of Life

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*All recite:* PSALM 62(63)

O God, you are my God whom I seek;|  
for you my flesh pines and my soul  
thirsts|  
like the earth, parched, lifeless and  
without water.|

Thus have I gazed toward you in the  
sanctuary|

to see your power and your glory,|  
For your kindness is a greater good than  
life;|

my lips shall glorify you.

*Narrator:* Mankind thirsts for everlasting life and everlasting peace. God is the source of all this. God declared this in Old Testament times when he granted his prophet Ezechiel a vision of the future Temple of God on earth:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity EZECHIEL 47:1-12)

*Narrator:* With the Psalmist let us express our longing for the water of life:

*All recite:* PSALM 41(42)

As the hind longs for the running wa-  
ters,|

so my soul longs for you, O God. |

Athirst is my soul for God, the living  
God. |

When shall I go and behold the face  
of God? |

My tears are my food day and night, |  
as they say to me day after day,  
“Where is your God?” |

Those times I recall, |

now that I pour out my soul within  
me, |

When I went with the throng |

and led them in procession to the  
house of God,

Amid loud cries of joy and thanksgiv-  
ing, |

with the multitude keeping festival. |

Why are you so downcast, O my soul? |

Why do you sigh within me? |

Hope in God! For I shall again be  
thanking him, |

in the presence of my savior and my  
God.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Jesus revealed to men that  
he was that future Temple of God—God  
incarnate. All men must come to him for

life, for he alone has conquered death. From the pierced side of this new Temple there came forth water and blood—Baptism and the Eucharist—which vivify the world. Listen to the words of Jesus as given in John's Gospel:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads JOHN 4:1-15 and 6:32-40)

*Narrator:* Let us rejoice in Jesus Christ, mankind's source of life:

*All recite:* PSALM 106(107)

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,|

for his kindness endures forever!"|

Thus let the redeemed of the Lord say,|  
those whom he has redeemed from  
the hand of the foe|

And gathered from the lands,|  
from the east and the west,|  
from the north and the south. |

They went astray in the desert wilder-  
ness;|  
the way to an inhabited city they did  
not find. |

Hungry and thirsty,|  
their life was wasting away within  
them. |

They cried to the Lord in their distress |  
from their straits he rescued them. |

He changed the desert into pools of  
water,|

waterless land into water springs. |

And there he settled the hungry, |  
and they built a city to dwell in.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* The Church of Jesus is the New Jerusalem within which Jesus stands, our living Temple, pulsating life to all who enter. Our prayer must ever be that men in increasing numbers enter this city and find unity and life around the one source to true unity and life unto the fulfillment of the grand vision of the Apocalypse:

*3rd Lector:* (Reads APOCALYPSE 21:9-14 and 21:22-27 and 22:1-2)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* Let us unite in the offering of PSALM 99:

*All recite:* PSALM 99:(100)

Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands; |

serve the Lord with gladness; |

come before him with joyful song. |

Know that the Lord is God; |

he made us, his we are; |

his people, the flock he tends. |  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, |  
his courts with praise; |  
Give thanks to him; bless his name, for  
he is good: |  
the Lord, whose kindness endures  
forever, |  
and his faithfulness, to all generations.

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* O God, you have united various nations in confessing your name. Grant that those who are reborn in baptism may be one in faith, one in holy deeds: through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

*Recessional Hymn* (Optional)

## 8. The Holy Spirit and Sonship

*Narrator:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*All recite:* ISAIA 63:15-19

Look down from heaven and regard us|  
from your holy and glorious palace!|  
Where is your zealous care and your  
might,|

your surge of pity and your mercy?|  
O Lord, hold not back,|  
for you are our father. |

Were Abraham not to know us,|  
nor Israel to acknowledge us,|

You, Lord, are our father,|  
our redeemer you are named for-  
ever. |

Why do you let us wander, O Lord,  
from your ways,|

and harden our hearts so that we  
fear you not?|

Return for the sake of your servants,|  
the tribes of your heritage. |

Oh, that you would rend the heavens  
and come down,|

with the mountains quaking before  
you.

*Narrator:* On the day Jesus was bap-  
tized in the Jordan the heavens were

torn open and the Holy Spirit came upon him and a voice from heaven proclaimed him God's ideal son. He then showed himself an obedient, ideal son by resisting the demon's invitation to rebellion in the desert. Jesus offers the powerful and good Spirit which came upon him to all men. St. Luke declares this in his Gospel:

*1st Lector:* (Reads with clarity and dignity LUKE 3:21-22 and 4:1-21)

*Narrator:* Let us thank God and praise him:

*All recite:* PSALM 97(98)

Sing to the Lord a new song,|  
for he has done wondrous deeds;|  
His right hand has won victory for him,|  
his holy arm.|  
The Lord has made his salvation  
known;|  
in the sight of the nations he has re-  
vealed his justice.|  
He has remembered his kindness and  
his faithfulness|  
toward the house of Israel.|  
All the ends of the earth have seen|  
the salvation of our God.|  
Let the rivers clap their hands,|  
the mountains shout with them for  
joy|

before the Lord,|  
for he comes,|  
for he comes to rule the earth.

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* The powerful Spirit of Christ comes upon us at our baptism, making us one with Christ, sharers of his familiar sonship, truer brothers than brothers in the flesh. Listen to the enthusiastic words of the apostle Paul:

*2nd Lector:* (Reads ROMANS 8:5-17)

*Narrator:* This is an appropriate moment to raise our voices in the LORD'S PRAYER:

*All recite:* THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Silent Prayer.*

*Narrator:* Christ gives us his Spirit and makes us sons of God and heirs to everlasting happiness. But we have embarrassed our Father and Christ our brother before the nations of the world by fighting among ourselves, by isolation from each other. Christians must reunite. Christians must not face the world as separated brothers but as brothers visibly one, sharing the One Bread, all of one harmonious mind and of one heart, remembering the instructions of the St. John—instructions which we and our ancestors have so often ignored:



*3rd Lector:* (Reads 1ST EPISTLE OF JOHN 2:28-29 and 3:1-18 and 3:23-24)

*Homily:* (The speaker may develop the biblical theme or the intention of the day, or he may expand upon the topic of Christian Unity from any aspect he may desire.)

*Narrator:* Let us acknowledge the blessing of brotherly unity with the words of the Psalmist:

*All recite:* PSALM 132(133)

Behold, how good it is, and how pleasant,|

where brethren dwell at one!|

It is as when the precious ointment upon the head|

runs down over the beard, the beard of Aaron,|

till it runs down upon the collar of his robe. |

It is a dew like that of Hermon,|

which comes down upon the mountains of Sion;|

For there the Lord has pronounced his blessing,|

life forever.

*Benediction* (Optional)

*Concluding Prayer:* O God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace, grant us the grace

to take to heart the scandal of our divisions. Deliver us from all hatred and prejudice, and from all that hinders our unity, in order that, as there is but one body and one spirit, one hope in our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, so we may also be of but one heart and one soul, united by the bonds of grace and truth, of faith and of love, in Jesus Christ our Lord.\*

*All: Amen.*

*Recessional Hymn (Optional)*

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\* From the Liturgy of St. James



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may be one**

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