Canopy of Prayer

JANUARY 2017 · #012

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN: THE EUROPEAN ANTHEM

– To Ode To Joy –

Joyfully we come before You,
King of nations, Lord above,
Grateful for the gift of freedom,
Thankful for your gift of love.
From the shame of human folly
You've restored our dignity
Granted peace among the nations,
Given back our unity.

We confess we've often wandered
from your path of truth and light
Trusted human understanding,
set our hopes on mortal might.
Lord, restore us to our senses,
bring us back to Father's heart,
Visit us anew, O Spirit,
every nation, every part.

With the vision e'er before us,
of a true community
Of all European peoples,
rich in our diversity,
Let us pray and work together
for our solidarity,
Peace, equality and freedom,
rooted in Your charity.

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven
Words: Jeff Fountain

The European Anthem

A New Christian Version by Jeff Fountain

At the beginning of this New Year 2017 I want to welcome you with this lively melody but with a new text from Jeff Fountain, director of the Schuman Centre in Heerde/Holland. As a born New Zealander Jeff was one of the first outstanding Christians who understood the importance of the unification process of Europe. And he ended up in establishing a whole centre for European Studies www.schumancentre.eu

Jeff succeeded in breathing an atmosphere of joy into his poem. He is enthusiastic about what God gave us in Europe: **peace, freedom, solidarity and a new dignity**. These jewels for human life – which so many people on earth can not enjoy – they are given to us in Europe by God since the beginning of the process of the unification in 1950. It is time to praise God for these wonderful gifts at the threshold of the New Year 2017.

But there is a second element in this anthem. Only Christians can formulate it and that is: "We confess we've often wandered from your path of truth and light". Yes! We did! Politicians usually say "problems". God says "Sin". Yes we trusted "human understanding" instead of his word. "O Lord, bring us back to our Father's heart!"

Fortunately there is a third element left for Europe: God's Love "rooted in His charity". Because of this charity we still exist. Our only future in Europe is "Visit us anew, o Spirit, every nation, every part" of Europe: Revival!

Prayer in three steps: Thanksgiving – Identificational repentance – Worship of God's mercy over Europe and the EU.

Ortwin Schweitzer

Let us pray for God's will:

- The inauguration and the first 100 days of Donald Trump.
- The elections 2017 (NL, F, Germany) are decisive for the future of the EU.

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