



Federation Worship

The Order for the Blessing of the Water
15 November 2022
St Giles' Church, Cambridge

The Priest gives the blessing:

Blessed is our God always, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The whole congregation then says: Glory to you, our God, glory to you.

O heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of truth, present everywhere and filling all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come to dwell in us, cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (x12)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

Reader:

Come let us worship and fall down before our King and our God.
Come let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.
Come let us worship and fall down before Christ himself, our King and our God.

PSALM 142 / 143 (NRSV)

Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness; answer me in your righteousness. Do not enter into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you. For the enemy has pursued me, crushing my life to the ground, making me sit in darkness like those long dead. Therefore my spirit faints within me; my heart within me is appalled. I remember the days of old; I think about all your deeds, I meditate on the works of your hands. I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Answer me quickly, O Lord; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me, or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit. Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning, for in you I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. Save me, O Lord, from my enemies; I have fled to you for refuge. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. Let your good spirit lead me on a level path. For your name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life. In your righteousness bring me out of trouble. In your steadfast love, cut off my enemies and destroy all my adversaries, for I am your servant.

The priest then sings:

Tone 4

God is the Lord, and has become manifest unto us; blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord. (x4)

Troparia, Tone 4

To you, O Mother of God, we sinners now flee. In repentance we bow down before you, saying: O Sovereign Lady, help us: have compassion on us, make haste to help, for we perish in the multitude of our sins. Turn us not empty away, for we have you as our only hope.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

O Mother of God, we will never cease to proclaim your power: for if you did not hasten to our aid, making intercession, who would have delivered us from our various difficulties? Who would have preserved us free to this day? We will not forsake you, O Lady, for you save your servants from all evil foes.

Reader: PSALM 50 / 51 (NRSV)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God[d] is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Priest: All-Holy Mother of God, guard, protect and keep your servants.

Through the prayers of your Holy Mother, and of your holy saints, O Merciful God, grant your great mercies to your people.

Through the prayers of the glorious Archangels, the Angels, and all the heavenly Hosts, mightily preserve your servants, O Saviour.

Through the prayers of the glorious Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist, and of all Your Saints, greatly preserve Your servants, O my Christ and Saviour.

Through the prayers of the glorious Apostles, and the victorious Martyrs, and of all Your Saints, grant Your mercies to Your servants.

Through the prayers of the glorious Cosmas and Damian, the unmercenary physicians, O Mother of God, preserve your servants, you who are an intercessor and supporter of the world.

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to ages of ages. Amen

We glorify the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit saying: O Holy Trinity, save our souls.

Both now and ever... (Theotokion)

O Virgin, who beyond understanding conceived and brought forth in these latter days Your Creator: save us who magnify you.

Priest: Open for us the door of your tender compassion, O blessed Mother of God; and as we set our hope in you, let us never be confounded. Through you, may we be delivered from all adversity; for you are the salvation of all Christians.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord have mercy.

Priest: For Holy are You, O God, and to You we ascribe glory, honour, and adoration: to the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and to the ages of ages.

All: Amen.

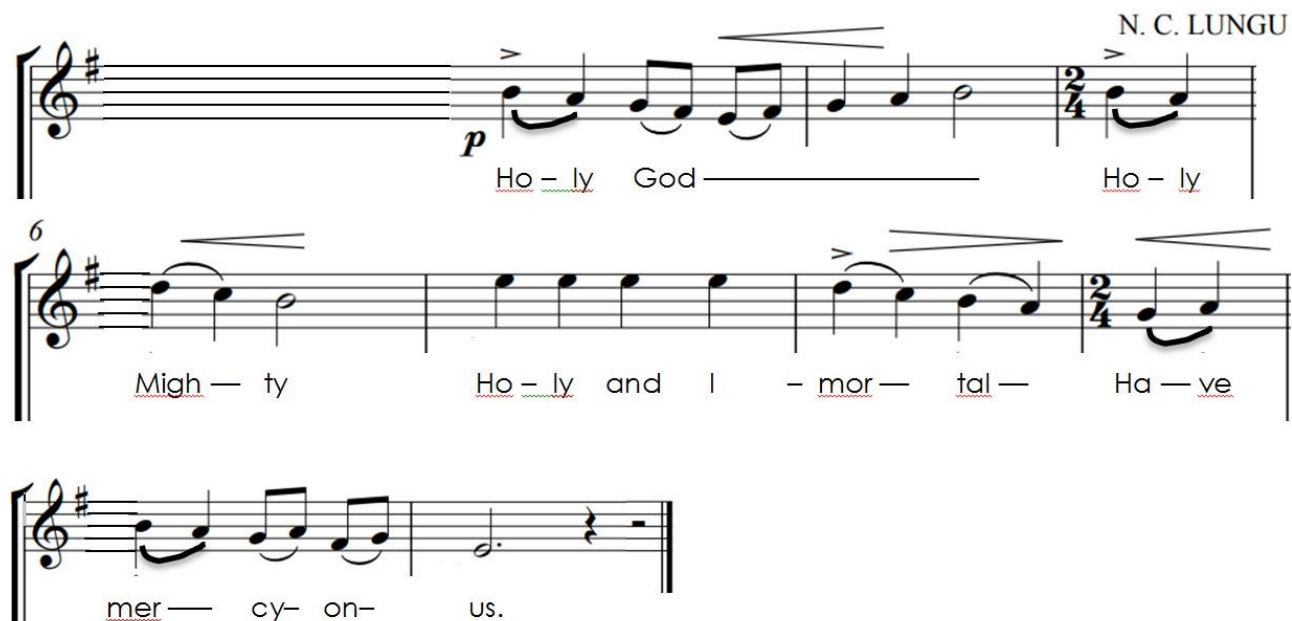
The Priest reads the following troparia

Now draws nigh the time that sanctifies all men, and the just Judge awaits us; turn then, O my soul, to repentance, like the sinful woman tearfully crying: have mercy on me, O Lord.

O Christ, the Fountain who sprinkled the waters of healing in the all-holy Temple of the Virgin, You, today, through the sprinkling of blessing expel the illnesses of all, for You are the Physician of our souls and bodies.

As a Virgin you knew not man, but gave birth; and as a Mother unwedded, you remained a Virgin; entreat then Christ our God that He will save us.

O All-Holy Mother of God Virgin, guide the works of our hands, and ask pardon for our transgressions, when we sing the angelic Hymn:



All: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy and Immortal: have mercy on us. (x3)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

The Epistle

Priest: Let us attend. Peace be to all!

Reader: And to your spirit!

*The Lord is my Light and my Saviour; whom then shall I fear?
The Lord is the defender of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?*

Priest: Wisdom.

Reader: The reading is from St Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. (Heb. 2:11-18)

Priest: Let us attend.

Reader: Brethren, the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying:

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

And again: "I will put my trust in him."

And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.

For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

And because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Priest: Peace be to Reader.

All: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel reading

Priest: Wisdom! Stand upright! Let us listen the Holy Gospel. Peace be to all!

All: And to your spirit.

Priest: The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to John (5: 1-4).

All: Glory to You, O God; Glory to You.

Priest: Let us attend!

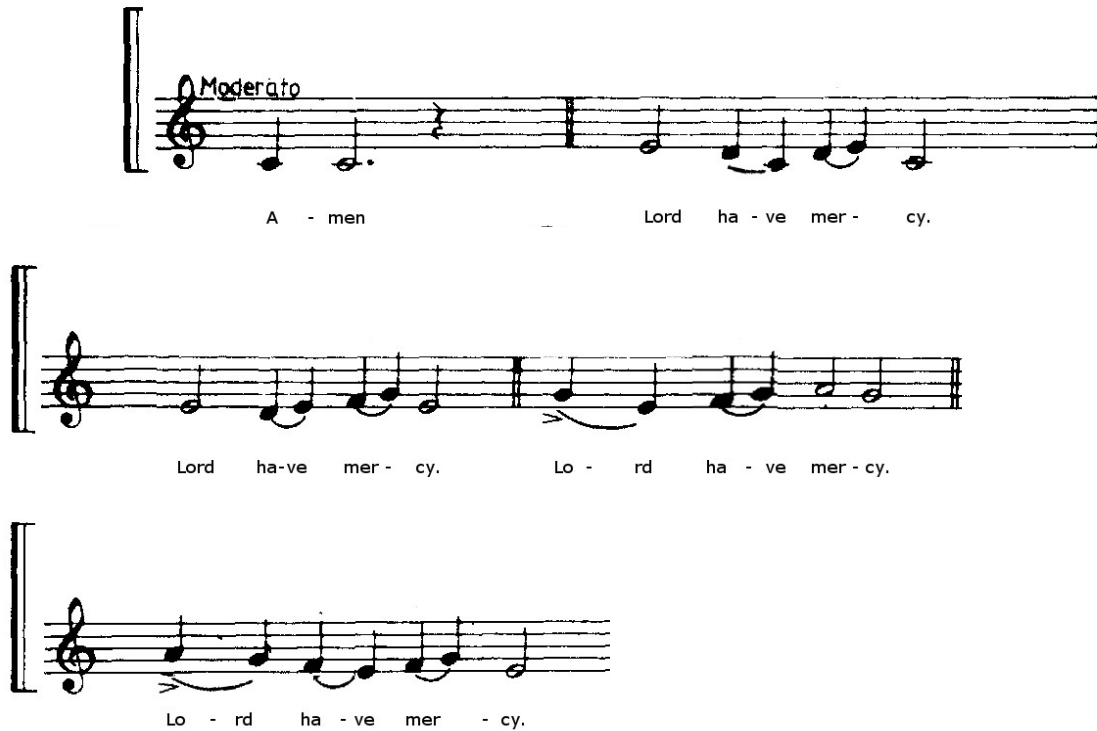
The Gospel

At that time, there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now, in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Bethesda, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids: blind, lame, and paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; and whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well from whatever disease that person had.

All: Glory to You, O God; Glory to You.

THE LITANY OF BLESSING

Following each petition, ALL respond with '*Lord have mercy*'.



The musical notation consists of three staves, each beginning with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo marking 'Moderato' is written above the first staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Staff 1: A - men Lord ha - ve mer - cy.

Staff 2: Lord ha - ve mer - cy. Lo - rd ha - ve mer - cy.

Staff 3: Lo - rd ha - ve mer - cy.

Priest: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy Churches of God; and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy House and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Sovereign, King Charles, the Royal Family, his Government, and all in authority under him, the armed forces, and those who serve in civil administration, let us pray to the Lord.

For the Bishops of the Orthodox Episcopal Assembly for Great Britain and Ireland, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, its Benefactors, Directors, Members, Staff and Students, let us pray to the Lord.

For the Cambridge Theological Federation and all its houses, the Staff and Students, and for the Universities of Cambridge, Durham and Anglia Ruskin, let us pray to the Lord.

For all students and teachers who are in need of God's help and assistance, for the illumination of their minds, for help with their studies, teaching or research, and for their peace, health and salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For all who suffer throughout the world because of conflict and war, because of sickness and poverty, natural disasters or accidents, because of discrimination, and especially for Christians who are persecuted for their faith throughout the world, for their help, deliverance, safety and salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For those who are homeless or without work, for those who are afflicted by loneliness, anxiety and depression, for their peace, health and salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

That this water might be sanctified by the power, operation, and descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

That there may descend upon this water the cleansing operation of the Trinity beyond being, let us pray to the Lord.

That this water may be to the healing of souls and bodies, and to the banishment of every hostile power, let us pray to the Lord.

That there may be sent down upon it the Grace of Redemption, the blessing of Jordan, let us pray to the Lord.

For all those who are in need of God's help and protection, let us pray to the Lord.

That God will enlighten us with the Light of understanding of the Consubstantial Trinity, let us pray to the Lord.

That the Lord our God will show us to be sons and daughters and heirs of His Kingdom through the partaking and sprinkling of this water, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and constraint, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your Grace.

Calling to mind our all-Holy, pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us entrust ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For to you we ascribe glory, honour, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Prayer for the sanctification of the water

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord have mercy.

Priest: O Lord our God, Who are mighty in counsel and wondrous in all your works, the Creator of all things. You, who keep your Covenant and your mercy upon all those who love you and keep your commandments; You, who receive the devout tears of all who are in distress; You, who for this reason came in the likeness of a servant, not despising our image but giving true health to the body and saying, "Behold! You are healed, sin no more." You are the one who, with clay, made whole the eyes of the blind man, and having commanded him to wash, made him - by your word - rejoice in the light. You are the one who stays the floods of conflicting passions and quell the bitter sea of this life, subduing the waves of sensual desires which are so difficult to endure.

Do you, Lord and King who loves mankind, who has granted to us (through Baptism) to clothe ourselves in a garment of light as white as snow, by water and by Spirit,

Send down on us the grace of your All-Holy and Life-Giving Spirit, who sanctifies all things, and sanctify this water! (x3)

(When saying this, the priest makes the sign of the cross in the water, with his right hand.)

And through the tasting and sprinkling of this water, send us your blessing that washes away the damage of passions.

Visit our weaknesses, we pray, O Good One, and heal our infirmities of spirit and of body through your mercy. Through the prayers of the

all-pure, exceedingly blessed Lady Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary. Through the intercessions of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the protection of the glorious bodiless Powers of the Heavens; through the intercessions of the glorious Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist; of the holy, glorious and all-praised Apostles; of the holy and God-bearing Fathers; of our Fathers among the saints, the great Hierarchs and Ecumenical Teachers: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom; of our Fathers among the Saints: Athanasios, Cyril, and John the Merciful, the Patriarchs of Alexandria; of Nicholas Bishop of Myra in Lycia; of Spyridon the Wonderworker; of the holy, glorious Martyrs, George the Victorious, Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer, Theodore of Tyron and Theodore the General, and of all the righteous Martyrs, of the holy wonderworking doctors Cosmas and Damian and of all holy physicians who required no payment; of Saint Catherine the Great Martyr, patron of the Institute, of Saint John the Evangelist, of St Peter, and of St Giles - patron of this church - of Saint Matthew the Apostle whose memory we keep today, of the holy and righteous forefathers Joachim and Anna, and of all Your Saints.

Preserve, O Lord, your people, this country and all our countries, this Theological Federation and all its member Houses. Be merciful to this Christian habitation which labours for you. Remember, O God, every priestly and monastic order and their salvation; remember, O God, both those that hate us and those that love us, the brethren who serve and pray with us; the people here present; and all those who for any worthy cause are not here but have asked us, unworthy though we are, to pray for them; remember, O God, our brethren and all those who are in captivity and affliction, [*all who suffer for the Christian faith and those who are afflicted by conflict, poverty and sickness*] and show mercy to them according to Your great Mercy, delivering them from every tribulation.

For you are the Spring of Healing, O Christ our God, and to you we ascribe glory, together with your Eternal Father and your All-Holy, Good, and Life-Giving Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

All: And to your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads to the Lord!

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest:

Bow down Your ear and listen to us, O Lord, You Who lowered yourself to be baptized in the river Jordan, and there sanctified the water. Bless us all who by the bowing of our heads show forth our love and that we are your servants. Grant that we may be filled with your sanctification through the partaking of this water, and let it be for us, O Lord, for the healing of soul and body.

For You are the sanctification of our souls and bodies, and to You we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Then the Priest, taking the Cross, dips it crosswise in the water three times, singing the Troparion:

Tone 1

O Lord, save your people, and bless your inheritance. Grant victories to the faithful over their enemies and by the power of Your Cross preserve your habitation. (x3)

Then the Priest sprinkles the congregation with Holy Water in the form of the Cross.

Reader: Make us worthy of your gifts, O Virgin Mother of God, overlooking our transgressions; give healing through faith to them that accept your blessing, O Immaculate One.

Concluding Litany

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great Mercy, we pray You: listen and have mercy.

All: Lord have mercy. (x3)

Priest: Again we pray for the Bishops of the Orthodox Episcopal Assembly for Great Britain and Ireland, and for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

All: Lord have mercy. (x3)

Again we pray for the Cambridge Theological Federation and all its houses, for their staff and students, for their peace, health and salvation.

All: Lord have mercy. (x3)

We pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and forgiveness of sins of the servants of God, all devout Christians who dwell in this city, and of the servants of God, the members, students, contributors, and benefactors of this Federation.

All: Lord have mercy. (x3)

We also pray that He will save this city and this country, and every city and countryside from pestilence, famine, earthquake, flood, fire, and the sword; from invasion of enemies, and from civil war; and that our good God, who loves mankind, will be graciously favourable and easy to be entreated with, and will turn away all wrath stirred up against us and deliver us from all his righteous chastisement which impends against us, and have mercy on us.

All: Lord have mercy. (x3)

Again we pray that the Lord our God listens to the voice of the supplication of us sinners, and has mercy on us.

All: Lord have mercy. (x3)

Priest: Hear us, O God our Saviour, the Hope of all the ends of the earth and of those far off at sea, or in the air. Show mercy, show mercy upon our sins, O Master, and have mercy on us. For you are a merciful God who loves mankind, and to you we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Prayer for students

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord have mercy.

Priest: O Lord, our God and Creator, who have made us in your own image and who has taught those who love you that the fear of you is the beginning of true wisdom; you who revealed your wisdom to children

and taught your law to Solomon and to all those who have sought you in purity of heart, open the hearts, minds, and lips of the students who study in the Federation, that they may perceive the power of your law in our Lord Jesus Christ, and to comprehend the things which will be taught them. Help them, Master, to understand your perfect will and contribute to the building up of your Holy Church. Deliver them from every snare of the enemy, preserve them in your love, in righteousness and purity all the days of their lives that they may grow in both knowledge and wisdom as they observe your commandments, and may be revealed as worshipers of your name and heirs of your Kingdom. Bless also their teachers, O Lord; grant that their words may be free from the vanity and deceit of the world, and rooted in the word of your truth.

For you, our God, are the Fountain of Wisdom – the one who knows and searches minds and hearts – and to you we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to ages of ages. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Priest: Glory to you, O Christ our God our sure Hope, glory to you.

Reader: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Father, give the blessing!

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure Mother; of the holy, glorious, and all-praised Apostles; of the holy, glorious, and right-victorious Martyrs; of our holy and God-bearing Fathers; of Saint John the Evangelist, St Peter, and St Giles - patron of this church – of Saint Matthew the Apostle, whose memory we keep today, of the holy and righteous forefathers Joachim and Anna and of all his Saints, have mercy on us and save us, since He is good and loves mankind.

All: Amen.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

All: Amen.



Saint Catherine, Patron of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies

English translation of the text of the service from:
http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/lesser_water (with adaptations)

Cover image: Icon of the Healing of the Paralytic (public domain)
Scripture readings NRSV translation

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