

Today's gospel follows Jesus' second passion prediction where Jesus informs His disciples about His future suffering and death. The disciples, unfortunately, do not understand what this means. Additionally, their misunderstanding is heightened by the fact that they begin arguing about who among them is the greatest.

Today they are worried about keeping Jesus' power in their inner circle. It is a bit ironic that after Jesus came down the mountain after the Transfiguration, the disciples couldn't drive out the demon from the possessed boy, and now they are upset that someone not in their group *is* driving out a demon.

Additionally, John complains that the exorcist does not follow *us*, that is, the disciples, instead of follow *you*, Jesus. No one group has a copyright on the name of Jesus. In other words, Jesus will take all the friends He can get!

In Matthew's Gospel, we hear something similar. Jesus says, "*Whoever is not with me is against me.*" (Matt. 12:30) In the end, everyone either chooses to be on the side of Jesus or opposes Him, whether consciously or unconsciously.

For us today, one of the great movements since the Second Vatican Council is the work being done to heal the wounds of disunity in Christendom. Certainly, doctrinal differences still exist and those are extremely important given that our worship and life flows from our beliefs.

However, we certainly rejoice in what we share and for the grace of God that is at work in non-Catholic communities. Additionally, according to the Council's Decree on Ecumenism, there are many ways that contribute to bringing about greater unity. Some examples include: A change of heart, growth in holiness of life, better understanding of what our separated brothers and sisters believe, and performing common works of charity.

Certainly, at the top of the list must be gratitude for what God does in both Catholic and non-Catholic circles, as well as prayer for unity. Without prayer, all the efforts for attaining unity will be fruitless. As far as possible, then, may we pray and work that all may be one as Jesus wills and for the glory of God.