

# Week Of Prayer For Christian Unity 2009

## Theme: Reconcile Your People

This week we celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This occasion is celebrated by many denominations of Christian churches throughout the world. The task for us as people of different churches and traditions is to come together to pray for unity as Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one. We must come face to face with the challenges we share and celebrate the commonality of our mission to be the Body of Christ on earth.

In the United States this week we mark three significant events: the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., our Presidential Inauguration Day, and the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. All of these days illustrate this year's Christian Unity theme of reconciliation.

The following reflections and prayers challenge us to come "face to face" with themes and situations in our world where reconciliation is needed and that cry out for a united response by people of all faiths.

### Sunday January 18

#### Face to Face with Differences

O Jesus, you prayed that we may all be one, as you and the Father are one. (John 17:21) Help us to come together as people of faith to do your work on earth. Grant us the courage to ignore our differences and work together to provide for the common good. You call us to unity. Protect us from confusing unity with uniformity, diversity with division. Give us the courage to open our hearts and our minds to neighbors of other Christian confessions and of other faiths; and give us the grace to overcome barriers of indifference, prejudice or hate. Send your Holy Spirit to guide us. Reconcile our divisions and give us peace. Amen.

### Monday January 19

#### Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

#### Face to Face with Prejudice

O Jesus, Scripture teaches us that there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for we are all one in you. (Gal. 3:28) We come to you today as we celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose peaceful efforts to eliminate prejudice changed the face of our nation. We ask that you help us carry on his work by showing us

how to erase all vestiges of racial tension in our nation. Help us to accept and cherish diversity of race, nationality, gender, and abilities. Grant us an appreciation for our diverse roles as the Body of Christ in the world. Amen.

### Tuesday January 20

#### Presidential Inauguration Day

#### Face to Face with Hope

O Jesus, you promised that faith, hope and love would remain with us. (1 Cor 13:13) We come to you on this inauguration day with anxiety, but full of hope. Shower your blessings on our new President. Give him the knowledge, wisdom, and compassion, that he needs to lead us and resolve our national problems. Surround him with advisors and associates who will assist him in this monumental task. Help him to use his power to seek the common good – not only for us, but for people of all nations, races and creeds. Grant him the skills necessary to advance the cause of peace and justice in the world. Amen.

### Wednesday January 21

#### 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Roe v. Wade

#### Face to Face with Life Issues

O Jesus you said, "I came that you may have life and have it more abundantly" (John: 10:10). We come to you on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade – the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. Our hearts go out to all who have been touched by this decision. We ask you to welcome the infants of abortion into your presence. Be merciful to those who have had abortions and grant them healing, reconciliation, and peace. Show us ways to provide whatever is needed to alleviate the desire for abortion. Grant those who perform abortions an appreciation for all stages of life, and protect those who oppose abortion from developing bitterness or violent responses. Help all of us to form consciences that support a consistent ethic of life from conception to the grave. Amen.

### Thursday January 22

#### Face to Face with Poverty

O Jesus, you said, "There is still one thing left for you: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." Help us to strive for this heavenly treasure and turn our attention away from accumulating earthly wealth. So many people in the world are without food or shelter or medical attention. Help us to find ways to alleviate their plight. Grant all your people meaningful work at just and fair living wages. We thank you for all that we have. Grant us a spirit of generosity that leads us to share our wealth with others. Amen.

*Friday January 23*  
*Face to Face with Creation*

Heavenly Father, you blessed us with all of creation. To us you gave the land and the sea, and all the plants and animals. (Genesis 1:1-31) You gave them to us to fulfill all our earthly needs, that we may have an abundant life. Yet we have fallen into habits of wastefulness and are depleting the resources you gave us. Help us to preserve the beauty of the earth and use only what we truly need. Grant us wisdom and discretion as we search for ways to replenish your gifts. Show us ways to bring nations together to solve these problems with a united effort. We thank you for our blessings and resolve to cherish and preserve them for the future. Amen.

*Saturday January 24*  
*Face to Face with non-Christian Faiths*

Heavenly Father, you set before us a "vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue" (Rev. 7:9) standing before the throne at the end of time. We look forward to the day when all will become one as you desire. We know that to reach out to our brothers and sisters – Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, and people of other non-Christian faiths and traditions is a step toward the unity you desire. Help us to work together for the good of all humanity, to respect each other, and not fall into prejudice, conflict, or hate. Teach us to appreciate the inclusiveness of your love for all people. Amen.

*Sunday January 25*  
*Face to Face with War & Violence*

O Jesus you said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" (John 14:27) We live in a the world marred by war and we see violence in our neighborhoods, cities, towns, and nations, sometimes even in our families. Do not abandon the oppressed who suffer from all sorts of violence, anger and hatred – victims of erroneous beliefs and conflicting ideologies. Help us to work together to bring about justice. Show us peaceful ways to settle differences in our families, community and nation, and to eliminate the violence of crime and war. Grant us the wisdom to treat our enemies with love instead of hatred. Amen.

~ ~ ~

St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Church • 6000 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Indianapolis, IN • 317-291-7014 • [www.stgabrielindy.org](http://www.stgabrielindy.org)

*Week Of Prayer*  
*For Christian Unity 2009*

*Theme: Reconcile Your People*

Sunday January 18  
Face to Face with Differences

Monday January 19  
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Face to Face with Prejudice

Tuesday January 20  
Presidential Inauguration Day  
Face to Face with Hope

Wednesday January 21  
35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Roe v. Wade  
Face to Face with Life Issues

Thursday January 22  
Face to Face with Poverty

Friday January 23  
Face to Face with Creation

Saturday January 24  
Face to Face with non-Christian Faiths

Sunday January 25  
Face to Face with War & Violence