

The Order of Worship for Preparatory Service (Thooyaba)

P: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. Grant to us O Lord, weak and sinful as we are, we ask for Your mercy and Your compassion in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

P: O Lord, You are merciful and loving to each one of us. Give to us reverence and understanding of heart, that we may hold ourselves in Your presence free from all discord and impurity, and worship You as Lord and Creator, as is Your due, both now and forever.

C: Amen.

Psalm 51 - Psalm of Confession

[Priest and congregation alternate stanzas – Or – left side of church and right side sing alternate stanzas.]

P: Have mercy on me O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

C: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

P: For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.

C: Against You, You only have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Your sight.

P: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

C: Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

P: Create in me a clean heart O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

C: Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

P: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

C: O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

P: Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

C: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

Promeon

P: O Lord, grant us Your grace and Your mercy.

C: Merciful Lord, have mercy and help us.

P: Help us, O Lord, continually to offer to You our praise and thanksgiving. To the One merciful Father, who hears the prayers of all sinners who call upon Him; to the One merciful Son, who receives all who knock in penitence at His door; and to the One holy and life-giving Spirit who cleanses all who turn and seek Him, belong glory and honor and worship now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sedra

P: O God, You are gracious, approachable and merciful; You love us and desire above all else the offering of a broken spirit. Receive us, we humbly pray, with all that we have and as all that we are. Make us worthy to come before You with contrition and humility, purify us from all stain that

we may be transformed by the renewal of our life, and go forth, as did the wise virgins, to a new world, bearing the shining lamps of faith. Enable us to sing Your praises, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: At Your door I knock and from Your treasure-store, O Lord, I ask for mercy. I am a sinner who for long has turned aside from Your ways. Help me to confess my sins, to leave them behind me and to live by Your grace. To whom shall I turn, if not to You, O compassionate Lord, and who will plead for our faults, if not You, O glorious King? O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be to us a refuge from all evil. Protect us under the wings of Your mercy both now and to the end of time.

C: Amen.

Ethra

P: May the perfume of our prayers be always acceptable to You.

C: Have mercy, O Lord. Reconcile the whole creation to Yourself.

P: O Lord, we have sinned.

C: Have mercy, O Lord. Pardon our offences.

P: O Lord, make us worthy to offer to You all our thoughts, words and deeds.

C: Have mercy, O Lord. Receive us as an acceptable sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

**MARTHOMA CHURCH
ORDER OF WORSHIP SERVICE OF FIRST COMMUNION**

Opening Hymn

(The first communicants come forward and stand in line. A dedication hymn is sung. The congregation remains seated).

Celebrant: Dearly beloved members of the congregation, we are assembled here to praise God as these first communicants openly confess that they are partakers in the saving grace of God. Let us all pray that they may experience God's abundant power and grace. We welcome them today to the full fellowship of the Church, the Body of Christ, through the Sacrament of the Holy Qurbana.

(Parents and Godparents shall stand in their respective places to thank God silently)

(Priest to the Communicants)

Now, our dearly beloved children in the Lord, you are called upon to renew the pledge taken on behalf of you by your parents and godparents at the time of your baptism.

Please repeat that pledge after me, now.

1. I renounce Satan; I believe in CHRIST.
2. I renounce Satan; I believe in CHRIST.
3. Renouncing Satan, I fully believe in CHRIST.

(Communicants repeat the following after the Bishop/Priest)

Lord God - You accepted me to the membership of the Church - the community of the new covenant, through baptism. I praise and thank You now for the great privilege of partaking in the Holy Qurbana.

I confess in Your presence and in the presence of all assembled here - that I have sinned against You and others - in thought, word, and deed. I commit myself in Your hands - trusting in Your inestimable mercy. I earnestly desire to whole-heartedly love You -- and faithfully follow You.

I decide now - to diligently learn the Word of God - and to regularly participate in the Holy Qurbana. Relying on the grace of God - I would continue to strive for the establishment of peace and justice among all people and to uphold the value and worth of all.

Blessing

Celebrant: You, who are called to be the light of the world, be strong by the Spirit with power from the One on high. Renounce the transient and deceitful lusts of fallen humanity and turn away from them. Hold forth the Word of God. May you enjoy life through faith in Christ Jesus. May God strengthen you to be steadfast in your pledge. May you experience a life of peace on earth and heavenly joy in God's presence in the world to come.

People: Amen.

Prayer

(The first communicants kneel)

Celebrant: Lord, fill this Your children with Your Holy Spirit. Strengthen them for Your service. Nurture them with heavenly graces. Protect them always under Your loving care. Bring them lip in the knowledge and obedience of Your Word. May they serve You in this world and enjoy the inheritance of all the saints in the world to come.

People: Amen.

(The Bishop or Priest lays his hands on the heads of the first communicants to bless them)

Celebrant: May God Almighty bless you and strengthen you to grow and bear fruit by the power of the Holy Spirit that is already given to you.

First Communicants: Amen ..

(After that, they are helped to stand and given Bibles and candles. They stand with lighted candles, facing the congregation).

Welcome by the Church

People: We, the members of this parish - joyfully welcome you - to the fellowship of the Church. - We promise you our prayers and help. - May the lord help us - to serve God in the unity of the Spirit. May God keep us all from falling. May God in His power and love - enable us to stand pure and spotless, with all the saints in His presence - in His eternal Kingdom.

Benediction

(The communicants turn facing the Altar).

Celebrant: Dearly beloved, go into the world with great joy. May the God of peace be with you. May His Holy Spirit guide you: May the. grace and blessings of the Triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(The communicants will join in the Prayer of Confession. They will partake first in the Holy Qurbana when it is served).

Dedication Service for Altar Boys

Opening Hymn

(As a hymn is sung, the candidates come forward and stand in a line before the altar)

Call to Worship

Celebrant: Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in His holy place?

People: The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.

Exhortations (Bishop)

Dear Altar Boys;

As you dedicate today to stand before the worshipping community and in the presence of God, know that you are called by God to serve at the Holy Altar. We remember boy Samuel who was brought by Hannah to be with Priest Eli to study, grow spiritually and to serve at the Holy place.

We also remember, Boy Jesus at the age of 12, who came to Jerusalem Temple for worship. He not only worshipped at the Temple but also took time to converse with the scribes to understand the Holy Scripture and to grow in wisdom and stature with God and men (Lk 2: 41-51).

You will be spending time from now onwards with your parish priests, listening, observing and asking questions to know more on the Faith and practices of the Church. You will do the service at the Holy Place according to a schedule prepared by our Achens.

You will be coming to the Church on Sundays, at least ½ hour (30 mts) early to prepare the Altar and to participate in the preparatory service (Thooyaba) of the celebrant. You will come with all preparation offer yourself through the offertory, confess your sins and take part in the Holy communion.

You are to set yourself to continue to do this regularly for a minimum period of three years. (Parents are requested to help the Altar Boys to reach the Church on Sundays sufficiently early for the services at the Altar).

Achens will be taking classes for them, enable them to observe the worship services and train them to help in the various sacraments.

Promeon

Celebrant: Glory be to the blessed Trinity - God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - who hates sin but loves the sinner and forgives those who repent. By thy mercy O Lord, sanctify these Thy children who have approached Thy holy presence to bear the joyful yoke of serving in Your holy

altar. To Thee be glory and honor and worship at this time when Your servants are received for this office, and at all times both now and forever.

People: Amen.

Sedra

Celebrant: O blessed Redeemer who dwells in the Holy of holies, protect these Your servants from the attacks of the evil one. Have mercy upon them as they labor in Your vineyard. Give them abundant joy as they dwell in Thy holy place. Give them strength to offer themselves as a sacrifice in perfect holiness. Adorn them with robes of white as they seek to reflect the light of Your glory. Make them worthy of the wisdom of Thy prophets. Help them keep the teachings of the Apostles. Inspire them to the boldness of those martyrs who have died for the sake of the Gospel. Count them in company of Thy saints. Lead them to green pastures, where you have instructed us to shepherd Your sheep. May these your servants dedicate themselves to the task of living as instruments of Thy glory. To Thee, we lift up glory and honor, praise and thanksgiving, now and always forever and ever.

People: Amen.

(The candidates kneel. The celebrant blesses each candidate and then helps them to rise up by holding their right hand into the service as an altar boy.)

Altar Boy Prayer

(After all altar boys are led to the Altar, they turn to the Bishop and in unison proclaim the following prayer.)

Altar Boy: *We are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and our body is the temple of the living God. We earnestly pray that the glory of the Lord shall ever be shining upon the altar and we shall serve the Lord throughout our life. Amen*

Parish Prayer

(When the Altar Boys turn to the Congregation, the members of the parish stand up as a mark of recognizing the altar boys and proclaim the following prayer.)

People: *May God grant you grace to sufficiently do what is needed in the altar of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be strong and of good courage, for the church is praying for you.*

Benediction

(Candidates turn to the altar and receive the benediction.)

Celebrant: You are blessed by the Lord who created Heaven and Earth. May the Lord bless and sanctify all of you who have attended this divine service with us. May + God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, hear and accept our weak and inadequate prayers before His throne of grace.

People: Amen