

Commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB)



In January 2017, The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) will be releasing joint material to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. The resource is entitled, "Together in Christ -- Lutherans and Catholics Commemorating the Reformation". The resource includes a five-part parish study guide which may be used in individual segments or as a whole series by any Lutheran, Catholic, or ecumenical study session focusing on the Reformation. The resource is designed to bring Catholic and Lutheran

parishes together to facilitate discussions touching on some of the historical and theological questions surrounding the Reformation and the advancements in reconciliation which have occurred over the past 50 years. *Together in Christ* is based on *From Conflict to Communion (2013)* and the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (1999)* which were developed by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

In addition to the five-part parish study guide, a homily resource has been developed for Sunday January 29, 2017, the concluding Sunday of the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the launch date for *Together in Christ*. Celebrants and preachers are encouraged to use this resource to help emphasize the theme of reconciliation and the importance of Christian unity during this year of commemoration. Lutheran and Catholic communities across Canada are already planning to use *Common Prayer (2015)*, a worship resource also prepared by the LWF and PCPCU for the commemoration. This resource may be accessed for free at the following links:

ENGLISH - https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/dtpw-lrc-liturgy-2016_en.pdf

FRENCH - https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/dtpw-lrc-liturgy-2016_fr.pdf

In advance of 2017, Catholics and Lutherans in Canada are eagerly anticipating events in Sweden which will include His Holiness Pope Francis, Bishop Munib Younan, President of the Lutheran World Federation, and the Rev. Martin Junge, the Federation's General Secretary. Their meeting will mark the 500th year of the Reformation and will culminate in a prayer service held on October 31, 2016 at the Lund Cathedral. The prayer service will be based on *Common Prayer*.

Following the service of prayer, Malmö Arena will be the stage for joint activities focusing on the commitment to common witness and service of Catholics and Lutherans in the world. An International and Ecumenical Day of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East, with a special focus on the people of Syria, will further expand upon the theme of reconciliation on October 31, 2016. This important ecumenical witness for peace is being organized by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Caritas Internationalis, and the Lutheran World Federation.

For a live feed of the October 31 events, use the following link:

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/joint-commemoration-livestream>

For further information on Syria and various peace initiatives, please click on the following links:

ENGLISH - <http://syria.caritas.org/> FRENCH - <http://syria.caritas.org/fr/>

ENGLISH ONLY - <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/photo-essay-scars-war-syria>