An Interconfessional Prayer For Christian Unity Was Held in Lviv

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On January 24, an interconfessional prayer for Christian unity was held in the chapel of the Ukrainian Catholic University.

The organizer of the event was the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at the UCU.

The event began with a public prayer, in which the representatives of the Roman Catholic, Armenian Apostolic, Autocephalous Orthodox, Greek-Catholic Churches and the Church of Christian of Evangelical Faith participated.

As
Fr. Ihor Petsyukh, a confessor of the UCU, pointed out: ?Only through repentance we can really break the wall which is separating us. Even though the prospect of church unity may look pessimistic, Lord, don?t let our hope cool down, don?t let us get disappointed in our regular efforts, give us strength to make even short steps towards each other, and such a short step will be our prayer which we are about to have.? That was the prayer Our Father, pronounced by all participants of the public prayer, who were holding each others? hands and thus symbolizing Christian unity.

After the prayer, the guests were greeted by the students of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, who performed the pantomime Fire (based on a short-story of Italian author Bruno Ferrero).

At the conclusion of the event, one of the representatives of the Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith performed a Christian song.

It is interesting to note that on the walls of the chapel, in which the prayer was read, saints of Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Armenian Apostolic Churches are depicted alongside Greek-Catholic saints. That is, ?the very sacral art of our tradition encourages us to this profound common prayer,? pointed out a researcher of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies and DLMPES' coordinator,
Fr. Roman Fihas.

Representative of several confessions shared their thoughts about the unity and necessity of a common prayer.

?Once no one could dream that different confessions could stand together and pray. The time will pass and the unity will come as well as common Eucharist. We have to understand that the Church is indeed united, all believers are united, all Christian are united, because all of us believe in Jesus Christ and our holy book is the Bible. Yet is it possible without a prayer? Without unity with God, without God?s help, without God?s intervention? There should be a plea from us,? said the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church,

Fr. Tadeos Gevorgyan.

?The unity is a Christian ideal, this is not something extraordinary, this is a norm because Christ is one, God is one. We Christians look at Christ from different perspectives due to our different traditions? Even though many Churches are local, we should feel ourselves to be Christians of one church, this is a norm, this is a law and we should stick to it. And praying for Christian unity helps us overcome separations. We have to realize that many our separations do not reach the heavens, they have a purely earth origin. Therefore, we have to not only pray for Christian unity once a year, but at the beginning of every Liturgy in the Great Litany, mention these pleas for the unity of the Christ?s Church,? said the Zolochiv dean of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church,
Fr. Vasyl Sahan.

?The Second Vatican Council speaks about unity in diversity, because similarly to people who are all different, ecumenism should establish unity without losing diversity. We all make one Christ?s Church. The dialogue, the prayer which we have together is important. We begin with a prayer. In order to pray well, we have to pray for this. The same is with unity among Christians ? we have to pray for it to become real, so that the Word becomes the Body,? said the perfect of the Roman Catholic Seminary,
Fr. Krzysztof Szebla.

The event took place within the framework of the Week of Prayers for Christian unity from 18 to 25 January.

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