

Priests Conference, Lealyfalu

Wednesday November 29, 2006

Practical Consequences

The teaching is that only through confession of the sin/evil and through repentance can evils from the past be truly put behind us. Let us look at what this might mean in practice.

Wherever there are unhealed wounds, and anger/bitterness remain, it is very difficult for a faith renewal to take place and our society be impacted with the Gospel.

Parish/Town/City Level

What historical episodes have marked the consciousness of our people? Where are there deep wounds hidden perhaps but not healed?

Conflicts between Cities/Towns/Villages. Ancient feuds?

Have any major atrocities happened in our area? During Communist times? During World War II? In the time of the Turkish occupation?

What is the history of the Protestant congregations in our town/city? Reformed? Free Church? Have we listened to their histories?

Identifying Intercessors

One great treasure we have in our parishes is the small nucleus of deeply praying people. Do we know what the Holy Spirit has been placing on their hearts? Often we will find that they are spiritually aware of these barriers and wounds. Don't assume that they are only in the convents! But also be aware of the rich resource of the contemplative orders.

Forming Groups to Pray for Our Town/City

This is happening in many parts of the world. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead to a unity about what to pray for. It will not work when any one group imposes their agenda. Often it can be good to start with a reflection on the history of the area, with particular reference to spiritual conflicts and bloodshed.

Best when they are ecumenical. We can learn much about intercessory prayer from Evangelical Christians. Honour the martyrs of every confession (John Paul II in *Ut Unum Sint*).

Intercession has to precede public statements and initiatives. Hearts have to be prepared in prayer and humility. The important thing is to pray, not to announce our prayer to the world.