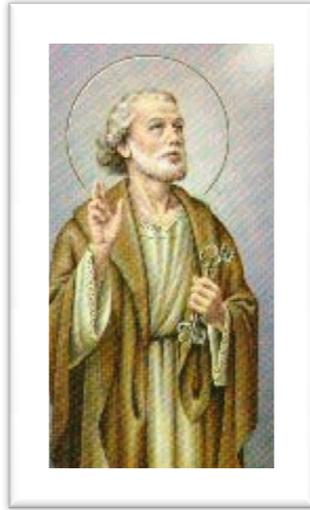


Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity

January 18th – 25th



On January 18th begins the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity, a period of eight days set apart for the express purpose of seeking that unity which was prayed for by Christ Himself. This was the inspiration given by God to Fr. Paul of Graymoor who, with Mother Lurana, founded the Society of the Atonement in Graymoor, New York.

Known more familiarly today as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the traditional prayers set by Fr. Paul are as follows:

ANTIPHON: That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.

V. I say unto thee, thou art Peter;

R. And upon this rock I will build my Church.

[Here is brought to mind the intention for the day's prayer.]

January 18: For the return of the "other sheep" to the One Fold of our Lord Jesus Christ.

January 19: For the return of the Eastern Orthodox Christians to communion with the Apostolic See.

January 20: For the return of the Anglicans to the authority of the Vicar of Christ.

January 21: For the return of all Protestants throughout the world to the unity of the Catholic Church.

January 22: That Christians in America may be one, in union with the Chair of Saint Peter.

January 23: That lapsed Catholics will return to the Sacraments of the Church.

January 24: That the Jewish people will be converted to the Catholic Faith.

January 25: That missionary zeal will conquer the world for Christ.

Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, who saidst unto Thine Apostles: Peace I leave you, My peace I give to you; regard not our sins, but the faith of Thy Church, and grant unto her that peace and unity which are agreeable to Thy Will; Who livest and reignest ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

+ + + + +

Father Paul considered the Octave as the greatest project which came from Graymoor, and even though it was overshadowed by the less-specific "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" during his own lifetime, he rejoiced that those separated from the Catholic Church felt called to observe the January period as a time of prayer for unity. Even though their concept of unity differs from that of the Catholic Church, it is significant that so many pray for the unity which God desires for His people.

The Octave, as originally conceived by Father Paul, reflects the unchanging truth that there can be no real unity apart from union with that Rock, established by Christ Himself, which is Peter and his successors. For that reason, St. Peter is considered the special Patron of the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity.