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## Christian unity. Mons. Olivero ( CEI): "Humble in our quest, we need one another"

A week to be "lived with enthusiasm and humility. The humility of those who are in search and the enthusiasm of those who know that there is a Star that illuminates the way." It is "the auspicious wish" expressed by Monsignor **Derio Olivero**, Bishop of Pinerolo and President of the Italian Bishops' Conference Commission for Ecumenism and Dialogue, addressed to Christians in our country on the eve of the Week of Prayer for Unity held every year from 18 to 25 January, when dioceses, churches and communities animate and promote meetings, moments of prayer, round tables and celebrations throughout Italy.



"We saw His Star in the East, and we came to worship Him". This is the theme of the Week chosen at international level by the Middle East Council of Churches, entrusted this year with the task of preparing and proposing texts for prayer vigils. **Msgr. Olivero, what are your hopes on the occasion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?** The theme of the Week draws inspiration from the journey of the Magi, guided by the Star, to Bethlehem. This journey prompts three reflections. The first is that this is the year for recognising that we are all on a quest. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, the only Star. No one can claim to have the fullness of Jesus Christ within their reach; we all have something to learn from one another. Secondly, we must strive to bear witness in a society that finds it hard to appreciate the importance of Christianity, which shows disaffection for the religious realm as a whole and for Christianity in particular. *This is therefore the right year to ask ourselves how we can work together to highlight the relevance, the 'good news' of Christianity for humanity today.* Thirdly, we should all feel that our quest is shared by all the men and women of our time, and humbly take a seat at the world's table to build a new civilisation, a new cultural era. **It is widely felt that the world has emerged from this pandemic worse than it was before. Which signs are Christians called to offer in the light of this situation today?** Admittedly, ours is a wounded and torn society. For many reasons, I believe. At a cultural level, we are no longer inclined to believe that the Truth of things is greater than ourselves and that seeking that Truth entails a great amount of humility. Instead, we tend to follow anyone's opinionated views in an exasperated, hasty and impulsive manner, sometimes even violently. The truth is a serious matter and it is always greater than our understanding. It requires humility, the willingness to embark on a quest, and openness to learn from one another. We are living in a divided and polarised society. Everyone is seeking shortcuts that only apparently solve the problem. *There are new, massive challenges. They are weighing on us, hurting and disturbing us.* The gravity of the situation is such that finding a solution is very difficult, and we must work towards it together, in a spirit of cooperation and humility. **How has ecumenism been affected - if it has - by the test of time?** In these times, ecumenism must show that spirit, that style. *Truth is greater, and it is sought together, with earnestness and humility.* But a further aspect must be taken into account. As I have already said on other occasions, the dialogue between the Christian Churches must also take into account the contemporary crisis of religion. It could be said that in this respect we are all in the same boat. Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants, Lutherans: all Christian denominations are experiencing a time of crisis of religion in our culture, of secularisation, of apathy. It is a common challenge. This does not mean ironing out our differences, but rather harnessing all our strengths to embark on this

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[path of reflection and meet this challenge together.](#)

[M. Chiara Biagioni](#)