

Canopy of Prayer

November #54-2018

contributor

René Mally



Dear praying friends in Europe

"You are the salt of the earth," says Jesus to his followers (Mt 5:13). What he meant by this: (1) You are always a minority. (2) Nevertheless, through your presence alone, you change "the taste," the atmosphere of your surroundings. (3) You are salt, because I AM in you the power to be different. (4) Salt belongs in the soup, not (permanently) in the salt shaker. The power of being salty is not in the "holy huddle", but in the midst of the world. (5) If the salt loses its saltiness, which is chemically impossible, but apparently spiritual: if Christians forget the mission of Jesus, then mankind ignores it and goes back to business as normal. Prayer and contradiction, where necessary, are the salt-work of the disciples of Jesus.

Ortwin Schweitzer



There are men and women who pray in the European Commission

Contrary to the convictions of the founding fathers of the European unification, which were deeply rooted in the Christian faith, the Commission nowadays adopts a very neutral, indifferent position towards every religion and any display of it. It therefore reflects developments in the public sphere in many EU Member States. However, this does not mean that religion and belief are banned from Commission buildings.

Many staff at different levels do not leave their faith at the office door. A number of them take part in one of the 7 or so prayer meetings that gather on a weekly basis in the morning or at lunchtime on Commission premises.

Invitations to the meetings are sent to about 175 colleagues from different Christian denominations and nationalities. Participant numbers vary, as many can only take short breaks because of their heavy workload. The prayer groups are in principle independent of each other, although there have been recurring joint events in recent years. In fact, prayer meetings have happened in the Commission for almost as long as there have been Commission meetings.

Often a text from the Bible is first read and briefly discussed, followed by a time of prayer. We thank God and lay our concerns before Him. We pray over recent events around the world; for Europe and decision-makers in the European Union; for our colleagues, and for personal concerns outside our immediate working environment. Some groups finish this time with a shared Our Father, which is mostly prayed in the various mother tongues of the participants. For many of us it is a precious opportunity, in the middle of our often hectic timetable, to experience God's closeness and altogether to be refreshed.

These prayer groups exist not only in the Commission but also in the European Parliament and the Council.

Some of us are also connected with the European prayer breakfast, which takes place every year in the European Parliament in December.

Is everything fine with religion in the European Institutions then? I would not go that far. There are forces at play that would banish matters of faith from the public space. There are nevertheless far more people and colleagues who have not yet experienced God's closeness, as well as colleagues, decision-makers who are not yet aware of God's Grace and Leadership being available to reach political decisions that are good for our societies, for Europe and for the world. For them we want to be there, for them we pray. And we are grateful if others do likewise.

Prayer

- Give thanks, that so many believers (175) are working in the commission and that there are 7 prayer groups in existence.
- Pray for daily strength for their work and their testimony.
- Pray for their colleagues and the decision makers who don't know Jesus yet.



Update: Canopy Issue 52

Poland gives in:

The Polish Parliament has withdrawn the controversial forced retirement of the highest judges.

Please also pray for:-

1. **Italy** has refused the corrections from the EU of her national budget. It means a high risk for the country. And for Europe.
2. **Brexit:-** EU heads of state meet in Brussels this weekend to sign off on the draft political declaration of the UK's future relationship with the EU. Pray for clarity in the ongoing parliamentary process in the UK for the withdrawal deal.

CONTACT Canopy of Prayer, Ortwin Schweitzer, Ian Jeal, Corrie Oosterhuis
info@canopyofprayer.eu
www.canopyofprayer.eu

DONATION Waechterruf e.V.,
IBAN DE73 6129 0120 0464 0500
06 BIC GENODES1NUE
Use "Project 2100", Name and Address