Brought
TOGETHER

Matthew's Gospel has an interesting focus on bringing together people who have different outlooks on life. The Church today continues the peaceful appeal of the Gospel message. The Church works for unity in all areas of life.

Joseph Bernardin was a man who, through his humble nature, was able to bring many people together. In 1952, he was ordained a priest. Father Bernardin worked in Charleston, South Carolina, before being appointed the bishop of Atlanta, Georgia and later the Archbishop of Cincinnati. In 1983, after he was appointed Archbishop of Chicago, Pope John Paul II appointed him a cardinal.

Cardinal Bernardin understood the importance of people working together, even when they held different perspectives. He is credited with putting forth the image of a "seamless garment of life" as a way to bring together all the Church's teachings regarding the sanctity of life.

▶ Why is being consistent in your beliefs important?

Seeking Peace

In 1983, Cardinal Bernardin was chairman of the bishop's committee that produced *The Challenge of Peace.* In this pastoral letter, the U.S. bishops spoke out against nuclear war.

Cardinal Bernardin took a strong stance for both nuclear disarmament and health care for the poor. He spoke publicly against assisted suicide, abortion, and racial injustice. Even when he was falsely accused of sexual abuse in 1993, he responded with grace in the face of public scorn. His accuser recanted, and Cardinal Bernardin forgave him and prayed with him.

The Cross as Companion

In 1995, Cardinal Bernardin was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Despite his own fears, he was able to minister to other cancer patients in the hospital. He made phone calls and visits and sent kind notes to them. By his actions, Cardinal Bernardin demonstrated a sincere humility even during his own suffering.

Cardinal Bernardin faced his approaching death with dignity and humility. In his final book, *The Gift of Peace*, he wrote, "The shadow of the cross falls upon each of our lives, although we are not usually aware of it each day. This is how it was for me until late August of this year. Since then the cross had become my constant companion, a reminder of my upcoming encounter with my new friend, death, who will lead me home to God."

In 1996, Cardinal Bernardin died at age sixty-eight. His legacy offers us a model of how one humble person can draw together many others into a spirit of authenticity and harmony.

Disciple POWER

HUMILITY
The humble person is aware of his or her gifts and limitations. Humility makes a person so comfortable with oneself that he or she can truly be present to others, even those holding quite different points of view. Inevitably, the humble person recognizes dependence on God for all things.

Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, who had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, wrote letters to fellow cancer sufferers.

FAITH JOURNAL

How can you be more consistent in applying your faith in your relationships with others?