

help of this little booklet which we are distributing in both East and West, we call upon the Orthodox and the Catholic faithful to pray the Rosary together: (1) for the conversion of the materialistic West; (2) for the victory of Christ in Russia and in the whole of the former Soviet Empire; (3) for reconciliation between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches.

To avoid any misunderstanding: by our joint prayer we wish neither to latinise nor to proselytise Eastern Christianity. On the contrary, we are convinced that the Holy Orthodox Church is an indisputable part of the Mystical Body of Christ. We have been helping this Church for many years in the liturgical and pastoral field and we now wish to substantially increase this help. To do this we set up in our Organisation a separate department. It is in this spirit of fraternal cooperation that, together with the Orthodox children of Mary, we wish to clasp her saving hand and jointly carry out what she has asked both of Western and of Eastern Christianity. She will see to it that neither the Orthodox nor the Catholic faithful lose their identity when they pray the Rosary together.

This is the 4 point plan by which we wish to carry out this worldwide ecumenical rosary campaign :

1. In October, the month of the Rosary, we will send this booklet to all Christians in the West who wish to take part in this campaign of prayer.
2. Meanwhile we will use TV, radio and press to inform believers in Russia so that they can take part in this ecumenical prayer campaign.

3. Whoever then writes to our office in Moscow will receive, together with the Russian edition of this booklet, one of the rosaries which have been donated by Christians in the West, so that Christians in Russia can pray with them.
4. For all the rest - including the funding for this campaign - Mary will provide. She knows well how to inspire generosity in her children.

For the world continues to be the battle-ground of the apocalyptic struggle between the Woman and the Dragon. The mortally endangered Church of our time will never be able to face the historic task before her on the threshold of the Third Millennium unless She who is victorious in all God's battles comes to our aid again today.

So let us become again like little children who cry out in mortal fear to their Mother. Pray the Rosary with the faith of children and devout grandmothers. Pray as our ancestors once prayed. Like Moses on Mount Sinai and Jonah in the belly of the whale. Like the youths in the fiery furnace and like Job when he was put to the test by Satan. Their prayers were heard! Pray with unshakable trust and with a heart that embraces the whole world in love. And the Lord will turn His face towards us and His Mercy will know no bounds.

*Werenfried van Straaten, o. praem.*