

Itaici, 27th April 1998

On the path to unity

Spontaneous prayer by Chiara Lubich at an ecumenical day organised by the Brazilian Catholic Bishops' Conference (CNBB)

“Jesus, I believe and I am sure that you are here in our midst, so I turn to you, living and risen here amongst us - Catholic bishops, lay men and lay women, like me, and leaders of other Churches.

Jesus, you are of course amongst us because we love one another, in you. We are united in your name; we are here to take a step forward in unity among the churches.

Of course we realise that many centuries have passed, shocking and terrible centuries that truly pierced your heart and the heart of your mother, who is the mother of unity.

So here we are, all united, speaking to you directly and saying, “Forgive us, Jesus, forgive all that has happened during all these centuries”. Our voice wishes to be the voice of all the Christians who lived during all these centuries. We ask your forgiveness in their name too.

Above all, Jesus, we have immense faith in your love and mercy. We know that your love and mercy are greater than all centuries of the past and of the future.

We abandon ourselves trustfully to this love. We are sure that just as a mother does not remember the mistakes her children made, if we turn to you with confidence you will forget everything because you know how to forgive and forget. So Jesus, let us be your instruments, hands that begin to work for unity together with others, because if there are not those who sow there will be no one who reaps. It is likely, indeed certain that in our lifetime we will not see the beautiful Church you founded; but we will do so from Heaven. Meanwhile, help us live the years we have before us for unity, so that all may be one. Amen.”