

DAY 7: Tue 24th Jan: *‘What is now does not have to be’*

The Magnificat is Mary’s song of joy for all that she sees God is doing: raising up the lowly; righting injustice; and remembering Israel, his servant. The Lord never forgets his promises or abandons his people. It is easy to overlook or undervalue the faith of those who belong to other Christian communities. But the Lord makes his people whole by raising up the lowly so that the value of each is recognised. We are called to see as He sees and to value each of our brothers and sisters as He values them. *How can we come together in Christ with hope and faith that God will “shut injustice’s mouth?”*

Prayer

God of Hope, help us to remember that you are with us in our suffering. Help us to embody hope for one another when hopelessness is a frequent unwelcomed guest in our hearts. Grant us the gift of being grounded in your loving Spirit as we work together to eradicate all forms of oppression and injustice. Give us the courage to love like you, and to express this love in our actions. Amen.

DAY 8: Wed 25th Jan: *The justice that restores communion*

Jesus tells the parable of the widow and the unjust judge in order to teach the people “about their need to pray always and not to lose heart” (Lk 18:1). Jesus has won a decisive victory over injustice, sin and division, and as Christians our task is to receive this victory firstly in our own hearts through prayer and secondly in our lives through action. May we never lose heart, but rather continue to ask in prayer for God’s gift of unity and may we manifest this unity in our lives.

How are our churches called to engage in justice that unites us in our actions to love and serve all of God’s family?

Prayer

God, Creator and Redeemer of all things, teach us to look inward to be grounded in your loving Spirit, so that we may go outward in wisdom and courage to always choose the path of love and justice. This we pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The night before his Passion and Death, Jesus said:

**“May they all be one,
just as, Father,
you are in me and I am in you” Jn 17:21**

Each year from 18-25th January, Christians of all denominations unite around the world to pray for this great desire of the heart of Jesus—that we may all be one.

Here at Kilmacud Carmelite Monastery we dedicate our Evening Prayer at 4.30pm for this intention each day during the Week of Prayer.

All are welcome to join us.

2023 PROGRAMME

Wed 18th: Reflection by a Carmelite Sister

Thur 19th: Rev. Robert Marshall,

St. Brigid’s Church of Ireland, Stillorgan

Fri 20th: Dr. Paul Manook,

Armenian Apostolic Church in Ireland

Sat 21st: Reflection by a Carmelite Sister

Sun 22nd: Rev. Donie O’Connor MHM,

Kilmacud Parish

Mon 23rd: Rev. Martin Sauter, Lutheran Church

Tues 24th: Reflection by a Carmelite Sister

Wed 25th: Mr Gerard Gallagher,

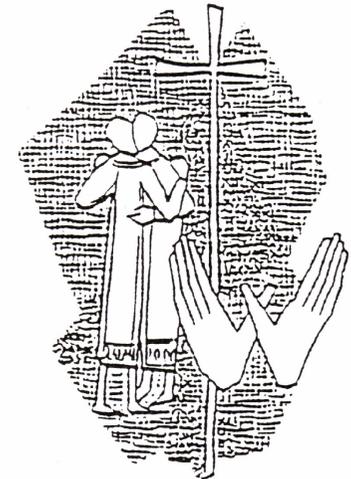
Communications Office AMRI

The prayers and reflections on this leaflet are taken from material prepared by Christians in Minnesota, USA. Please use this leaflet at home, this week and throughout the year in order to pray for Christian Unity.

Carmelite Monastery of St Joseph
Upper Kilmacud Road
Stillorgan, Blackrock
Co. Dublin
www.kilmacudcarmel.ie

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

18-25 January 2023



Do good; seek justice

(Isaiah 1:17)

**Carmelite Monastery of St Joseph
Upper Kilmacud Road**

**All are welcome to join us
at 4.30pm each day
either in-person or via live-link
YouTube: @KilmacudCarmel**

DAY 1: Wed 18th Jan:

Learning to do the right thing

A lawyer asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?” Jesus’ response asks us to see beyond the divisions of religion, tribe and nationality to recognise our neighbour in need. Christians likewise must see beyond these divides and the divisions within the Christian family to recognise and love our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Who are the marginalised in your society? How might churches together speak up on their behalf?

Prayer

Lord, you called your people from slavery into freedom, Give us strength and courage to seek out those who are standing in need of justice. Allow us to see this need and provide help, and through your Holy Spirit gather us into the one fold of Jesus Christ, our Shepherd. Amen.

DAY 2: Thur 19th Jan: When justice is done...

The religious leaders Jesus addresses in the Gospel have grown accustomed and comfortable with the injustices of the world. They are happy to perform religious duties such as tithing mint, dill and cumin, but neglect the weightier and more disruptive demands of justice, mercy and faithfulness. Similarly Christians have grown accustomed and comfortable with the divisions that exist between us. We are faithful in much of our religious observance, but often we neglect the Lord’s challenging desire that all his disciples be one.

How can local congregations support one another to withstand opposition from doing justice?

Prayer

God, you are the source of our wisdom. We pray for wisdom and courage to do justice, to respond to what is wrong in the world by acting to make it right; We pray for wisdom and courage to grow in the unity of your Son, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit, reigns forever and ever. Amen.

DAY 3: Fri 20th Jan: Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly

“Walking humbly” was challenging for the rich young man who asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. He had obeyed all the commandments from his youth, but he could not take the further step to join Jesus’ disciples because of his wealth; he was beholden to his possessions. How difficult it is for Christians to let go of that which we perceive as riches, but which keep us from the greater wealth on joining Jesus’s disciples in Christian unity.

How can our churches better respond to the needs of our most vulnerable neighbours?

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, expand our vision that we might see the mission we share with all of our Christian brothers and sisters, to show forth the justice and loving kindness of your kingdom. Help us to welcome our neighbours as your Son welcomed us. Help us to be more generous as we witness to the grace that you freely give us. Amen.

DAY 4: Sat 21st Jan: Look, the tears of the oppressed

Matthew’s account of the Beatitudes begins with Jesus seeing the crowds. In that crowd he must have seen those who were peacemakers, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, men and women who mourned, and those who hungered for justice. In the beatitudes Jesus not only names people’s struggles, he names what they will be: the children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. As Christians we are called to see the holy struggles of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

How have you engaged with Christian groups addressing oppression in your neighbourhood? How can the churches in your locality come together to better show solidarity with those suffering oppression?

Prayer

God of justice and grace, remove the scales from our eyes so we can truly see the oppression around us. We pray in the name of Jesus who saw the crowds and had compassion for them. Amen.

DAY 5: Sun 22nd Jan: Singing the Lord’s song as strangers in the land

Luke’s Gospel records that people, many of them women, follow Jesus even as he carries his cross to Calvary. This following is faithful discipleship. Furthermore, Jesus recognises their struggles and the suffering that they will have to endure in faithfully carrying their own crosses. Thanks to the ecumenical movement, Christians today share hymns, prayers reflections and insights across traditions. We receive them from one another as gifts borne of the faith and loving discipleship, often enduring struggles, of Christians from different communities than our own. These shared gifts are riches to be treasured and give witness to the Christian faith we share. *How do we raise up the stories of ancestors who lived among us and have sung songs of faith, hope, and liberation from captivity?*

Prayer

God of the oppressed, Open our eyes to the harm that continues to be inflicted on our sisters and brothers in Christ. May your Spirit give us the courage to sing in unison, and raise our voices with those whose suffering is unheard. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

DAY 6: Mon 23rd Jan : Just as you did it to one of the least of these...you did it to me.

The prophet Ezekiel describes the Lord God as a shepherd who makes the flock whole by gathering in those who have strayed and binding up those who are injured. Unity is the Father’s desire for his people and he continues to bring about this unity, to make the flock whole, through the action of his Holy Spirit. Through prayer we open ourselves to receive the Spirit which restores the unity of all the baptised.

How are the “least of these” invisible to you or your church? How can our churches work together to care for “the least of these?”

Prayer

God of Love, we thank you for your unending care and love for us. Help us to sing redemption songs. Open wide our hearts to receive your love and to extend your compassion to the whole of the human family. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.