

The Need for Reform

Name: _____

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Jesus prayed for his followers at the Last Supper “that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (Jn 17:21). Yet today Jesus’ followers are not one, but rather they are divided. The divisions among Christians “that wound the unity of Christ’s Body . . . do not occur without human sin” (CCC 817).

How can we work to reunify the followers of Jesus into one Body and one Church? The *Catechism* lists several requirements for responding to Jesus’ call to unity (CCC 821). We will examine a few of them below.

“Conversion of heart,” or striving to live holier lives as Christ commands us in the Gospel.

How can each of us striving to live holier lives help to draw all Christians together?

When we strive to turn toward God and away from sin, we can overcome the obstacles that we set up against unity, and our witness will be more attractive to others.

“Fraternal knowledge of each other,” or learning more about one another’s beliefs and traditions.

How can learning more about one another help draw all Christians together?

Answers may include learning about our similarities can help us see we are not so different; learning about our differences can help us see what we need to discuss; and learning about one another can help dispel misunderstandings.

“Collaboration among Christians in various areas of service to mankind,” or “human service.”

How can sharing in acts of charity help draw all Christians together?

Answers may include working together to serve others can help us recognize one another’s desire to live out God’s love and doing acts of charity helps build us up in charity toward one another.

How can reforming your own life help you reform the Church?

Answers may vary.

Visiting the Sick and Homebound

Name: _____

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Saint Charles Borromeo was a great reformer and bishop. He also showed heroic virtue in caring for the sick during the great plague that broke out in the city of Milan. Instead of fleeing the city to avoid the plague, as most civic leaders had done, he cared directly for the sick and the dying. He made sure to provide the sacraments, thinking of creative times and places to celebrate the Mass to reduce the spread of the plague. In this way, Charles lived the corporal work of mercy of visiting the sick. He did so at great risk to himself, as the plague was incredibly contagious and a miserable way to die.

While we aren't all called to put ourselves at such risk, we are still called to practice the corporal work of mercy of visiting the sick. We could do this in many ways. Perhaps it is as simple as being extra kind to a sibling who has a cold. Or we could make cookies to take to a sick friend, send a get-well card to someone who is ill, or go to the hospital to keep someone company during her stay. We could visit the homebound and elderly, whether at home or in nursing homes, to make sure they know we still love them and care about them.

Write the name of a friend or family member who is sick or perhaps recovering from surgery. What specifically might you do for this person to live out the corporal work of mercy of visiting the sick?

Answers may vary.

If you were sick and friends visited you, what would you like them to say or do?

Answers may vary.

It is easy to have everyone rally around someone when a sudden sickness hits. But often those with chronic illnesses struggle daily and are overlooked. **Whom do you know who deals with a chronic illness, and how can you support that person?**

Answers may vary.
