

Sisters and Brothers, may we be one as You are one.

03/07/2021

Covenant Life

- A new (Winter 2021) North American Network Newsletter is available on the NAN website. Dad wrote an article, and you can also learn about other Communities in our network here: <https://www.nanccc.org/newsletters>
- This week I hope to be able to communicate the date of our next in-person Community Gathering. If you are willing to help, please contact a coordinator or send me a note.
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222

Reflection - As I mentioned last week, I had the privilege of attending the Charismatic Leaders Fellowship and the North American Network conferences in Augusta. In praying about this reflection, I discerned to use today's letter to share about the first day of the Charismatic Leaders Fellowship (CLF).

The CLF conference is an opportunity for Charismatic leaders from all cultures, denominations, backgrounds to come together to advance Christian unity. Simply put the objective is to realize the answer to Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-21: *"I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me."*

Being honest I must confess to seeing the challenge of Christian Unity much like the challenge of the poor (*"The poor you will always have with you"* Math 26:11a). It seemed an impossible problem to solve. Of course, this limited perspective is because I was looking at it from my own limited perspective and not through God's eyes. Matteo's Kairos conferences revealed to me the power of God in building Christian Unity.

It is a natural human tendency to surround ourselves with people we are comfortable with, those that agree and affirm us. What I heard in the CLF meeting was an exhortation not just to value diversity but to really invest in

making it real in our lives. We all have a role to play. It is not just a good idea but an obligation if we are to work for an answer to Jesus' prayer.

One of the pastors asked the question "Can we be relevant to the problems of our day?" This is the question that I offer for each of us to reflect on today. What can I do to show love for someone outside my comfort zone? Loving outside our faith circle, outside our culture circle, outside our political perspective, loving another when it is tough...this is how we witness true love in a way that it becomes a witness that might lead an unbeliever to Jesus.

Unity is being attacked from all sides. The devil is dividing us in so many ways. He uses gossip, criticism, and fear to divide us and hold us back. To come against him we must put on the armor of God, take advantage of the sacraments, and pray. Pope Francis makes this point in his [Prayer for Christian Unity](#): "Unity is above all a gift, it is a grace to be requested through prayer." But we cannot stop there. Our response must also be active. Pope Francis continues: "The world will not believe because we will convince it with good arguments, but rather if we will have borne witness to the love that unites us and draws all of us near."

This is our calling for today. To earnestly pray for unity, to ask for the grace to see our sisters and brothers (especially those that do not look or sound like us) as God sees them and have the courage to show love in everything we do and say. To honestly see the beauty of the bouquet of flowers where all of God's children are together in love. This is what Jesus prayed for...that our words and actions would be visible "so that they may all be one...that the world may believe that you sent me."

Let us pray "Jesus, I repent of any gossip, any criticism, any negative thought about one of Your children. I pray and ask for the grace to see all of Your children as You see them and to love them as You love them. Jesus, remove any bias from me that prevents me from loving them. Take away any fear that holds me back from sharing You with them. Jesus, today I pledge to be active in my response to Your prayer for unity. I want to love and cherish the diversity of

Your children and do my part to build Your Kingdom. I commit to doing this through prayer and acts of love. Amen."

God bless,
David