

# Pope Says Prayer Got Ecumenical Wheels Turning

## Only God Can Accomplish Union, Affirms Pontiff

JANUARY 25, 2008 00:00 • ZENIT STAFF • VATICAN DICASTERIES/DIPLOMACY

ROME, JAN. 25, 2008 (Zenit.org) – Prayer is the current that – along with the breath of the Holy Spirit – has moved the “ship of ecumenism” out of port, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope affirmed this today at the celebration of vespers in St. Paul Outside the Walls to close the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Christian leaders, such as the president of the World Council of Churches, Reverend Doctor Samuel Kobia, attended the celebration. Father James Puglisi, successor of Father Paul Wattson, the Anglican priest who began the octave of prayer for unity 100 years ago, also attended.

Recalling this year’s theme – “Pray Without Ceasing” – the Holy Father asked: “What would the ecumenical movement be without the personal and common prayer that ‘they may be one, Father, as you and I are one,’ which Jesus lifted up at the Last Supper? Where would be found the impulse of faith, charity and hope of which our search for unity has particular need today?”

“The path of prayer has opened the path of the ecumenical movement as it is known today.”

The Pontiff continued: “Unity with God and with our brothers and sisters is a gift that comes from on high, that surges up from the communion of love between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and grows and is perfected in it.

“It is not within our possibilities to decide when and how this union will be fully accomplished. Only God can do this!”

Benedict XVI gave thanks to God “for the great movement of prayer that for the last 100 years has accompanied and supported believers in Christ in their search for unity. The ship of ecumenism would never have been able to leave its port if it had not been moved by this broad current of prayer and pushed by the breath of the Holy Spirit.”

The Pope concluded his address recalling that the Year of St. Paul will be inaugurated this June in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls: “May his tireless fervor in the building up of the Body of Christ in unity help us to pray ceaselessly for the full union of all Christians.”

JANUARY 25, 2008 00:00 • VATICAN DICASTERIES/DIPLOMACY

### About ZENIT Staff

[View all articles](#)

[Share this Entry](#)



**Support ZENIT**

If you liked this article, support ZENIT now with a donation

[Donate now](#)

### Tweets from Pope

[Pope Francis](#) **Pope Francis** [Follow](#)

**Pope Francis** @Pontifex · 13h  
Sometimes we may feel we are alone in facing difficulties. But, even if He doesn't intervene immediately, the Lord walks by our side and, if we keep going forward, He will open up a new path.

**Pope Francis** @Pontifex · 1 Mar  
In order to pray well, we need to have the heart of a child.

**Pope Francis** @Pontifex · 28 Feb  
Let's take a little time every day to examine our conscience, to convert to the Lord. Five minutes at the end of each day will help us think about a change of heart and conversion to the Lord, without procrastination. #SantaMarta

[Load More...](#)

### The Pope Video



### Subscribe to the ZENIT Email Newsletter

Receive the latest news of the Church and the world in your inbox





[SUBSCRIBE](#)

Do you have a problem with this newsletter? [Click here to get support](#)

### POPULAR

 **Father Cantalamessa's 4th Lent Homily 2016**

 **Pope's Morning Homily: You Can't Have a Closed Heart If You Want to Understand Jesus**

 **Pope's Morning Homily: True Christians Have Cheerful Faces, Joyful Eyes and Hearts**

 **GENERAL AUDIENCE: On Mercy**