

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

### What is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a yearly time set aside for Christians to reflect on and pray for the visible unity of the Church, echoing the prayer of Jesus “that all may be one”(Jn. 17:21). It is usually celebrated from January 18 - 25, concluding on the feast of St. Paul.

### Is this something official or is it a grassroots movement?

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been celebrated for over 100 years. It is sponsored by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity and the World Council of Church. Each year, these organizations work together to produce a theme and related resources, but a great deal of flexibility is given regarding how to locally implement the Week of Prayer.

### How will the Diocese of Phoenix celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

On January 23, 2025, Bishop Dolan will gather with leaders and members of other Christian communities for an annual **statewide ecumenical prayer service**. This year, the event will be held at the Redemptorist Renewal Center (7101 W. Picture Rocks Rd., Tucson, AZ 85743) and is scheduled to begin at 6:30 pm. All are invited to attend. The diocese is also distributing resources that may be used by parishes and individuals to participate in the Week of Prayer.

### How should our parish participate in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

Each pastor may use his discretion when considering how to promote the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Some practical ideas to consider:

- **preach** on the theme of Christian Unity,
- include a **petition** for unity in the Prayers of the Faithful,
- offer a weekday Mass using the Roman Missal’s **Mass for the Unity of Christians** (Masses for Various Needs and Occasions #17),
- include a short catechesis on the unity of the Church in your **parish bulletin**,
- or have a parish **holy hour** to pray for unity.

### How can individuals participate in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

- Read the Daily Reflections and Prayers that have been prepared for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (available at <https://dphx.org/ecumenism-interreligious-affairs/>).
- Consider attending the statewide ecumenical prayer service mentioned above.
- Prayerfully read paragraphs 813-722 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which reflect on the unity of the Church.
- Meditate on John 17 and make a personal prayer for the unity of Christians.

## Sample Intercessions for Christian Unity

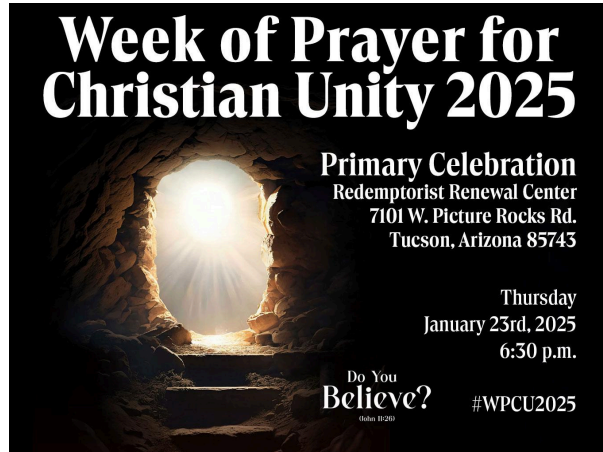
Consider including a petition related to unity of Christians in the Prayers of the Faithful. Below are some examples that you could use.

- For all who believe in Christ, that our God and Lord may be pleased, as they live the truth, to gather them together and keep them in his one Church, we pray to the Lord...  
(Adapted from the Good Friday Liturgy)
- For full and visible communion among Christians: that undimmed by any division the Church of God may brightly shine as a light to all the nations, we pray to the Lord...
- For healing, forgiveness, and renewal in the hearts of all Christian people, that the obedience of faith might purify what divides us and bring us into full communion, we pray to the Lord...

### Sample Intercessions from the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute

- For an end to the divisions among Christians: that they work together in bringing about healing and promote reconciliation as signs of God's reign ...
- For all Christian Churches and faith communities, that they may continue to show one another extraordinary kindness in guiding them towards reconciliation and unity in Christ...
- For all Christian Churches and faith communities, that they may be faithful witnesses to the Gospel call to reconciliation...
- For church leaders everywhere during this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, that they may work together and promote unity among Christians ...
- For the Church, that God would inspire His people to continue the quest for Christian Unity and that our hearts be filled with the gift of Jesus' love for all ...
- For the leadership of the Church throughout the world during this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, that they may witness to Christ's prayer "That All May Be One" ...
- For the various ecumenical dialogues between our church and other denominations, that they bear witness to the quest for Christian unity in Jesus' name ...
- For those who participate in the works of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, that they always treat one another with extraordinary kindness seeking the unity that is found in Christ and a true openness to the giftedness found in each other ...

# Bulletin Resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



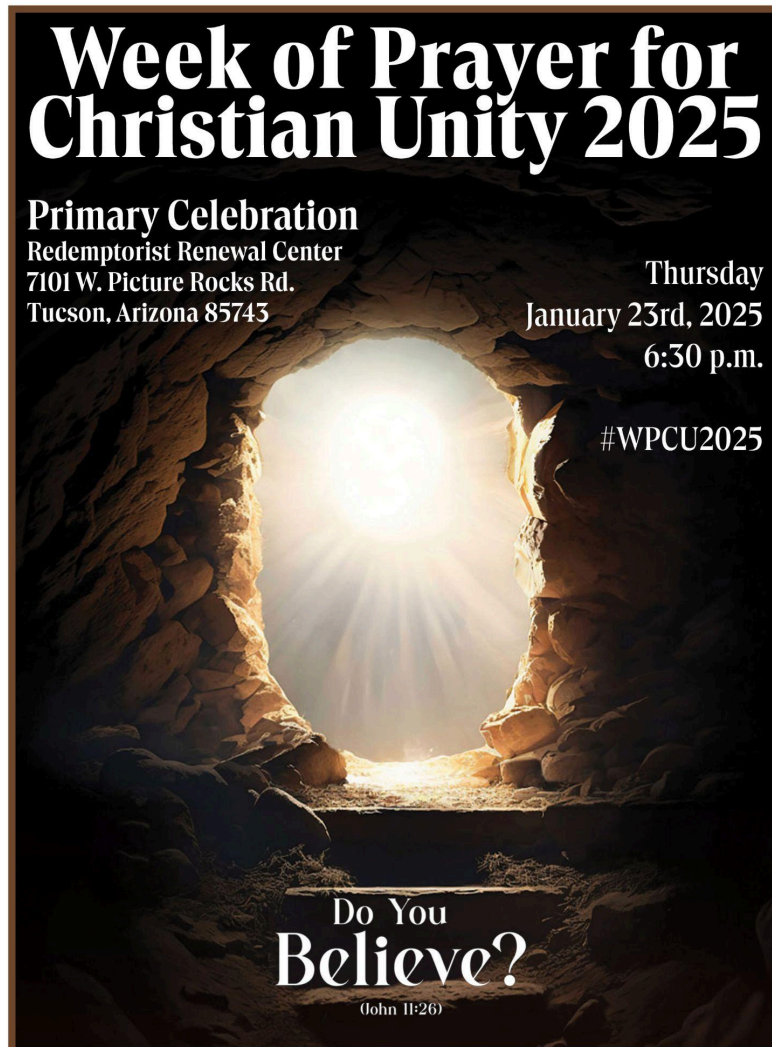
**Week of Prayer for  
Christian Unity 2025**

**Primary Celebration**  
Redemptorist Renewal Center  
7101 W. Picture Rocks Rd.  
Tucson, Arizona 85743

Thursday  
January 23rd, 2025  
6:30 p.m.

Do You  
**Believe?**  
(John 11:26) #WPCU2025

Join Bishop John Dolan for the 2025 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity! This year's statewide ecumenical prayer service will be hosted by Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson. Let's unite in prayer for Christian unity on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 6:30 PM at 7101 W. Picture Rocks Rd., Tucson, AZ 85743.



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## **2025 THEME FOR REFLECTION: “Do You Believe?”**

(cf. John 11:17-27)

The entire passage chosen for reflection in 2025 is John 11:17-27, where Jesus arrives in Bethany and raises Lazarus from the dead. A part of that story is the encounter between Jesus and Martha, at the end of which Martha confesses faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God.

The theme for 2025 was proposed by the ecumenical monastic community of Bose in Italy, in cooperation with the international team appointed by the Catholic Church’s Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, at meetings in Bose in late September 2023.

The year 2025 marks the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the first Ecumenical Council of Christian churches, called by Emperor Constantine I. The Council took place in Nicaea, a place just outside Constantinople (now Istanbul), from May to July of 325. This was just 12 years after a meeting between the co-emperors Constantine and Licinius in February 313 in Milan, at which they agreed to grant legal status to Christianity. The so-called “Edict of Milan,” actually a letter from Licinius to governors of provinces in the Eastern Empire, granted Christians and all persons within the empire freedom from religious persecution.

Having then just emerged from a type of “underground” status of nearly 300 years, the diversity of language, culture and hierarchical organization created situations of theological divisions within the Church. There was an urgent need for one unified voice for the sake of orthodox doctrine, especially about the nature of Jesus’s relationship to the Father within the being of the Triune God. There was also a need to establish a common date for Easter and a way to reconcile Christians who had lapsed under the period of persecution. A major result of the Council was the creation of the first Nicene Creed. Tradition has it that there were 318 bishops present, mostly from Eastern churches, and that all but two signed the Creed.

Considering divergences of interpretation on the “settled” date of Easter agreed at the Council, followed by separate dates again for centuries, it is of special significance that in 2025, all Christians have the same date for Easter: April 20.

As the whole Church of today considers the commemoration of a gathering that signified a belief in “one, holy, catholic and apostolic church,” may we all be more and more drawn into the mystery of unity. May we confess our resistance to that unity, embrace our diversity and remember exactly what we believe together and share with the world: that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God, who raises all with him to eternal life in a kingdom that will never end. The observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a powerful spiritual start to 2025 and everything that will be celebrated by Christians during that year.