

Diocese of North America and Europe
Diocesan Sunday- March 4th 2007

Order of Worship

Theme: “Fellowship that leads to goodness”

I rejoiced with those who said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the LORD."
Our feet are standing
in your gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is built like a city
that is closely compacted together.
That is where the tribes go up,
the tribes of the LORD,
to praise the name of the LORD
according to the statute given to Israel.
There the thrones for judgment stand,
the thrones of the house of David.

Psalm 122:1-5

Song: God of wonders

Kauma

Almighty Lord, we come before you to worship you in spirit and truth. You are the true light that brightens and illumines our existence. You have redeemed the church by your own life and have made it pure and blameless. Today we, your people, gather together in this consecrated space and time of worship as the Diocese of North America and Europe, witnessing to your saving grace, and looking back into the glorious ways that you have led us. You are worthy of adoration and praise that we offer you with humble hearts.
Amen.

Confession

“The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.”

Acts 15:30, 31

Church is the space of encouragement; where the weak are held close and surrounded by the warmth of care; where those far are drawn closer; where the weak are empowered. But we have been weak in encouraging and edifying others.
Lord, forgive us and heal us.

"I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints". Philemon 6, 7

We are called to be faith sharing and faith generating communities. We are called to live out faith in our situations. But we often fail to take up the challenge of faith.

Lord, forgive us and heal us.

"Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I appeal to you on the basis of love..."

Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask".

Philemon 8, 21

Christian fellowship is based on the authority of true love. It provides the confidence in calling God, Abba Father and seeing the other as brother and sister. It implies disturbing the comfortable to side with those in distress.

But many a time we have made ourselves insulated. We have failed to approach God with confidence for the sake of those in need.

Lord, forgive us and heal us.

"Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good, no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother". Philemon 15,16

Church destroys all class distinctions. Everyone is redeemed in Christ Jesus, to the privilege of being the sons and daughters of God grace.

But we are comfortable with some distinctions of wealth and status.

Lord, forgive us and heal us.

"Many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them". Mark 2:3, 4

When everyone rushed to see Jesus, these four men ran away to their paralytic friend. They carried him to Jesus. They were "doing it together". It caused the miracle or it was the miracle.

But we are too much obsessed with ourselves and our own rights and our privacy. We are uncomfortable in doing it together for God.

Lord, forgive us and heal us.

The Prayer of the Four

What can we bring before you O Lord?

Our friend, paralytic, immobile, withered

Our love for him, the chord, unbroken

Our trust in you, the Prime mover

Our hope, you can transform

Our confidence, you will never reject, disregard

Lord, in you we find salvation

In you we find LIFE

Song: Hungry (falling on my knees)

Thanksgiving

Gracious Lord, we thank you for the grace that has brought together as a church of the diaspora. The vibrant faith of our fathers and mothers who motivated us to go forward still inspires us. We are grateful for the work of your Spirit who illumined the lives of those who laid foundations for this Diocese and their untiring efforts in building up it as a community of faithful, spanning different continents. We are privileged to be part of the rich heritage of Apostolic Faith as it flowered in the Malabar Coast, spreading its fragrance to the nations. We are indebted to you for the blessedness that we experience as your people and for the leadership we receive through our Diocesan Episcopa Coorilos Thirumeni.

Lord, help us ever to be seeking your purpose in planting us in these lands of opportunities, resources and technological advancement, that we may transform our situations to the good of the weak, the poor and the needy.

Lord, let our Diocese become the House at Capernaum,

Where

Jesus is present in Spirit

People are received

Weak are strengthened

Sins are forgiven

Legalism is confronted

God's love is proclaimed

Word is expounded

Grace is experienced

And lives are transformed

Amen

Song: Give thanks

Intercession

We pray for our Metropolitan Thirumeni, who is celebrating Navathy (90 yrs) of blessed and fruitful living; and our Euyakim Mar Coorilos Thirumeni, who provides great leadership to our Diocese; that they may be strengthened in spirit to lead and guide the people of God.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for our Diocesan Secretary Rev. Joseph Oommen and family, Diocesan Treasurer Mr. T. A. Mathew, the Diocesan Assembly and Council members and the Sabha Council members that they may be able to serve the Lord with a cheerful heart.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the *Mar Thoma Messenger* which has completed 25 years in its glorious ministry of bringing together the church members far and wide and sharing the vision of the church and the Diocese. Let us also remember the selfless labor of the past and present edit and managing team, committees, contributors, printers, mailers and the financial and prayer partners.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those members of our Diocese in full time ministry in various capacities and places and especially those in ordained ministry of our church. We also pray for the ministry accomplished through the various organizations; Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, Yuvajana Sakhyam, Sevika Sangham, Edavaka Mission, Choir, Young Families Fellowship and Senior Citizen's Fellowship.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the mission involvements of our Diocese, especially the life transforming events that we are engaged with the Mexican and Native American Mission. We also pray for the Mission fields of our church and for the missionaries and evangelists laboring there and for those who are supporting them.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Benediction

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.

And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Amen