

Russ. Lit. OUR FATHER      OUR FATHER

RS 264

These eight days, from today to next Mon., mark the now familiar and long-established Week of Prayer for Christian unity. This year the agreed theme for the week is "Fellowship in the Holy Spirit", a phrase taken from a blessing formula used by St Paul, and now commonly used again in our churches in one of the greeting prayers at the beginning of Mass. This theme-phrase draws attention to the Church and the Holy Spirit's presence and activity in drawing together into one community of God's family all who believe in Christ, with hope and love. Unity in oneness with God is not yet achieved among Christ's followers, and no one can foresee just how or when, in time, it will be: Christ himself prayed specifically for this, and we believe the H. Sp. is at work among us. This week, in prayer, let us reflect on the Church - the H. Sp., and take the special opportunity of praying together with other Christians that we may be open & attentive to the voice of the Spirit, ~~and~~ that the prayer of Christ for us be able to take effect. I'd like you to listen today to 2 short pieces about the Church - the Spirit, both of them long before the modern unity movement, and by Christians of different denominations. The English theologian H. B. Swete wrote in 1915: Q. [Casper, Mystery of the Church p 199]

MUSIC ("Spirit of God" - 17. 9. 18. 5. 18.)

The second piece I want to read for you is even older - 1825 in fact, from a book on unity in the Church by Möller Q. [Casper, id. p. 203]