**Please Take Spare Pew Bulletins** to anyone housebound or absent this morning.

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**Before** the service, talk to God.

During the service, listen to God.

After the service, talk with each other.

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In today’s Gospel reading we find Jesus praying for the unity of the disciples, the Church. He prays that they may see him in glory. He prays that the love with which the Father loved him may be in them and that he himself may also be in them. May every denomination yearn for unity – not uniformity – so that God’s will be done.

* Lord, inspire me to find out about denominations other than my own, and learn about the National Council of Churches in Australia, and the state ecumenical bodies.
* Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

*Text: Robert McLean © Anglican Board of Mission*

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**FAITH BOOK:** Mini-reflections on the Sunday scripture readings designed for persons on the run.

**From Thursday’s Ascension Gospel reading**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"And behold I am sending the promise of my Father upon you, but stay in the city

until you are clothed with power from on high."

**Reflection**:

When our world is dark and we feel alone, we want Jesus to keep his word and send us "the promise of my Father." We want that promised One with us in whatever darkness, interior or exterior, we find ourselves.

**So, we ask ourselves:**

* Name the darkness in your private world that needs "the promised One."
* Will you pray from now till Pentecost for Jesus to fulfil his promise to you?

*Jude Siciliano, OP,*

*Southern Dominican Province, USA*

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**A Prayer for Followers**

*Who is a good example for our young? Why is he or she a good example?*

A hero provides more than a good example for others, he or she provides a standard of virtue. Some heroes are authentic, others prove to be two-dimensional, not because of their actions, but because of their intent. The authentic hero is transparent; that person practices what he or she preaches.

Jesus was a hero. That might ring strange in our ears, but it is true. His example was the cross, his virtue was love through self-giving. Of course, he is more than a hero, for he shares that love with us, the love he had with his Father. When he prayed for us, he wanted us to be part of his example and his virtue. He wanted us to share in the glory of the cross and the love God had for the world.

How do people come to know about Jesus? They hear about Jesus from his followers and they see the results of the Good News in the lives of believers. In other words, evangelization is based upon word and example (no surprise). Example, however, is not only a sense of ethical behaviour and charitable outreach, it is a sense of communal sharing. The community shares a sense of purpose and a unity of faith; both are a result of God's peace. So, word and example are invitations to the Kingdom.

The sign of the Kingdom is the glory of Christ. In John's theology, the crucifixion is his glory. Evangelization about the crucifixion was an extension of Christ's glory. The Father gave Jesus glory with the cross; the cross is the sign used for spreading the Good News. Faith in the One crucified brings unity and divine intimacy. Faith in the One crucified shows the world what sort of God we believe in. He is love! No wonder Jesus desired the glory that the Father gave him. The cross, his glory, would bring all followers close to him and would allow them to see the Lord as he truly was.

*Larry Broding*

*word-sunday.com*

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**Monastic Wisdom**

**Companion**

Open your heart to Jesus. Share with him your deepest fears. Speak to him about your troubles, your hopes, your worries. Let him relieve you of the burdens you are carrying. Let him be your constant companion, your friend, your advocate, your guide, the one who travels alongside you. Believe that he will bring you through whatever it is that you are facing now.

*Br. David Vryhof, SSJE*

**Mirror**

Hildegard of Bingen said we are like mirrors, catching God’s light and then mirroring that light onto the countenance of others. We and others can change, amazingly, miraculously for the better. So we pray our hearts out.

*Br. Curtis Almquist, SSJE*

**Love**

Death cannot kill the love that binds us together with our departed loved ones in a bond and a communion which transcends time and space. For it is ultimately the unbreakable bond of love which lifts us above both time and space, and into the very life of God.

*Br. Geoffrey Tristram, SSJE*

The first book given by God to rational beings is the nature of created things. Instruction by means of ink was added after the transgression.

*Isaac of Nineveh [7th century],*

***First Collection****, 5*

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The Nicene Creed

This year is the 1700th Anniversary of the Nicene Dreed still used in the Church’s worship. Below is a statement relating to the Creed highlighting our unity as Christians, based upon use of the Nicene Creed:

**Unity with one another and with the global Church**

The Nicene Creed is more than just a statement of beliefs; it is a comprehensive definition of what it means to be a Christian. By declaring the Creed, believers affirm their faith in a way that is both personal and communal, aligning themselves with the historic and universal Church. This act of affirmation is particularly important in a world where the term ‘Christian’ can be used in vague or widely varying ways. This corporate declaration of faith is a powerful expression of the unity of the Church. In saying the Creed together, the congregation affirms that they hold the same beliefs and share the same faith, despite any individual differences in background, culture, or personal experience. The Creed reinforces the bonds between members of the faithful, reminding them that they are part of a larger body—the Body of Christ. This sense of unity and the corporate nature of Christian faith is particularly important in a fragmented world, where divisions often threaten to undermine the Church’s witness.

*GENERAL SYNOD*

*LITURGICAL COMMISSION*

*THE USE OF THE NICENE CREED IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, para. 12*

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**Universal Love** *Love is invisible, but it is the most powerful force in human nature. Jesus spoke of the Spirit which he would send as Truth but also as Love. “If anyone loves me, my Father will love him and we will come to him and make our abode with him.” This is the love, the prema and bhakti, which was proclaimed in the Bhagavad Gita, the compassion (karuna) of Buddha, the rapturous love of the Sufi saints.  
Ultimately a religion is tested by its capacity to waken love in its followers, and, what is perhaps more difficult, to extend that love to all humanity. In the past religions have tended to confine their love to their own followers, but always there has been a movement to break through these barriers and attain to a universal love.*

*Bede Griffiths, 1906-1993****Universal Wisdom***

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**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Beginning this Sunday, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity commences. Material to use for each day is available, prepared by the brothers and sisters of the monastic community of Bose, in Italy. Their reflections are also mindful of the shared heritage of the Western, Eastern, and Oriental Churches as present in the Nicene Creed.