



PENTECOST RETREAT



ARNA
Anglican Renewal Network Australia

“Come Holy Spirit, Renew your Church”

Monday 30 May 2022

Our Retreat “Come Holy Spirit Renew your Church” begins in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

SPIRIT CHURCH

I Focus Centring On God's Presence

This morning I still myself in the presence of God, remembering the promise of Emmanuel *'I am with you always, to the end of the age'* (Matt 28:20)

'O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvellous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with his mother; my soul is like a weaned child that is with me.' (Ps 131:1-2)

I give praise to God for who God is; I give thanks to God for what God has done.

...In the silence I pray ...

This week is the Week of Prayer for Christianity Unity, the eve of Pentecost. The Psalmist reminds us *'how very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!'* (Ps 133:1)

Saint Paul writes of this unity: *"I therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with*

patience, bearing one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you are called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all." Ephesians 4:1-11 NRSV

Unity of the Body of Christ was a key message of Jesus especially in his last days of earthly ministry. Jesus when he prayed for his disciples prior to his betrayal and arrest, said to the Father:

'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'

John 17:20-21 NRSV

I Imagine

Imagine Jesus at this time. So many things rushing through his mind - knowing that his time left to impart his message and demonstrate his ministry, is quickly drawing to a close. Yet, he pauses to pray to the Father that *'they may be one, as we are one'*. It was part of his final prayer witnessed by his disciples as he prayed for them. *'Be one, as we are one.'* Unity of the Body of Christ was not something just close to the heart of the Saviour, it was something that would clearly impact the effectiveness of the gospel down the generations of church that would follow.

I Challenge Myself

Unity in the Church is not just the challenge for popes, priests, and pastors, but also the people - all of us. It is a responsibility of ours as well - as individuals in the Body of Christ. Does my heart ache for unity in the children of God, like Jesus' heart does? How have I championed the work of the other churches in my community as well as my own? What are the excuses I have used that have prevented me from being a champion of unity in the Church?

I Listen

'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'

John 17:20-21 NRSV

I Pray

Loving Lord, I pray *'your Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven'*, and I know for as long as there is disunity, it is impossible to imagine what your Kingdom on earth, may look like. Come Holy Spirit, I desire what you want for the church, and I need to know my part.

Holy Spirit reveal to me where I have allowed my excuses to determine how strongly I have sought unity in your church. And by your grace show me what more I can do, that your name may be glorified on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.
