

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
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The Unity Octave

Beginning this Sunday, the Church prays especially for the return of dissidents to the one, true fold, and also for fruitful progress in missionary enterprises of the Church.

This devotion was initiated in 1908 by Reverend Paul James Francis Watson, S.A. -- An Anglican (Episcopalian) clergyman, and founder of a small religious community -- the Society of the Atonement. He, with his entire community, entered the Catholic fold in 1909. Now the entire Church sets aside these eight days between the Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome and the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul (January 18-25) to pray especially for the return of all men to the Apostolic fold -- that "there may be one fold and one shepherd."

In explaining the purpose of the Octave, Father Watson declared:

"There is no other unity possible in the divine economy save that which is built upon the same foundation as the one on which Christ Jesus, the Lord and Master, founded His Church; and you know what that foundation is : ... 'And I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock, I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven (by which he meant His Church) and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven...'  
When, therefore, you unite with us in the observance of the Unity Octave it should be to pray specifically that all those who down through the centuries, have been separated from the Chair of Peter at Rome, may return to Catholic communion, that is to say, communion with the Apostolic See."

Timely Reminders

This would be an excellent time for you to do a little apostolic work in regard to friends who, you know, are interested in the teachings of the Catholic Church -- friends who would like to join a group of "Inquirers" or even to take instructions. A little encouragement on your part may be all that is needed to enkindle the Faith ultimately in their hearts. Don't overlook the "human interest" element required to bring these prospects into the fold. Last year, over 130,000 Americans embraced the Faith -- largely through the good will and help of their Catholic acquaintances.

And while we're glowing about the number of converts -- don't overlook the sad reality that we have our good, fat, share of Catholics who have lapsed, and given up the Faith. These are the days to pray especially for the "black sheep" who have strayed. Maybe you have one in your own family! Pray for him. Remember, they have been led astray by the deceit of the devil. Had you been tempted as they were, you might well be in their shoes today. Ask God to deliver them from darkness, and call them back to the Faith of their fathers. That is real charity. And don't forget to pray for yourself, too.

PRAYERS Deceased: Father of Rev. Wm. Duffy, C.S.C.; mother of Elmer Angsman, '45; uncle of Father Grimm, C.S.C.; father of Joe Eger, '51; James Connors '30, uncle of John Mahoney of Dillon; grandmother of Jim Terry of Walsh; grandmother of Joe Dombrosky of Dillon; father of James Knoblock, '47. Ill: Dr. James Hines, '45 (seriously in Tokyo); Jim McGraw, friend of Bill Higgins.  
Today: Father Farley's anniversary. Mass in Farley hall requested by a friend.