

*Easter 7C 2016*

*Jesus' Prayer for Us*

*Have there been moments in your life when you have prayed in a special way for someone?* I know there have been in my life. Perhaps you have prayed for a child who is about to be born. Perhaps you have prayed for a son or a daughter who is about to go off to college or be married. Perhaps you have prayed for a mother or father who is at the point of death. Yes, there are those special moments when we pray in a special way for those whom we love. And so it was with Jesus. On the night before he died, he prayed for his disciples, and he prayed for us.

*Listen to how Jesus prays for his disciples and for us:* “Holy Father, I pray not only for them [the disciples] but also for those who will believe in me through their word [us] so that they may be one as you Father are in me and I in you that they may also be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.”

*Notice what Jesus prays for.* He prays that we will be one, just as he and the Father are one: The Father dwells in Jesus; and Jesus dwells in the Father, and the union between God and Jesus is so perfect that he lives and dwells in the Father; and the Father lives and dwells in him. This is Jesus' prayer for us. He prays that we will be one with him and the Father just as he and the Father are one with each other. He prays that we will be in union with God and each other in the same way that he is in union with God so that we may be one.

*Why does Jesus pray that we will be one?* Jesus prays that we will be one so that the world will believe that he truly came from the Father. For, when the world sees the unity we have with God and Jesus, and each other, then the world will know that Jesus comes from Father. The world will glorify Jesus and the Father, and the world will enter into the life of God we enjoy with with God. This is why Jesus prays that we will be one with God and with each other. This is the kind of church and parish Jesus wants us to be. This is the life he wants us to live with him and the Father.

*But is this kind of unity possible?* Is it possible to be in such union with Christ and God? Is it possible to be in such union with each other? Although it may be difficult to imagine, we can enjoy this kind of union with God, with Christ, and with each other if the power of God's life-giving Spirit is present to us. For, the Spirit of God can do all things and make all things possible if we open our hearts to power of God's Spirit.

*Imagine what our life would be like if we lived in union with God and Christ.* Imagine what our parish would be if we lived in union with each other in Christ. Imagine what a witness we could give to the world if we live in union with Christ and each other. This is what Jesus prayed for on the night before his death. This is the kind of life he wants us to live and the kind of parish he wants us to be.