

# Liturgical Resources



# Liturgical Resources for Episcopal Ministries Sunday

## May 18, 2025

### **Proper Preface**

It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

For through your Son Jesus Christ, who taught us to keep your commandments and abide in your love, you have made our joy complete. Through him, you have chosen us as beloved children, empowered us to bear good fruit, and strengthened us for love and service in your name. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, as we sing...

From *Proper Prefaces and Offertory Sentences for Sundays, Years A, B, and C*; Steve Lipscomb; St. Mark's Press

### **Prayers of the People**

*The Right Reverend GERALYN WOLF*

The Paschal Flame burns in the heart of the Church, and bids us to offer our prayers and thanksgivings in the joy of Christ's resurrection, as we respond to each petition by saying, Hear us O Risen Christ.

+ In thanksgiving for the continued joy of this Easter Season, may it inspire us to carry the light of hope in the face of uncertainty and discord that covers our present age; let us pray.

+ That through Jesus' sacrificial love for us, we may be signs of his embrace to all people everywhere, and call into his fold all who seek to share in his life and witness; let us pray.

+ For the leaders of the nations of the world, that they may realize the folly of power, prestige, and financial gain and work for the fruits of peace that will bring freedom, education, opportunity, and security to all inhabitants of the earth, our island home; let us pray.

+ In thanksgiving for Episcopal Ministries of Long Island, whom we remember today, and all who give of their time, treasure and talent, to bring the basic necessities of life and spiritual friendship to thousands of people throughout our counties and boroughs; let us pray.



+ For the forgiveness of our sins, when out of fear and anxiety, anger and despair, we have failed to love others as God loves us, may we ever-strive to live into the greatest commandment as the focus of our lives; let us pray.

+ For those who have died, (especially-----), may they dwell in paradise with all the saints, in whose company we may one day reside; let us pray.

+ In thanksgiving for the gift of baptism, by which we have been knit together as a community of faith, and given the waters of hope to refresh the world; let us pray.

God's generosity surpasses our understanding, and in gratitude, we continue our prayers either silently or aloud.

*(The Celebrant adds a concluding collect)*

## **Collect for Episcopal Ministries Long Island Sunday**

*The Reverend Canon John Denaro*

God of abundance, the source of all that is good: You reveal your great love for the world in Jesus and call us into community. You nourish us with the Bread of Life and teach us to share our daily bread. Enlighten us with vision to see that we possess all we need to meet the needs of your people. Empower us by your Spirit to engage in acts of loving service to feed the hungry and heal the brokenhearted. With thankful hearts for all you entrust to us, we pray that our work may bring hope to many and usher in your Reign of justice; in your most Holy name. Amen.

## **Sermon Support**

*The Reverend Jesse Lebus*

### **Sermon Prompt: "Who Are We to Hinder God?"**

**Scripture:** Acts 11:1–18

**Theme:** Breaking boundaries, making room for the Spirit Purpose: Inspire support for EMLI's parish-based ministries—materially and spiritually

**Key Idea:** Peter's vision in Acts 11 is about far more than food—it's about who belongs, who deserves care, and how the Church responds when God acts in unexpected places. When Peter is

criticized for sharing a meal with outsiders, he explains how the Spirit led him—and then asks the pivotal question: “Who was I that I could hinder God?”

**Connection to EMLI:** This is the very work that Episcopal Ministries of Long Island supports. Across Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk, EMLI helps local parishes set aside barriers of “deserving” and “undeserving” and meet people exactly where they are—with food, legal support, child care, afterschool programs, and more.

These are not acts of mere charity; they are signs of a Spirit-led Church that refuses to hinder the work of God. When a church installs a refrigerator to receive donated produce, or when a garden blooms and feeds neighbors, the lines between “them” and “us” begin to fade. It becomes clear: God is already there. And the question becomes, will we join in?

**Sermon Angle:**

- Emphasize how the early Church learned to let go of rigid boundaries to follow the Spirit’s lead.
- Highlight the mutual transformation that occurs when we serve—not as saviors, but as fellow human beings.
- Challenge the congregation to see their giving not just as support, but as participation in this Spirit-led movement.
- Invite listeners to ask: What might it look like for me to stop hindering God—and start helping build God’s Kingdom, right here on Long Island?

**Direct Appeal or Call to Action:** Today, we are invited to support this work—not just with our prayers, but with our resources. A gift to EMLI helps ensure that a neighbor has fresh food, a child has a safe place to learn, and an immigrant family receives welcome and guidance. When we give, we say: You belong. We belong to each other. And God is here among us.

**Sermon Prompt: “God Dwells With Us”**

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:1–6

**Theme:** New creation, radical hope, and the home of God among mortals  
**Purpose:** To invite support for EMLI’s life-giving, Spirit-led ministries across Long Island

**Key Idea:** Revelation 21 is not only a vision of heaven someday—it is a call to participate in God’s renewal now. “See,” the voice declares, “the home of God is among mortals.” Not above them. Not removed from them. Among them. This is a bold, cosmic promise: that God chooses to dwell with us—in our neighborhoods, our griefs, our hunger, and our hope.

**Connection to EMLI:** This is the very heart of Episcopal Ministries of Long Island. In food pantries, gardens, tutoring programs, and immigrant support services, we catch a glimpse of this “new Jerusalem”—a community where mourning and pain are met with compassion, where dignity is restored, and where no one is left behind. These are ministries not of distant charity, but of presence. God’s presence—among mortals.

When a parish sets a table for the hungry, God is there. When a family finds support, safety, and welcome, God is there. This is not just about aid—it’s about revealing what is eternally true: “I am making all things new.”

**Sermon Angle:**

- Preach this passage not as fantasy, but as a theological reality breaking into the present.
- Help the congregation see EMLI ministries as signs of God's promise: tears being wiped, hope being planted, newness rising in old places.
- Invite listeners to believe that resurrection is not behind us, but ahead of us—and among us.

**Direct Appeal or Call to Action:** When you support Episcopal Ministries, you become a co-creator with God. You help bring about that holy vision—where no one goes thirsty, no one goes hungry, and all are welcomed into the radiant city of God. Your gift today isn’t just a donation. It is hope made visible. It is a declaration of faith: that God dwells here, and that all things can be made new.

**Sermon Prompt: “Love One Another”**

**Scripture:** John 13:31–35

**Theme:** Love as the mark of discipleship Purpose: To inspire giving in support of EMLI’s ministries of presence, compassion, and community

**Key Idea:** On the night before his death, Jesus distills his mission into one final command: “Love one another.” Not as a feeling or philosophy, but as a lived reality—“Just as I have loved you.” This is not abstract. Jesus has just knelt to wash his friends’ feet. He’s about to give himself fully, even to those who betray and abandon him. His glory is not in power, but in service.

This is how people will know who we are—not by our creeds or buildings, but by our love.

**Connection to EMLI:** Episcopal Ministries of Long Island helps parishes embody this love in tangible, Spirit-filled ways. A bag of groceries. A garden bed tilled and shared. A child welcomed



into a safe, nurturing space. A neighbor who doesn't speak the language, finding dignity, legal guidance, and care.

These ministries are how the Church is recognized—not by size, but by love. Not by doctrine alone, but by dinner tables, diapers, and deep listening. Love like this doesn't always look grand—but it always looks like Jesus.

**Sermon Angle:**

- Reflect on the setting: Jesus offers this commandment at the very moment betrayal is in the air. Real love is vulnerable, messy, and costly.
- Challenge the congregation to ask: Would someone know we are disciples by how we love—especially the hungry, the immigrant, the overlooked?
- Lift up the work of EMLI as a collective response to Jesus' commandment. It's how our parishes "wash feet" every day.

**Direct Appeal or Call to Action:** Today, we are invited to respond to this commandment—not only with our hearts, but with our hands and resources. Your gift to Episcopal Ministries becomes an act of love. It helps love take root in a concrete way—in food shared, relationships built, tears honored, and hope restored. When we love like this, everyone will know who we follow