

Becoming One

Most of us have been members of some club, organization, or board. Often, we get to choose the club to which we belong. Did you ever join something because your friend did? Or, you didn't know how to say "no" to someone, so you joined the club, even though you didn't want to join? We have been on sports teams, civic organizations, church groups, theatre groups, and all kinds of clubs, groups, or teams.

Each of these teams or clubs may have had its own insignia, symbol, or even clothing. How many of us have a hat, shirt, or sweatshirt from a team or group to which we belong or have been a member of in the past? These types of things allow you to be recognized by others as being part of that organization or at least a fan of the team or school. While on vacation in Ogunquit, I wore a Notre Dame sweatshirt (some things you just can't give up) on a particularly cold day and was stopped by more than one person to say, "Go Irish." These things unify us or even make us one.

Today is World Communion Sunday. It is a day when Christians all over the world, regardless of denomination, celebrate the sacrament that we do today and every first Sunday of the month. It is the gathering of a simple meal of bread and grape juice in some form that helps us to come that much closer to the answer of Jesus' prayer: "Father, may they be one as you and I are one."

We come to the table today with people from churches throughout the world, one to receive grace and celebrate the goodness of life and one another. One might think that last Sunday's event could have been a great time to celebrate Communion with the other churches. The thought was given some consideration as we worked out the dynamics to make that happen. While we are trying to become one, our unity is not uniformity. We have different approaches, things we hold as important, and ways of worship. But there is something we have in common, a message of love and peace and forgiveness. World Communion Sunday reminds us of this.

In the same way that we choose a club or sport, we also make some decisions on how to align ourselves spiritually so that we can worship in a manner that works for us. In the same way that we choose what team to root for or what club to join, we can choose how we worship or which church to join based on how our spirituality has developed. Yes, the denominations may have their differences. Heck, even the UCC and NACCC churches, by virtue of their autonomy, have different styles of worship.

The way in which we become one is in the celebration of Communion. So, on this World Communion Sunday, let us lock arms with each other and people of faith on every continent and come to the table, the feast. Let us receive grace and forgiveness and guidance, pledging to grow and live out the teachings of Jesus. Let us do our part in answering Jesus' prayer that we would be one. And let us imagine how God smiles upon us, grateful that we're all here. Amen.