

A catholic spiritⁱ

¹⁴ For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.

¹⁹ So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Ephesians 2: vs 13,19.

The churches in Celtic Britain were part of the one catholic and apostolic church throughout the world, yet they responded to direct promptings of the Holy Spirit in mission. Some people maintain that in view of later divisions it is no longer possible to be both Catholic and Pentecostal.

These words from a famous sermon by John Wesley on *The Catholic Spirit* suggest that it is possible:

‘Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Every wise person will allow others the same liberty of thinking which they desire they should allow themselves.... And how shall we choose among so much variety? No one can choose for or prescribe to another. But everyone must follow the dictates of their own conscience, in simplicity and godly sincerity. They must be fully persuaded in their own mind; and then act according to the best light they have.

My only question at present is this, ‘Is your heart right, as mine is with yours?’ ... Learn the first elements of the Gospel of Christ and then you shall learn to be of a truly catholic spirit.

While the person of a truly catholic spirit is united by the tenderest and closest ties to one particular congregation, their heart is enlarged towards all humanity, those they know and those they do not; they embrace with strong and cordial affection neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies. This is catholic or universal love.

A person of catholic spirit is one who gives their hand to all whose hearts are right with their own.... Who is ready to ‘spend and be spent’ for them, yes, to lay down their life for their sake.’

John Wesley

Give me a heart that is open to all, a heart that embraces every brother and sister in Christ, a heart that wills their wholeness as one family. *Celtic Daily Light*

O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— Stretch out your hand with healing power.

Acts 4: vs 24, 30

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator, come
from thy bright heav'nly throne;
come, take possession of our souls,
and make them all thine own.

Thou who art called the Paraclete,
best gift of God above,
the living spring, the living fire,
sweet unction and true love.

Thou who art sevenfold in thy grace,
finger of God's right hand;
his promise, teaching little ones
to speak and understand.

O guide our minds with thy blest light,
with love our hearts inflame;
and with thy strength, which ne'er decays,
confirm our mortal frame.

Far from us drive our deadly foe;
true peace unto us bring;
and through all perils lead us safe
beneath thy sacred wing.

Through thee may we the Father know,
through thee th'eternal Son,
and thee the Spirit of them both,
thrice-blessed three in One.

All glory to the Father be,
with his coequal Son;
the same to thee, great Paraclete,
while endless ages run.

Veni Creator ascribed to Rabanus Maurus, a 9th Century Solitary in Gaul