

Unity in the Church and in our Lives

Becoming Promoters of Unity

Studies

- Dr. Blake Bowden
- **What they observed, once more, is that adolescents whose parents ate dinner with them five times per week or more were:**
 - The least likely to be on drugs
 - To be depressed
 - To be in trouble with the law
 - More likely to be doing well in school
 - To be surrounded by a supportive circle of friends
- Dr. Catherine Snow, professor of education at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, followed 65 families over an eight-year period. She found that dinnertime was of more value to child development than playtime, school, and story time.

How to become a promoter of Unity?

Recap

- There is power in Unity
- There can also be destruction in unity
- What unites us?
 - Having a common Father
 - Our faith
 - The Holy Spirit
- Restoring Unity is God's ultimate desire and plan

1. Peacemaking

- “But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’” (Luke 10:5)
- “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matt. 5:9)

2. Willingness to accept injustice

- “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” (Lk. 1:14)
- “...and by Him [the Son] to reconcile all things to Himself [the Father], by Him [the Son], whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.” (Col. 1:20)

3. Forgive

- Forgiveness will promote peace in our relationships
 - Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” (Matt. 18:21-22)
- Forgiveness also grants us peace with God
 - “Forgive, and you will be forgiven.” (Lk. 6:37)
 - “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.” (Ex. 32:31-32)

4. Willing to Yield

- “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”
(Jam. 3:17)

5. Pray with one another

- People of Nineveh vs. people of Sodom and Gomorrah
- *“A family that prays together, stays together.”* (Fr. Patrick Peyton)
- *“The Spirit of God endows the community with more than it endows an individual. This is why taking Holy Communion together, following repentance and confession, is a continuous source of renewal for the family.”* (HG Bishop Moussa)

How can we promote Unity?

1. Peacemaking
2. Willing to accept injustice
3. Forgive
4. Willing to yield
5. Pray with one another