



Keeler, Cardinal William H.

John F. Hotchkin

With the unexpected death of Father John F. Hotchkin the quest for Christian unity and for interreligious understanding has lost a great champion. To his family and friends and to Cardinal Francis George and the Archdiocese of Chicago I extend deepest sympathy as I join them in mourning the passing of a dear friend and collaborator.

Time and again Father Hotchkin served exceedingly well the table of dialogue in the United States and indeed at the world level, through his service to the Holy See's Council for Promoting the Unity of Christians, by offering farsighted counsel and wise insights. His many friends within the Christian family and on the interfaith scene constantly turned to him for advice, and he never failed to respond with courtesy and dignity.

When Pope John Paul II visited the United States in 1987 and met with other Christian leaders at Columbia, South Carolina, he found a spirit of openness that he repeatedly commended afterwards. So much of this was due to the work of Father Hotchkin and the staff who worked under his direction, building on the pioneering efforts of his predecessors.

We of the Bishops' Committee will miss his deep and practical faith in the ways of God. We must mourn as well the loss of the help of his encyclopedic memory and of his ability to analyze in the light of principle very complex situations.

May Father Hotchkin enjoy the Lord's reward of a full measure of eternal joy and peace.

Cardinal William H. Keeler
Archbishop of Baltimore