



NEWS

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Bishop Bambera Urges Christians to Unite and Pray for Peace During Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

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WASHINGTON – The [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#) is observed annually by the Catholic Church between January 18 and 25. In his message for this year’s observance, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera of Scranton, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs urges Christians throughout the United States to unite across denominational lines and pray for peace.

“Given the paralyzing nature of polarization and tragedy of war that have spread throughout our world today, the importance of living the love of Christ in our own circumstances cannot be overemphasized. May Christians throughout our country come together across denominational lines to pray for peace in our world and an end to the sad divisions that prevent us from fully loving each other as Christ loves us all.”

Each year a different country and theme is highlighted during the week-long observance. For 2024, the Christians from Burkina Faso in West Africa developed the prayer materials and chose the theme from St. Luke’s Gospel, “You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbor as yourself.” ([Luke 10:27](#))

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity started in 1908 when Father Paul Wattson, SA, the founder of the religious order, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, conceived of the idea of a Christian Unity Octave -- an observation of eight days of prayer -- for an end to divisions between Christians. Since the Second Vatican Council, it has been co-organized by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity.

More resources to pray and reflect during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity may be found [here](#).

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