

St. Matthew Parish



Website: www.stmatthewrc.org

Pastoral Staff

Pastor

Fr. Frank Black

Priests

Fr. Thaddeus J. Abraham

Msgr. Pierre Andre

Pierre

Fr. Ralph Theodat

Deacon

Nickie Colon



St. Gregory the Great

224 Brooklyn Ave.

Brooklyn, NY 11213

Tel 718- 773-0100

Fax 718- 773-4198

Email: faithcommstgreg@aol.com

Mass Schedule:

First Friday 10:00am

Saturday-5pm

Sunday 11:30am

Saturday: Reconciliation-4:30 pm

Office Staff

Secretary: Rosanne Barber Ext.100

D.R.E.: Monica Flemmings

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00am-5:00pm

St. Matthew

1123 Eastern Pkwy.,

Brooklyn, NY 11213

Tel 718- 774-6747

Fax 718- 953-4895

Email: stmatthew1123@aol.com

Mass Schedule:

Monday-Friday 7:30am & 9:00am

Saturday 8:00am & 8:00pm

Saturday: Reconciliation-7:30 pm
or by appointment

Sunday:

English-7:30am & 11:30am

Spanish 9:30am; Kreyol 1:30pm

Office Staff

Secretary: Sharon Andrews

D.R.E.: Charmaine Noel

Office Hours:

Monday:10:00am-4:00pm

Tuesday, Wednesday,

Thursday Friday & Saturday:

10:00am-6:00pm

Sunday: 9:00am-4:00pm

Monday - Saturday-

Closed for lunch 1-2 P.M.

Our Lady Of Charity

1669 Dean St.,

Brooklyn, NY 11213

Tel 718- 774-5100

Fax 718- 778-3335

Email: Olc1669@aol.com

Mass Schedule:

Sunday: Rosary 9:00am

9:30am-Praise & Worship

10am-Mass

Office Staff:

Secretary: Patricia Romain

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday:10am-6pm

Catholic Cemeteries-

80-01 Metropolitan Ave.

Middle Village, NY 11379

Tel:718 – 894-4888



3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time: The Wonder of God's Mercy

Today's first reading is taken from the middle of the story of Jonah. God had told Jonah to go to Nineveh and condemn them for their immorality. Nineveh was to the East of Israel. Jonah went to the West. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, one of Israel's enemies. Jonah was sure they wouldn't listen to him. They'd probably kill him. So Jonah went as far west as he could until he came to the sea. There he embarked on a boat to get even further away from Nineveh. You know the rest of this part of the story. A storm came up and the boat was about to sink. The sailors were sure that the storm had a divine origin. They wanted to know who had offended God. Then Jonah told them about God's call for him to go to Nineveh. They threw him overboard and a fish gobbled him up—a whale, most likely. Perhaps it was meant to be humorous, but nasty old Jonah was sour even to the whale's stomach. The whale spit him out on the land. So Jonah, now showing the result of being in the whale for three days, probably all grey and hairless, went onto to Nineveh. He prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed because the sins of the people. After only a day, the people from King to slave repented, fasting, putting on sack clothe and ashes. God saw their repentance and forgave them. Jonah became quite angry not that God was merciful, but that he, Jonah, had looked like a fool telling them that they were all going to die. The message here is that God is more concerned about the people's repentance than he is concerned about judging them for their sin.

Jesus Christ came to forgive sins. He did this through the sacrifice of the cross. He died for you and for me. He continues to forgive sins through the sacrifice of his Body, the Church. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. This Body heals and strengthens us when we are in the pain of sin. Just as the entire body hurts when one part is injured, stub your toe and you can feel the pain all the way up to your head, so also the entire body mobilizes itself to heal the injured part. We lie down when we have a physical pain so all our body's energy can be directed to healing.

At this time of year, many people will be joining pilgrimages to support life. Yes, the horrible Supreme Court decision to allow abortion in our country has been overturned by federal law, but there are many states and many people who are demanding the restoration of abortion. We continue to pray for an end to abortion. We also need to remember that there are people who come to Church who are reminded that they themselves were involved with an abortion. Some of them think that it is too late for them to be forgiven, or that the sin was too much to forgive. They think that they do not belong in Church. They think that other parishioners really would not want them there if they knew what they did. They are wrong. God wants them in Church.

We need them in Church. God wants them because he wants them to receive healing from the community. We need them because we need people who will proclaim to the world that there is only one choice a Christian can make and that is the choice of life. We need them because they are hurting, and we, the Body of Christ, cannot bear to see any of our members in pain.

Some people come to Church battling sin and frequently losing that battle. They might have gotten through a week or two, but then they succumb again. Once in Church they see so many around them living a moral life that they feel that they don't belong there. But they are wrong. They need to be there because they need to be in the presence of compassion and love, compassion and love emanating from Christ and reflected by the Catholic community. We need them there because we need to provide the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. They need to hear from us that it is not too late for them. They need to hear us recognize our own sins and proclaim that the Mercy of God is far more powerful than any of our sins. it is not too late for any of us.

Today's Gospel sums up all of Jesus' teaching. His message was simple: repent and believe in the Gospel, the Good News. The Good News is that if we are willing to fight against sin and turn to the Lord, happiness and peace will be ours. No one, no situation in life, nothing can destroy the joy that we have in being united to the Lord. The Good News is the wonder of God's merciful love.

Msgr. Joseph Pellegrino

| WEEKLY READINGS | |
|-----------------|---|
| Sun Jan 21 | Jon 3:1-5,10; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Mt 1:14-20 |
| Mon Jan 22 | Is 8:23—9:3; 1Cor1:10-13,17; Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17 |
| Tue Jan 23 | 2 Sm 6:12-15,17-19; Mk 3:31-35 |
| Wed Jan 24 | 2 Sm 7:4-17; Mk 4:1-20 |
| Thu Jan 25 | Acts 22:3-16 or 9:1-22; Mk 16:15-18 |
| Fri Jan. 26 | 2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5; Mk 4:26-34 |
| Sat Jan. 27 | 2 Sm 12:1-7,10-17; Mk 4:35-41 |

OUR LADY OF CHARITY: MASS INTENTIONS

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS: Yolanda De Sandies , Theresa Lewis , Shawn Spellman ,Jayden Duncan , Destiny Joseph , Arlene Jackson , A’Ameerah Robinson , Olivia Henry , Sharon Duncan , Terrance Fraser , Canone Robinson , Dominic Duliepre Sr., **We pray to the Lord**

PARISH PRAYER: For our parish, that the three communities of St. Matthew, St. Gregory the Great and Our Lady of Charity, learn how to merge and grow together spiritually and become financially sound as three and yet one,
We pray to the Lord.

TODAY’S MASS :We pray to the Lord.

ALTAR BREAD : We pray to the Lord.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY : We pray to the Lord.

SANCTUARY CANDLE : We pray to the Lord

ST. GREGORY : MASS INTENTIONS

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Saturday, Jan. 20 th | 5 PM Vigil Mass for Fabian Milburn, Birthday Blessings, R.I.P., Requested by Theresa Milburn |
| Sunday, Jan. 21 st | 11:30 AM Mass for Agnes Clouden Smith, Birthday Blessings & Thanksgiving for Life, Health & Strength, Requested by her mother Maria Clouden |
| Saturday, Jan. 27 th | 5 PM Vigil Mass for Iyanna Gilkes, Birthday Blessings, Requested by The Gilkes Family |

ST. MATTHEW: MASS INTENTIONS

| | |
|--|--|
| Saturday January 20 | 8:00pm – Birthday blessings Colleen Chasteau by family |
| Sunday January 21 <i>3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time</i> | 7:30am –Birthday blessings Alma Ifil & Yira Alonso 9:30am – I.L.M. of Diego Antonio Amadiz (1 year passing) by Clara Amadiz 11:30am –R.I.P. Rupert & Agatha Mitchell by Catherine Ruffin 1:30pm –R.I.P. Karl Amilcar by Armelle Amilcar |
| Monday January 22 | 7:30am –Thanksgiving to God for his many blessings by Eda Wilson 9:00am – R.I.P. Cecilia Alexander in heaven by Patricia Alexander & family |
| Tuesday January 23 | 7:30am –Birthday blessings Shantee Boye by aunt, Myrna Mendez 9:00am –Blessings for Miranda David & children by Miranda David |
| Wednesday January 24 | 7:30am – That God’s healing blood & Mary’s blue mantle will continue to protect my children from all evil 9:00am – Birthday blessings Nigel Andrews by family |
| Thursday January 25 | 7:30am –For all priests as they continue to shepherd their flock 9:00am – For peace in the world, especially in the Middle East, Ukraine, Haiti & Africa |
| Friday January 26 | 7:30am –A home for me & my daughter by Letitia Pavy 9:00am – For the unemployed & underemployed |
| Saturday January 27 | 8:00am –In loving memory of Agustin H. Mendez 1 by daughter, Myrna Mendez |

CANDLE FOR January 21– January 27



Thanksgiving to God requested by Lucesca Francis

BREAD & WINE FOR JANUARY

BREAD - Thanksgiving to God requested by Princess Frank



WINE - In memory of my mom, Lucile & dad, Constant requested by Evelyn Barreau

REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

For the homebound, hospitalized and sick

Judith Adams, Rita Antomez, Armelle Amilcar, Loraine Quash-Antoine, Marie Augustin, Al Barnett, Monica Belfon, Marque & Yael Barber-LaFon, Melona Barber, Jason Bascom, Ruby Bowman, Silvestre Brathwaite, Ismay Brewster, Recy Brown, Patricia Burrowes, Yolande Cadet, Diana Codogan, Cathleen Charles, Catilda Charles, Delcia Charles, Marcel Charles, Maria Clouden Cecilia Clovie, Nelia Collins, Marilyn Coates, Virginia Cox, Daphne Critchlow, Theresa Cudjoe, Veronica Dale, Angela Daniels, Shirley Daniels, Joseph Drew, Stephen Duncan, Dorothy Edwards, Una Europe, Stella Emmanuel, Elardo Flemmings, Carrie Frasier, Doriel Gabriel, John Gale, Doriel Gabriel, Ryan Gee, Sybil Geoffroy, Catherine & Deacon Roy George, Bernadette Gilbert, Muriel Gomez, Trina Gonzalez, Kellon Hagley, Kelly Hagley, Gwendolyn Harding, Pat Harris, Bruno Henry, Beverly Hillyer, Pierre & Elreta Hinds, Florence Holder, Danielle Huie, Janice & Orson Hutchings, Kerlyne Hyppolite, Anasha Inniss, Carlyn Jabouin, Donna James, Nellie James, Diane John, Alsie Johnson, Nicole Johnson, Magdalena Joseph, Ian Kellman, Lucy King, Albert Kirton, Kanelle Lang, Rhoda Lewis, Sampson Lewis, Marjorie Lopez, Luis Manuel Lorenzo, Madelin Lorenzo, Vivian Boykin Lott, Norberto Lovell, Jean Lubin, Gloria Lynch, Hubert Lynch, Mamita, Barbara Manuel, Virginia Marcellin, Judith Matthew, Tom McCafferty, Laura McDonald, Mavis McDonald, Leticia McDowell, Vernita McDowell, Gemma Mejias, Isai Munoz, Marta Munoz, Nelson Munoz, Suzanne Neil, Ronald Nethersole, Claudette Norde, Mother Dolores Olf, Keena Ollivierre, Ronaldo Nano Paul, Sharon Perry, Andre Perry, Chung Peters, Mary James Peterson, Marie Pierre, Melody Pink, Sonia Prescott, Ann Primo, Val Quash, Len Quash, Dorothy Irons Reid, Catherine Richards, Melissa Richards, Elizabeth Rivera, Cornelia Robergeau, Randolph Romain, Carlos Rudas, Lidia Saunders, Marlene Saunders, Pamela Smith, Pema Smith, John Spellman Sr., Lisa Scott Spencer, Delores Sykes, Kevin Maynard, Basil Suarez, Antonio Sultan, Violet Sylvester, Brenda & Javier Talango, Angela & Edris Thomas, Lyonette Tribie, Janet Throne, Amparo Torres, Malik Wellington, Hazel Williams, Karen Williams, Terrance Williams, Octavio Willis, Leandro Wilson, Hazel Williams, Reynold Williams, Christine Wright, Joan Wright, Natasha Wright, James P. Young

SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR : Yvonne Lacy, Dean Jackson, Wendy Romain, Vaughn Haynes, Georgeann Campbell, Maura Chisam, Danielle Huie, Cotilda Charles, Anthony Hepburn Jr., Lawrence Latimer, La Mar Mc Nabb, Lisa Colone, Krystal Chinalbert, Christine Hudson & family, Conrad Lord, Glenda Hunter, Livingston Holloway, Jaden Bell, Nathan Ford Sr. & family, Isabella Bugett, Sabrina Guess, Daphne & Golda Critchlow, Gwen & Helena Pugh, Hannah Penny, Kendall Wilson, Almarie Mc Coy, Raymond Jorsling, all families represented here today,

All students, teachers and principals, President Joseph Biden & his family, Vice President Kamala Harris & her family, our Government, prayers and petitions in our prayer basket, for the all Priest especially those who serve here at Charity, Religious Vocations, and an increase in Religious Vocations, all men and women serving our country, the elders, all who are incarcerated, and unexpressed prayers, for immigrants, a successful solution to the pandemic, the mentally sick, the unemployed and under employed, end to gun violence and for world peace,

We pray to the Lord.

WEEKLY MEETINGS - St. Matthew

St. Matthew weekly meetings have commenced. Please contact your ministry to find out the time and date of the meetings.

WEEK OF SUNDAY 01/21/2024 @ ST. GREGORY

+ **9 AM Sunday school- In Session**
+ **10:30 AM – Choir Rehearsal**
+ **11:30 AM Sunday Mass – (Live Stream)**
+ **CREDIT UNION-OPEN**
+ **2 PM to 3 PM EBC Meeting at First Baptist Church at 450 Eastern Parkway.**

MONDAY 01/22/24

+ **7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal-Church**

FRIDAY 01/26/24

+ **7:30 PM Bible Study via zoom**

SATURDAY 01/27/24

+ **4 PM Confession**
+ **4 PM Vigil Choir Rehearsals**
+ **8 PM Light Fest Prayer Group – ZOOM** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82362442148?pwd=MGVNMWFFQcVdrQktXeTh0YjRadC9Mdz09>

+ **5 PM Vigil Mass - Church- (Live Stream)**

COLLECTION 01/13- 01/14/2024

for

ST. MATTHEW

| Mass | Envelopes | Envelope Collection | Loose money | Totals |
|-----------------------|------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 8 PM | 22 | 658.00 | 180.26 | 838.26 |
| 7:30 AM | 106 | 3,637.24 | 309.00 | 3,946.24 |
| 9:30 AM | 67 | 944.00 | 231.75 | 1,175.75 |
| 11:30 PM | 69 | 2,036.00 | 381.00 | 2,417.00 |
| 1:30 PM | 39 | 594.00 | 116.00 | 710.00 |
| L.I.R. | 20 | 1,070.00 | — | 1,070.00 |
| Total | 323 | 8,939.24 | 1,218.01 | 10,157.25 |
| <i>Christmas Gift</i> | 157 | 6,812.00 | — | 6,812.00 |

ST. GREGORY

| Mass | Envelopes | Envelope Collection | Loose money | Totals |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 5 PM | 10 | 390.00 | 130.60 | 520.60 |
| 10:00AM | 33 | 1,628.00 | 163.00 | 1,791.00 |
| Total | 43 | 2,018.00 | 293.60 | 2,311.60 |
| <i>Christmas Gift</i> | 18 | 810.00 | — | 810.00 |

OUR LADY OF CHARITY

| Mass | Envelopes | Envelope Collection | Loose money | Totals |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 10:00AM | 43 | 2,190.00 | — | 2,190.00 |
| Total | 43 | 2,190.00 | — | 2,190.00 |
| <i>Christmas Gift</i> | 3 | 80.00 | — | 80.00 |

FAITH DIRECT:

January 1st – 16th , 2024 - \$1,209.00

ST. MATTHEW EXPENSES

| | <u>Apr - Jul 20</u> | <u>Apr - Jul 19</u> | <u>% Change</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Income | | | |
| Collections | 168,288.50 | 344,182.28 | -51.11% |
| Rent | 199,829.29 | 217,167.84 | -7.98% |
| Programs | 0.00 | 10,369.20 | -100.0% |
| Donations/Fundraising | 1,366.00 | 18,115.47 | -92.46% |
| Other | 25,491.52 | 24,792.07 | 2.82% |
| Total Income | 394,975.31 | 614,626.86 | -35.74% |
| Expense | | | |
| Employee Compensation | 302,582.87 | 291,549.37 | 3.78% |
| Maintenance | 69,276.57 | 33,706.71 | 105.53% |
| Office Expenses | 28,460.39 | 19,601.93 | 45.19% |
| Programs | 3,351.36 | 6,028.70 | -44.41% |
| Altar Supplies | 6,099.33 | 16,602.28 | -63.26% |
| Utilities | 28,261.46 | 27,878.02 | 1.38% |
| Miscellaneous Expense | 2,032.03 | 3,230.79 | -37.1% |
| Total Expense | 440,064.01 | 398,597.80 | 10.4% |
| Net Income | (45,088.70) | 216,029.06 | -120.87% |

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

St. Gregory the Great **BIBLE STUDY** with Catherine Abdullah @ 7PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) every week

on

FRIDAYS

Bible Study back in Session @ 7:15 PM

Link for Bible Study [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85498875775?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85498875775?pwd=Nk4zY3BVOUFmVzRUSDJodllWSDArUT09)

[j/85498875775?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85498875775?pwd=Nk4zY3BVOUFmVzRUSDJodllWSDArUT09)

To Join Zoom Meeting please use Meeting ID: 854 9887 5775

Passcode: 374738

On tap mobile

Dial 929 205 6099 using Meeting ID and the passcode **Bible Study** (All Are Invited) Meets on zoom every Friday from 7:30PM to 8:30PM A Book of the Bible is picked (By the Group) alternatively, from the Old Testament, followed by The New Testament.

LIGHT FEST PRAYER GROUP (ALL ARE WELCOME!) Meet-In-Person at St. Gregory R.C. Church every **FIRST SATURDAYS** of the month in the Church's dining room. The remaining Saturdays of the month, Light Fest Prayer Group meets on zoom in the Light Fest Reading Room from 8PM to 9PM. The zoom link is mentioned above. Please contact any member for information for telephone number and pin number to access this prayer line. (This enables us to discuss confidentiality protocols to New Participants)

UPCOMING MTGS. & EVENTS @ ST. GREGORY MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MARCUS GARVEY SERVICE ONCE A MONTH ON THE SECOND SUNDAY AT 2PM

St. Gregory the Great – Religious Education

Sunday school is in session. Time: 9:30am.

Registration fee: \$60 per candidate

JESSIE TREE PROJECT (Sponsored by Sunday school & Confirmation Class) (All are Welcomed to participate) occurs every December starting December 1st and extended until Sunday, January 21st. Note that a different Charity is chosen yearly. This is decided by the availability, or need.

East Brooklyn Congregation (EBC) Meeting on Sunday, January 21st, 2024 from 2pm to 3pm at First Baptist Church of Crown Heights located 450 Eastern Parkway.

Join your neighbors to call on New York State to develop Kingsboro with the urgency this crisis demands. Brooklyn families need housing NOW!

SACRAMENTS & REGISTRATION

PARISH REGISTRATION:

All are welcome! Any letter concerning sponsorship for the sacraments or testimonial letters will only be issued to registered parishioners of 6+ months. Please register in the rectory.

BAPTISM:

To have your child baptized in the

Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens, you must show:

1. Proof that you live in the geographical boundaries of the Church you wish to have the baby baptized.(e.g. electric bill). If you live outside the boundaries of the Church you wish to have your baby baptized , you must get a permission letter from the Catholic church closest to where you live granting you permission to have your baby baptized outside of the geographical area .
2. Your baby is allowed **one** God mother and **one** God father, one must be Catholic, practicing their faith (letter from the Church stating this), and have their confirmation certificate. The baby can be baptized with one Catholic god parent.
3. One parent must be baptized Catholic and have their baptism certificate, First Communion or Confirmation as proof.
4. Once these requirements are fulfilled, we encourage you to call and set a date. Children 7 & under can be baptized w/o CCD classes.

RCIA

RCIA stands for RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS and is composed of a series of sessions bringing people together to experience the prayer life of the church as well as learn about its doctrines and teachings. Using the readings from the Bible which we hear daily at Mass, the Sacred Liturgy as well as the Catechism of the Catholic Church, teens and adults who have not yet done so prepare themselves to receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation & Holy Eucharist.

RCIA is offered in Spanish, Kreyol & English and is for people who:

- ◆ Were baptized in the Catholic Church but have not received the sacrament of Confirmation, First Holy Communion or First Confession
- ◆ Were baptized in another Christian denomination and wish to join the Catholic Church
- ◆ Were never baptized & wish to fully worship in the Catholic Church
- ◆ Wants to know more about what it means to be Catholic?

The sessions begin in October. If you are interested in knowing more, please contact the rectory.

SACRAMENTS & REGISTRATION

School of Religion @ St. Matthew

After receiving First Holy Communion, It is essential for your child to continue each year in our program, until they complete their initiation with the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

For more information about registration requirements or other questions you might have, contact us: Phone: 215-576-4124; email: stmatthewreledu@stmatthew-brooklyn.org

Después de recibir la Primera Comunión, es esencial que su hijo continúe en nuestro programa cada año, hasta que complete la iniciación con la recepción del Sacramento de la Confirmación.

Para más información acerca los requisitos para registración u otras preguntas que usted pueda tener, comuníquese al Tel: 215-576-4124; email: stmatthewreledu@stmatthew-brooklyn.org

***ENSKRIPSYON YO AP FÈT KOUNYE A
BATÈM, PREMYE SENT KOMINYON AK KONFI-
MASYON.***

Pouplisenfòmasyon sou kondisyon enskripsyon ou swalòtkek-
syon ou ta genyen kontaktenounan: Phone: 215-576-4124;
email: stmatthewreledu@stmatthew-brooklyn.org

ST. MATTHEW EVENTS

GIFT SHOP

Located @ the back of the Church, selling an array of religious articles including rosaries, open on weekends before & after Mass.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Adoration in the Church on **Wednesdays** and **Fridays** after **9:00 am Mass until 12:00 noon**. Fridays from **7 P.M. to 9 P.M.** The Divine Mercy is recited during the reposition.

Your hour with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will repair for evils of the world and bring about peace on earth. "Let us be generous with our time in going to meet Jesus and ready to make reparation for the great evils of the world.

Let your adoration never cease."

-Pope John Paul II -

VOCATIONS

"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Are you being called to strengthen Christ's Church through a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate or the consecrated life?

Contact the Vocation Office at

718-827-2454 or email: vocations@diobrook.org

WOMEN'S BRUNCH RETREAT

Heart to Heart Ministry will have a retreat for women on Saturday, February 10th from 9:45 a.m. until noon.

The address is American Martyrs Parish, Sullivan Hall, 79-43 Bell Blvd, Bayside, New York.

For additional information you can contact Sister Ave Clark at 718-428-2471.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Gathered in worship around the One Lord "They saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage." (Matthew 2:11)

Scripture:

Exodus 3:1-6, Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Matthew 28:16-20, When they saw him, they worshipped him.

Meditation:

When the Magi arrived at Bethlehem and saw the child with his mother, they worshipped him. Similarly at the sight of the burning bush, Moses hid his face, afraid to look at God. When the disciples saw the risen Christ on the mountain in Galilee, they worshipped him. In the heavenly liturgy, the twenty-four elders fall before him who sits on the throne. Encountering God's presence, we respond thus: gazing, followed by amazement, leading to worship.

Do we see? Are we amazed? Are we truly worshipping? In our narrow vision, too often we see only our tangled disagreements, forgetting that the one Lord has given his saving grace to us all, and that we share in the one Spirit who draws us into unity.

As communities enlivened by the Holy Spirit, our churches call us to walk together towards the Christ Child to offer him homage as one people. The Spirit of compassion guides us to each other, and together guides us to our one Lord.

Prayer:

Compassionate God, you gave the blind the insight to recognize you as their Savior, enable us to repent. In your mercy, remove the scales from our eyes and lead us to worship you as our God and Redeemer. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon us, so that together we glorify you in the Spirit's fellowship, and witness to all those around us. Amen.