

*Today* we conclude a week of prayer for Christian *unity* –

That we may be *one* in *Christ* –

Who is *THE ONE* who *liberates* us from captivity by any *darkness* –

*Particularly* the power of a world burdened by *division* from our God.

Christ *calls* us to *enter* His *light*, and to let it *shine*,

As His body on earth, *here* and *now*.

As a *particular* church here at St. Henry's,

Those who *gather* here to *share* in the joy of Jesus's *love*,

Are *encouraged* by His Spirit that we share,

To *radiate* the *joy* of *Christ's Gospel* –

From *our* hearts – touching the hearts of *anyone* we *meet*.

How can *we* drop our *entanglements* in our *nets*, and *follow* Him?

How can we cast *His* net –

*Gathering* our neighbors into His *light*?

*Most* Catholics *recoil* when they hear the word, *evangelization*.

But we need not *fear* that we have to become the next *Billy Graham*!

It *all* boils down to *living* the joy of Jesus' love in *all* corners of our hearts –

*Carrying* that joy into all *corners* of our everyday *lives*.

St. Francis of Assisi was told by our Lord to *rebuild* His church –

*Not* in terms of *brick and mortar* –

But in terms of its *living stones* –

*Every* human heart, *reborn* in *encountering* Jesus' *radical* love for us.

Francis tells us: *preach the Gospel **always*** –

*And when **necessary**, use **words**.*

My friends, we *gather* together as Children of the *Light* of Christ *Jesus*.

Do not be *afraid* to abandon any *fears* of our *mission*–

And *carry* the light of His love *beyond* these *doors*.

Jesus is *not* only the foundation of the *church* –

*But* the foundation of every *beat* of our *hearts*.

May we *echo* the One who said:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to bring glad tidings to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free.”

*Stir the flames of Christ in our hearts,*

*And let it shine – for all to see.*

*For God so loved the world that he **gave** his only Son,  
so that **everyone** who **believes** in him might not perish  
but might have eternal life.*

*For God did not send his Son into the world to **condemn** the world,  
but that the world might be **saved ... through** him.*

*We cannot give what we have not received.*

*So let us fix the gaze of our hearts on Jesus' heart –*

*A heart in which humanity and divinity are truly ONE.*

*May we embrace the heart of Jesus –  
Aching to draw all people to Himself –  
Using you and me to welcome the stranger –  
That by our works of mercy – they become His friends.*

*We cannot do that ourselves.*

*But we can let it be done **to** us –*

*As we rest in the light of Jesus' face.*

*Receive the look of love from our Lord's compassion –*

So those *out there*, can see the light of Jesus' compassion in our *own* faces.

It's the look of love from the merciful *father* –

Who *saw* his prodigal *son* –

And he ran *out* to him who was once lost and dead –

And *enfolded* him in his strong-yet-tender *arms*.

It's the look of love Jesus cast upon the rich young man –

Who *craved* eternal life –

Yet went away *downcast* –

*Not ready* to give his *whole* heart to following the Son of God.

It's the look of love Jesus gave as he was under *arrest* and being taken *away* –

And *Peter denied* Him three times –

Yet the Lord *turned* and *looked* at Peter with great *love* –

And Peter weeps *bitterly*.

It's the look of love with which Jesus *captivated*

The woman caught in *adultery*.

The *self-righteous* were *bent* on *condemning* her,

But they were *stilled* by what Jesus *does*.

What does He do?

He bends *down* to write on the ground with his *finger*.

He then *rises* – and He says:

“*Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.*”

He stoops *down* to the ground *again*.

*Countless* scholars have *speculated* on *what* Jesus *wrote* in that dirt.

But let’s set that *aside* for a moment.

Let’s focus on what He’s *doing*.

The *woman* is in the *middle* of this *hostile* crowd of *men*.

She’s *quiet*.

She *knows* her sin.

Her gaze is *downcast* in *shame* – thinking she is *defined* by her sin.

So, *what* does Jesus *do*?

He *lowers* Himself!

Down to the *dirt* of the *ground*!

He’s *entering* the downcast woman’s field of *vision*.

So, she can *look* at Him –

Looking at *Her* – with a *mighty love*.

And it’s that look of love that changes *everything*.

She was *ready* to be condemned –

Probably even condemning *herself* in her shame –

But then, she *saw* the face of *God*,

And *lived*.

She was *not* condemned – but *saved*.

May *we* direct the eyes of our hearts to Jesus' look of love for us –

For *each* of us.

May *we* bring that look of love *out* to those who have yet to *encounter* it.

*Cast* His light to *scatter* any darkness –

*Adding* living stones to His *church*.

Walking as *one* people by the light of God's *mercy* –

*Walking* and *working* as children of the *light* –

Drawing *every* human heart into our Lord's *life-changing*... look of love.