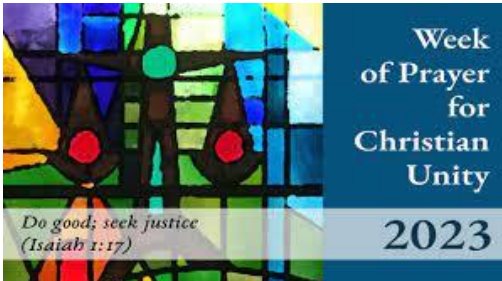




NEA NEWSLETTER



JANUARY NEWS 2023



Learning to do right requires the decision to engage in self-reflection. The Week of Prayer is the perfect time for Christians to recognize that the divisions between our churches and confessions cannot be separated from the divisions within the wider human family. Praying together for Christian unity allows us to reflect on what unites us and to commit ourselves to confront oppression and division amongst humanity.

A STORY - LACK OF RESPECT

A stranger, exuding joy, went into church one day, a church that was not his own. He mingled about with the parishioners patting them on the back, talking loudly and laughing in a gesture of friendship. The parishioners were shocked with his familiarity and horrified at his “lack of respect” for a place of worship. He was asked to leave. On the doorstep, he was approached by God who said,

“Cheer up, fella, I’ve been trying to get into that church for years!”

(Source: *Dare to Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord!* by Erma Bombeck)

Which comes first, the fish or the river? – Malcolm Guite

(Written for the week of Christian Unity 2014)

Since every gift comes down from the All-Giver,
How can I choose between the Giver’s gifts
Or say which should come first, the fish or river?

He scatters first, and then calls us to gather,
To lavish on his work our smaller crafts
And sail our praise upstream, back to the Giver.

He gives His gifts when we are met together,
Not in our splits, our schisms, and our rifts:
We cannot prize the Fish and not the River,

Divide the two and say ‘which would you rather?’
We float through time on fragile little rafts,
But time and life alike flow from the Giver.



Away upstream, it all flows from the Father:
The stream is His own Spirit, giving gifts;
His Son, our brother, joins us in the River.

He is our ‘both-and’ God, not ‘or’, or ‘either’;
He gives full measure: steady, heady draughts!
The Giver must come first, always the Giver,
We prize alike His gifts: both Fish and River.

Anniversary of the death of Jean Gailhac – 25th January 1890



From a letter written from Béziers, 8 January 1884

'Always live in charity love for one another and in perfect union in Jesus Christ. Therein lies the strength and happiness of a community.... Keep God before your eyes. God sees, hears and knows all. We can fool people but not God. Be full of holy zeal for God's glory. May everything that is in you breathe God and may your life be a fragrant perfume that attracts people to leading a good life, wins them for God and raises you to heaven.'

Life is short, dear daughters, its length uncertain, so let us take advantage of every moment to become holy. The hour of departing for eternity is unknown to us, so we must be always ready. We must not be content with making good resolutions that disappear as soon as they are made. Hell is paved with good intentions. Do everything for the good God. If we don't have God during our lifetime we cannot have God after we die. Let us die to everything and live for God, from God and for God. This is true wisdom and its reward is heaven.'

Your father, Gailhac, superior

This New Year By Aleena

Poem About Possibilities Of A New Year

Even during the worst of times
When I feel the years go slipping by
Life seems rife with possibilities
When the New Year arrives.

Buoyed by hope at the New Year coming
I feel renewed and want to start living.
This year I'll travel and see the sights,
I'll be bold, I'll be courageous.

I'll reach out and go beyond.
I might even try being flirtatious!
I'll be a new fish in a brand-new pond.
This new year I'll be brave and I'll be strong.

Even though time does fly,
I won't let this year be wasted.
I'll look forward to new adventures
And be open to opportunities I am graced with.



I'll learn and laugh and have good times.
I won't dwell on years gone by.
I'll start each new morning a brand-new way.
I'll pretend it is New Year's Day!