

**M**any years ago, I had a vivid religious experience about this topic while praying with a group of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. In my mind's eye I could see a number of tall flagpoles with their respective flags flapping in the wind. At the base of each flagpole were groups of people. They were shouting angrily and shaking their fists at the people gathered around the other flagpoles. Then, in the middle, I saw the cross. At first the people didn't even notice it. Then, one by one, the agitated and resentful protesters began to pay attention to the crucified One. As they beheld him, their anger began to turn to shame. Each group began to lower its flag, some slowly, others more quickly. Soon the cross stood higher than all the flags. Then, people began to drift away from their flagpoles and to gather around the foot of the cross. It seemed as if the Lord was saying: 'At the moment the flags of your denominational, nationalistic and sectional pride are raised higher than the cross. But when you look to Him who was lifted up from the earth to draw all people to himself, you will lower the flags of your pride. Then and only then, will you



find peace, for in the power of the cross the dividing wall of your divisions will crumble.'

Pope Francis pointed out, in par. 227 of *The Joy of the Gospel*, that there are good and bad ways of dealing with conflict in interpersonal relationships. When conflict arises, Francis observes, some people simply look at it and go their way as if nothing happened; they wash their hands of it and get on with their lives (the way of avoidance). Others embrace it in such a way that they become its prisoners; they lose their bearings, project onto institutions and other

people and groups their own confusion and dissatisfaction and thus make unity impossible (the way of antagonism). But there is also a third way, and it is the best one for dealing with conflict. It is the willingness to face it head on, to resolve it by means of mutual understanding and consensus thereby making it a link in the chain of a new process (the way of dialogue). Thus fulfilling the words of St Paul, 'Let the peace of Christ control your hearts' (Col 3:15). ■

— Pat Collins

## Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts ...

## After the Consecration

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

## THE COMMUNION RITE

At the Saviour's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

Our Father, ...

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, ...

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are  
yours now and for ever.**

Lord Jesus Christ, ...

**Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

## And with your spirit.

*As the priest breaks the consecrated Host the following  
is sung or said:*

**Lamb of God, ...**

*Showing the Host to the people, the priest says:*

Behold the Lamb of God, ...

**Lord, I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word  
and my soul shall be healed.**

**Communion Antiphon** (Ps 33:9)

**Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.**

## Prayer after Communion

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that, having been  
replenished by such great gifts, we may gain the  
prize of salvation and never cease to praise you.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



## Reflection

In what ways are you a  
missionary who proclaims God's  
love and his kingdom?



## Lesson

We are the new missionaries. We  
are responsible for continuing the  
work of proclaiming the kingdom:  
'The harvest is abundant but the  
labourers are few' (Lk 10:2).



## Prayer

Lord, fill all people with your spirit  
of mission that your kingdom  
may continue to grow throughout  
the world. Amen.

