

Nov. 20, 2017

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving this Thursday, Nov. 23, let us remember that it is the only time when all the people in the USA join together in gratitude to our loving Creator. Christian, Jew, Moslem, etc., pause to thank God. In many places, Christian Churches have joint services, which reminds us of Jesus' prayer "that all may be one, that the world may believe" in Christ, our savior (Jo. 17:21).

Please note too that this past Oct. 31, the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation published a joint statement to conclude the initial year of the common commemoration of the Reformation (the 499th anniversary year of Luther posting his 95 theses). In that statement, we were reminded that Pope Francis and Lutheran Bishop Munib A. Younan stated "Many members of our communities yearn to receive the Eucharist at one table, as the concrete expression of full unity. We experience the pain of those who share their whole lives, but cannot share God's redeeming presence at the Eucharistic table. We acknowledge our joint pastoral responsibility to respond to the spiritual thirst and hunger of our people to be one in Christ. We long for this wound in the Body of Christ to be healed. This is the goal of our ecumenical endeavors, which we wish to advance, also by renewing our commitment to theological dialogue."

The full text of this short, one page statement is on the home page of the Mission-Unity-Dialogue website, headlined "Episcopalians/Anglicans Join Lutherans and Roman Catholics in Reformation Document" (www.harrywinter.org).

May each member of the Five Ways Group have a happy and holy Thanksgiving!