

Dear friends

In the week between Ascension and Pentecost Sundays the Christian churches celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. We are united in our desire for unity, although we know this is a long road.

In Aotearoa New Zealand the Christian churches work together in many ways. Prison and hospital chaplaincy, advocacy on behalf of those who are disadvantaged, and resettlement of refugees are just some examples. In some places we gather together to worship at times such as Ash Wednesday and Advent. This is a long way from the strained and often hostile relationships which have existed among Christian churches in past times. We are blessed to be living in a time when we can talk together about unity, pray together and work together for others.

The theme for this year's Week of Prayer is **Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit** (*cf. Jn 15:5-9*). If possible try to take part in the Week of Prayer in some way, with others or on your own. The prayers for the Eight Days between Pentecost and Easter can be found at [www.catholic.org.nz](http://www.catholic.org.nz) or on your diocesan website, together with other information about the Week of Prayer.

Each of us has a part to play.

Cardinal John Dew  
Catholic Bishops Committee for Ecumenism