



CENTRO PRO UNIONE

..... SEMI-ANNUAL BULLETIN

A publication about the activities of the Centro Pro Unione

N. 104
FALL 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ *Letter from the Acting Director* **TIMOTHY MACDONALD, SA** 2
- ▶ *Conference · Thursday, 15 December 2022* **THOMAS F. BEST** 4
(In Case You Missed It) The “Ecumenical Winter” is Over
- ▶ *Conference · Thursday, 19 January 2023* **DIRK G. LANGE** 17
Baptism · Ecclesiological Implications of the latest Lutheran-Catholic Joint Commission
- ▶ *Conference · Wednesday, 17 May 2023* **JACK BEMPORAD** 26
The Decisive Significance of the Book of Amos for Understanding the Literary Prophecy
- ▶ *Formation Program* **SUMMER SCHOOL ROME 2024** 33
Introduction to the Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Roman Catholic Perspective
- ▶ *Ecumenical Prayer Vigil · Saturday, 30 September 2023* **TOGETHER 2023** 36
On the initiative of Taizé: "Together | Gathering of the People of God" · Workshop "History of a Future" at the Centro Pro Unione
- ▶ *Evento M.A.D. for Ecumenism · Giovedì, 26 ottobre 2023* **TERZA EDIZIONE** 38
Evento celebrativo per la consegna Report "Laboratorio ecumenico sinodale" presentato alla Segreteria del Sinodo dei Vescovi quale contributo specificamente ecumenico al cammino sinodale
- ▶ *In Honor of the Atonement Society Co-Founders* **ANNUAL CONFERENCE** 42
Lecturer Dr. Prof. Donna Orsuto · Thursday, 14 December 2023 on the theme "Towards a Contemporary Spirituality of Reconciliation"
- ▶ *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* **18-25 JANUARY 2024** 44
You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27) “Ama il Signore Dio tuo... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso” (Luca 10, 27)
- ▶ *Ecumenical Networking* **VISITORS AT THE CPU** 48
An honored visit of the WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr. Jerry Pillay and Faith and Order Commission Director Prof. Dr. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc
- ▶ *Statistics Overview About CPU Activities · 2020-2024* **ANNUAL REPORTS** 50
The latest years of mission and activities in numbers
- ▶ *Digital Network* **UPDATES ON MEDIA CHANNELS** 54
Latest posts review about our online platforms | Stay tuned and Follow Us!

UT OMNES UNUM SINT



LETTER FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR

▶ *Timothy MacDonald, SA*

The Friars of the Atonement are grateful for the service and witness that Fr James Puglisi, SA, has given throughout many years to the Centro Pro Unione. They wish him well in New York and happiness in his new ministry.

The Friars of the Atonement welcome to the CPU Fr Timothy MacDonald, SA, as Acting Director. Father MacDonald, SA, originated from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada. He did his theological studies at Atonement Seminary in Washington DC and Catholic University before his ordination to the priesthood. He earned his MA in Ecumenics, World Religions and Mission at Boston University and his Ph.D. at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI, where he specialised in Ecclesiology with a dissertation on Y. Congar, OP, 's Theology of Church. Is the second time of Fr Tim, SA, in Rome as he was Associate Director of CPU 35 years ago, during which time he also taught at the Angelicum.

Among his other ecumenical assignments, Fr Tim, SA, was Associate Director of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute, Ecumenical and Interfaith Director for the Archdiocese of Halifax, Ecumenical and Interfaith Director for the Archdiocese of Toronto. He has served his community too in the capacity of Novice Director, Post-Novitiate Director, Retreat Director, among other ministries.

The Staff at CPU continues as it had in the past, particularly with Dr Prof Teresa Francesca Rossi who continues as Co-Director planning and

developing of lectures and projects into the future of the Centro.

The three stoic Staff Members in the office, Dr Loredana Nepi, Chief Librarian, Dr Barbara Giambartolomei, Librarian and Espedito Neto, Web and Media Coordinator, continue their respective responsibilities in the work of the Centro.

The Friars of the Atonement extend a very warm welcome to Fr MacDonald, SA and wish continued blessings upon him and the Staff of CPU.

Among the significant upcoming occasions for CPU is the 125 Anniversary of the Foundation of the Friars and Sisters of the Atonement, commonly known as the Society of the Atonement. The beginning of the celebrations for this event have taken place at St Patrick's Cathedral in New York in December 2023, and the CPU will celebrate this event in Rome with a special lecture on the charism of the Founders to be given by Fr Rick Gribble, CSC, and a reception at Sant'Onofrio Church in the Fall of 2024. Further information will be sent out later.

As we look back on the year, we would like to point out a number of events that we feel were significant in the work of the CPU.

The first of this is the lecture by Rabbi Jack Bemporad, Co-Director of The Centre for Interreligious Understanding, Teaneck, NJ, on the theme: "The Decisive Influence of Amos for the Understanding of Literary Prophecy" which is published in this issue.

CENTRO PRO UNIONE BULLETIN

The Centro Pro Unione in Rome, founded and directed by the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, is an ecumenical research and action center. Its purpose is to give space for dialogue, to be a place for study, research and formation in ecumenism: theological, pastoral, social and spiritual. The Bulletin has been published since 1968 and is released in Spring and Fall.

IN THIS ISSUE

- *Thomas F. Best*
- *Dirk G. Lange*
- *Jack Bemporad*
- *Summer School Rome 2024*
- *Together 2023 / Workshop*
- *Report M.A.D. for Ecumenism / Edition 3 - Celebrative Event*
- *Ecumenical Networking / Visits CPU*
- *Statistics Overview / Annual Reports*
- *Editorial Catalog of the Centro*
- *Support the Atonement Friars*
- *Latest News on Media Channels*

CONTACT

Address
Via Santa Maria dell'Anima, 30
I-00186 · Rome - ITALY

Telephone
(+39) 06 687 9552

Fax
(+39) 06 687 9552

Media Network
@EcumenUnity
@CentroProUnione

E-mail
pro@prounione.it

Website
www.prounione.it



We were honoured to receive Dr Andrej Jeftić, new Director of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and Dr Vasile-Octavian Mihoc, WCC Program Executive for Ecumenical Relations, which offered us an opportunity to exchange ideas on projects for ecumenical library facilities and other projects.

As we do every year, we conducted the ecumenical Summer Course in which we played host to 23 students who were very enthusiastic for the lectures and the opportunities to ask questions to the Professors who participated in the course.

We were pleased to host a group of young people from Taizè that were present here in Rome on the occasion of the Synod and offered them the opportunity to come to know the work of the Centro.

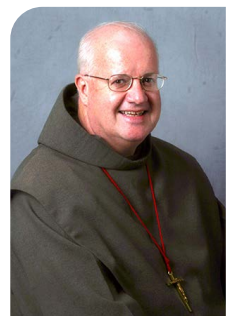
You may recall the project *M.A.D. for Ecumenism – Mutual Accountability Desk*, which has been in process since 2018, and we are delighted that the project was able to submit a statement to the Synod and it was accepted. During this period of the Synod we were able to present the statement, which is of an ecumenical nature, to guests who were involved in its formation with presentation on Synodality by Fr Davide Carbonaro, OMD, Coordinator of the Synodal Process of the Diocese of Rome, and at the same time, a presentation was given by Prof Vasile-Octavian Mihoc from the World Council of Churches on the development of the WCC.

The final important contribution to the ecumenical work of the CPU in 2023 was the lecture by Dr Donna Orsuto, Professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University and Director of the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas on the theme “Towards a Contemporary Spirituality of Reconciliation”.

The year 2024 began with the celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with an afternoon of reflection and prayer entitled: “Synodality at your fingertips – Sinodalità ‘a portata di mano’”. Three speakers offered their perspectives on synodality: Dr Prof Tamara Grdzeldze, Professor at Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia and former Ambassador of Georgia to the Holy See; Dr Rev Vanessa Bayha, Director of the Centro Melantone, Rome and Dr Rev Maurizio Mirilli, Chaplain at the Policlinico Tor Vergata, Rome and former Responsible for Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Rome. The afternoon continued with a prayer in Taizè style coordinated by the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas, who also co-sponsored the event.

We are happy to present in this issue of the Bulletin the texts of the lectures given by: Dr Thomas Best on the theme: “(In case you missed it) the Ecumenical Winter is over”; Dr Dirk Lange on the theme: “Baptism and *Growth in Communion: Ecclesiological Implications of the latest Lutheran-Catholic Joint Commission*”; Rabbi Jack Bemporad on the theme: “The Decisive Influence of Amos for the Understanding of Literary Prophecy”.

We wish all of our readers the blessings of this Lent Season and a joyful celebration of Easter.



Timothy MacDonald, sa · Acting Director

P. Timothy MacDonald, S.A.

THOMAS F. BEST

Pastor of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) · Director of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches from 1984 to 2017

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Thursday · 15 December 2022

(In Case You Missed It) The “Ecumenical Winter” is Over

(25th annual Conference in honor of the Servant of God Paul Wattson and Lurana White)

Introduction

At my age you will forgive me for hoping that you do not regard this evening as an exercise in the veneration of relics! But now, more seriously:

I begin, as at every ecumenical occasion, with a prayer for the safety of Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim and Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi, kidnapped by gunmen on 23 April, several years ago, when they were on their way back from the Turkish border to their city of Aleppo. We await news of their fate. They are not forgotten; thank you for remembering them with me and keeping them in your prayers.



Thomas F. Best

Photo Credits
Archive Centro Pro Unione

MEDIA

Lecture video

www.prounione.it/webtv/live/15-dec-2022

Audio podcast

Conference · bit.ly/Best-Podcast-Lecture-Dec-2022

Q&A · bit.ly/Best-Podcast-QA-Dec-2022

What an honor it is to speak to you at the Centro again. I last spoke for the 50th anniversary of the Centro, concluding my presentation with Mother Lurana White’s comment in 1916, about the Society of the Atonement having created an Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity.

I often think that if the Society of the Atonement had never done another thing, this [Church Unity Octave] alone is a great work of God, so far reaching in its effects as to baffle our weighting its influence either now or in the days to come.¹

Thus it’s especially meaningful to me to be speaking now at your Twenty-Fifth Annual Conference in Honor of Paul Wattson and Lurana White. Thank you, Fr. Puglisi, Jim, for your invitation.

Before I begin I have to confess that I never quite believed in the notion of an “ecumenical Winter”, understood as a time when little or nothing is happening. After all, Winter is the time when things are lying fallow, gathering resources and strength for the time of growth ahead. And there is, after all, that ultimate word on Winter, the two-line poem by the great, enigmatic United States poet Emily Dickinson:

Winter under cultivation

Is as arable as Spring.²

1 See THOMAS F. BEST, “The Week of Prayer: Faithful Witness – and Challenge – to the Ecumenical Movement”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 91 (2017) 3-10. Quotation, p. 10

2 *Emily Dickinson’s Poems: as She Preserved Them*, edited by Christiane Miller, (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998).

But unfortunately the term “ecumenical Winter” stuck and, despite all the “cultivating” we’ve actually been doing, it has shaped the way the ecumenical movement thinks about itself - and not always in helpful ways. So I hope that tonight we can put that language behind us and look forward.

Let me begin by first noting (in roughly chronological order) my personal “ecumenical fundamentals”, the principles and events which, for me, continue to inspire and challenge the ecumenical enterprise today. Then second, to look at some of the challenges and critiques we face and third, to justify the very bold title of this presentation by reminding us of just some of the many recent achievements the ecumenical movement has made. And fourth and finally, to end with a note of hope - and challenge - as we move forward ecumenically.

Ecumenical Fundamentals

Allow me to begin this section with a personal experience. Long ago and far away I arrived at an ecumenical conference, and met a local pastor also attending the event. As we talked it became clear that the meeting was for him an escape from his familiar, daily, routine parish duties, a kind of holiday, if you will. So, when he asked me, “And what do you do in Real Life?” I said instinctively, unthought: “For me this *is* Real Life” - and recognized at that moment that ecumenism was not just my job, but my *vocation*, the place I felt best called to serve Christ’s Church.

But not only individuals have this ecumenical vocation; it is first and foremost the vocation of the One Church of Jesus Christ. And while the Church could not lose that vocation - it is intrinsic to its nature - the churches *could* lose that vocation, and had lost it over the centuries. The twentieth century was, then, the century in which the churches rediscovered their ecumenical vocation and began to practice it anew. So, my first ecumenical fundamental is that **ecumenism is a vocation** we practice, not just a job we do.

This is of course based upon a second fundamental, our **biblical mandate for unity**, expressed in Jesus’ prayer in John 17:21 “that they may all be one...so that the world may believe that you have sent me”. Thus, unity is not only

intrinsic to the One Church, but also the basis of its credibility before the world. And the unity given by God has to be made visible and effective in the actual lives of the churches today.

My third ecumenical fundamental is the **Week of Prayer**, beginning as early as 1910 with the Episcopalian Paul Wattson and brought with him into the Catholic church through his conversion to Rome. But meanwhile Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ and other Protestants brought the vision of prayer for unity into the nascent Faith and Order movement, so that parallel streams of prayer for unity, Catholic and Protestant, flourished through the 1920s. The time was ripe, then, for Abbé Couturier’s vision: not of a preconceived form of unity as simply a “return to Rome”, but of “the unity Christ wills, and by the means which Christ wills”. It’s no longer a hidden secret that already in the 1950s the Ecumenical Center in Lyon, and Faith and Order in Geneva, were quietly preparing together a common Week of Prayer text; of course, this became the open norm after the Second Vatican Council, culminating in not just parallel publication, but joint publication of the materials by the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It stands, I believe, as the longest-running common ecumenical project within and among Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches.³ And it is a powerful exemplar of what we now call “spiritual ecumenism”.⁴

A fourth ecumenical fundamental is the **Edinburgh Missionary Conference** of 1910 with its call for co-operation rather than competition in what were then called the “mission fields” - but also for the memorable witness by Chang Ching-Yi of Beijing to the desire for local unity among the missionary-founded churches and, already in 1910, a powerful indictment of the missionary

3 THOMAS F. BEST, “The Week of Prayer: Faithful Witness - and Challenge - to the Ecumenical Movement”. See also ELEUTERIO F. FORTINO, “La preghiera per l’unità da P. Paul Wattson al Concilio Vaticano II e alla collaborazione con il Consiglio Ecumenico delle Chiese”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 70 (2006) 3-10.

4 See for example WALTER KASPER, *A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press of the Focolare, 2007).

enterprise as having imported the divisions of the Western churches into the Global South.⁵

A fifth fundamental is the **Encyclical “Unto the Churches of Christ Everywhere”** of the Ecumenical Patriarchate from 1920, stressing the need to rekindle and strengthen love among the churches, “to obtain a better knowledge of them”, and a “willingness to offer mutual aid and help”. This remarkable and prophetic Orthodox statement marked the unequivocal commitment of Orthodoxy to the ecumenical movement. It can be seen as the basis of what we now call “mutual accountability”.⁶

A sixth fundamental is the definition of **“Organic Unity”** from the Second World Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh in 1937.⁷ This explicitly rejects “a compact governmental union involving rigid uniformity” and offers instead a vision of “the unity of a living organism, with the diversity characteristic of the members of a healthy body”. Note well: the word “organic” does not impose a preconceived unity, rather it protects our diversity within an overall ecclesial framework. It continues:

In a Church so united the ultimate loyalty of every member would be given to the whole body and not to any [one] part of it. Its members would move freely from one part to another and find every privilege of membership open to them. The sacraments would be the sacraments of the whole body. The ministry would be accepted by all as a ministry of the whole body.⁸

Is this not finally the goal of our search for Christian unity today: sharing the gifts of our respective ecclesial traditions while offering a common and credible witness and service to the

world, within a common framework of confession of the one faith, mutual recognition of sacraments and ministries, and an appropriate structure for common deliberation and decision-making?

A seventh fundamental is the **witness of United and Uniting Churches**: churches, once divided, now united within a single ecclesial structure. Perhaps the most dramatic ecclesiological witness is the Church of South India, formed in 1947 from diverse Protestant churches including both Presbyterians and the Anglican church - thus incorporating the office of a sacramentally-understood bishop within the structure of the united church. (It is indeed possible for Anglicans and Presbyterians to live together within a single, united church!). The great ecumenical theologian and missionary bishop Lesslie Newbigin described his ecclesial anguish upon returning to his native England after long service in India in this way:

For twenty-seven years I had been a bishop in the Church of South India... we had been innocent enough to hope that three decades would be enough to enable the divided churches in England to catch up with India. For all these years [in the united Church of South India] we had lived in a fellowship where the treasures of the Anglican, Methodist, and Reformed traditions were all ours to share. [Now back in England] we faced the painful necessity of choosing which [denominational] slot to go into.⁹

This is the most poignant statement of the longing for Christian unity that I know.

The **Founding of the World Council of Churches** in 1948 is of course an eighth ecumenical fundamental: here I want simply to stress its bringing a wide range of Protestants and Orthodox together at a common table; its bringing the diverse ecumenical movements of Faith and Order and Life and Work together; and then incorporating the ecumenical Mission and Education movements. It has become the broadest platform - the institutional basis - for much of what Protestants, Orthodox, and Catholics have achieved since the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement.

5 THOMAS F. BEST, “A Tale of Two Edinburghs: Mission, Unity, and Mutual Accountability”, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 46 (2011) 311-328, see especially 315.

6 “‘Unto the Churches of Christ Everywhere’, Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 1920”, in *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*, 2nd Edition, ed. by Michael Kinnamon, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2016) 73.

7 *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937*, ed. by Leonard Hodgson, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938) 252-253.

8 *The Second World Conference*, 252.

9 LESSLIE NEWBIGIN, *Unfinished Agenda: An Updated Autobiography* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1993) 230.

A ninth fundamental is the “**Lund Principle**” from the Third World Conference on Faith and Order in Lund, Sweden in 1951:

A faith in the one Church of Christ which is not implemented by acts of obedience is dead. There are truths about the nature of God and His Church which will remain for ever closed to us unless we act together in obedience to the unity which is already ours...Should not our churches ask themselves...whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?¹⁰

At one stroke the focus was shifted from how the churches differ, to the conviction that we have a sufficient basis in faith for common mission, diakonia, and social witness to be the *norm*, with divided action by the churches the *exception*. Since then the Lund Principle has taken on a life of its own and serves now as a basis for our ecumenical engagement including, where possible, common confession and worship. Like many memorable ecumenical statements, it is put as a question – in effect, a challenge. I promise you a dramatic example later on of how Lund continues to bear fruit in the ecumenical movement today.

A tenth fundamental is the 1963 **Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order** at Montreal with its distinction between the Christian *Tradition* and the manifold Christian *traditions* in which it has historically been expressed. This is to say that all churches are beholden to something higher than themselves: to the One Church of Jesus Christ, to something which every church, with its own distinctive charisms and history, seeks to embody in its own faith and life.¹¹ A first corollary is: no single church has the full richness of the One Church of Jesus Christ; the churches need each

other’s gifts to be, together, the One Church of Jesus Christ. Recognizing our need for one another has become a foundation for our ecumenical life together.

A second corollary is: unity and diversity belong together within the One Church of Jesus Christ. At Montreal the distinguished Catholic Biblical scholar Raymond Brown showed the essential unity among the local churches, and streams of thought and practice, reflected in the New Testament. And then the equally distinguished Protestant Biblical Scholar Ernst Käsemann showed the actual diversity of faith and practice within those same early texts and churches.¹² Thus living with the tension between unity and diversity has also become foundational for our ecumenical life together.

An eleventh fundamental is the **Second Vatican Council** during the 1960s, marking the official and unequivocal commitment of the Catholic church to the ecumenical movement. Several things were of particular ecumenical importance: first the affirmation of valid baptism as the fundamental bond of unity among all Christians and the consequent recognition of all the baptized, in whatever church, as members of the One Church of Jesus Christ. Second, the recognition of elements of the “true church” within many churches outside the Catholic church. (Speaking frankly, this was a step which seemed minimalist to many Protestants, especially when coupled with language describing us as “ecclesial communities” rather than “churches”. But I recognize this as a very significant and welcome step for the Catholic church to take). Third, the commitment of the Catholic church to engage in bi-lateral dialogues with a very wide range of ecumenical partners, as I will note later on. And fourth, Vatican II opened the way for Catholic participation in councils of churches at all levels, including the World Council of Churches. This has meant, for example, official Catholic membership in the WCC Faith and Order Commission, so that Faith and Order texts since Vatican II reflect a strong Catholic (as well as Protestant and Orthodox) input.

10 “A Word to the Churches”, in *Third World Conference on Faith and Order, Held at Lund August 15th to 28th, 1952* (London: SCM Press, 1953) 16.

11 “Report of Section II: Scripture, Tradition and Traditions”, in *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order: Montreal 1963*, ed. by P. C. Rodger & Lukas Vischer, Faith and Order Paper, 42 (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1964) §§39, 50.

12 *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order: Montreal 1963*, 16-17.

A twelfth fundamental is the **ecumenical witness of the churches for justice and peace**. Among countless examples this may be exemplified by the common stand of the churches from the 1970s against the apartheid regime in South Africa, with its heretical theological and Biblical “justification” of apartheid. Nelson Mandela hailed the churches’ common witness as essential to the dismantling of apartheid. Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order at Santiago de Compostella in 1993 witnessed famously that “apartheid is too strong for a divided church”.¹³ The ecumenical experience is that when the churches do unite in their prophetic witness, they can speak powerfully and effectively to our broken and divided world.

And thirteenth and finally, **Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry** (1982)¹⁴ is of course an ecumenical fundamental. As the first of only two Faith and Order “Convergence” texts, BEM is celebrated first for recognizing the churches’ common intention, expressed in varying practices, in baptism as incorporation into the whole Church, and the beginning of our life-long growth into Christ; second for affirming the centrality of the eucharist and the churches’ common conviction, however understood, that Christ is present at His own eucharistic table;¹⁵ and third for making clear that all churches have structures of oversight and governance, however differently understood and practiced. Beyond this, BEM has made crystal clear that our most intractable ecumenical problem is our different understandings of the *nature of the church itself*, in particular its structure and governance. Not to mince words: is a specific structure of the church – including bishops in apostolic succession – intrinsic to its nature, in

essence a part of divine revelation? Or, while the calling and missing of the church are divine and enduring, can the church be called to express itself in different structural forms in different historical circumstances?¹⁶

Besides these points I want also to stress that BEM insists on the relation of Christian faith to Christian witness and action, as exemplified in its remarkable evocation of the social consequences of the Eucharist:

The eucharist embraces all aspects of life. The eucharistic celebration demands reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded as brothers and sisters in the one family of God...all kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom are radically challenged when we share in the body and blood of Christ.¹⁷

Thus, BEM is a basis not only for our theological and ecclesiological reflection on the unity of Christ’s church, but for the churches’ united witness for justice and peace.

This personal list of ecumenical “fundamentals” could be extended, but these are the principles and events I find especially significant – and challenging – for our ecumenical situation today.

The Challenges We Face

But while we have much to celebrate, the fact is that both for the churches and the ecumenical movement face unprecedented challenges. In 2023 we no longer live in the world of “Christendom”, the world in which the ecumenical movement was born and developed. No one as analyzed this more perceptively than Bishop Brian Farrell, speaking at this very podium in January of 2020. Drawing on the second Faith and Order Convergence text, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*¹⁸ of 2013, he noted three developments which have been “particularly challenging to the

13 *On the Way to Fuller Koininía: Official Report of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, Santiago de Compostela 1993*, Thomas F. Best and Günther Gassmann, eds., Faith and Order Paper, 166 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994) 96.

14 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, 25th anniversary printing*, Faith and Order Paper, 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982-2007).

15 Geoffrey Wainwright is reputed to have said, and memorably, that “the Eucharist is not a meal from which the Host is absent”.

16 The issue endures, even after 40 years of intensive work. See footnote 42, below.

17 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, “Eucharist”, §20.

18 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, Faith and Order Paper, 214 (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2013) §7.

Church's mission and self-understanding":

First, "the global secularizing culture" in which "God is not necessary, the Church is merely a maintainer of traditions that have little to do with the real life-choices of people today. Society should be organized without any reference to transcendent truths or values";

Second, "the development of social media in which "views are no longer based on reality and experience but on virtual reality and the emotions virtual reality, not real reality, arouses... [this] diminishes the sense of committed belonging, for example in interpersonal relationships and in bonding with a particular church"; and

Third, a "religious pluralism" in which "all religions are present everywhere... and civil legislation more and more requires that they be treated as equally valid, and equally irrelevant in determining social values and laws".¹⁹

In short, as I would put it for today: *we have the answers, but people are simply asking the questions.* Indeed, the very questions themselves – about the meaning of life, about living rightly and justly, about helping myself and others to flourish, about a belonging and destiny beyond this material life – seem increasingly irrelevant to people's lives today. Or perhaps they are indeed asking the questions, but in ways which we do not understand?

Even among devout churchgoers our ecumenical endeavors may seem irrelevant, as Bishop Walter Kasper himself noted, again speaking at this very podium: "...we are often too concerned with our own old problems which are perhaps of interest for theologically trained people but of no relevance for normal people, instead of taking up the very existential problems of the people, including often enough our own faithful".²⁰ This is

especially true among young people who, as Sarah Coakley notes, "if they have maintained their Christian practice at all, are weary of ecclesiastical divisions which they see as a diversion from the urgent, indeed potentially catastrophic, spiritual and political challenges of our day".²¹

And while through God's grace some churches are flourishing in the Global South, Brian Farrell is right in saying that secularism and relativism

are not just ideas being propounded by elites. They are now the dominant organizing criteria of not only the Western First World, but more and more are becoming a global aspiration. Peoples everywhere tend to identify the freedom and development they yearn for with this secularizing trend. Secularization seems to promise release from rules and limits. Religion with its demands begins to feel intolerable".²²

Even the churches themselves may find our ecumenical exertions of little interest for their perceived needs: I spoke about *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* at the Pacific Conference of Churches in 1986, explicating its deft and skillful handling of the classic theological and ecclesiological causes of division among the churches. Afterwards a delegate arose and said, "Thank you, Faith and Order, for sending us *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*: until you sent us BEM *we never knew we had these problems*". The churches there enjoyed a flourishing ecumenical life, largely untroubled by the theological and ecclesiological divisions imposed by the Northern missionizing churches which had founded them.

And beyond this, and more radically, is the rise of a "Global Christianity" movement through which churches in the Global South are finding their own indigenous voice – a voice increasingly critical of the churches in the North and of an ecumenism seen to serve their interests. In this "post-colonialist" view, the ecclesial divisions of the North are not simply irrelevant for churches in the South, but a source of oppression for the

19 BRIAN FARRELL, "The Ecumenism of Pope Francis", *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 97 (2020) 5-10, Quotation, 5.

20 WALTER KASPER, "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2001: I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life –Homily–", *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 59 (2001) 30-31, Quotation, 30.

21 SARAH COAKLEY, "Brief Response to *Sorores in spe*: What does this Mean for Theology, for Theological Education, for Parishes and Communities?", *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 101 (2022) 73-75, Quotation, 74.

22 BRIAN FARRELL, "The Ecumenism of Pope Francis", 5.



☒ Society of the Atonement co-founders

📷 Photo Credits
Archive Centro Pro Unione

Southern churches. In some quarters calls can be heard for a “letting go” of the “old ecumenism” – meaning *us*, those committed to traditional ecumenism – in order that a “new ecumenism” may be born. In particular Dale T. Irwin has called for “an ecumenism of inexpediency”, an ecumenism which grapples with issues which our traditional ecumenism has ignored and avoided.²³

This is harsh language, and engaging with it is beyond the scope of my presentation, but I hope to show that the traditional ecumenical movement is hearing this critique and beginning to address the challenges it poses.

Recent Achievements on our Ecumenical Journey

This brings me to what we may call recent signs of ecumenical flourishing. First and most

basic is the fact that **ecumenism is embedded in the lives of the churches today**. In churches engaged ecumenically, most of the faithful think of themselves as baptized into Christ and as members of Christ’s one body, the Church, and not their own particular denomination. And the churches think of themselves as expressions of Christ’s one body: Susan Durber notes that the ordination service of her own church, the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom, asks candidates to promise “to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always to build up the one holy, catholic, and apostolic church”.²⁴ Our vision is increasingly of the whole church, not just our “own” particular part of it.

A second sign is **the churches’ growing interdependence and mutual encouragement and support**, as evidenced in the words of Munib Younan, the Palestinian Bishop of the of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (and former President of the Lutheran World Federation) and an activist for peace with justice. His message was: “Keep sending us Faith and Order and other ecumenical texts. First, they show us that we are not alone in our Christian witness, that we are supported by churches around the world. And second, they remind us of whose we are: that we are not just another social service agency, but we serve the world as Christians, motivated by Christ’s love for the world”. Our ecumenical relationships are indeed active, and bear rich fruit.

A third sign is **our continued worshipping together**, as our ecclesial disciplines allow. Among Protestant churches within the ecumenical movement, ecclesial agreements now give full access to worship, including participation in the eucharist. More broadly, most churches Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox welcome one another to their services of the word, and common Services of the Word are just that – common – in ecumenical contexts. Thanks to the Liturgical Renewal Movement many churches now share a common basic structure and indeed language for worship, including for the eucharist. The very

23 DALE T. IRWIN, “God’s Terrible Springtime: Ecumenical Reflections”, *Ecumenical Trends*, 51 (2022) 21-23 and 31. See also R. C. BARRETO, “How World Christianity Saved the Ecumenical Movement”, in *Protestantism em Revista*, 46 (2021) 222-242, especially 231.

24 SUSAN DURBER, “A New Theme for the World Council of Churches: Towards a Heartfelt Ecumenism”, *Ecumenical Trends*, 51 (2022) 14-17. Quotation, p. 15, citing *Worship: from The United Reformed Church* (London: United Reformed Church, 2003) 271.

hymns we sing testify to our oneness in Christ: do you know that a widely-used Catholic hymnal includes the hymn “By Gracious Powers So Wonderfully Sheltered”, a setting by the British Methodist F. Pratt Green of a poem by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran pastor martyred for his opposition to the Nazi regime? Or that that the official Disciples of Christ in the United States and Canada hymnal includes, among its great store of material for use in worship, a poem by St. Irenaeus of Lyon?²⁵ You will hear the poem at the conclusion of my presentation.

A fourth sign of ecumenical flourishing is **the breadth and depth of bilateral dialogues and other conversations** now underway.²⁶ As issues central to further progress we have identified the nature of the Church itself, and in particular its sacramentality,²⁷ as well as the validity and exercise of ministries within the Church. Currently the notion of “Differentiated Consensus” is helping us address the vexed question of (from the Catholic point of view) the validity of ministries in Protestant churches.²⁸ And within the framework of the Malines Conversations, Catholics and Anglicans are discussing the equally vexed question of the validity of Anglican ministerial orders.²⁹ And now we even have a discussion of the highly sensitive question of the means of salvation: Catholics acknowledge Protestant churches as offering a means of salvation; but is that salvation somehow

mediated through the Catholic church, as some interpretations of Vatican II suggest, or does it come directly through the Protestant churches themselves?³⁰

I want briefly to mention a dialogue which is close to my own heart, the **Disciples - Catholic Dialogue** which our two churches have pursued since 1977 and which has emerged as a model of (mostly) irenic exploration and engagement. Our goal is nothing less than the full visible unity of our two communions, expressed in a common eucharistic celebration; we have, wisely I think, stopped short of suggesting what structural form that unity might take. Since our beginning, and virtually alone among Protestant churches, Disciples of Christ have understood the frequent (at least weekly) celebration of the Eucharist as the center and foundation of our church’s life. Disciples and Catholics differ in a great many respects, but we are united in our regular eucharistic practice and in our conviction that Christ is present at His Table. I can think of no more solid basis for dialogue between churches,³¹ and no more urgent goal than our common celebration of the eucharist – would not that be truly the end of our “ecumenical Winter”?

A fifth sign is the growing exercise of **Mutual Accountability** amongst the churches: the profound and challenging principle that we have moved beyond mutual recognition of one another as members of Christ’s one body, the Church, to the point where we are *accountable to one another* within that one body. We recognize that we each need each other, and each other’s gifts, to be fully the One Church of Jesus Christ and that this fact has consequences: for example, that churches need to consider the impact of their own decisions (even “internal” decisions) upon other churches

25 “By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered,” in *Worship*, 3rd ed., Robert J. Batastini, ed., (Chicago: GIA Publications, 1986) No. 577; and *Chalice Hymnal*, (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1995) No. 262.





26 WALTER KASPER, *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue*, (London/New York: Continuum, 2009).

27 See *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Faith, “Ministry”*, §§1-55; *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, Faith and Order Paper, 149 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), 74-88, 120-130, and 147-151; and *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, §§45-57.

28 See WILLIAM HENN, “A Reached Differentiated Consensus on the Concrete Sacramental Structures of the Church? A Catholic Approach”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 95 (2019) 40-42.

29 See among others SARAH COAKLEY, “Brief Responses to *Sorores in spe*, 73-75.

30 See the discussion of this point by WILLIAM HENN, “A Reached Differentiated Consensus...”, 42.

31 See  <https://bit.ly/3TaVNLU>  URL Retrieved: 22 February 2024 and  <https://bit.ly/3UUwNJL>  URL Retrieved: 22 February 2024.

and their ecumenical relationships.³² Of course churches must finally act according to their own conviction and conscience, but we affirm a new sense of responsibility to our ecumenical partners within the one Body of Christ.

A sixth sign is the powerful witness offered by **church leaders speaking together**. From the mission movement comes the text “**Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World**’, Recommendations from the World Council of Churches, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and the World Evangelical Alliance, 2011”.³³ Produced with strong input from “evangelical” churches, it is a most hopeful sign of increasing cooperation among a growing range of churches. Understood as a “tool” for mission agencies rather than a policy or theological statement, it focuses on the proclamation of the Gospel as our common task, on mutual respect among the churches engaging in mission together, and above all on respect for those to whom we bring our message of salvation in Jesus Christ.

And from the churches’ concern for creation comes the remarkable ecumenical statement “**A Joint Message for Protection of Creation**” issued 1 September 2021 by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, Pope Francis, and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin. They write, “This is the first time that the three of us feel compelled to address together the urgency of environmental sustainability, its impact on persistent poverty, and the importance of global cooperation.” Speaking truth to power, the statement is most pointed in its appeal

To those with more far-reaching responsibilities—[persons] heading administrations, running companies, employing people or investing funds—we say: choose people-centered profits; make short-term sacrifices to safeguard all our futures; become leaders in the transition to just and sustainable economies. “To whom much is given, much is required.” (Lk 12:48).

And it concludes:

Again, we recall Scripture: ‘choose life, so that you and your children may live’ (Dt 30:19). Choosing life means making sacrifices and exercising self-restraint...All of us—whoever and wherever we are—can play a part... Caring for God’s creation is a spiritual commission requiring a response of commitment. This is a critical moment. Our children’s future and the future of our common home depend on it.”³⁴

A seventh sign is efforts to **Broaden the Ecumenical Table**, for example the Global Christian Forum formed through the impetus of none other than the then WCC General Secretary Konrad Raiser. It now brings together an exceptional breadth of Christian traditions and organizations, including many not previously engaged ecumenically.³⁵ And this has spawned parallel initiatives in local contexts, for example Christian Churches Together in the United States which brings together Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal, historic Black, and Mainline Protestant Communities & organizations and claims now to be “the broadest fellowship of Christian communions in the country.”³⁶ So far they have chosen, wisely I think, to focus on developing mutual understanding and making what common witness they can agree upon, rather than discussing divisive doctrinal issues.

I want to conclude these signs of ecumenical flourishing with two of special importance. Thus an eighth sign is the second Faith and Order

32 JOHN A. RADANO, “Mutual Accountability: Building Together on the Achievements of the Ecumenical Movement”, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 47 (2012) 333-354; THOMAS F. BEST, “From Mutual Recognition to Mutual Accountability: A Next Step for the Ecumenical Movement”, *Towards Unity: Ecumenical Dialogue 500 Years after the Reformation, Essays in Honor of Monsignor John A. Radano*, ed. by Donald Bolen, Nicholas Jesson, and Donna Geernaert, SC, (New York / Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2017) 323-343 and “A Tale of Two Edinburghs...”, 326-328; OLAV F. TVEIT, “Renewed Mission of the WCC in the Search for Christian Unity”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 80 (2011) 30-35, esp. 32-34 and “What Does Mutual Accountability Mean for Christians and the Christian Life?”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 95 (2019) 12-16.

33 See <https://bit.ly/42SaR3X> URL Retrieved: 22 February 2024.

34 *Ecumenical Trends*, 51 (2022) 1-3, Quotations, p. 3.

35 HUIBERT VAN BEEK, “Breaking New Ground: The Global Christian Forum”, in *Towards Unity: Ecumenical Dialogue 500 Years after the Reformation, Essays in Honor of Monsignor John A. Radano*, 357-375.

36 <https://www.christianchurchestogether.org>

“convergence” text *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*,³⁷ issued in 2013. The result of long years of reflection by Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox³⁸ it represents the ecumenical movement’s most recent effort to say what we can say together about the One Church of Jesus Christ, and to name the problems still to be resolved in order that our unity may be visible, convincing, and effective in witness and service to the world.

The document draws especially on recent Faith and Order work on baptism as the basis for our common belonging to Christ’s Church,³⁹ and stresses the missionary nature of the church.⁴⁰ Perhaps its greatest achievement is in exploring, in light of 30 years of bilateral and other discussions since BEM, the classic Joint Working Group statement of “The ecclesial elements required for full communion within a visibly united church – the goal of the ecumenical movement”. These are identified as:

communion in the fulness of apostolic faith; in sacramental life; in a truly one and mutually recognized ministry; in structures of conciliar relations and decision-making; and in common witness and service in the world”.⁴¹

In addition the text is especially helpful in its clear discussion of our inability, as yet, to agree on a single pattern of ministry to serve the One Church of Jesus Christ: we agree, “more or less explicitly, on the threefold pattern of *episkopos-prestyteros-diakonos*”. But even after 40 years of intensive work, we remain divided as to whether the “historic episcopate”, i.e. bishops ordained in apostolic succession, is necessary.⁴²

The Church: Towards a Common Vision was published now a surprising 9 years ago, and in the meantime it has spurred Faith and Order to extensive and intensive activity. As with BEM all the responses, from churches most importantly but also from councils of churches and other groups have been published,⁴³ together with an initial⁴⁴ and now a final summary of what we have learned from the process.

This last document is *What Are the Churches Saying About the Church?: Key Findings and Proposals from the Responses to The Church: Towards a Common Vision*.⁴⁵ It is, if you will, our “response to the responses” and rejoices in the fact that we can now affirm together “that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic; that it is by its very nature missionary; and that the Church is called to fulfil its vocation in witness, worship, and discipleship in fidelity to God and in service to the world.”⁴⁶

37 See footnote 17, above.

38 See *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement*, Faith and Order Paper, 181 (Geneva: WCC/Faith and Order, 1998), and *The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement*, Faith and Order Paper, 198 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005).

39 *One Baptism: Towards Mutual Recognition, A Study Text*, Faith and Order Paper, 210 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2011). See also *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, p. viii.

40 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, §§1-10.

41 See *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, §37, including the extensive and detailed footnote 2. Note also the excellent review of the TCTCV process from a Catholic perspective by WILLAIM HENN, “‘Capturing the Reality in its Entirety’ (Ut Unum Sint 38), *Towards a Common Vision of the Church* (Faith and Order Text 2013)”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 85 (2014) 3-12, as well as *Receiving The Nature and Mission of the Church: Ecclesial Reality and Ecumenical Horizons for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. by Paul M. Collins and Michael A. Fahey, (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2008).

42 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, §§46-47. See the discussion of BEM and footnote 16 above.

43 *Churches Respond to The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, Volume I, Faith and Paper, 231, ed. by Rev. Dr Ellen Wondra, Rev. Dr Stephanie Dietrich, Dr Ani Ghazaryan Drissi, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2021); *Churches Respond to The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, Volume II, Faith and Order Paper, 232, ed. by Rev. Dr Ellen Wondra, Rev. Dr Stephanie Dietrich, Dr Ani Ghazaryan Drissi, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2021).

44 *Common Threads: Key Themes from Responses to The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, Faith and Order Paper, 233, ed. by Ellen Wondra, Stephanie Dietrich, Ani Ghazaryan Drissi, (Geneva, World Council of Churches, 2021).

45 Faith and Order Paper, 236, (Geneva, World Council of Churches Publications, 2021).

46 “What Are the Churches Saying About the Church?”, §3.

But it also acknowledges the critiques of “traditional ecumenism” which we heard earlier from the “Global Christianity” movement:

“The Faith and Order Commission, recognizing that so much of world Christianity has not yet engaged with the text of TCTCV or with this ecumenical conversation on ecclesiology, has also set out intentionally and proactively to engage more churches from regions and from traditions that represent some of the fastest-growing parts of global Christianity, whose voices have not always been clearly or strongly part of the conversation...this is an essential, and urgent, part of the future ecumenical reception of TCTCV, and of the whole ecumenical movement...the ecumenical movement...sorely needs the voices of those who have not historically been part of it, if it is truly to be, in every sense, ecumenical, and to speak within and for global Christianity.”⁴⁷

We must also note other and complementary work by Faith and Order. The studies on “Moral Discernment” are tackling the sensitive ethical and moral issues now causing so much division within and among churches.⁴⁸ These studies do not take positions on divisive issues; rather they help churches understand how their ecumenical partners have arrived at their own – and perhaps very different or even opposed – positions on those issues, as a basis for understanding and further discussion among churches. This project

has been extensively documented,⁴⁹ and of course follows on from earlier Faith and Order work, notably *Church and World: The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community* from 1990.⁵⁰

Lastly to point to two of Faith and Order’s most recent texts: *Cultivate and Care: An Ecumenical Theology of Justice for and within Creation*,⁵¹ which anticipated and prepared for the joint statement on Creation by the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Holy Father, and the Archbishop of Canterbury mentioned above; and *Towards a Global Vision of the Church*, a direct engagement with issues of the “World Christianity” movement mentioned above.⁵²

49 As an excellent overview see MYRIAM WIJLENS, “Facilitating Dialogue to build Koinonia: A Study Document on Churches and Moral Discernment by the Faith and Order Commission”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 99 (2021) 12-27. See also *Churches and Moral Discernment, Volume 1: Learning from Traditions*, ed. by Myriam Wijlens and Vladimir Shmaliy, Faith and Order Paper, 228 (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2021); *Churches and Moral Discernment, Volume 2: Learning from History*, ed. by Myriam Wijlens, Vladimir Shmaliy, and Simone Sinn, Faith and Order Paper, 229 (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2021); and *Churches and Moral Discernment, Volume 3: Facilitating Dialogue to Build Koinonia*, Faith and Order Paper, 235 (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2021).

50 Faith and Order Paper, 151 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990). See also GÜNTHER GASSMANN, “The Search for Christian Unity and Common Moral Orientations: Three Case Studies”, *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 51 (1997) 3-9; *Christian Perspectives on Theological Anthropology: A Faith and Order Study Document*, Faith and Order Paper, 199 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005); and *Participating in God’s Mission of Reconciliation: A Resource for Churches in Situations of Conflict: A Faith and Order Study Document*, Faith and Order Paper, 201 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2006).

51 *Cultivate and Care: An Ecumenical Theology of Justice for and within Creation*, Faith and Order Paper, 226 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2020).

52 *Towards a Global Vision of the Church, Volume I: Explorations on Global Christianity and Ecclesiology*, ed. by Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., Sotirios Boukis, and Ani Ghazaryan Drissi, Faith and Order Paper, 234 (Geneva, World Council of Churches, 2022).

47 “What Are the Churches Saying About the Church?”, §5.

48 *Moral Discernment in the Churches: A Study Document*, Faith and Order Paper, 215 (Geneva, WCC Publications, 2013); *Sources of Authority, Vol. 1: The Early Church*, ed. by Tamara Grdzeldze, Faith and Order Paper, 217 (Geneva, World Council of Churches Publications, 2014), and *Sources of Authority, Vol. 2: Contemporary Churches*, Faith and Order Paper, 218 (Geneva, World Council of Churches Publications, 2014).

And now, happily, a ninth final and vibrant sign of ecumenical flourishing: the **Ecumenical Quest of Pope Francis**, which I consider a gift to the whole of Christ's Church. Again we are in Brian Farrell's debt, this time for showing us Pope Francis' path to ecumenism: "In Francis' vision of the Church *Christian unity* plays a central part. But it was not always that way. Pope Francis came to ecumenism by way of a personal 'conversion', inspired by his personal contacts among a wide range of Catholics and non-Catholics alike in Buenos Aires".⁵³ (A wide range indeed, by all accounts involving charismatic Catholics, Evangelical and other Protestants, and a Jewish rabbi).

If I may put it this way – it endears him to me – I like to think of Pope Francis as having "the enthusiasm of the convert" to the ecumenical cause. A vivid example is his reference to non-Catholic Christians in his Homily at Vespers in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls on 18 January 2019, marking the opening of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

It is easy to forget the fundamental equality existing among us: that once we were all slaves to sin, that the Lord saved us in baptism and called us his children. It is easy to think that the spiritual grace granted us is our property, something to which we are due, our property. The gifts we have received from God can also blind us to the gifts given to other Christians. It is a grave sin to belittle or despise the gifts that the Lord has given our brothers and sisters, and to think that God somehow holds them in less esteem. When we entertain such thoughts, we allow the very grace we have received to become a source of pride, injustice and division. And how can we then enter the promised kingdom?⁵⁴

And in particular I note his remarks during his visit to the World Council of Churches in June 2018, which he concluded by calling us to ask ourselves, "What can we do together? If a particular form of service is possible, why not

plan and carry it out together, and thus start to experience a more intense fraternity in the exercise of concrete charity?"⁵⁵ And so we come full circle, with Pope Francis affirming that touchstone of the ecumenical movement, the Lund Principle of 1951, stating that churches doing things together should be the norm of our lives as churches rather than the *exception*.⁵⁶ His impulse is that "the churches *cannot wait for ecumenical agreement to be achieved before they preach the gospel to every creature*, and in doing so 'grow' the unity they already have".⁵⁷

Conclusion

I spoke earlier about the 20th century as the century in which the churches rediscovered their ecumenical vocation. My further conviction is that the 21st century – our century – will be the century in which the churches realize that vocation and become truly the One Church of Jesus Christ.

Through the grace of God we have achieved a great deal, but we dare not remain satisfied with our present ecumenical structures and texts and meetings, important as they are. Perhaps the greatest challenge is for all of us, from ecumenical professionals to the faithful in our pews, to be open and ready for the ecumenical future God has in store for us. And perhaps our greatest temptation, as individuals and as the ecumenical movement, is to grow hard and fixed as we are now, within our present state.

55 See <https://bit.ly/3OTZPFY> URL Retrieved: 22 February 2024

56 But note also Pope Francis' stress in the same presentation on theological reflection, mission, and education, all also undergirding unity through the Catholic Church's membership in the WCC Faith and Order Commission, the WCC's Commission on Mission and Evangelism, and commitment to the WCC's Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

57 BRIAN FARRELL, "The Ecumenism of Pope Francis", *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin*, 97 (2020) 10. See also BRIAN FARRELL, "Are We on the Brink of a New Ecumenical Spring?", *The Tablet*, 24 January 2019, See <https://bit.ly/42MYA0V> URL Retrieved: 22 February 2024. Note not least his frank appraisal of current difficulties among Orthodox churches.

53 BRIAN FARRELL, "The Ecumenism of Pope Francis", 6-7.

54 See <https://bit.ly/3wsH5H0> URL Retrieved: 22 February 2024, emphasis mine

CONFERENCE

So let me conclude, as I promised earlier, with that poem from St. Irenaeus of Lyon. I am reading it – and this itself is a sign of ecumenical hope – from the *Chalice Hymnal*, the hymnal of my own church, the Disciples of Christ. After all we have said this evening about ecumenical fundamentals, challenges and achievements let the words of St. Irenaeus linger in your mind and heart as an inspiration and a challenge – for you personally, and for the ecumenical movement today:

It is not you who shape God;
it is God that shapes you.

If then you are the work of God,
await the hand of the Artist
who does all things in due season.
Offer the Potter your heart,
soft and tractable,
and keep the form in which
the Artist has fashioned you.
Let your clay be moist,
lest you grow hard and lose
the imprint of the Potter's fingers.



Conference presentation and Q&A

Photo Credits
Archive Centro Pro Unione



DIRK G. LANGE



Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Lutheran World Federation Thursday · 19 January 2023
and Professor of Worship and Frederik A. Schiøtz Chair of Christian Missions, Luther Seminary, USA

Baptism and Growth in Communion: Ecclesiological Implications of the latest Lutheran-Catholic Joint Commission

It is a joy to be with you today. In this special week of prayer for Christian unity, I bring you greetings from the LWF and from our General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Anne Burghardt. As you may know Catholics and Lutherans have been in dialogue since 1965. (Well, I suppose if I take a broad historical perspective, I should say the dialogue actually began over 500 years ago when Luther met Cardinal Cajetan and subsequently that search for unity leading to the AC in 1530!). But, yes, back to today, even before the end of Vatican II, a Lutheran theologian from the US, George Lindbeck, began talks with Cardinal Bea about starting a dialogue immediately. This initiative came to fruition and a dialogue did begin at the newly founded LWF Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg. The Institute brought many Lutherans and Catholics together at that time, including the young Bishop Kasper and the professor Josef Ratzinger. So, I repeat, it is a joy to continue this dialogue now almost 60 years later and be with you here today. It is also a joy for me to be again with a good friend, Jim Puglisi. We have had many encounters over the years though in a different context: the world of liturgical studies. Thank you for this invitation. Thank you for the hospitality. Thank you for making this lecture possible. And thank you to you all for being here today.

I will discuss *Baptism and Growth in Communion*. But first, allow me also to situation myself. I was the North American Lutheran representative on the Fifth Phase of the Joint Commission and the Lutheran English-speaking drafter of the text. My counterpart co-drafter was Prof. Susan Wood, whom many of you may know. She is currently at Regis College at the University of Toronto in Canada.

My lecture is divided into five sections: background, process, pneumatological impulse, baptism and ecclesiological implications, and finally paradigm shift.

MEDIA

Lecture video

www.prounione.it/webtv/live/19-jan-2023

Audio podcast

Conference · bit.ly/Lange-Podcast-Lecture-Jan-2023

I. Background

The Report of the Fifth Phase of the Lutheran-Catholic Joint Commission – *Baptism and Growth in Communion* (BGC) – was published on both the DPCU and LWF websites in April 2022. In fact, the Fifth Phase of the Joint Commission produced two reports, one of which also provided the foundation for the Joint Commemoration of the



 *Dirk G. Lange*

 Photo Credits

Archive Centro Pro Unione

500 Years of the Reformation, celebrated in the Lund Cathedral, with Pope Francis and leaders of the LWF, in October 2016.

The first report was entitled *From Conflict to Communion*. It is a significant report in that it summarizes the status of the L-C dialogue up to that point in time (it was published 10 years ago already, in 2013) covering such topics as monastic and mystical theology, justification, eucharist, ministry, Scripture and tradition. I call it a significant report because it opened the possibility not only for a theological reassessment, for example, what is the theological paradigm for an ongoing L-C dialogue but also invited into a spiritual challenge, for example, how do we (Catholics and Lutherans) actually understand ourselves and our ecclesial identity. Put more simply: how do we talk about ourselves and about each other to ourselves and to one other.

Let me take a moment to explain and review. After the signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* in 1999, the L-C Joint Commission produced the report, *The Apostolicity of the Church* (2006) under the presidency of Cardinal Walter Kasper and General Secretary Ishmael Noko. The Report cannot of course be summarized in one sentence but one important step it takes retrieves and develops a statement made in the Malta Report (the very first Report of the L-C Commission published in 1972) concerning the broadening of the notion of apostolic succession. Apostolic succession is not confined only to ministry (or a particular practice) but to the whole life of the church and its proclamation. The Report *Apostolicity* states: "Vatican II drew on Scripture and the Fathers to explain the apostolic tradition, in its objective sense, as an ensemble of gospel preaching, sacraments, different types of ministry, forms of worship, and the apostles' example of selfless service of the churches founded by the gospel" (§156). Apostolicity is faithfulness to the preaching of the gospel of justification and the practices by which gospel is embodied in ecclesial life.

Continuing on from *Apostolicity*, the new Joint Commission was first of all charged with preparing a document that could hopefully encourage and support a Joint Commemoration of the upcoming 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.

From Conflict to Communion does this by analyzing that particular Reformation moment and that particular theologian, Martin Luther, through the important scholarly work achieved in the past one hundred years by both Lutherans and Catholics. A very nuanced picture of the origin of the Reformation emerges. The task is not that of rewriting history or denying the past with its conflicts, tensions, even violence but rather remembering that history differently. In the words of FCTC: "Remembrance makes the past present. While the past itself is unalterable, the presence of the past in the present is alterable. In view of 2017, the point is not to tell a different history, but to tell that history differently" (§16). This perspective was notably reinforced in the sermon by Pope Francis at the Joint Commemoration on October 31, 2016.

FCTC invites all the faithful on a spiritual and theological journey. This journey is a spiritual challenge because it implies stepping out of one's own comfort zone, stepping out of one's usual categories of analysis and classification and, dare I say, stereotypical descriptions. It acknowledges that, in the encounter with the neighbor, something in me, in my self-understanding, in the self-understanding of my community, will change. This transformative moment is an ecumenical characteristic or truth. It is described, at the end of FCTC, in the five ecumenical imperatives: "The [ecumenical] second imperative: Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith."

With specific reference to the L-C dialogue, this transformation is, I believe, made possible initially by the JDDJ and the consensus reached on the central doctrine of justification - God's ultimate act of redemption. Justification by faith places Catholics and Lutherans (and now Methodists, Anglicans, and Reformed as well) at a table where there are no prerequisites or preconditions. We all come with our gifts and blessings, our tradition and practices, but we are all like infants at the baptismal font, naked before God. All we have is faith. This nakedness may be described in the context of ecumenical dialogue as a complete openness to listen, to discover, to grow, which are also all part of that sacramental practice we call baptism.

Throughout this period, the Fifth Phase of the Joint Commission continued its work on the topic of baptism and the possibility of a growth in communion, recognizing faith as a dynamic of the Holy Spirit. The topic flows forth quite naturally from the topic of justification, apostolicity, spiritual transformation, and recognition of each other's gifts. But the challenge was to move beyond or better yet to broaden our understanding of the individual implications of baptism to the ecclesial dimension, to demonstrate the connections between the soteriological and ecclesiological dimensions of baptism.

II. Process

As already mentioned, the Report was published online in 2022 though the work of the Commission had completed the Report in 2019 and had been carefully studied by the LWF and received at the LWF's Council Meeting in June 2019. The Report did include a special statement by an American Catholic theologian, Christian Washburn. It was not the first time a Report had a special statement, in fact, the very first report on *The Gospel and the Church* (or Malta Report) had several special statements. However, it soon became clear that this statement needed more clarification as it presented a different reading of the ecclesiology of Vatican II than did *Baptism and Growth in Communion*.

One of the first question that needed to be addressed by both sides was related to the term: mutual recognition. To respond to the concern a new preface was written by the co-chairs, Bishop Eero Houvinen (Bishop emeritus, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) and Bishop William Kenney (Aux Bishop, Archdiocese of Birmingham). In this new preface, they defined how the term "mutual recognition" is used in the document.

"Baptism is a once-for-all-beginning, and therefore it extends over the whole life of the baptized who need continuous nourishment for their Christian lives through the means of grace administered in the respective communities. Taking baptism seriously challenges the baptizing communities to examine whether they can recognize each other as members of the body of Christ. Here, the word "recognition" is not used in a canonical sense, rather, it is developed in four interacting levels."

Then co-chairs highlight certain perspectives: a theological meaning (that is, building on the results of ecumenical dialogues); an existential meaning (that is, acknowledging the presence of the means of grace in the other community, participating in them as much as currently possible); a spiritual meaning (that is, the Holy Spirit is active in the other community and creating the fruit of the Spirit within them); and finally a practical meaning (that is, acknowledging the main areas of cooperation between Lutherans and Catholics).

However, this new Preface did not address a primary concern highlighted in the critical commentary written by Prof. Wolfgang Klausnitzer. (It is customary for the now Dicastery from Promoting Christian Unity to ask for a commentary on any given Report by an ecumenist who was not part of the Commission.) Prof. Klausnitzer's full commentary is available online on the webpage of the DPCU. In it, he points out that it is unclear how "mutual recognition" is employed in the text. He asks if the Report is calling for (and I quote in rough translation from the original German) a "mutual recognition of the churches (as they currently are) on the basis of the baptism of their faithful, [that is] the model of the Leuenberg Agreement or [on the basis of] the model of a church (in the multi-faceted form of its local churches that all possess Bellarmin's three 'vincula')?" Here, I must agree and say that the term "mutual recognition" could have been more clearly defined in the text. It is one of the questions that will be addressed by a preparatory group which will begin meeting this year.

The question Klausnitzer raises actually points to the critical question that BGC raises, to which both the DPCU and the LWF recognize: what is the model of unity that we are pursuing? What do we mean by a communion of churches? I will return to this later.

Back to the chronology of event, the preface was re-written, as I said, and then the above-mentioned commentary by Klausnitzer was shared with the LWF and the Joint Commission. In response to the critical commentary, a small task of the Commission was convened. The small task force wrote a response - "A Short Reflection" - which to date has not been published but upon which I will partly draw as I outline the argument made in *Baptism and Growth in Communion*.



And, the Preamble also expresses its deep appreciation highlighting the fact that the Report and I quote “includes important pneumatological impulses for ongoing theological and ecclesiological discussion. It makes a significant step in proposing a differentiating consensus on baptism.”

As I said, the critical evaluation of the Report does not hinder our two communions on the way from conflict to communion. Dialogue matters, the Preamble states. In this current year of 2023, a preparatory group will be conducting a thorough assessment

of the situation and the text. This preparatory group is named as such because its goal is to work with the critical questions raised by BGC and thereby prepare the ground for the Sixth Phase of the Lutheran – Catholic Joint Commission.

❖ *Ecumenical Celebration of the Word*

📷 *Photo Credits*
Archive Centro Pro Unione

Finally, and most importantly, both the PCPCU and the LWF made quite clear that despite their differing appreciation of the Report, this situation was not an obstacle but actually an important step forward on the way from conflict to communion as it places us before that critical question concerning models of unity. To express both the appreciation and the differences, a Preamble was written, signed by Cardinal Koch and the former LWF General Secretary Martin Junge.

The Preamble recapitulates the situation concerning the differing approaches. I quote:

The Report was studied and received by the Council of The Lutheran World Federation in June 2019.

The Report was studied and critically evaluated by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with the assistance of experts. In the process, the Catholic side has expressed serious concerns that focus, above all, on various ecclesiological presuppositions and consequences as well as ambiguities and misunderstandings in the chosen terminology.

III. Pneumatological Impulse

a. Justification and ecclesiology

I want to focus on the affirmative statement in The Preamble which I just cited: BGC “includes important pneumatological impulses for ongoing theological and ecclesiological discussion.” It is these impulses that I would like to highlight in this lecture, focusing more on a dynamic of unity present within the text. Both the DPCU and the LWF acknowledge that BGC sets before us the critical question or the crux of our ecumenical endeavor: defining what is meant by models of unity and what exactly do we mean by a “communion of churches”.

Let’s begin with a simple summary of BGC’s working hypothesis:

Baptism and Growth in Communion starts from the mutual recognition of baptism by Lutheran and Catholic communities and explores the ecclesial consequences of this fact. Baptism does not only refer to a person’s relation to God, but it has – as incorporation into the body of Christ – an ecclesial dimension. Thus, the question arises since baptized individuals are members of body of Christ, are not the communities in which

they live their Christian lives also members of the body of Christ. (Preface)

BGC highlights the reality that baptism is more than just an individual experience. It has ecclesiological implications (incorporation into the Body of Christ, initiation into a life greater than one's own life, that is, initiation into God's work of new creation, reclaiming and reconciling all humanity and creation to God's self, becoming part of a communion, an assembly, a gathering of believers). Of course, there is nothing new in that statement about baptism. However, the Report attempts to take this theological truth and give it new language, language that will highlight the ways in which, beginning in baptism, we can recognize not only the Holy Spirit's gifts in each other's communions but understand these gifts as actualizing an ecclesiological impulse, a Spirit-inspired growth in communion. To put it slightly differently, the gifts of the Spirit embody "church" as they are shared (participated in) with one another and which thereby set our communions on a path ever-deeper into communion.

b. Ecumenical language / challenge

The Report seeks a new language and it attempts to respond to a challenge presented by the JDDJ. The JDDJ left open further work on the ecclesial significance of the consensus on justification. To consider the ecclesial significance of justification by faith, the BGC begins with baptism as the event, the place, where those who are baptized experience the saving grace of justification, which as noted by the JDDJ, lays the basis for the whole Christian life (§25). The JDDJ states, justification "occurs in the reception of the Holy Spirit in baptism and incorporation into the one body (Rom 8:1ff., 9ff.; 1 Cor 12:12ff.). All this is from God alone, for Christ's sake, by grace, through faith in 'the gospel of God's Son' (Rom 1:1-3)" (§11).

Justification is received and it incorporates. It is both gift and power. It is a dynamic that sets the baptized on a journey that conceives of a life in faith as individually received but outwardly directed. BGC makes the argument that the communion of the body of Christ consists of those who are justified by faith based on Paul. For Paul, in the letter to the Galatians, a common understanding of justification by faith is the criterion for ecclesial communion within a community despite the

variety of pieties, traditions, and practices that might be present. (3.3.8.)

An ecclesial communion requires a common understanding of justification by faith according to the apostolic tradition. When such an understanding of justification is present, it can provide the foundation for unity, it can be the measure or touchstone to analyze and resolve situations of conflict. This call is present in the JDDJ when it states, first of all, that the doctrine of justification is an "indispensable criterion that constantly serves to orient all the teaching and practice of our churches to Christ" (§18) and then further in the Annex: "The doctrine of justification is measure or touchstone for the Christian faith" (Annex 3). There may be several criteria but the measure or touchstone is justification.

Based then on our consensus on justification, a consensus which in itself already indicates the existence of ecclesial communion, how can Catholics and Lutherans take the next step on this journey to a recognition of this communion in the one Church of Christ? What ecumenical efforts are necessary to interpret the message of justification in language for today?

Ecumenical theology has this challenge at its heart: grounded in the tradition, it seeks both in doctrine and in praxis to find new ways of expressing that tradition. Tradition is never simply repeating old definitions but a witness today that speaks the old in ever new ways, as St. Augustine stated. This characteristic of ecumenical theology is the very challenge to maintain and deepen apostolicity and to recognize it in our historically separated communities. Finding a new language of course never happens all at once. Language itself develops, is modified, nuanced, is continually in flux. The language proposed in BGC is also just that: a proposal. It is a first step, one that needs refining but one that nevertheless takes us a step further on a journey.

The pneumatological and ecclesiological impulse developed within the chapters of BGC is rooted in Scripture. The impulse focuses on the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit, given in baptism through varying charisms, has ecclesial implications. As Paul notes in 1 Cor 12:4-7, each gift is given by God in order to build up others and the whole church. And as the BGC then states, "This 'building up' of others and the church is the

main criterion Catholics and Lutherans need to identify and actualize at this time” (3.5.5.6.).

c. Fruit of the Spirit

But how does the BGC define this Scriptural expression “fruit of the Spirit”. For one, it cites Galatians 5:22-26

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

The fruit of the Spirit opens us up towards the others, towards the neighbor, towards building up and not competing against, and, in Chapter 6, Paul continues to define this outward community perspective as bearing one another’s burdens. We do this not only individually but as community.

The term “fruit of the Spirit” in the BGC is always coupled with other theological and ecclesial realities. In its final chapter, the Report enunciates most clearly what it means by fruit of the Spirit: “the apostolic faith confessed, the sacraments celebrated, the service rendered (martyria, leiturgia, diakonia)” (page 73).

Recognizing the fruit of the Spirit is also recognizing the visible elements of the Church and acknowledging the sacramental character of those communities in which these elements and fruit are found, for the visible elements and the fruit of the Spirit witness to a broader ecclesial reality (3.5.4.8.). These visible elements include ordained ministry when that ministry is understood, as Catholics and Lutherans understand it, as preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments, communicating grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (3.5.4.6.), as ministry of the Word.

At this point, the Report cites *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3 which states, “Moreover, some and even very many of the significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church: the

written word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope and charity, with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, and visible elements too. All of these, which come from Christ and lead back to Christ, belong by right to the one Church of Christ.”

BGC is then also attempting to find a language for this impulse given by Vatican II. I quote from BGC: “Vatican II does not only evaluate the ecclesial character of a community by looking at its sacraments, ministry, or institutions but also recognizes the fruit of the Spirit in other communities outside its borders from the perspective that the Holy Spirit uses these elements not only to create faith, love, and hope in human beings, but also at the same time to create church.” (3.5.5.1.)

BGC underscores this point citing John Paul II in *Ut Unum Sint*: “The elements of sanctification and truth present in the other Christian Communities, in a degree which varies from one to the other, constitute the objective basis of the communion, albeit imperfect, which exists between them and the Catholic Church. To the extent that these elements are found in other Christian Communities, the one Church of Christ is effectively present in them.” (3.5.5.3.)

If the one Church of Christ is present in the other churches and ecclesial communities, if, as emphasized by John Paul II who is reflecting on *Lumen Gentium* §15, there is “a true union in the Holy Spirit” which links the Catholic Church with the ecclesial communities, if therefore the fruit of the Spirit has the power to overcome conflicts, to build bridges and to strengthen mission (3.5.5.4.), then how are Lutherans and Catholics to define and live into that true union in the Holy Spirit? How does that union come to expression?

IV. Baptism: ecclesiological implications

The contours of this “true union in the Holy Spirit” – the pneumatological impulse for ecclesiology – is found in baptism. As noted earlier, BGC is the “first time that a differentiating theological consensus on baptism has been developed between Catholics and Lutherans” including both theological and liturgical analysis (Small Task Force). With this consensus, the Report hopes to make an important step forward on the journey towards visible unity.



and the need of both the individual and the baptizing community. This attempt at defining a new language is already present in the title itself *Baptism and Growth in Communion*. Let me parse this out.

On the one hand, there is baptism, a one-time event, a singular event in the life of an individual yet an event that inaugurates into Christian community. The context of baptism is always ecclesial. Baptism is administered by a community, by a local church and into the body of Christ.

BGC states:

“Individuals normally are baptized in a local church. They become members of a denominational church with a specific profile and tradition, and at the same time members of the body of Christ. Christian life is shaped by the liturgical assembly in which baptism happens. Nevertheless, [citing Joseph Ratzinger in *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion*,] ‘baptism is the presence of the one church, and it can only come from her – from the Jerusalem above, the new mother [...] in baptism, the universal church always precedes the local church.’” (3.4.3.)

“The ecumenical problem [however] arises from the fact that baptism incorporates the baptized into the one body of Christ even while [at the same time] these baptisms take place in denominational, local churches that are, in many cases, divided from each other.” (3.6.4.) It is be noted that this challenge exists because the body of Christ and the local church are not too separate entities. The body of Christ is not a platonic form but is always located, known through embodied practice, known sacramentality in this time and place, in this particular local church, in this particular denomination. This reality gives rise to a dialectic “as ‘body of Christ’ ecclesiology refers not only to local communities but also to the whole church, it describes the relationship between different Christian communities and traditions in the same dialectic of unity and diversity (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-6).” (3.3.7.)

🎵 *Musician and choir at the celebration*

📷 *Photo Credits*
Archive Centro Pro Unione

BGC states, “Baptism is the entry point for Christian life in the communion of the church. Baptism imparts the full grace of justification and gives full membership in the body of Christ...” (1.6.1.1.). We have just covered this intimate connection between baptism, justification, and ecclesial communion via the fruit of the Spirit.

At this stage, I will not discuss this differentiating consensus on baptism but rather underscore some key characteristics of a theology of baptism and the implications for ecclesiology and ecumenism. Here is a short list that will guide this reflection:

1. Baptism initiates a process (adapting, exercising, growing into an identity)
2. Baptism is a call to discover the dimensions of grace
3. Baptism points to the continual bestowal of the Holy Spirit throughout life – inspiratio continua
4. Baptism is a sacramental bond that open new ways towards communion

BGC attempts to find a new language for ecclesial communion by focusing on these characteristics of baptism that shape the life

So back to our title *Baptism and Growth in Communion...* From baptism onwards, an individual is no longer alone but in community and in communion in the Body of Christ. In that community, the Holy Spirit continues to manifest its gifts, the fruit of the Spirit, all for the building up of the body, the church, the mystery of communion. Building up or growth signify a dynamic that links baptism and church. A process is inaugurated. Growth is not only an individual transformation but an ecclesial transformation, that is, a continual conversion of the community, the church, in which the baptized are located. Growth is discovery of identity. Growth begun in baptism is the continual discovery of all the dimensions of grace, both individually and ecclesially, leading to a deeper understanding of ecclesial identity.

This dynamic of growth, discovering the dimensions of grace particularly in their ecclesial embodiment, defines in some ways the shift that BGC proposes.

The Report makes an ecclesiological claim which may have already present in the church's history or not – I'll let others discuss that! The claim is simple enough: church itself can be defined as growth in communion, as a continual discovery of the ways in which the Holy Spirit manifests itself in communities. BGC states, "The church is not a static entity but a body for which growth in communion is an essential element." (4.1.4.) In other words, church cannot simply be juridically defined (though that is also necessary for local communities to function). Church is a dynamic of growth. Christian communities are continually growing into the one Church of Christ.

This ecclesiological claim implies then that unity itself is not static but rather dynamic. The unity we seek is not a "state of being" or an "order" or a "rule" or even a "model" but a dynamic of growth that includes within it continual discovery, *inspiratio continua*, participation and sharing. There is always something "unfinished" in this growth which cannot be defined as a defect to be corrected but rather as a mutual invitation into ongoing growth.

Perhaps it would be better to speak about a dynamic of unity, a dynamic experienced in continual discovery, conversion, attention to the Spirit's ongoing work, participation and sharing

in that work. This dynamic of unity is defined as continual growth in ecclesial communion. This dynamic then begs the questions what do we actually mean by models of unity? Is that even the term that can be used? For example, a "model" might indicate again a particular "order" where ecclesial characteristics are clearly defined and which can serve as a type of rule to determine if unity is accomplished. But the proposal for unity in BGC is one of continual growth in ecclesial communion through discernment (for example, doctrinal discussion and differentiating consensus), active participation and sharing in the fruit of the Spirit.

Unity is given through the sacramental bond of baptism (UR 22) and we, as ecclesial communities, continually grow into that bond. The notion of unity itself then would require a more provisional definition, unity grows as the Spirit molds and shapes us, breaking us open, bending what is rigid and reconciling division, as the BGC says in its conclusion. Unity grows as the Spirit's actions are discerned among our communities, participated in and shared.

Discerned and shared. BGC argues that "prayer, discernment of the fruit of the Spirit in one another's communities, and shared sacramental life make possible the process of growth in ecclesial communion and the acknowledgement of the ministry that serves them." (4.1.4.). To be church is an invitation into this participation, sharing, discovery of the Holy Spirit's work that leads us all into the fullness of Christ, a process envisioned in the letter to the Ephesians. The vision of the church in Ephesians is "set in the largest possible framework, the cosmic body of all the faithful united with its head, the risen Christ (Eph 1:22-23;2:6)" (Perkins).

V. Paradigm shift

Quoting the BGC: "This commission proposes a paradigm shift that grounds the recognition of the other community as church in the recognition of the fruit of the Spirit active in the other community through the elements of sanctification and truth. The elements have not fallen from heaven like meteors but rather are connected with each other and embedded in the communities they shape. Through these elements of sanctification and truth, the body of Christ exists and is present in these communities." (3.6.8.)

Paradigm shift is perhaps a bold claim. The Report attempts to shift from “older, often oppositional, constructions of confessional identity to the recognition of the ecclesial identity of the other community by identifying the work of the Spirit within it [and] help to overcome traditional controversies.” (4.3.2.) It proposes a shift in focus for the sake of ecumenical dialogue: a shift away from more static or juridical definitions of church to a pneumatological approach that lifts up the way in which the Holy Spirit, molding communities of faith in the greater design of God, bringing all things in Christ.

For the global Lutheran communion, the challenge can be described in various ways but one very evident challenge is the need to develop and deepen a more robust ecclesiology throughout the communion. It is an internal challenge to bring into dialogue various ecclesiologies represented in different local and regional expressions of member churches of the LWF, from well-rooted episcopal expressions (though still often very regional) to very presbyterial expressions. At the same time, another challenge requires examining more closely the Augsburg Confession and its definition of church. It is one thing to always lift up Article VII (where church is defined as “the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.” BC, page 42) which can also become a static definition. How do we as Lutherans live into the communion of churches as defined in the Apology of the AC of Articles VII and VIII, which in fact, argues that the church “consists (...) of people scattered throughout the entire world who agree on the gospel and have the same Christ, the same Holy Spirit, and the same sacraments, whether or not they have the same human traditions.”¹ How do we, as a Lutheran communion, define amongst ourselves “communion of churches”? These are some of the Lutheran challenges.

BGC makes an ecumenical proposal and asks whether Lutherans and Catholics can understand “church” in a dynamic

sense. With a mutual and official recognition of baptism, there “is something much more than an act of ecumenical courtesy, writes already JP II; it constitutes a basic ecclesiological statement.” (UUS42) (3.2.3.) When the “marks” of the one body are recognized in a faith community, can we discern and acknowledge the one church of Christ present there? Even more, can we then participate and share together in that fruit of the Spirit? Through participation and sharing, ecumenical relations are strengthened as they witness to faith, hope, and love. (4.3.2.) Aspects of participation and sharing are developed in the final chapter of BGC.

To quote the final paragraph of BGC:

“The fruit of the Spirit, present in different communities, witnesses to this one body of Christ, in which the Holy Spirit is continually active (...) God calls all Christians to grow in personal faith, to transform the life of their ecclesial community, and to deepen the communion among their communities (...). On the way, the churches walk together in God’s Word and Sacrament towards an ever-deeper communion, not for their own self-preservation but to proclaim joyously the Gospel to all people and to serve all creation” (page 75).



 *Ecumenical Celebration Readers*

 *Photo Credits*
Archive Centro Pro Unione

1 R. Kolb, T.J. Wenger, & C.P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000) 175.

JACK BEMPORAD

◀ | ||||| Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Director, The Center for Interreligious Understanding Teaneck, New Jersey, USA

Thursday · 17 May 2023

The Decisive Influence of Amos for the Understanding of Literary Prophecy¹

The prophet Amos is one of the most important figures in the Hebrew Bible, and the Book in his name is impactful and influential far beyond its nine-chapter length. Amos lays down the fundamental principles that the literary prophets that follow him adopt and expand. In fact, many Biblical scholars, both Jewish and Christian, credit Amos with having had an enormous influence. He is the first prophet to appeal directly to the people to abandon their evil ways to effect a change in

¹ All Biblical references are to the *Holy Bible Revised Standard Version*, Oxford University Press, 2002, New York.



▣ *Jack Bemporad*

📷 Photo Credits
Personal Archive / J. Bemporad

▣ MEDIA

📺 Lecture video

www.prounione.it/webtv/live/17-may-2023

🎧 Audio podcast

Conference · bit.ly/Bemporad-Podcast-Lecture-May-2023

Q&A · bit.ly/Bemporad-Podcast-QA-May-2023

God's decree, instead of simply appealing to God to forgive. And he is the first to state that an unjust society, (and not simply an idolatrous one), cannot stand.

Among Jewish scholars, both Martin Buber and Yehezkel Kaufmann, in their extraordinarily important studies of the prophets, place Amos at the highest level of Biblical teaching. Buber states,

He set up the exclusiveness of the people in its relation to its God, as to the liberator, leader and judge of the peoples, Lord of righteousness and Justice, he set it up under the divine demand, and chastisement in a manor such as nobody before in man's history, so far as we know, had achieved.²

The Christian scholar, J. Skinner, refers to Amos as "...The father of written prophecy; but all the prophets move on the lines laid down by him, and mean by righteousness substantially what he [Amos] means."³

² M. Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, Harper & Row, New York ©1949 The MacMillan Co., p. 110.

³ J. Skinner, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, Hendrickson Publishers, 1988 USA, vol. 4, p. 274.

While other prophets, their words and deeds are incorporated in other Biblical books, notably the historical books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, Amos is the first prophet to have authored a ^{book} in his name among the literary prophets, and, most significant, to appeal directly to the people to change their errant ways, rather than appealing to God to alter his edict.

Amos lived in the middle of the eighth pre-Christian century. He was a native of Tekoa in the southern kingdom of Judah, and worked as a shepherd and a dresser of sycamore trees. While shepherding his flock, Amos underwent an irresistible and overpowering experience; it was a Divine call that commands him to travel to Bethel in the northern kingdom, to proclaim God's message there.

In this respect, Amos is in the line of Moses and other messenger prophets who were chosen and sent by God for a particular purpose. Amos's task was to proclaim the divine judgment and foretell the destruction of the northern kingdom because of its sinfulness. Amos also follows in the line of others who tried to appeal to God's mercy first, asking God, "How can Jacob stand? He is so small" (Am. 7:5).

In the same way, Abraham implored God to change his judgement regarding Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 18:17-33), or Moses, after the incident of the spies (Nm 14: 11-20). What is decisively new in Amos (Am 7:8), is his direct appeal to the people to change their ways after learning that God will definitely execute justice upon the inhabitants. Amos learns that God can no longer abide the evilness of the people, especially the ruling class, and will impose a plumbline to determine the guilty. Amos tells them, however, that adopting righteousness and justice will save them from the consequences of their acts.

When the leadership does not heed Amos's pleas, he therefore condemns the kingdom, its priesthood, and the upper classes, predicting their destruction.

Amaziah, the priest at Bethel, responds by sending Amos's message to the king. Since Amos is from the southern Kingdom of Judah, it was not clear why he should be sent to prophecy at Bethel, in the northern Kingdom.

So Amaziah directly confronts Amos (Am 7:10-16) telling him to go back to Judah (in the South) and prophecy there. Indeed, the High Priest sends a letter to the King, accusing Amos of conspiring against him and his reign.

Amos responds by telling Amaziah that he is not a member of a prophetic guild, but a shepherd. Amos deliberately disassociated himself from the prophetic guilds of his time, which were on the payroll of the monarchy (Am 7:14). He is the first of the Literary prophets to experience and describe a "call" to be a prophet, something other prophets later experience and describe (Isaiah 6; Jeremiah 1; Ezekiel 1).

After the confrontation with Amaziah, Amos then proceeds to condemn the northern kingdom of Israel, setting the precedent that has changed the social and religious consciousness of the world: Amos is the first prophet to assert that social injustice will bring about national ruination, and that an unjust society cannot stand.

While other prophets condemned an individual's social sins, as the prophet Nathan condemned David, and Elijah condemned Ahab, they nevertheless believed that the punishment would be meted out only to the lives of these individuals and their progeny. It was believed that national exile and destruction would only be the result of the practice of idolatry.

Amos then is the first of a line of "classical" prophets who view the exploitation of the poor and destitute as a crime equivalent to idolatry. Yehezkel Kaufmann, in his magisterial book, *The Religion of Israel*, makes a special point of indicating the importance of Amos as being the first to indicate that the national destiny doesn't just hinge on idolatry and its practices, but actually, and much more importantly, on social injustice.

He states:

Amos is the first to evaluate social morality as a factor in national destiny... Israel and Judah will be judged “for selling the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes” (2:6). Moreover, the new reproof is here given its most pointed expression. Unlike the other prophets, who tend to generalize, and, by comparing Israel to Sodom, to imply that the whole nation is involved in especially horrendous sins, Amos makes it plain that it is the ruling class in particular that is involved in the everyday moral sins. He never speaks of murder, but only of exploitation, oppression, and perversion of justice, such wrongs as can be done only by the rulers and the rich. They crush the poor, carouse on pledged clothing in Temple courts, and fill their mansions with violence and plunder. They raise the price of bread and defraud and impoverish the people. For this Amos threatens destruction and exile.

What underscores the novelty of this evaluation and condemnation is Amos’s almost complete silence regarding idolatry, the chief offense which the early literature held crucial for the destiny of the people.

The new stress on morality has as its concomitant a new attitude toward the cult [of sacrifices]. It was the prophets who expressed for the first time the idea that the cult of the nation as a whole, the entire (YHWH) cult has no intrinsic value.⁴

Kaufmann continues:

Morality on the other hand, is an absolute value, for it is

Divine in essence. The God who demands righteousness, justice, kindness, and compassion, is Himself just, gracious, kind and compassionate. Moral goodness makes man share, as it were, in the Divine nature...While the cult is sacred only as a symbol, morality is essentially Godlike, being a reflection of the qualities of God.⁵

As to the efficacy of sacrifices in maintaining the safety of Israel, Amos clearly contrasts the offering of sacrifices with what God really wants.

He states (Am 5:21-24):

I hate and I despise your feasts and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and cereal offerings, I will not accept them, and the peace offerings of your fatted beasts I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs, to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 367.



❖ Q&A session - Rabbi Jack Bemporad

📷 Photo Credits
Archive Centro Pro Unione

⁴ Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, Schocken Paperback Edition, 1972, USA, pp. 366ff.

In this respect, he is the first to contrast the offering of sacrifices as opposed to ethical living. Isaiah continues this theme (Is 1:11-17):

What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? Says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats.

When you come to appear before me who requires of you this trampling of my courts? Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of assemblies— I cannot endure iniquity and Solemn assembly.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them.

When you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you;

even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes;

cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression;

defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Micah as well declares (Mc 6:6-8):

With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Second Isaiah later continues, plainly stating what God despises and then, what He requires (Is 58:2-7):

Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways,

as if they were a nation that did righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgements, they delight to draw near to God. "Why have we fasted,

and thou seest it not? Why have we humbled ourselves,

and thou takest no knowledge of it?"

Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,

and oppress all your workers. Behold, you fast only to quarrel and

to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day

will not make your voice to be heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a man to humble himself?

Is it to bow down his head like a rush,

and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?

Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and to bring the homeless poor into your house;

when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Amos challenged the conventional wisdom shared by the ruling classes of the northern kingdom. Since Jereboam II, the King of Israel, had been successful in conquering substantial territories (2 Kings 14:25), the ruling powers believed that the "day of the Lord" was coming when Israel would triumph over all her enemies.

The ruling classes also felt that through their many sacrifices and solemn assemblies, they were pleasing God and therefore, they could exploit the poor and destitute with impunity.

In addition, and more important, they believed that they were chosen by God and therefore, as long as they participated in the sacrificial cult and worshipped the Lord, they were invincible.

Amos rejected each of these assumptions. He was the first to characterize the Day of the Lord, not as a time of victory, but of judgment. He states:

Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord... It is darkness and not light. As if a man fled from a lion and a bear met him; or went into a house and leaned with his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him" (Am 5:18-20).

Finally, he condemns the most cherished of Israel's beliefs: that they were the chosen people and therefore invulnerable. Amos declares:

You only have I known of all of the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Am 3:2).

What Amos means is that only Israel has been selected to be the witness to the God of Justice, and insofar as they neglect to do that, they will suffer for their failure.

Amos is the prophet whose foremost concern is justice and righteousness, and who visualizes God as a God of justice. As such, the Lord is not just the God of Israel, but his law of justice applies to all nations.

The beginning of the book is a condemnation of other nations for wrongdoing, whose result is their punishment. As a God of justice, those who act unjustly offend his very nature and Divine justice turns into Divine judgment. He sets forth the sins of Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, and numerous other places, especially Judah and Israel, where crimes have been committed (Am 1: 3-2:8).

Amos sees a necessary connection between cause and effect: As he demonstrates in 3:3-8, actions bring about consequences:

Do two walk together, unless they have made an appointment? Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?

Does a young lion cry out from his den, If he has taken nothing?

Does a bird fall in a snare on the earth when there is no trap for it?

Does a snare spring up from the ground, when it has taken nothing?

Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid?

Does evil befall a city unless the Lord has done it?

Surely the Lord God does nothing, without revealing his secret

to his servants the prophets. The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?

And in 6:12, Amos illustrates what is impossible:

Do horses run upon rocks?

Does one plow the sea with oxen?

But you have turned justice into poison, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood-

Therefore, it is equally impossible to act unjustly, forsake justice and righteousness, believing that sacrifices and ceremonies will save you from the necessary consequences of unjust and exploitative behavior.

In addition, the prophet Hosea shows this same relationship when he states: "For they sow the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind" (Ho 8:7), and the contrast: "Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of steadfast love" (Ho 10:12). This causal relation is seen again in Hosea (Ho 9:10), they "Consecrated themselves to Baal and became detestable, like the thing they loved" or, Jeremiah, (Je 2:5), "They went after worthlessness, and became worthless."

It is this causal connection that the upper classes refused to acknowledge, that is, that unjust and unethical acts brought about punitive consequences.

They believed they could act with impunity as long as they offered sacrifices.

They believed that God's decrees could be offset through acts of ritual and sacrifice, and that the power of God could be manipulated and mitigated by ritual, namely, "How do we bribe God through ritual, so that God will completely ignore what we do?"

What Amos tried to convey is that this belief turns things upside down. In other words, God is a god of justice and righteousness. God wants us to be kind to one another and treat each other fairly, but if the people are going to destroy each other, God will bring about the consequences of their actions. A just God will respond justly, a righteous God will respond righteously. The person who practices injustice and offers sacrifices, openly appearing as someone who is doing God's will, is actually contravening it, actually doing everything that God rejects. Such acts of hypocritical religious celebration are actually a rejection of God.

Therefore, based on the evil ways of the generation, Micah (3:12) and Jeremiah (26:6) drew the logical conclusion, saying that the Temple would be destroyed, since an unjust society cannot stand.⁶

This is especially the case when the later prophets speak about the corruption of the judges, the corruption of the priests, the corruption of the guild



The live streaming of the lecture

Photo Credits
Archive Centro Pro Unione

prophets, the corruption of the leadership, and the corruption of all that is related to the Temple. Thus, Amos states (6:1):

Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
and to those who feel secure on the
mountain of Samar'ia the notable men of
the first of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel come!

And, (Am 6:3-6):

O you who put far away the evil day, and
bring near the seat of violence?
Woe to those who lie upon beds of ivory,
and stretch themselves upon their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock, and calves
from the midst of the stall;
who sing idle songs to the sound of the
harp, and like David invent for themselves
instruments of music;
who drink wine in bowls, and anoint
themselves with the finest oils, but are not
grieved over the ruin of Joseph!

⁶ The culmination can be clearly seen in Jeremiah, Chapter 7:1-12.

⁷ Joseph was the brother who was left in a pit to die, who instead was sold into slavery.

In addition, one of the most important concepts in the book of Amos is that the people's immoral behavior will lead to the greatest evil of all, that of the breaking of any connection and link between them and God. Amos states:

Behold the days are coming says the Lord when I will send a famine on the land; not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it" (Am 8:11-12).

And the prophet Micah, as well, describes the chaotic condition of the consequences of selfishness and exploitation, separating them from a godly life (Mc 7:1-6).

Finally, Amos introduces one of the most significant contributions of Prophetic Judaism, that by imploring the people to repent, to change their ways, the people can bring about a change in God's decrees and be forgiven.

He states:

Seek me and live but do not seek Bethel" (Ch. 5:4),... "Seek good and not evil, that you may live, ...hate evil and love good and establish justice in the gate, it may be that the Lord the God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph" (Am 5: 14-15).

In spite of the severity of Amos' prophecy, he, like the other prophets, reject the total destruction of the people. Indeed, a time will come when great prosperity will come to Israel (Am 9:13-15).

Many of the most important themes of the literary prophets are contained in the book of Amos and are developed in a more expanded form in other prophetic books. Amos, however, was the spiritual trailblazer and taught three revolutionary concepts: that an unjust society cannot stand, that the immoral and unscrupulous deeds of a corrupt leadership will always result in dire consequences and most important, that a life of unethical, dishonest, and exploitive behavior will cause the worst consequence of all – the severing of the connection of intimacy between man and God.












Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Catholic Perspective

Proposed dates
25 June - 12 July 2024

Week One The Church facing Divisions

-  Biblical foundations
-  Factions and divisions within the Church
-  An overview of the Reformation and Catholic Reform movements, the modern ecumenical movement
-  Vatican II and Catholic principles of ecumenism; World Council of Churches
-  Worldwide ecumenical and interreligious organizations
-  Eastern Christianity
-  On June 29, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, participation in the Papal Mass of the Pallium

1

Week Three Christians & World Faith Traditions

-  Jewish-Christian relations
-  Christian responses to people of other faiths
-  Fundamentalism as a worldwide phenomenon
-  Catholicism and Islam in dialogue
-  New religious movements
-  Grassroots ecumenism

3








Submit your *application now!*



 **APPLICATIONS**
CAN BE FILLED OUT ONLINE

www.prounione.it/en/formation/summer-school-rome

Week Two The Church embracing Unity

-  Exploration of the various dialogues which exist between the churches, their context and results
-  Ecumenical documents
-  Reading of ecumenical texts
-  Concept of reception in the ecumenical movement
-  Visit to the Dicasteries for Promoting Christian Unity and for Interreligious Dialogue

2



Aim

This course is designed to introduce participants to the ecumenical and interreligious movements from a Catholic perspective. It will offer a historical and theological overview of the issues that divide Christians as well as the bonds that unite them.

The program will explore relations with other religious traditions. The course, which is in English, is for men and women who are in preparation for ministry or for a sabbatical experience led by qualified professors and ecumenists.

Schedule

The schedule for the three weeks is the same Monday through Friday: morning prayer followed by three 60-minute lecture segments.

The afternoons are for on-site excursions and lectures (Roman catacombs, Basilica of St. Peter and excavations, St. Clement, "Roman ghetto", Synagogue and museum, Mosque and Islamic center, and others). Weekends are free.

Ecumenical Gatherings

Afternoon Program

-  St. Peter's Basilica
-  St Pauls-outside-the-walls
-  Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul Mass of the Pallium in the presence of the Delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate
-  St. John Lateran, Baptistry and Basilica of St. Clement
-  St. Mary Major's Basilica
-  Tour of the "Roman Ghetto", the Synagogue and Museum
-  Excavations under St. Peter's
-  Islamic Center & Mosque

Morning Prayer		8:45 — 9:00
Class I		9:00 — 10:00
Class II		10:15 — 11:15
Class III		11:30 — 12:30



Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute (NY)

Centro Pro Unione



Geii.org



AtonementFriars.org



Prounione.it



STATISTICS FORMATION



 *Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Catholic Perspective*

Our Course attendees from 5 Continents 

Summer School Statistics
Academic Years from 2001 to 2023

Continents	Students
------------	----------

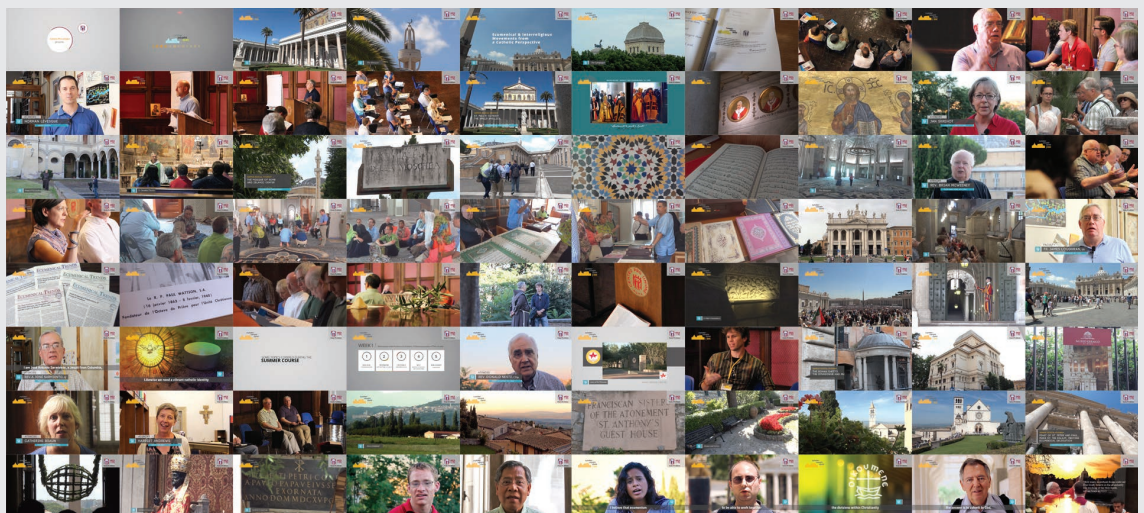
Europe	17 % students
North America	67 %
Latin America	3,1 %
Asia	7,2 %
Africa	3,5 %
Oceania	2,2 %

Countries	Students
-----------	----------

USA	61,4 % students
Canada	5,7 %
India	3,8 %
Finland	2,8 %
Malta	2,5 %
Italy	2,5 %
Ireland	1,9 %
Australia	1,6 %
United Kingdom	1,3 %
Nigeria	1,3 %
Kenya	0,9 %
Philippines	0,9 %
Colombia	0,9 %
France	0,6 %
Spain	0,6 %
Sweden	0,6 %
Estonia	0,6 %
Romania	0,6 %
Albania	0,6 %
Puerto Rico	0,6 %
Malaysia	0,6 %
Uganda	0,6 %
Netherland	0,3 %
Belgium	0,3 %
Servia	0,3 %
Austria	0,3 %
Ethiopia	0,3 %
Ghana	0,3 %
Turkey	0,3 %
Greece	0,3 %
Slovakia	0,3 %
Japan	0,3 %
Korea	0,3 %
China	0,3 %
Honk Kong	0,3 %
United Arab Emirates	0,3 %
Pakistan	0,3 %
Mexico	0,3 %
Brazil	0,3 %
Argentina	0,3 %
Uruguay	0,3 %
Peru	0,3 %
New Zealand	0,3 %



 **Watch a Video Documentary**
on the Summer School Rome journey 
www.prounione.it/webtv/doc-ministryedu 



WORKSHOP AT THE CPU

On the initiative of Taizé / Ecumenical Prayer Vigil
— Workshop "History of a Future" on Sept. 30, 2023

The prolonged and intense moment of silence during the vigil *Together-Gathering of the People of God* on Sept. 30, 2023, on the occasion of the opening of the Synodal session, was preceded by two days of lively and engaging meetings and workshops, coordinated by the Taizé Community. At the invitation of the Taizé Community leaders – received with gratitude and joy by us – we organized a Workshop at the CPU, due to its history as a place of ecumenical dialogue during the Council.

And so, we were pleased to organize a Workshop entitled *History of a Future*, on Sept. 30 at the CPU, hosting about 50 participants, including young people from different countries and Christian traditions. After a moment of prayer led by Frère Francis of the Taizé Community, two distinguished guests – Fr. Serge Sollogoub from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, who serves as Ecumenical Delegate to the Assembly of French Orthodox Bishops for the Ile de France Region, and Archbishop Bernd Walleit, Archbishop of Utrecht, President of the Old Catholic International Bishops' Conference of the Union of Utrecht – shared some perspectives on dialogue and unity from their personal experiences. In their addresses, they spoke of some aspects of their ecumenical vocation and highlighted the importance of the integration of Ecumenism and Spirituality, Liturgy and Theology, Unity and Diversity.

Inspired by the prayer and motivated by the addresses, the younger attendees spent the rest of the morning in small groups organized by different languages, where they were able to express their views, shared later with the whole group in brief summaries given by the coordinators of the small groups.



The atmosphere of the Centro has always been warmed by dialogue since the time of the Council. This long-term tradition was recalled in a brief presentation by CPU staff. We feel the story of the Centro helped participants to experience something of a synodal atmosphere and to realize that what had been expressed at the time of the Council in that same room could once again be present today, by their personal commitment to unity and reconciliation. Among the younger people there emerged a true desire for unity, despite the difficulties that were also addressed. At the end of the morning, they committed themselves to small but concrete personal proposals, moving forward on the path to unity.

The Workshop was very well received. The At-One-Ment charism of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, a spiritual force for communion since the first years of their presence in Rome, was very much at work in the *Gathering of the People of God*. In the afternoon, the Friars of the Atonement from the communities of Rome and Assisi participated in the joyful ecumenical vigil in St. Peter's Basilica, in the presence of Pope Francis and leaders of the various Christian traditions.



WORKSHOP PRESSO IL CPU

■ **Iniziativa Taizé / Veglia Ecumenica di Preghiera**
— **Workshop "Storia del Futuro" il 30 settembre 2023**

Il prolungato e intenso momento di silenzio durante la veglia *Together-Raduno del popolo di Dio* del 30 settembre 2023, coincidente con l'apertura della sessione sinodale, è stato preceduto da una due giorni di vivace e coinvolgente susseguirsi di incontri e workshops, coordinati dalla Comunità di Taizé. Proprio dai responsabili della Comunità è giunto il graditissimo invito ad organizzare un Workshop presso la nostra storica sede, teatro del dialogo ecumenico durante il Concilio.

È nata così la realizzazione del Workshop *Storia del Futuro*, organizzato il 30 settembre presso il CPU che ha ospitato circa 50 partecipanti, giovani da vari paesi e tradizioni cristiane.

Dopo un momento di preghiera accompagnati da Frère Francis della Comunità di Taizé, due illustri ospiti - l'Arciprete Serge Sollogoub del Patriarcato di Costantinopoli, Delegato ecumenico per la Conferenza dei Vescovi Ortodossi Francesi per la Regione dell'Ile de France, e l'Arcivescovo Bernd Wallet, Arcivescovo di Utrecht, Presidente della Conferenza Internazionale dei Vescovi Veterocattolici dell'Unione di Utrecht - hanno condiviso alcune prospettive sul dialogo e l'unità, a partire dalla propria esperienza personale. Gli ospiti hanno condiviso alcuni tratti della propria vocazione ecumenica e hanno richiamato l'importanza di articolare sinergicamente ecumenismo e spiritualità, liturgia e teologia, unità e diversità. Ispirati dalla preghiera e motivati



■ **Workshop al Centro Pro Unione**

📷 **Crediti Foto**

Archivio Centro Pro Unione

dagli interventi, i giovani hanno trascorso la restante parte della mattinata in gruppi linguistici per esprimere il proprio punto di vista e condividerlo poi, mediante una breve sintesi dei coordinatori di ciascun gruppo, con tutti partecipanti.

L'atmosfera del Centro - intrisa di dialogo fin dai tempi del Concilio, come ricordato nella breve presentazione ad opera dello Staff del CPU - ha contribuito ad immergere i partecipanti nell'atmosfera sinodale dando loro la percezione che quanto vissuto nel passato conciliare tra quelle mura potesse rivivere, oggi, grazie al loro personale impegno per l'unità e la riconciliazione. È emerso tra i giovani un sincero desiderio di unità nonostante le difficoltà e, al termine della mattinata, hanno formulato individualmente un piccolo proposito personale concreto per crescere verso l'unità.

Il Workshop ha ricevuto un riscontro molto positivo e il carisma dei Frati dell'Atonement, foriero di comunionalità già dai primi anni della loro presenza a Roma, ha potuto così essere presente anche in questo *Raduno del popolo di Dio*.

Nel pomeriggio, i Frati Francescani dell'Atonement delle Comunità di Roma e di Assisi hanno preso parte alla gioiosa veglia ecumenica in San Pietro alla presenza di papa Francesco e dei Leader delle varie tradizioni cristiane.



SYNODAL ECUMENICAL WORKSHOP

Report on the project

M.A.D. for Ecumenism - Edition 3 / 2022-2023

Pope Francis' call for active and responsible participation in the synodal process could not be ignored! And the special emphasis on its ecumenical dimension – as recalled in the synodal document *Enlarge the space of your tent (Is 54:2)* that “there is no complete synodality without unity among Christians” (n. 48) – challenged the CPU in a particular way.

For the third edition of the *M.A.D. for Ecumenism - Mutual Accountability Desk* project, the then director, Fr. James Puglisi, SA, intended to interact with the process desired by Pope Francis, and so we organized a *Laboratorio ecumenico sinodale* (Synodal Ecumenical Workshop) that began in November 2022 and ended in October 2023.

The first stage of this third edition of the project – namely *M.A.D. 3* – involved a group of 18 faithful Catholics – personally approached by the CPU and affectionately called by the nickname *M.A.D.ers* from the name of the project – who were asked to identify challenges, problems and potentials of Christian identity in the current context and to outline the key features of a synodal church for the future.

The rich and varied reflections of the *MA.D.ers* were compiled in a Report entitled *Identità cristiana: indagine sui temi emergenti della fede e della società (Christian Identity: An Enquiry on Emerging Trends in Faith and in Society)* – in itself an initial contribution to the Synodal process –

which revealed widespread unease about some areas that need improvement, such as: communicative capacity, authenticity of witness, liturgical vitality, participation of the laity and particularly of women, just recalling the most frequently mentioned. Despite the criticisms, expressed with *parrhesia*, what emerges from the Report is a confident voice in the Church's ability to listen and to act upon, to discern and to renew itself.

Since the *mens synodalis* requires first of all the capacity to rethink some ecclesial dynamics and – listening to the Holy Spirit – to propose new paths, the second stage of the project involved a group of Ecumenical Consultants in a kind of concrete “synodal experiment”: to listen together to the reflections of the Catholic faithful, and to answer to them together by outlining some possible scenarios for the construction of a synodal Church.

The group of Ecumenical Consultants, was formed by leaders, theologians and pastors from various Christian traditions, particularly those with established synodical practices, that had not been involved in the previous editions of the *M.A.D.* project. The individual reflections of the consultants and the fruitful exchange of their perspectives, shared during a long working session at the CPU in February 2023, produced a document entitled *Assidui nell'ascolto: un responso ecumenico sinodale (Devoted to Listening: An Ecumenical Synodal Response)*.



This was in spiritual continuity with the passage from Acts 2:42 that describes the Christian community as “devoted to” listening to the Word and to the apostolic teaching. This offers the synodal reflection some ways of reading the current ecclesial context and also offers some concrete proposals so that the Catholic Church, as the main actor in the synodal journey, can equip itself in the best possible way to respond to the expectations of the faithful and to the ecclesial vision of Pope Francis.

The generous spirit of collaboration and the theological competence of the group of Consultants made it possible to achieve the desired goal. The most ecumenically relevant result of M.A.D. 3 consists precisely in having begun a fruitful shared “chain of listening” and in having achieved – with the elaboration of the document *Assidui nell’ascolto: un responso ecumenico sinodale*, jointly drafted by the Ecumenical Consultants, and the methodology used to achieve it – a concrete synodal cameo.

Admittedly, this may be limited to the extent of the project itself, and not just a reflection on the theme of synodality.



August 2023 · H.E. Cardinal Mario Grech receives the Report M.A.D. for Ecumenism Edition 3 from Fr. Timothy MacDonald, sa and Teresa Francesca Rossi. A contribution to the Synodal journey of the Church

Photo Credits Archive Centro Pro Unione

📖 **E-book · M.A.D. for Ecumenism / Edition 1**
"Itinerary of a Historical Exchange of Pulpit"
<https://bit.ly/Logbook-MAD-for-Ecumenism-v1>

📖 **E-book · M.A.D. for Ecumenism / Edition 2**
"By baptism [...] we walk in newness of life" (Rom 6: 4)
<https://bit.ly/Logbook-MAD-for-Ecumenism-v2>

📖 **E-book · M.A.D. for Ecumenism / Edition 3**
"Synodal Ecumenical Workshop"
<https://bit.ly/Logbook-MAD-for-Ecumenism-v3>

The two documents *Identità cristiana: indagine sui temi emergenti della fede e della società* and *Assidui nell’ascolto: un responso ecumenico sinodale* were delivered to the Synod Secretariat in the summer of 2023 and received with great appreciation.

A festive celebration marked the end of the third edition of M.A.D. in the presence of representatives of both the M.A.D.ers and the Consultants and an audience of CPU friends.

Two distinguished guests – Father Davide Carbonaro, OMD (Coordinator for Synodal process of the city of Rome) and Dr. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc (WCC Program Executive for Ecumenical Relations and for Faith and Order Commission) – delivered addresses on the theme of Synodality and on the current journey of the WCC.

A fraternal agape – themed around the pomegranate, a symbol of unity since antiquity – brought the meeting to a close, thus colouring it with ecumenical joy.

PDF **DOWNLOAD** ~
E-BOOKS
 Editions 1, 2 and 3

LABORATORIO ECUMENICO SINODALE

Report sul progetto

M.A.D. for Ecumenism - Terza edizione / 2022-2023

L'invito di papa Francesco ad una attiva e responsabile partecipazione al processo sinodale non poteva essere disatteso! E la particolare enfasi data alla dimensione ecumenica - come ricordato dal documento sinodale *Allarga lo spazio della tua tenda* (Is. 54, 2) "non c'è sinodalità completa senza unità tra i cristiani" (n.48) ha interpellato in modo particolare il Centro Pro Unione.

Per la terza edizione del progetto M.A.D. for Ecumenism - Mutual Accountability Desk l'allora Direttore del CPU, p. James Puglisi, SA, ha inteso interagire con il processo voluto da papa Francesco e così si è dato il via ad un Laboratorio ecumenico sinodale, iniziato nel novembre 2022 e terminato nell'ottobre 2023.

La prima tappa di questa terza edizione del progetto - M.A.D. 3 per l'appunto - ha visto impegnati un gruppo di 18 fedeli cattolici - appositamente interpellati dal CPU e che dal nome del progetto sono stati simpaticamente denominati M.A.D.ers - chiamati ad evidenziare sfide, problemi e potenzialità dell'identità cristiana nell'attuale contesto contemporaneo e a tracciare un profilo di una futura Chiesa più sinodale.

Le ricche e variegate riflessioni dei M.A.D.ers sono state assemblate in un Report dal titolo *Identità cristiana: indagine sui temi emergenti della fede e della società* - in se stesso già un primo contributo al processo sinodale - da cui è emerso un diffuso disagio circa alcuni ambiti che si vorrebbero migliorati: la capacità comunicativa, l'autenticità di testimonianza, la vitalità liturgica, la partecipazione laicale e femminile solo per richiamare i più citati. Nonostante le critiche

tuttavia, espresse anche con parresia, ciò che si evince dal Report è una voce fiduciosa nella capacità della Chiesa di ascoltare e intervenire, di esaminarsi e rinnovarsi.

Dal momento che la *mens synodalis* richiedeva, in primis, la capacità ripensare alcune dinamiche ecclesiali e - in ascolto dello Spirito - di suggerire nuovi percorsi, la seconda tappa del progetto ha coinvolto un gruppo di Consulenti ecumenici in una sorta di "esperimento sinodale" concreto: porsi, coralmemente, in ascolto delle istanze e dei fedeli e, insieme,

rispondervi delineando alcuni possibili scenari nella costruzione di una Chiesa sinodale.

Il Gruppo di Consulenti ecumenici era costituito da leader, teologi e pastori di varie tradizioni cristiane, particolarmente quelle con conclamata prassi sinodale e non ancora coinvolte

nelle precedenti fasi del progetto M.A.D. Dalle riflessioni individuali dei Consulenti e dallo scambio fecondo delle loro prospettive, condivise durante una lunga sessione di lavoro presso il CPU nel febbraio 2023, è nato un documento dal titolo *Assidui nell'ascolto: un responso ecumenico sinodale* - in continuità spirituale con il brano di Atti 2, 42 che descrive la comunità cristiana "assidua" nell'ascolto della Parola e nell'insegnamento apostolico - che consegna alla riflessione sinodale sia alcune piste di lettura dell'attuale contesto ecclesiale, che alcune proposte concrete affinché la Chiesa cattolica, in quanto principale attore del percorso sinodale, possa equipaggiarsi al meglio per rispondere alle attese dei fedeli e al progetto ecclesiale di papa Francesco. Il generoso spirito



collaborativo e la valentia teologica del Gruppo di Consulenti ha reso possibile il raggiungimento dell'auspicato traguardo.

Il frutto ecumenicamente più rilevante di M.A.D. 3, quindi, è costituito proprio dall'aver attivato una fruttuosa "catena di ascolto" comunione e di aver realizzato - con l'elabo-

sinodale sono stati consegnati alla Segreteria del Sinodo nell'estate 2023 e ricevuti con vivo apprezzamento.

Una celebrazione festosa ha siglato il termine della terza edizione di M.A.D., alla presenza di rappresentanti sia dei M.A.D.ers, che dei Consulenti e di un pubblico di amici del CPU. Due illustri ospiti - Padre Davide Carbonaro, OMD (Coordinatore e Referente del Sinodo per la città di Roma) e il Dott. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc (WCC Program Executive per le Relazioni Ecumeniche e per la

Commissione Fede e Costituzione) - sono intervenuti, rispettivamente, sul tema della Sinodalità e sull'attuale cammino del Consiglio Ecumenico delle Chiese. Una agape fraterna - tematicamente imbandita attorno alle melagrane, dall'antichità simbolo di unità - ha concluso l'incontro colorandolo di allegria ecumenica.



L'evento celebrativo è visibile nel sito

Crediti Foto

Archivio Centro Pro Unione

WEB TV & MEDIA
CENTRO PRO UNIONE
presenta **Evento celebrativo**
Report Laboratorio ecumenico sinodale

MAD for Ecumenism
MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY DESK
MODULO 3

Relatore
Padre Davide CARBONARO

Relatore
Dott. Vasile OCTAVIAN MIHOC

razione del documento *Assidui nell'ascolto: un responso ecumenico sinodale*, congiuntamente redatto dai Consulenti ecumenici, e la metodologia attuata per raggiungerlo - un cameo sinodale concreto, seppur, ovviamente, circoscritto ai confini del progetto stesso, e non solo una riflessione sul tema della sinodalità.

I due documenti *Identità cristiana: indagine sui temi emergenti della fede e della società* *Assidui nell'ascolto: un responso ecumenico*



IN HONOUR OF THE ATONEMENT SOCIETY CO-FOUNDERS




Twenty-six Annual Conference in Honor
of the *Servant of God* Father Paul Wattson and Mother Lurana White



CENTRO PRO UNIONE
"Ut Omnes Unum Sint"

Annual Conference
2023

 Lecture given on
Thursday,
14 December 2023

In-Person &
Live Streaming 

Lecturer 

Dr Prof Donna Orsuto

born in the United States, has lived in Rome since 1979. She is an Ordinary Professor of Spiritual Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, and she has taught at various academic institutions in Rome. She is also the Co-Founder and Director of The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas (www.laycentre.org). She has edited and authored various books and articles in the area of spirituality. Over the years, she has given retreats, conferences, and workshops for laity, religious women and men, diocesan priests, and seminarians in various countries, including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Senegal, Sweden, and the United States. In 2011, she was created *Dame of St Gregory* by Pope Benedict XVI.

The *Centro Pro Unione*
invites you to the
Twenty-sixth
Annual Conference

in Honor of the
Servant of God Father Paul Wattson
and Mother Lurana White



Co-founders of the
Society of the Atonement

In-Presence & Web Streaming 



Lecturer

Dr Prof Donna Orsuto

Professor of Spirituality
at the Pontifical Gregorian University
and Director of the Lay Centre
at Foyer Unitas, Rome

on the theme

**Towards a Contemporary
Spirituality of Reconciliation**



Thursday · 14 December 2023
6:00 pm (Rome Time)



Via Santa Maria dell'Anima, 30
(1st floor) – Rome




Reservation Attendance
www.prounione.it/en/events/14-dec-2023



FRANCISCAN FRIARS
of the
ATONEMENT

Centro Pro Unione - A Ministry of the
Franciscan Friars of the Atonement

 WEBSITES
www.prounione.it
www.atonementfriars.org | www.fratiationement.org

Tel. (+39) 06 6879552
Fax (+39) 06 68133668
E-mail pro@prounione.it

   
FIND US ON
[@EcumenUnity](https://www.facebook.com/EcumenUnity) [@CentroProUnione](https://www.instagram.com/CentroProUnione)

 **Learn more | Event Page** www.prounione.it/en/events/14-dec-2023



TAIZÉ PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Co-sponsored **Centro Pro Unione**
and **The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas**



Lecture given on
Thursday,
18 January 2024

In-Person &
Live Streaming

Lecturers

Dr Prof Tamara
Grdzeldze

Professor at Ilia State
University, Tbilisi, Georgia;
former Ambassador of
Georgia to the Holy See

Dr Rev Maurizio Mirilli

Chaplain at the Policlinico
Tor Vergata, Rome;
former Responsible
for Youth Ministry
for the Diocese of Rome

Dr Rev Vanessa Bayha

Director of the
Centro Melanone, Rome

followed by
a Taizé Prayer



led by **The Lay Centre**
at **Foyer Unitas**

On the occasion of the
Week of Prayer 2024
for **Christian Unity**
you are cordially invited to an
afternoon of **prayer and reflection**

Thursday,
18 January
at 4:30 PM
(Rome time)

Synodality at your fingertips –
Sinodalità “a portata di mano”

Dr Prof Tamara Grdzeldze
Professor at Ilia State University,
Tbilisi, Georgia · former Ambassador
of Georgia to the Holy See

Dr Rev Maurizio Mirilli
Chaplain at the Policlinico Tor Vergata,
Rome · former Responsible for Youth
Ministry for the Diocese of Rome

Dr Rev Vanessa Bayha
Director of the Centro Melanone,
Rome

followed by a **Taizé Prayer** led by
The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas

Via Santa Maria dell'Anima, 30
1st floor (Piazza Navona) · Rome

Please, confirm your participation

IN-PERSON and LIVE STREAMING event
www.prounione.it/en/events/18-jan-2024

Organized by

CENTRO PRO UNIONE
“Ut Omnes Unum Sint”

LAY centre
AT FOYER UNITAS

125 YEARS
THE SOCIETY OF
THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS
OF THE ATONEMENT

Telephone (+39) 06 687 9552 (CPU) (+39) 06 772 6761 (LC) FAX (+39) 06 6813 3668 (CPU) (+39) 06 772 676 235 (LC) Websites www.prounione.it www.laycentre.org E-mail pro@prounione.it info@laycentre.org Social Media

Learn more | **Event Page** www.prounione.it/en/events/18-jan-2024

TEMA PER L'ANNO 2024



Preghiamo insieme per l'unità dei cristiani

18-25 gennaio 2024 / Iniziativa del fondatore dei Frati Francescani dell'Atonement, il Servo di Dio, P. Paul Wattson

Tema

Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama
il prossimo tuo come te stesso
(Luca 10, 27)

Illustrazione locandina

“Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama
il prossimo tuo come te stesso”
(Luca 10,27)



Sussidi e risorse utili per la SPUC in lingua ITALIANA

Libretto Guida · Locandina · Pagellina

www.prounione.it/it/ecumenismo/spuc/2024-settimana-preghiera-unita-cristiani

Archivio decennale dei sussidi · pubblicati per anno

www.prounione.it/it/ecumenismo/spuc

WEEK OF PRAYER · CHRISTIAN UNITY

Let's pray together for Christian Unity



THEME FOR THE YEAR 2024

A Franciscan Friars of the Atonement founder's initiative, the Servant of God, Fr. Paul Wattson / 18-25 January 2024

Theme

**You shall love the Lord
your God ... and your neighbor
as yourself (Luke 10:27)**

ENGLISH

Poster Artwork

Tema

**Amarás al Señor tu Dios...
y a tu prójimo como
a ti mismo (Lucas 10:27)**

ESPAÑOL

Ilustración del cartel



Sources for the WPCU materials and resources for ENGLISH Language

 **Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute · NY / GEII**
www.geii.org/week_of_prayer_for_christian_unity

 **World Council of Churches / WCC**
www.oikoumene.org/resources/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity

 **Dicastery for the Promotion of Christian Unity / DPCU**
www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/settimana-di-preghiera-per-l-unita.html

Poster Artwork Courtesy

Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute (NY)
A Ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement



SETTIMANA DI PREGHIERA · UNITÀ CRISTIANI

LETTURE BIBLICHE 2024

per ogni giorno della settimana di preghiera

Sui nostri canali digitali

@CentroProUnione @EcumenUnity

18 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

Primo Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Aiutaci, Signore, a vivere una vita orientata a te

Un maestro della Legge voleva tendere un tranello a Gesù. Si alzò e disse: "Maestro, che cosa devo fare per avere la vita eterna?" (Lc 10, 25)



Lecture

Romani 14, 8-9
Salmo 103 (102), 13-18



Day 1

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Help us, Lord, to have a life turned towards you

A lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher", he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Lk 10:25)



Additional scripture passages

Romans 14:8-9
Psalm 103:13-18



18 January 2023

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

19 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

Day 2

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Help me Lord to love you, my neighbour and myself with all that I am

The lawyer answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself" (Lk 10:27)



Additional scripture passages
Deuteronomy 10:12-13
Psalm 133



Secondo Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Aiutami, Signore, ad amare te, il mio prossimo e me stesso

Rispose: "Ama il Signore Dio tuo con tutto il tuo cuore, con tutta la tua anima, con tutte le tue forze e con tutta la tua mente, e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso" (Lc 10, 27)



Lecture

Deuteronomio 10, 12-13
Salmo 133 (132), 1-3



19 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

20 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

Terzo Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Signore, apri il nostro cuore a coloro che non vediamo

"Chi è il mio prossimo?"
(Lc 10, 29)



Lecture

Romani 13, 8-10
Salmo 119 (118), 57-63



Day 3

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Lord, open our hearts to those we do not see

"Who is my neighbour?"
(Lk 10:29)



Additional scripture passages

Romans 13:8-10
Psalm 119:57-63



20 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

21 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

Day 4

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

May we never turn away from those in need

When he saw him, he passed by on the other side
(Lk 10:31)



Additional scripture passages
Isaiah 58:6-9a
Psalm 34:15-22



Quarto Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Fa' che noi non ci voltiamo mai dall'altra parte, quando vediamo qualcuno nel bisogno

Vide l'uomo ferito, passò dall'altra parte della strada e proseguì (Lc 10, 31)



Lecture

Isaia 58, 6-9a
Salmo 34 (33),16-23



21 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

On our digital platforms

@CentroProUnione @EcumenUnity

BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS 2024

For the Eight days of the Week of Prayer

22 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

Quinto Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Signore, aiutaci a vedere le ferite e trovare speranza

Gli andò vicino, versò olio e vino sulle sue ferite e glielie fasciò
(Lc 10, 34)



Lecture

Gioele 2, 23-27
Salmo 104 (103), 14-15.27-30



Day 5

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Lord, help us see the wounds and find hope

He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them
(Lk 10:34)



Additional scripture passages

Joel 2:23-27
Psalm 104:14-15, 27-30



22 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

23 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

Day 6

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Lord, turn our churches into 'inns', to welcome those in need

Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him
(Lk 10:34)



Additional scripture passages

Genesis 18:4-5
Psalm 5:11-12



Sesto Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Signore, fa' che le nostre chiese diventino "locande" per accogliere coloro che sono nel bisogno

Lo caricò sul suo asino, lo portò a una locanda e fece tutto il possibile per aiutarlo
(Lc 10, 34)



Lecture

Genesi 18, 4-5
Salmo 5, 12-13



23 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

24 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

Settimo Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Signore, mostraci come rispondere alle necessità del nostro prossimo

"Chi di questi tre si è comportato come prossimo?"
(Lc 10, 36)



Lecture

Filippesi 2, 1-5
Salmo 10 (9), 17-18



Day 7

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Lord, show us how to respond to our neighbour

Jesus said:
"Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour?"
(Lk 10:36)



Additional scripture passages

Philippians 2:1-5
Psalm 10:17-18



24 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

25 January 2024

#ChristianUnity

#WPCU

Post

Day 8

"You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself"
(Luke 10:27)

Lord, may our fellowship be a sign of your Kingdom

Jesus said to him,
"Go and do likewise"
(Lk 10:37)



Additional scripture passages

Romani 12:9-13
Psalm 41:1-2



Ottavo Giorno

"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso"
(Luca 10,27)

Signore, fa' che la nostra comunione sia un segno del tuo Regno

Gesù gli disse: "Va' e comportati allo stesso modo"
(Lc 10, 37)



Lecture

Romani 12, 9-13
Salmo 41 (40), 2-3



25 gennaio 2024

#UnitàCristiani

#SPUC

Post

☼ *An honored visit of the*
WCC General Secretary and delegation

On Wednesday March 22, 2023, the World Council of Churches' *General Secretary, Rev. Prof. Dr. Jerry Pillay* and *Prof. Dr. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc, Programme Executive* for Ecumenical Relations and Faith and Order paid a visit to the **Centro Pro Unione**.

This was Dr. Pillay's first visit to Rome after his installation as General Secretary and the Centro's staff is honored that he would request to meet us and learn more of how the Centro could be engaged in some of the future projects being planned by the Faith and Order commission.

Dr. Pillay was very impressed by the important documentation housed in the Centro's Library concerning the international and regional theological dialogues and the fact that materials are present in many languages. The delegation also expressed appreciation for the formation projects of the Centro Pro Unione (specifically **Mutual Accountability Desk** for Ecumenism and annual Summer Course) and for the attention paid to the heuristic aspect of these projects oriented towards a constant meta-reflection on the dynamics of reception and ecumenical formation that the Centro has always activated.

Fr. James Puglisi, sa, and staff were able to speak about the on-going programs of the Centro as well as to describe future programs in development. Particular interest was shown in the proposed Nicaea 2025 project.

Drs. Pillay and Mihoc assured the Centro staff that we would maintain important collaborative relations in the immediate future.

☼ *An honored visit of the*
Director of the Faith and Order Commission

On May 9, 2023, the **Centro Pro Unione** received with joy the visit of the new appointed *Director of the Faith and Order Commission, Dr. Prof. Andrej Jeftić*, accompanied by *Dr. Prof. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc, Programme*

➤ *Learn More · WCC website publication*
<https://bit.ly/CPU-Visits-WCC-Mar-23>

GUESTS WELCOMED AT THE CPU

Executive for Ecumenical Relations and Faith and Order. The visit – which followed that of the World Council of Churches *Secretary General, Rev. Dr. Prof. Jerry Pillay* on March – was the opportunity for a cordial and informal exchange on FO projects as well as on CPU activities related to the Library (Dr. Loredana Nepi) and theological-formatinal projects (Prof. Teresa Francesca Rossi) enriched by the presentation of the charism of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement by Rev. Prof. Timothy MacDonald, SA, Rector of St. Onofrio Church.

To the guests from Geneva, our gratitude for the friendly attestation of esteem towards the CPU ministry and for the enriching meeting.



☼ *Left to Right*
 Fr. James Puglisi, sa, Dr. Jerry Pillay,
 Dr. Teresa Francesca Rossi, Dr. Vasile-Octavian
 Mihoc and Dr. Loredana Nepi

📷 *Photo Credits* Archive Centro Pro Unione

❖ *Siamo onorati per la visita del*
Segretario Generale del CEC e delegazione

Mercoledì 22 marzo 2023, il *Segretario Generale* del Consiglio Ecumenico delle Chiese, **Rev. Prof. Dr. Jerry Pillay** e il **Prof. Dr. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc**, *Direttore del Programma per le Relazioni Ecumeniche e Fede e Costituzione* hanno fatto visita al **Centro Pro Unione**.

Questa è stata la prima visita del Dr. Pillay a Roma dopo il suo insediamento come Segretario Generale e lo staff del Centro è onorato che abbia chiesto di incontrarci e di saperne di più su come il Centro potrebbe essere impegnato in alcuni dei progetti futuri pianificati dalla Commissione Fede e Costituzione.

Il Dr. Pillay è rimasto molto colpito dall'importante documentazione conservata nella Biblioteca del Centro riguardante i dialoghi teologici internazionali e regionali e dal fatto che i materiali sono presenti in molte lingue.

La delegazione ha inoltre espresso apprezzamento per i progetti di formazione del Centro Pro Unione (in particolare il **Mutual Accountability Desk** per l'Ecumenismo e il Corso Estivo annuale in ecumenismo e dialogo interreligioso) e per l'attenzione all'aspetto euristico di questi progetti orientati ad una costante meta-riflessione sulle dinamiche dell'accoglienza e formazione ecumenica che il Centro ha sempre attivato. Il Direttore e il personale hanno potuto parlare dei programmi in corso del Centro e descrivere i programmi futuri in fase di sviluppo. Particolare interesse è stato mostrato per il proposto progetto Nicea 2025.

I professori Pillay e Mihoc hanno assicurato allo staff del Centro che manterremo importanti rapporti di collaborazione nell'immediato futuro.

❖ *Siamo onorati per la visita del*
Direttore della Commissione Fede e Costituzione del CEC e delegazione

Il 9 maggio 2023 il **Centro Pro Unione** ha ricevuto la graditissima visita del nuovo *Direttore della Commissione Fede e Costituzione*, **Dott. Prof. Andrej Jeftić**, accompagnato dal **Dott. Prof. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc**, *Direttore del Programma per le Relazioni Ecumeniche e Fede e Costituzione*.

OSPITI RICEVUTI IN VISITA AL CPU

La visita – che seguiva quella del *Segretario generale* del Consiglio Ecumenico delle Chiese (World Council of Churches), **Rev. Dott. Prof. Jerry Pillay** del marzo scorso – è stata l'occasione per uno scambio cordiale e informale sia sui progetti di FeC che sulle attività del CPU relative alla Biblioteca (Dott.ssa Loredana Nepi) e ai progetti teologico-formativi (Prof.ssa Teresa Francesca Rossi) arricchiti dalla presentazione del carisma dei Frati Francescani dell'Atoneamento da parte del Rev. Prof. Timothy MacDonald, SA, Rettore della Chiesa di Sant'Onofrio al Gianicolo.

Agli ospiti di Ginevra la nostra gratitudine per la amichevole attestazione di stima verso il ministero del CPU e per l'arricchente scambio.



❖ *Da sinistra a destra*
 Dr. Prof. Andrej Jeftić, Dott.ssa Teresa F. Rossi,
 P. Prof. Timothy MacDonald, SA, Dr. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc e Dott.ssa Loredana Nepi

📷 *Crediti Foto* Archivio Centro Pro Unione

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity / Settimana di preghiera per l'unità dei Cristiani PRAYER GUIDE BOOKLET / LIBRETTINO GUIDA

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<p>Ci trattarono con gentilezza (Atti degli Apostoli 28, 2)</p>  <p>SETTIMANA DI PREGHIERA PER L'UNITÀ DEI CRISTIANI 18-25 gennaio Testi utili per tutto l'anno 2020</p>	<p>Rimanete nel mio amore: produrrete molto frutto (Gh. Co 15, 5-9)</p>  <p>SETTIMANA DI PREGHIERA PER L'UNITÀ DEI CRISTIANI 18-25 gennaio Testi utili per tutto l'anno 2021</p>	<p>"In oriente abbiamo visto apparire la sua stella e siamo venuti qui per onorarlo" (Matteo 2,2)</p>  <p>SETTIMANA DI PREGHIERA PER L'UNITÀ DEI CRISTIANI 18-25 gennaio Testi utili per tutto l'anno 2022</p>	<p>"Imparate a fare il bene, cercate la giustizia" (Isaia 1,17)</p>  <p>SETTIMANA DI PREGHIERA PER L'UNITÀ DEI CRISTIANI 18-25 gennaio Testi utili per tutto l'anno 2023</p>	<p>"Ama il Signore Dio tuo ... e ama il prossimo tuo come te stesso" (Luca 10,27)</p>  <p>Settimana di Preghiera per l'Unità dei Cristiani 18-25 gennaio 2024 Testi utili per tutto l'anno 2024</p>

Print / Cartaceo 17.295 Downloads 37.401	Print / Cartaceo 13.137 Downloads 10.584	Print / Cartaceo 12.739 Downloads 3.015	Print / Cartaceo 12.289 Downloads 10.643	Print / Cartaceo 9.555 Downloads 2.733
---	---	--	---	---

PRINT / CARTACEO 65.015 DIGITAL DOWNLOADS / PRELIEVI ONLINE 64.376

DAILY PRAYER / PAGELLINA

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Print / Cartaceo 56.728 Downloads 33.264	Print / Cartaceo 46.884 Downloads 1.025	Print / Cartaceo 41.979 Downloads 1.072	Print / Cartaceo 36.599 Downloads 1.972	Print / Cartaceo 10.975 Downloads 1.200

PRINT / CARTACEO 193.165 DIGITAL DOWNLOADS / PRELIEVI ONLINE 38.533

POSTER / LOCANDINA

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Print / Cartaceo 5.814 Downloads 31.617	Print / Cartaceo 4.734 Downloads 6.194 (ITA) 2.179 (ENG)	Print / Cartaceo 41.979 Downloads 426	Print / Cartaceo 36.599 Downloads 1.989	Print / Cartaceo 10.975 Downloads 942 (ITA) 332 (ENG)

PRINT / CARTACEO 100.101 DIGITAL DOWNLOADS / PRELIEVI ONLINE 43.679

LITURGICAL & PASTORAL SUBSIDIES (Paoline Editions) / SUSSIDI LITURGICI E PASTORALI (Ed. Paoline)

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<p>CON GRANDE GENTILEZZA... Preghiera per l'unità dei cristiani</p>  <p>Downloads 158</p>	<p>«RIMANETE NEL MIO AMORE...» Preghiera per l'unità dei cristiani</p>  <p>Downloads 185</p>	<p>«ABBIAMO VISTO LA SUA STELLA...» Preghiera per l'unità dei cristiani</p>  <p>Downloads 591</p>	<p>«IMPARATE A FARE IL BENE...» Preghiera per l'unità dei cristiani</p>  <p>Downloads 737</p>	<p>«AMA IL SIGNORE DIO TUO...» il prossimo tuo...</p>  <p>Downloads 883</p>

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS / PRELIEVI ONLINE 2.554

CALENDAR CELEBRATIONS IN ROME WPCU / CALENDARIO CELEBRAZIONI A ROMA SPUC

2020	2023
Downloads 18.554	Downloads 644

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS / PRELIEVI ONLINE 19.198

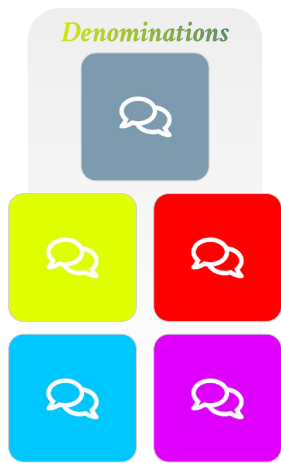
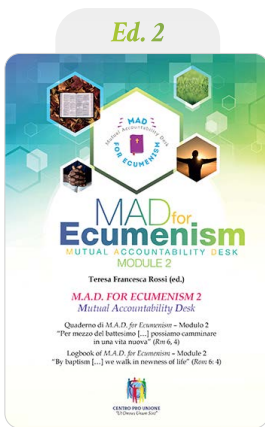
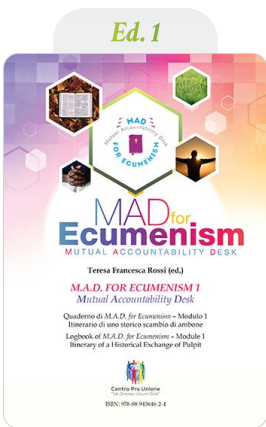
SEMI-ANNUAL BULLETIN / BOLLETTINO SEMI-ANNUALE



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) n. 83 / Fall 2012
<i>Downloads</i> 2.276 | 7) n. 80 / Spring 2011
<i>Downloads</i> 1.914 | 13) n. 04 / Fall 1972
<i>Downloads</i> 1.768 | 19) n. 81 / Spring 2012
<i>Downloads</i> 1.693 |
| 2) n. 103 / Spring 2023
<i>Downloads</i> 2.210 | 8) n. 03 / Spring 1971
<i>Downloads</i> 1.854 | 14) n. 96 / Fall 2019
<i>Downloads</i> 1.748 | 20) n. 66 / Fall 2004
<i>Downloads</i> 1.682 |
| 3) n. 44 / Fall 1993
<i>Downloads</i> 2.127 | 9) n. 90 / Fall 2016
<i>Downloads</i> 1.842 | 15) n. 73 / Spring 2008
<i>Downloads</i> 1.742 | List from 21° to 103°
<i>Downloads</i> 114.439 |
| 4) n. 95 / Spring 2019
<i>Downloads</i> 1.957 | 10) n.40-41/Fall-Spring 1991-1992
<i>Downloads</i> 1.813 | 16) n. 34 / Fall 1998
<i>Downloads</i> 1.734 | Digital Downloads Bulletin /
Prelievi online Bollettino
151.667 |
| 5) n. 49 / Spring 1996
<i>Downloads</i> 1.956 | 11) n. 59 / Spring 2011
<i>Downloads</i> 1.793 | 17) n. 56 / Fall 1999
<i>Downloads</i> 1.704 | |
| 6) n. 53 / Spring 1998
<i>Downloads</i> 1.934 | 12) n. 94 / Fall 2018
<i>Downloads</i> 1.782 | 18) n. 63 / Spring 2003
<i>Downloads</i> 1.699 | |

M.A.D. for Ecumenism - Mutual Accountability Desk
E-BOOK EDITIONS / EDIZIONI E-BOOK

Interconfessional Dialogues / Dialoghi Interconfessionali
FULL-TEXT DOCUMENTS / DOCUMENTI



- 1) Anglican-Old Catholic Theological Conferences (A-OC) *Downloads* 2.318
- 2) Anglican-Methodist International Commission (A-M) *Downloads* 1.896
- 3) The Joint Lutheran / RC Study Commission on 'The Gospel and the Church' (L-RC) *Downloads* 1.830
- 4) The Joint Working Group between the World Council of Churches and the Catholic Church (JWG) *Downloads* 1.516
- 5) International Conversations between the Anglican Communion and the Baptist World Alliance (A-B) *Downloads* 1.307

Dialogues Full-Text from 6° to 350°
Downloads 78.639

Downloads 8.260

Downloads 3.178

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS /
PRELIEVI ONLINE 11.438

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS DIALOGUES /
PRELIEVI ONLINE DIALOGHI 87.506

PRAYER VIGIL FOR UNITY / VEGLIA DI PREGHIERA PER L'UNITÀ

Co-organizaed / Co-organizzato · Anglican Centre in Rome, Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome and Centro Pro Unione



Live Streaming

Live Streaming

Live Streaming

Replay / Visualizzazioni 947

SUMMARY / RIEPILOGO

Material Week Prayer Christian Unity (2020-2024) + E-Books + Interconfessional Dialogues Full-Text /
Sussidi Settimana Preghiera Unita' Cristiani (2020-2024) + E-Books + Documenti Dialoghi Interconfessionali

Print material / Sussidi cartaceo

Digital downloads / Prelievi online

358.281

418.951

DELIVERING OVERALL OVERVIEW / PANORAMICA GENERALE DIVULGAZIONE

Print and digital downloads / Cartaceo e prelievi online

777.232

BOOKS AND COURSE VOLUMES

Corso breve in Ecumenismo · A short course in ecumenism



▶ **ORDER NOW**

www.prounione.it/en/activities/editorial-proposals



Volume I

LA CHIESA CATTOLICA E IL MOVIMENTO ECUMENICO

(Book out of print)

€ 5,00 EURO



Volume II

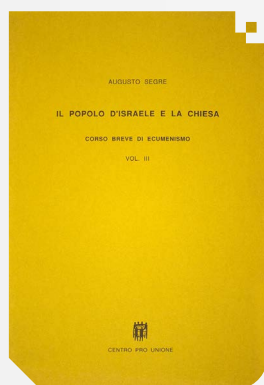
CONOSCIAMO I FRATELLI

La Chiesa Valdese, Metodista, Luterana, Battista, Anglicana e Ortodossa

€ 5,00 EURO

Reprinted in its entirety as the 1st part of

* **Volume XIV**
CONOSCIAMO I FRATELLI



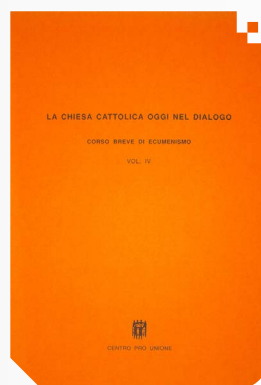
Volume III

Augusto Segre IL POPOLO D'ISRAELE E LA CHIESA

1982, pp. 137

Nascita e sviluppo dell'idea ebraica. Gli ebrei in Italia, l'Antisemitismo, il Sionismo, lo Stato di Israele, il Concilio Vaticano II, gli Ebrei

€ 5,00 EURO



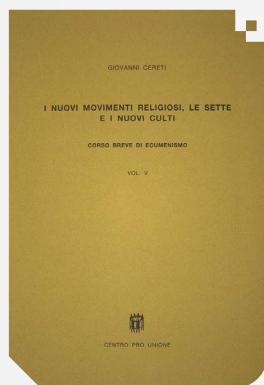
Volume IV

LA CHIESA CATTOLICA OGGI NEL DIALOGO (I parte)

1982, pp. 82

Saggi sui dialoghi intercorsi dal 1978-1982 tra la Chiesa Cattolica e le altre Chiese Cristiane

€ 4,00 EURO



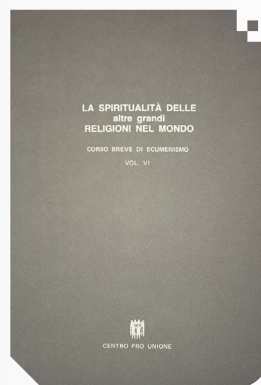
Volume V

Giovanni Cereti I NUOVI MOVIMENTI RELIGIOSI, LE SETTE E I NUOVI CULTI

1983, pp. 100

Fenomeno, classificazione, giudizio e osservazioni sui nuovi movimenti, culti e sette

€ 4,00 EURO



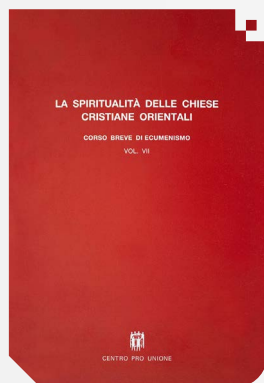
Volume VI

LA SPIRITUALITÀ DELLE ALTRE GRANDI RELIGIONI NEL MONDO

1984, pp. 105

Nozioni di spiritualità, ortodossa, ebraica, e delle altre grandi religioni: islamica, induista e buddista

€ 4,00 EURO



Volume VII

LA SPIRITUALITÀ DELLE CHIESE CRISTIANE ORIENTALI

1986, pp. 132

Nozioni di spiritualità cristiana orientale: cattolica, caldea, copta, armena, greca ortodossa, ecc.

€ 5,00 EURO



Volume VIII

IL VESCOVO DI ROMA NELLA CHIESA UNIVERSALE

1987, pp. 120

Riflessioni di esperti cattolici e fratelli cristiani sull'esercizio del ministero papale

€ 5,00 EURO





• Volume IX

**LA CHIESA CATTOLICA
OGGI NEL DIALOGO
(II parte)**

1988, pp. 70

Saggi sui dialoghi intercorsi dal 1983 al 1987 tra la Chiesa Cattolica e le altre Chiese Cristiane

€ 5,00 EURO



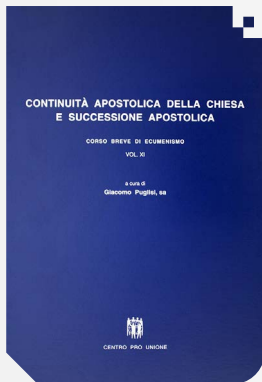
• Volume X

**LA CHIESA CATTOLICA
OGGI NEL DIALOGO
(III parte)**

1995, pp. 204

Saggi sui dialoghi intercorsi dal 1988 al 1995 tra la Chiesa Cattolica e le altre Chiese Cristiane

€ 8,00 EURO



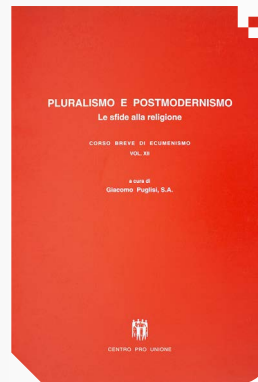
• Volume XI

**LA CONTINUITÀ
APOSTOLICA DELLA
CHIESA E LA SUCCESSIONE
APOSTOLICA**

1996, pp. 96

Atti del Simposio Interconfessionale tenutosi a Roma, 23-24 novembre 1995

€ 8,00 EURO



• Volume XII

**PLURALISMO E
POSTMODERNISMO**

1987, pp. 136

Le sfide alla religione esaminate da esperti di varie confessioni e religioni

€ 8,00 EURO



• Volume XIII

**IL RINNOVAMENTO
LITURGICO COME VIA
ALL'UNITÀ CRISTIANA**

2004, pp. 228

€ 10,00 EURO

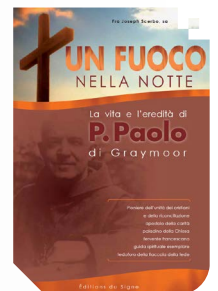
Italian edition ••

Joseph Scerbo

UN FUOCO NELLA NOTTE

La vita e l'eredità di Padre Paolo di Graymoor
Ed. du Signe 2013, pp. 102

€ 15,00 EURO



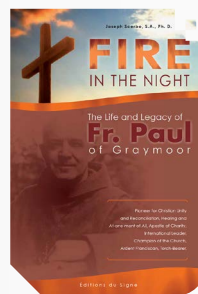
•• English edition

Joseph Scerbo

FIRE IN THE NIGHT

The Life and Legacy of Fr. Paul of Graymoor
Ed. du Signe 2013, pp. 101

\$ 15.00 USD



🛒 | bit.ly/order-FireInTheNight



• Volume XIV

a cura di Teresa F. Rossi
CONOSCIAMO I FRATELLI
Storia e attualità delle varie
confessioni cristiane *

2016, pp. 600

Volume costituito di tre parti:

1. Ristampa integrale del vol. II (1981);
2. Nuovi saggi e studi monografici sulle varie confessioni cristiane (2016);
3. Schede tematiche di approfondimento per ciascuna confessione. Arricchito da sussidio multimediale reperibile on-line

€ 25,00 EURO



Teresa F. Rossi
**MANUALE DI
ECUMENISMO**

Ed. Queriniana 2013, pp. 472

Manuale completo e innovativo sul Movimento ecumenico nei suoi aspetti di metodo, spiritualità, storia e sistemática, corredato da vari sussidi formativi e da un CD-ROM originale interattivo

€ 30,00 EURO

🛒 | bit.ly/order-ManEcumenismo

The Centro offers a formative itinerary in Ecumenism and Christian Unity

MEDIA NETWORK

We are online · Follow Us & Visit the
MEDIA CHANNELS



Connect & stay in touch on Facebook

Social Networking



Centro Pro Unione

@CentroProUnione · Education

Send message

Latest posts facebook.com/CentroProUnione

— Post · **Together 2023**

The Workshop "History of a Future" organized on Sept 30th by the Centro Pro Unione for the Taizé event Gathering Together · #Together2023 | Gathering of the People of God has been attended by about 50 people from various countries and Christian traditions.

The inspiring addresses by the two distinguished guests – Fr. Serge Sollogoub from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Ecumenical Delegate to the Assembly of French Orthodox Bishops for the Ile de France Region, and Archbishop

Bernd Wallet, Archbishop of Utrecht, President of the Old Catholic International Bishop's Conference of the Union of Utrecht – have been much appreciated by the young people, as well as the profound moment of prayer accompanied by Frère Francis.

The young participants had a lively sharing of perspectives during their work in groups. The CPU Staff warmly welcomed the participants: Dr Loredana Nepi explained the value of the Old and New Library as an inspirational place from the artistic point of view; Prof Teresa Francesca Rossi – after conveying the greetings

of the CPU Acting Director Fr Timothy MacDonald, SA – introduced the theme and coordinated the Workshop, recalling the mind and spirit of the Council and how that had been mirrored in those meetings organized by the Foyer Unitas and the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, and highlighting how this history can inspire the future commitment of the young people.

The Workshop – which received a very positive feedback – was aiming at rekindling in one's own ecumenical journey the enthusiasm for unity that featured the beginning of the Ecumenical Movement and to make the young people aware of the need to be one as Christians.

In the afternoon the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement from Rome and Assisi have attended the joyful celebration in St. Peter's basilica at the presence of Pope Francis and the Leaders of the various Christian traditions.

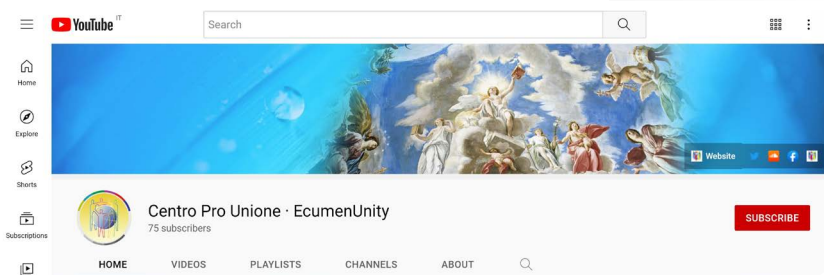
#Together2023 #Ecumenism
#UtOmnesUnumSint"
#MADforEcumenism

3 October 2023 | @CentroProUnione



Tune in & watch on YouTube

Video Streaming



Latest posts youtube.com/@CentroProUnione

— Post · **Conference**

Revd Dr Thomas F. BEST
(In Case You Missed It)
The Ecumenical Winter is Over
https://youtu.be/t74Te1cD_mM

— Post · **Conference**

Revd Dr Dirk G. LANGE
Baptism and Growth in Communion:
Ecclesiological Implications
of the latest Lutheran-Catholic
Joint Commission
<https://youtu.be/e-nBmctjvs8>

— Post · **Conference**

Prof Daniel PRATT MORRIS-CHAPMAN
Newman, Wesley and the Logic of Unity:
An Inductive Ecumenism
<https://youtu.be/2gT7nJifiWQ>

— Post · **Conference**

Rabbi Jack BEMPORAD
The Decisive Significance
of the Book of Amos for Understanding
the Literary Prophecy
<https://youtu.be/0Q9S3NypKP0>

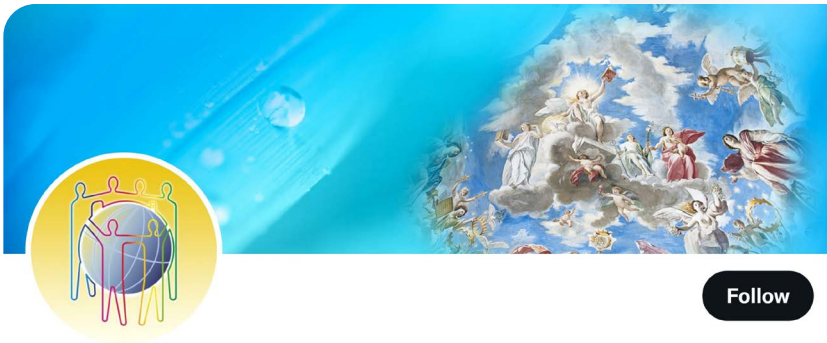
— Post · **Evento celebrativo**

Padre Davide CARBONARO, OMD
Dott. Vasile OCTAVIAN MIHOC
Consegna report M.A.D. for Ecumenism
edizione 3 #Synod23
<https://youtu.be/-aXKZN4M3BQ>

We are online · Follow Us & Visit the
MEDIA CHANNELS    

 **Keep posted** on X (former Twitter)

Microblogging



Follow

 Latest posts twitter.com/EcumenUnity




— Post · **Conferece in honor of the Atonement Society co-founders 2023**

We are deeply grateful to Dr Prof Donna Orsuto – Professor of Spirituality at the Pontifical Gregorian University (@UniGregoriana) and Director of the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas (@LayCentre) – for her commitment to Ecumenism and Reconciliation.


The inspiring lecture that Dr Prof Donna Orsuto presented in honor of the Atonement Society co-founders – the Servant of God Father Paul Wattson

and Mother Lurana White – to a hybrid in-person and online listening panel has given us much inspiration and points for reflection on Spirituality and Reconciliation.

We are proud to present some comments from the web audience:

-  — “Thank you so much for this opportunity to follow online!”
-  — “Thank you! So beautiful and inspiring!”
-  — “I wish you a lovely evening! Snowy greetings from Lund!”

The concluding words of hope and inspiration of the lecture are:

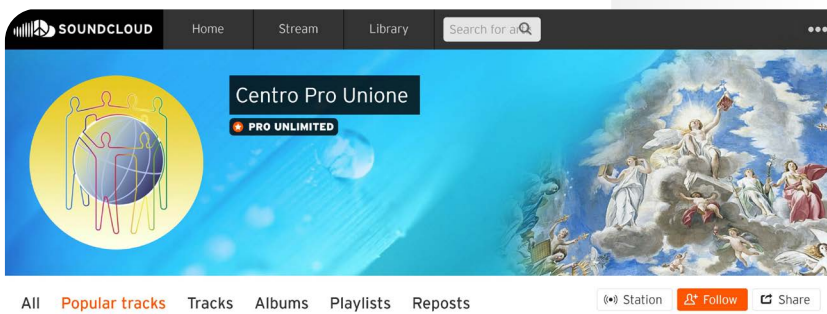
 — “I would like to end with one comment from FRATELLI TUTTI... True reconciliation is achieved proactively. By forming a new society, a society based on service to others, rather than the desire to dominate; a society based on sharing what one has with others, rather than the selfish scramble by each for as much wealth as possible; a society in which the value of being together as human beings is ultimately more important than any lesser group, whether it be family, nation, race or culture. Working to overcome our divisions without losing our identity as individuals presumes that a basic sense of belonging is present in everyone.”
 “So, with these words I conclude with the hope that all of us will be encouraged to be ambassadors for Christ who communicate the message of reconciliation in words and deeds to those we meet. In this way you and I will make a difference in our troubled world. Thank you...”

#Spirituality #Reconciliation
 #AtonementSociety #UtOmnesUnumSint
 @AtonementFriars @FратиAtonement

15 December 2023 | @EcumenUnity 



 **Start listening** on SoundCloud

Audio Podcasting



— Podcast

Baptism and Growth in Communion: Ecclesiological Implications of the latest Lutheran-Catholic Joint Commission

 **Speaker** · Dr Dirk G. LANGE
 <https://on.soundcloud.com/ZLcc4uUxazz4XXaa8A>

 Latest posts soundcloud.com/EcumenUnity

— Podcast
(In Case You Missed It) The “Ecumenical Winter” is Over

 **Speaker** · Dr Thomas F. BEST
 <https://on.soundcloud.com/2LaL1Ev1qyyPg9F88>

— Podcast
The Decisive Significance of the Book of Amos for Understanding the Literary Prophecy

 **Speaker** · Rabbi Jack BEMPORAD
 <https://on.soundcloud.com/x6eucrqzPiwiAE5W9>

MEDIA NETWORK

We are online · Follow Us & Visit the
MEDIA CHANNELS    

— Post · **New Audiovisual Series**
about the CPU activities / 2022-2023

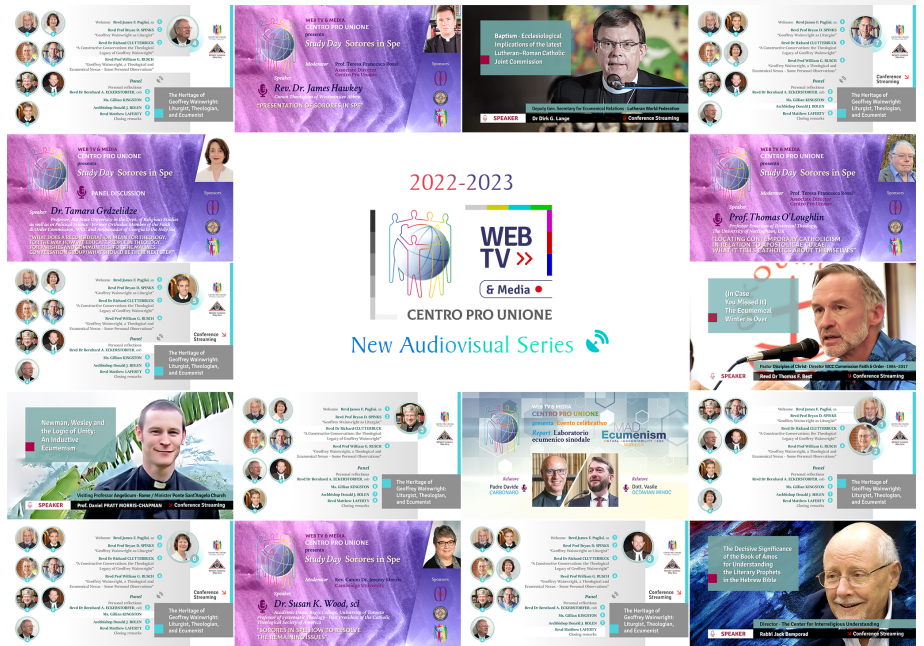
The Centro Pro Unione announces a brand new series of videos lectures, and events on the WebTV & Media!


— <https://pronione.it/webtv>

A visual media documentation of our activities and mission throughout the years 2022-2023 with co-sponsorships and committed experts will provide a wide range of theological and ecumenical subjects on Reconciliation and Unity.

The series depicts a gathering of speakers who participated in various sessions at the CPU and brought their voices and contributions to the dialogue. Those who have lent their voices include **Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans, Orthodox, Anglicans and Disciples of Christ**, in addition to the perspective of a **Jewish** scholar.

Discover the audiovisual sequence that includes the following:



—  **Study Day on Sorores in Spe “Sisters in Hope of the Resurrection”** · A Fresh Response to the Condemnation of Anglican Orders (1896) / a co-sponsorship Malines Conversation Group, The Anglican Centre in Rome (@AnglicanCentre) and Centro Pro Unione:


- 1) **Revd Dr James Hawkey** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 2) **Prof Joris Geldhof** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 3) **Prof Thomas O’Loughlin** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 4) **Fr William Henn, ofm cap** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 5) **Dr Susan K. Wood, SCL** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 6) **Rt Revd Bruce J. A. Myers, OGS** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 7) **Dr Tamara Grdzeldze** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 8) **Revd Dr Erik Eckerdal** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 9) **Revd Canon Prof Sarah Coakley, FBA** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>
- 10) **Revd James F. Puglisi, sa** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV>


—  **Pastor Prof Daniel Pratt Morris-Chapman** · Newman, Wesley and the Logic of Unity: An Inductive Ecumenism · <https://bit.ly/Pratt-WebTV-2022>

—  **The Heritage of Geoffrey Wainwright** · Liturgist, Theologian, and Ecumenist / a co-sponsorship Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome (@MethodistEOR) and Centro Pro Unione:

- 1) **Revd James F. Puglisi, sa** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 2) **Revd Prof Bryan D. Spinks** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 3) **Revd Dr Richard Clutterbuck** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 4) **Revd Prof William G. Rusch** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 5) **Revd Dr Bernhard A. Eckerstorfer, osb** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 6) **Dr Gillian Kingston** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 7) **Archbishop Donald J. Bolen** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>
- 8) **Revd Matthew Laferty** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022>

—  **Revd Dr Thomas F. Best** · (In Case You Missed It) The Ecumenical Winter is Over · <https://bit.ly/Best-WebTV-2022>

—  **Dr Dirk G. Lange** · Baptism and Growth in Communion: Ecclesiological Implications of the latest Lutheran-Catholic Joint Commission / a co-sponsorship The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas (@LayCentre) and Centro Pro Unione · <https://bit.ly/Lange-WebTV-2023>

—  **Rabbi Jack Bemporad** · The Decisive Significance of the Book of Amos for Understanding the Literary Prophecy / a co-sponsorship The John Paul II Center for Interreligious Dialogue (@JohnPaul2Center) and Centro Pro Unione · <https://bit.ly/Bemporad-WebTV-2023>

—  **Revd Domenico Carbonaro, OMD** (Synod Coordinator for the city of Rome / @Synod_VA) and **Dr Vasile Octavian Mihoc** (WCC program executive for ecumenical relations and Faith and Order / @Oikoumene) | Celebrative event for the presentation of the Report “Synodal Ecumenical Laboratory” · Project M.A.D. for Ecumenism — Edition 3 (presented to the Secretary of the Synod) · <https://bit.ly/MADforEcu3-WebTV-2023>

Enjoy our new **media video** series!

#Ecumenism #Synod23 #MADforEcumenism #UtOmnesUnumSint #Conferences #Media #WebTV

10 January 2024 | @EcumenUnity 

**Siamo online · Seguici e visita i nostri
CANALI MEDIA**



— **Post · Nuova serie audiovisiva
sulle attività del CPU / 2022-2023**

Il Centro Pro Unione è lieto di annunciare una nuova serie video di conferenze ed eventi sulla WebTV & Media!

— <https://pronuione.it/webtv/it>

Una documentazione audiovisiva sulla nostra missione e le nostre attività nel biennio 2022-2023, realizzate anche insieme a partners ecumenici, e grazie al contributo di esperti che presentano vari temi teologico-ecumenici sulla riconciliazione e l'unità.

L'inedita serie documenta una continua riflessione che, attraverso le sessioni tenute presso il CPU, offre un contributo originale al dialogo e si delinea quale spazio aperto ad uno scambio di prospettive reciprocamente arricchenti. I relatori, tutti esperti di rilevanza internazionale, sono esponenti di varie tradizioni, fra cui **Cattolici, Metodisti, Luterani, Ortodossi, Anglicani e Discepoli di Cristo**, in aggiunta alla prospettiva di un esperto di tradizione **ebraica**.

Scopri nel dettaglio la sequenza audiovisiva e i link ai video:

— **Giornata di Studio sul documento Sorores in Spe "Sorelle nella speranza della risurrezione"** · Una nuova risposta alla condanna degli ordini anglicani (1896) / una co-sponsorizzazione Malines Conversation Group, Centro Anglicano a Roma (@AnglicanCentre) e Centro Pro Unione:

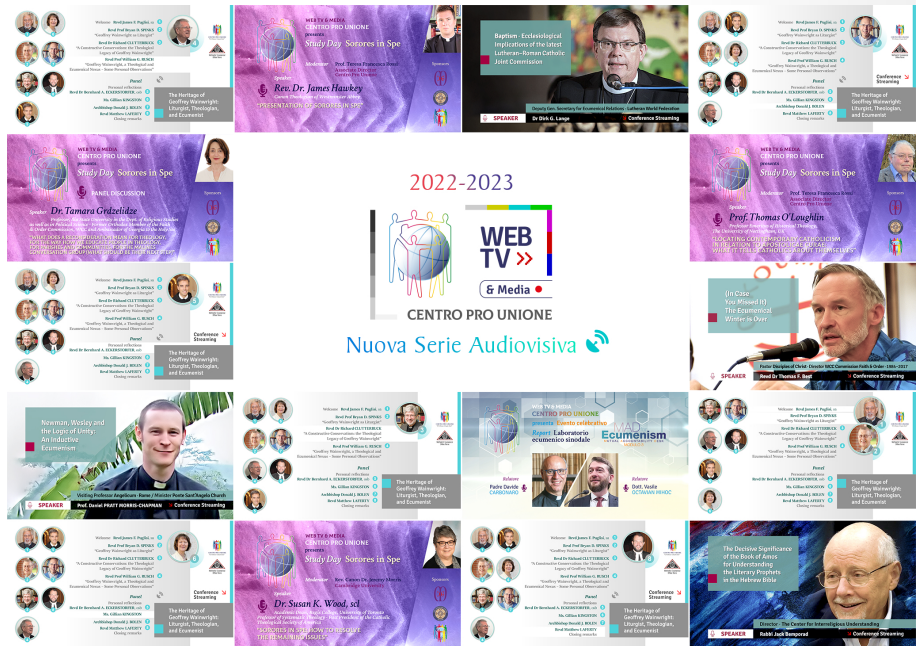
- 1) **Rev. do Dr James Hawkey** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 2) **Prof. Joris Geldhof** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 3) **Prof. Thomas O'Loughlin** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 4) **Fra William Henn, ofm cap** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 5) **Prof.ssa Susan K. Wood, SCL** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 6) **Rt Rev. mo Bruce J. A. Myers, OGS** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 7) **Prof.ssa Tamara Grdzeldize** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 8) **Rev. do Dr. Erik Eckerdal** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 9) **Rev. do Canon Prof.ssa Sarah Coakley, FBA** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>
- 10) **Rev. do Prof. James F. Puglisi, sa** · <https://bit.ly/SororesSpe-WebTV-Ita>

— **Pastore Prof. Daniel Pratt Morris-Chapman** · Newman, Wesley e la logica dell'unità: un ecumenismo induttivo · <https://bit.ly/Pratt-WebTV-2022-Ita>

— **L'eredità di Geoffrey Wainwright** · Liturgista, Teologo ed Ecumenista / una co-sponsorizzazione Ufficio Metodista Ecumenico a Roma (@MethodistEOR) e Centro Pro Unione:

- 1) **Rev. do Prof. James F. Puglisi, sa** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 2) **Rev. do Prof. Bryan D. Spinks** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 3) **Rev. do Dott. Richard Clutterbuck** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 4) **Rev. do Prof. William G. Rusch** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 5) **Rev. do Dott. Bernhard A. Eckerstorfer, osb** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 6) **Dott. Gillian Kingston** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 7) **Arcivescovo Donald J. Bolen** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>
- 8) **Rev. do Matthew Laferty** · <https://bit.ly/HeritageWainwright-WebTV-2022-Ita>

— **Rev. do Dott. Thomas F. Best** · (Nel caso non lo avessi saputo) L'inverno ecumenico è finito · <https://bit.ly/Best-WebTV-2022-Ita>



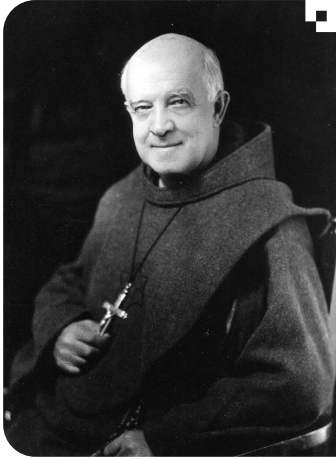
— **Dott. Dirk G. Lange** · **Battesimo e Crescere in Comunione: le implicazioni ecclesologiche del più recente documento della commissione congiunta luterano-cattolica / una co-sponsorizzazione The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas (@LayCentre) e Centro Pro Unione** · <https://bit.ly/Lange-WebTV-2023-Ita>

— **Rabbino Jack Bemporad** · Il significato decisivo del libro di Amos per la comprensione della profezia letteraria / una co-sponsorizzazione The John Paul II Center for Interreligious Dialogue (@JohnPaul2Center) e Centro Pro Unione · <https://bit.ly/Bemporad-WebTV-2023-ita>

— **P. Davide Carbonaro, OMD** (Coordinatore del Sinodo per la città di Roma / @Synod_VA) e **Dott. Vasile Octavian Mihoc** (Program Executive CEC per le relazioni ecumeniche e per Fede e Costituzione / @Oikoumene) | Evento celebrativo "Laboratorio Ecumenico sinodale" del progetto M.A.D. for Ecumenism — Edizione 3 (presentato alla segreteria del Sinodo) · <https://bit.ly/MADforEcu3-WebTV-2023-Ita>

Buona visione della nuova **serie audiovisiva!**
#Ecumenismo #Sinodo23
#MADforEcumenism #UtOmnesUnumSint
#Conferenze #Media #WebTV

10 gennaio 2024 | @EcumenUnity



Servant of God
Father Paul Wattson

Pioneer of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, prophet of Unity

The entire purpose of Fr. Paul Wattson's life was to work and pray for the realization of Christ's prayer at the Last Supper:

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe... (that thou hast sent me)" John 17:21 · King James Version

That journey is a commitment continuing today by the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement. Our mission throughout the world had reached the United States, Canada, Japan, Italy, United Kingdom, Brazil, Jamaica, Peru and the Philippines.



You may support the charism and ministry of the Atonement Friars in service of Christian Unity and Reconciliation by making a **free donation**:

IBAN BIC-SWIFT
IT10A010303827000000203723 PASCITM1P98
Monte dei Paschi di Siena

Account name Casa di Procura della Congregazione dei Frati francescani dell'Atonement
Piazza S. Onofrio, 2 - 00165 Roma



Thank you! 
Peace and All Good



 Visit us and learn more about the Friars
www.atonementfriars.org (United States)
and www.fratiatonement.org (Italy)



Pioniera della Settimana di Preghiera per l'Unità dei Cristiani, Profeta di Unità

Lo scopo della vita di **Padre Paolo Wattson** consisteva nel lavorare e pregare per la realizzazione della preghiera pronunciata da Gesù durante l'Ultima Cena:

«perché tutti siano una sola cosa. Come tu, Padre, sei in me e io in te, siano anch'essi in noi una cosa sola, perché il mondo creda... (che tu mi hai mandato)» *Giovanni 17,21 · C.E.I.*

Il cammino prosegue oggi grazie all'impegno continuo dei Frati e delle Suore Francescane dell'Atonement. Nel mondo, la nostra missione ha raggiunto Stati Uniti, Canada, Giappone, Italia, Gran Bretagna, Brasile, Giamaica, Perù e Filippine.



Madre Lurana White

Puoi sostenere il carisma e il ministero dei Frati dell'Atonement a favore dell'unità dei Cristiani e della Riconciliazione, facendo una **donazione libera**:

IBAN BIC-SWIFT

IT10A0103038270000000203723 PASCITM1P98

Monte dei Paschi di Siena

Intestato a Casa di Procura della Congregazione dei Frati Francescani dell'Atonement
Piazza S. Onofrio, 2 - 00165 Roma



Grazie di cuore!

Pace e Bene



Vieni a visitarci sui nostri siti web

www.fratiationement.org (Italia)

e www.atonementfriars.org (Stati Uniti)





Digital Edition
www.prounione.it/bulletin

Date of publication · May 13, 2024

Bulletin E-Book · ISSN Number
2532-4144