

Thought for the Week
2nd June 2019
7th Sunday after Easter

John 17:20-26 *“May they all be one”*

The Prayer of Jesus to the Father, in today’s Gospel reminds us, how important it is to pray and work for unity within the Christian Churches.

Some of us older members of the parish can remember a time when we were discouraged from even praying with members of another faith.

Vatican 2 (1962-1964) sharply changed this and in the opening paragraph of its *“Decree on Ecumenism”* we read: *“The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalises the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature”*

Pope Francis encourages us all to be involved in “spiritual ecumenism” and has said he is not thinking about doctrinal agreements, but about the need to build strong personal relationships with all our Christian brothers and sisters.

What are we doing in our Parish to encourage this friendship and co-operation with local Christian Churches?

For some years the Parish has helped organise the Walk of Witness on Good Friday and held services for Christian Unity and the World Day of Prayer. We have run Christian courses such as Alpha and supported ecumenical charities like the Reading Drop-In Centre and the Middle East Christian Charity Embrace. It is good to know that our Ministers regularly meet and pray together. From this has developed new initiatives including the very successful safari supper getting to know our local Christians. A more evangelising and ongoing project is: “Open the Book”. This project run by a team from all our local churches offers primary school children an opportunity to hear key Bible stories.

What more could and should we be doing together?

Stephen and Judy