

OFFICE OF ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

December 23, 2010

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

1. Please find attached the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Worship Service Program** which can be freely copied and used for your upcoming Week of Prayer services between January 18 and 25, 2011. If this particular time frame and not work well in your local community, because of Martin Luther King, Jr. observances or other factors, sometimes other places have held the service around Pentecost or at other times of the year that are more convenient. Communities which are predominately Catholic, or have no Protestant or Orthodox churches in the area, are encouraged to still hold a service praying for Christian Unity or to use parts of the service at various parish or school meetings or gatherings, especially during the Week of Prayer itself.

2. You will also find attached the latest issue of the Illinois Conference of Churches' ***Ecumenical Connection*** newsletter. I encourage you, after you have had an opportunity to read the newsletter, to make a copy of it and place it on your church and school bulletin board. This helps keep the mission of Christian unity visible before our Catholic faithful.

3. Included in the *Ecumenical Connection* newsletter is the registration form for the **Bi-annual Statewide Gathering of the Illinois Conference of Churches** which will be held at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville beginning at 1 pm on Friday, March 11, 2011 and ending at 12 noon on Saturday, March 12, 2011. The topic is helping people living with poverty, and there will be a various of groups and speakers from different parts of Illinois who will give presentations on poverty and what we can do to assist individuals who seek help in rural areas as well as small town and larger cities. We hope that there will be a good turnout from around our diocese for this statewide event, the first to be held in our area. Please pass on the word to your local ministerial alliances or associations and encourage participation.

Thank you for all you do to promote Christian Unity and interreligious relations on your local ministry. I hope you have a blessed Christmas and New Year!

God's peace,

Fr. Bob Flannery

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Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer
Diocese of Belleville

