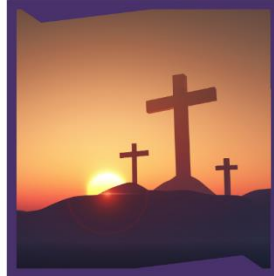


Catholic Parish of St Edward the Confessor, Romford



## ***Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday***

***The dramatic, radiant, poignant and eternal  
culmination of the Lenten love story 2024***

**Orders of Service and Readings  
for the great liturgies of Holy Week**

Please feel welcome to take a copy of this booklet for anyone who you know is watching and praying from home via Livestream, or for your personal prayer and reflection during Holy Week.

Otherwise, please leave this booklet at the back of the church after Mass.

# Welcome

**If you are visiting the parish for the first time this Holy Week, or if you are returning after a while, you are very, very welcome here.**

This booklet will guide you with the readings for the key Masses and Services of Holy Week. For most, there will also be an additional music sheet, and we warmly encourage you to join with the musicians and singers leading the music.

If you are new to the parish, you will find lots of information on the parish website, [www.stedwards-romford.org.uk](http://www.stedwards-romford.org.uk)

You are also warmly welcome to get in touch at any time – speak to Fr Dominic, or to Julia, our Administrator, by phoning 01708 740308 or emailing [romford@brcdt.org](mailto:romford@brcdt.org)

Everyone is welcome here. Holy Week most especially shows us the radical love of Jesus Christ; love that embraces the world, love that heals broken hearts and shattered lives; love that reaches to the edges; love full of compassion, tenderness and hope.

We pray this is the love modelled here, in our little corner of Romford. If there is anything you would like to see added to parish life, anything we can improve, or any skills you would like to use within the parish, please get in touch.

**With many blessings for Holy Week and Easter**

Fr Dominic

# Holy Week Masses and Liturgies

## **Palm Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> March**

Masses: Saturday 6.30pm  
Sunday 9.30am\* and 11.30am

## **Holy Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> March**

7.00pm\* Mass of the Lord's Supper  
*The church remains open for private prayer until 10.00pm*

## **Good Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> March**

10.00am Children's service for Good Friday (there is a separate booklet for this service, which will be given on the day)  
11.00am Prayer with town centre churches in the Market Place  
3.00pm\* Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
7pm – 8pm Church open for private prayer by the cross

## **Easter Vigil, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March**

11.30am Traditional blessing of Polish Easter baskets  
7.30pm Mass (this Mass is full of light and radiance, including the joy of welcoming seven adults as members of the Catholic Church. Please note this is a longer Mass, finishing around 10pm)

## **Easter Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> March**

Masses: 8am A quiet dawn Mass  
9.30am\* Music animated by the Youth Band and Choir  
11.30am Music animated by the Choir

\* These Masses and Services will be on the parish **Livestream**, which you can access via the parish website: [www.stedwards-romford.org.uk/livestream](http://www.stedwards-romford.org.uk/livestream) or directly at <https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/st-edward>. For those who are unable to be present, or watch live, the Holy Week liturgies remain on the Livestream to watch and pray later in the day.

## Holy Week and Easter 2024

### *The dramatic, radiant poignant and eternal culmination of the Lenten love story*

The story of Lent 2024 began on Valentine's Day, and there is a sense in which this love story never ends, for it leads to eternal Resurrection. Yet, of course, there is a definitive aspect to Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter celebrations. We make present those events which happened once and for all in first century Palestine. We journey from "Hosanna" at the gates of Jerusalem, to "Crucify him" in the city centre, to the hill outside the city where the crucifixion happens, and to the garden of Resurrection. We journey as disciples, at times as bewildered, shocked and sad as they were, even when we know the story does not end with the bloodied wood of the empty cross.

The chapter of the love story that is Holy Week includes Love that washes our feet, and anoints our hearts and souls; Love that goes to the cross for us, in suffering and death; Love that destroys death for ever. Our world is torn apart by anger, division and bitterness. Love offers a fresh pathway, speaking words of forgiveness, peace and hope from the very cross on which He is crucified.

How can we best enter into Holy Week? **Be there!** For children, there is a special service on Good Friday morning – best suited to those aged about 4-10 years old. For everyone, the Masses and Services of Holy Week are the most dramatic of the Church year. The signs and symbols in each liturgy illuminate what is happening: the washing of feet on Holy Thursday, followed by the radical emptiness of the church as we move into Good Friday; the one time in the year when the tabernacle is empty, as we venerate the cross. Then dramatic contrasts in the Easter Vigil; a fire lit, a lone candle piercing the darkness, swiftly joined by the lights of hundreds.

Please do all that you can to come – or, if you cannot be here in person, follow on the Livestream. There really is no other week like it. Come on the journey from Palm Sunday throughout Holy Week to Easter – it is a journey from despair to hope; from fear to radiant joy. Above all it is a journey of pure love that never ends. As Jesus himself says, "Come and see!" *Fr Dominic*

# Palm Sunday

*We begin Mass with the **blessing of palms**.*

*Depending on the weather, this will either be outside the church, on the new piazza, or in the Walsingham Hall in the new parish centre;*

## Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem

**Gospel**

**John 12:12-16**

### **Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord.**

A great crowd who had come to the feast  
heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

So they took branches of palm trees  
and went out to meet him, crying,  
'Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,  
even the king of Israel!'

And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as is written,  
'Fear not, daughter of Sion;  
behold, your king is coming,  
sitting on an ass's colt!'

His disciples did not understand this at first;  
but when Jesus was glorified,  
then they remembered that this had been written of him  
and had been done to him.

*As we process into church please use all the doors. We commemorate the first Palm Sunday, waving the palms and joining in song with the musicians*

## THE MASS

### Opening Prayer

### Gospel Acclamation

**Phil 2:8-9**

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!  
Christ was humbler yet,  
even to accepting death, death on a cross.  
But God raised him high  
and gave him the name which is above all names.  
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

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**Mark 15:1-39**

### The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

*Key: N. Narrator. ✠ Jesus. O. Other single speaker. C. Crowd – please join in*

**N.** First thing in the morning, the chief priests together with the elders and scribes – in short, the whole Sanhedrin – had their plan ready. They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him:

**O.** Are you the king of the Jews?

✠ It is you who say it.

**N.** And the chief priests brought many accusations against him. Pilate questioned him again:

**O.** Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!

**N.** But, to Pilate's amazement, Jesus made no further reply.

At festival time Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, anyone they asked for. Now a man called Barabbas was then in prison with the rioters who had committed murder during the uprising. When the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour, Pilate answered them

**O.** Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?

**N.** For he realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over. The chief priests, however, had incited the crowd to demand that he should release Barabbas for them instead. Then Pilate spoke again:

**O.** But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?

**N.** They shouted back,

**C. Crucify him!**

**O.** Why? What harm has he done?

**N.** But they shouted all the louder,

**C. Crucify him!**

**N.** So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, having ordered Jesus to be scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him,

**C. Hail, king of the Jews!**

**N.** They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes.

They enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull.

They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription giving the charge against him read: 'The King of the Jews.' And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said,

**C. Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself: come down from the cross!**

**N.** The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. They said,

**C. He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.**

**N.** Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.

When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

✠ Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

**N.** which means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood by heard this, they said

**C. Listen, he is calling on Elijah.**

**N.** Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink, saying:

**O.** Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.

**N.** But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

***In silence, we kneel and pause for a moment. This is the time of Jesus' death.***

And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died, and he said,

**O.** In truth this man was a son of God.

**We pause for a time of reflection on all that we have heard.**

**Then the Mass continues in the usual way.**

**Please continue to join with the music; the tone of the Mass changes now – from the joyful waving of Palms, we are now preparing ourselves for the events we have just read about. The music feels more sombre. We leave the church mindful of the week ahead of us.**

**You are very welcome to take this booklet home with you, to follow and to pray with the Holy week readings. Please bring it with you to the Mass on Holy Thursday, and the service on Good Friday, as well as to Easter weekend Masses.**



# Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord’s Supper

*For the hymns during this Mass, please see separate sheet. We thank singers from within the parish for leading hymns this evening – please join with them*

We process in with the **Oil for Anointing the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the Oil of Chrism**, all blessed by the Bishop at the Mass of Chrism, which was celebrated yesterday morning at Brentwood Cathedral.

## Penitential Rite

## Gloria

*For the first time since the beginning of Lent, the Gloria is prayed – in song! Please join with the choir, using the hymn sheet.*

## Opening Prayer

## First reading

**Exodus 12:1-8,11-14**

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:

‘This month is to be the first of all the others for you, the first month of your year. Speak to the whole community of Israel and say, “On the tenth day of this month each man must take an animal from the flock, one for each family: one animal for each household. If the household is too small to eat the animal, a man must join with his neighbour, the nearest to his house, as the number of persons requires. You must take into account what each can eat in deciding the number for the animal. It must be an animal without blemish, a male one year old; you may take it from either sheep or goats. You must keep it till the fourteenth day of the month when the whole assembly of the community of Israel shall slaughter it between the two evenings. Some of the blood must then be taken and put on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses where it is eaten. That night, the flesh is to be eaten, roasted over the fire; it must be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. You shall eat it like this: with a girdle round your waist, sandals on your feet, a staff in your hand. You shall eat it hastily: it is a passover in honour of the Lord. That night, I will go through

the land of Egypt and strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, man and beast alike, and I shall deal out punishment to all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord! The blood shall serve to mark the houses that you live in. When I see the blood I will pass over you and you shall escape the destroying plague when I strike the land of Egypt. This day is to be a day of remembrance for you, and you must celebrate it as a feast in the Lord's honour. For all generations you are to declare it a day of festival, for ever."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 115(116):12-13,15-18**

*The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ.*

How can I repay the Lord  
for his goodness to me?

The cup of salvation I will raise;  
I will call on the Lord's name.

*The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ.*

O precious in the eyes of the Lord  
is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;  
you have loosened my bonds.

*The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ.*

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make;  
I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil  
before all his people.

*The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ.*

## Second reading

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

### **Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the death of the Lord**

This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.' In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.' Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Acclamation**

**Jn13:34**

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!  
I give you a new commandment:  
love one another just as I have loved you,  
says the Lord.  
Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!

## **Gospel, including The Washing of the Feet.**

**John 13:1-15**

It was before the festival of the Passover, and Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father. He had always loved those who were his in the world, but now he showed how perfect his love was.

They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot son of Simon, to betray him. Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garment and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.' 'Never!' said Peter 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have nothing in common with me.' 'Then, Lord,' said Simon Peter 'not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!' Jesus said, 'No one who has taken a bath needs washing, he is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.' He knew who was going to betray him, that was why he said, 'though not all of you are.'

When he had washed their feet and put on his clothes again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand' he said 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Homily**

### **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

**The Offertory**

**The Communion Rite**

### **Act of Spiritual Communion**

*For those watching and praying at home*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

## **Prayer after Communion**

*The Blessed Sacrament is processed through the church to the Altar of Repose, in the side chapel, as a focus for Adoration and prayer. This reminds us that this is the night where Jesus, after celebrating the first Eucharist with his disciples, now sweats blood in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemene, is arrested late into the night, and awaits trial and crucifixion the following day. It is a sacred and solemn moment.*

*During the procession we will sing the “Pange Lingua Gloriosi” (“Of the glorious Body telling”), which you will find on your sheets. We pause before the last two verses, to place the Eucharist on the altar of repose. After singing the last two verses (beginning “Tantum ergo”) you are invited to leave the church in silence, or to remain in quiet prayer. The church remains open until 10.00pm.*

*The altar is stripped of all decoration, as we enter solemnly into Good Friday.*

# Good Friday - Celebration of the Passion of Our Lord

*For those watching and praying from home, please have a crucifix near to the screen where you are watching, as a focus for prayer when the crucifix in church is being venerated.*

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*Fr Dominic processes in silence from the back of the church, and you are asked to stand, if possible. In silence, Fr Dominic prostrates himself before the altar, in a moment of solemn prayer; please kneel, and then stand when Fr Dominic stands. Please remain standing for the Opening Prayer, and the Gospel – if you are able. Please also feel welcome to sit, if that is more comfortable.*

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## Gospel Acclamation

**Phil2:8-9**

Glory and praise to you, O Christ!  
Christ was humbler yet,  
even to accepting death, death on a cross.  
But God raised him high  
and gave him the name which is above all names.  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

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Fr Dominic: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**John 18:1-19:42**

*Key: N. Narrator. ✠ Jesus. O. Other single speaker. C. Crowd – please join in*

**N.** Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kedron valley. There was a garden there, and he went into it with his disciples. Judas the traitor knew the place well, since Jesus had often met his disciples there, and he brought the cohort to this place together with a detachment of guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. Knowing everything that was going to happen to him, Jesus then came forward and said,  
**✠** Who are you looking for?

**C. Jesus the Nazarene.**

✠ I am he.

**N.** Now Judas the traitor was standing among them. When Jesus said, 'I am he', they moved back and fell to the ground. He asked them a second time,

✠ Who are you looking for?

**C. Jesus the Nazarene.**

✠ I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.

**N.** This was to fulfil the words he had spoken, 'Not one of those you gave me have I lost.'

Simon Peter, who carried a sword, drew it and wounded the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter,

✠ Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?

**N.** The cohort and its captain and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him. They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had suggested to the Jews, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.'

Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who was keeping the door and brought Peter in. The maid on duty at the door said to Peter,

**O.** Aren't you another of that man's disciples?

**N.** He answered,

**O.** I am not.

**N.** Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

✠ I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together: I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught: they know what I said.

**N.** At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying,

**O.** Is that the way to answer the high priest?

✠ If there is something wrong in what I said, point it out; but if there is no offence in it, why do you strike me?

**N.** Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said to him,

**O.** Aren't you another of his disciples?

**N.** He denied it, saying,

**O.** I am not.

**N.** One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said,

**O.** Didn't I see you in the garden with him?

**N.** Again Peter denied it; and at once a cock crew.

They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves or they would be defiled and unable to eat the passover. So Pilate came outside to them and said,

**O.** What charge do you bring against this man?

**C.** If he were not a criminal, we should not be handing him over to you.

**N.** Pilate said,

**O.** Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.

**N.** The Jews answered,

**C.** We are not allowed to put a man to death.

**N.** This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating the way he was going to die.

So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him, and asked,

**O.** Are you the king of the Jews?

✠ Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?

**O.** Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?

✠ Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.

**O.** So you are a king, then?

✠ It is you who say it. Yes, I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.

**O.** Truth? What is that?

**N.** and with that he went out again to the Jews and said,



**O.** I find no case against him. But according to a custom of yours I should release one prisoner at the Passover; would you like me, then, to release the king of the Jews?

**N.** At this they shouted:

**C. Not this man, but Barabbas.**

**N.** Barabbas was a brigand.

Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged; and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him and saying,

**C. Hail, king of the Jews!**

**N.** and they slapped him in the face.

Pilate came outside again and said to them,

**O.** Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see that I find no case.

**N.** Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.

Pilate said,

**O.** Here is the man.

**N.** When they saw him the chief priests and the guards shouted,

**C. Crucify him! Crucify him!**

**O.** Take him yourselves and crucify him: I can find no case against him.

**N.** The Jews replied,

**C.** We have a Law, and according to that Law he ought to die, because he has claimed to be the Son of God.

**N.** When Pilate heard them say this his fears increased. Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus

**O.** Where do you come from?

**N.** But Jesus made no answer. Pilate then said to him,

**O.** Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?

✠ You would have no power over me if it had not been given you from above; that is why the one who handed me over to you has the greater guilt.

**N.** From that moment Pilate was anxious to set him free, but the Jews shouted,

**C. If you set him free you are no friend of Caesar's; anyone who makes himself king is defying Caesar.**

**N.** Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and seated himself on the chair of judgement at a place called the Pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha. It was Passover Preparation Day, about the sixth hour. Pilate said to the Jews,

**O.** Here is your king.

**C. Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!**

**O.** Do you want me to crucify your king?

**N.** The chief priests answered,

**C. We have no king except Caesar.**

**N.** So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

They then took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull or, as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle. Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross; it ran: 'Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews.' This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. So the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate,

**C. You should not write 'King of the Jews,' but 'This man said: "I am King of the Jews."'**

**N.** Pilate answered,

**O.** What I have written, I have written.

**N.** When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one another,

**C. Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.**

**N.** In this way the words of scripture were fulfilled:

They shared out my clothing among them. They cast lots for my clothes.

This is exactly what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother,

✠ Woman, this is your son.

**N.** Then to the disciple he said,

✠ This is your mother.

**N.** And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.

After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said:

✠ I am thirsty.

**N.** A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in the vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said,

✠ It is accomplished;

**N.** and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

***We all bow our heads, and pause for a moment in prayer.***

It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the sabbath – since that sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of one who saw it – trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and he gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture:

Not one bone of his will be broken;

and again, in another place scripture says:

They will look on the one whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of Jesus – though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews – asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it away. Nicodemus came as well – the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time – and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, following the Jewish burial custom. At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried. Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was near at hand, they laid Jesus there.

**Homily**

## The Solemn Intercessions

### For Holy Church

Let us pray, dearly beloved, for the holy Church of God, that our God and Lord be pleased to give her peace, to guard her and to unite her throughout the whole world and grant that, leading our life in tranquillity and quiet, we may glorify God the Father almighty.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
who in Christ revealed your glory to all the nations,  
watch over the works of your mercy,  
that your Church, spread throughout all the world,  
may persevere with steadfast faith in confessing your name.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### For the Pope

Let us pray also for our most Holy Father Pope Francis, that our God and Lord, who chose him for the Order of Bishops, may keep him safe and unharmed for the Lord's holy Church, to govern the holy People of God.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
by whose decree all things are founded,  
look with favour on our prayers  
and in your kindness protect the Pope chosen for us,  
that, under him, the Christian people,  
governed by you their maker,  
may grow in merit by reason of their faith.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**For all orders and degrees of the faithful**

Let us pray also for our Bishop Alan,  
for all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the Church  
and for the whole of the faithful people.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church  
is sanctified and governed,  
hear our humble prayer for your ministers,  
that, by the gift of your grace,  
all may serve you faithfully.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**For catechumens** (*those preparing to be received into the Church*)

Let us pray also for catechumens,  
that our God and Lord  
may open wide the ears of their inmost hearts  
and unlock the gates of his mercy,  
that, having received forgiveness of all their sins  
through the waters of rebirth,  
they, too, may be one with Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
who make your Church ever fruitful with new offspring,  
increase the faith and understanding of catechumens,  
that, reborn in the font of Baptism,  
they may be added to the number of your adopted children.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **For the unity of Christians**

Let us pray also for all our brothers and sisters who believe in Christ,  
that our God and Lord may be pleased,  
as they live the truth,  
to gather them together and keep them in his one Church.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
who gather what is scattered  
and keep together what you have gathered,  
look kindly on the flock of your Son,  
that those whom one Baptism has consecrated  
may be joined together by integrity of faith  
and united in the bond of charity.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **For the Jewish people**

Let us pray also for the Jewish people,  
to whom the Lord our God spoke first,  
that he may grant them to advance in love of his name  
and in faithfulness to his covenant.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his descendants,  
graciously hear the prayers of your Church,  
that the people you first made your own  
may attain the fullness of redemption.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**For those who do not believe in Christ**

Let us pray also for those who do not believe in Christ,  
that, enlightened by the Holy Spirit,  
they, too, may enter on the way of salvation.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
grant to those who do not confess Christ  
that, by walking before you with a sincere heart,  
they may find the truth  
and that we ourselves, being constant in mutual love  
and striving to understand more fully the mystery of your life,  
may be made more perfect witnesses to your love in the world.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**For those who do not believe in God**

Let us pray also for those who do not acknowledge God,  
that, following what is right in sincerity of heart,  
they may find the way to God himself.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
who created all people  
to seek you always by desiring you  
and, by finding you, come to rest,  
grant, we pray,  
that, despite every harmful obstacle,  
all may recognize the signs of your fatherly love  
and the witness of the good works  
done by those who believe in you,  
and so in gladness confess you,  
the one true God and Father of our human race.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **For those in public office**

Let us pray also for those in public office,  
that our God and Lord  
may direct their minds and hearts according to his will  
for the true peace and freedom of all.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
in whose hand lies every human heart  
and the rights of peoples,  
look with favour, we pray,  
on those who govern with authority over us,  
that throughout the whole world,  
the prosperity of peoples,  
the assurance of peace,  
and freedom of religion  
may through your gift be made secure.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **For the afflicted in time of war**

Let us pray also for all those who suffer the consequences of war,  
that God the Father may grant health to the sick, strength to those  
who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who  
have died.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God, only support of our human weakness,  
look with compassion upon the sorrowful condition of your children  
who suffer because of war and pandemic;  
relieve the pain of the sick, give strength to those who care for them,  
welcome into your peace those who have died  
and, throughout this time of tribulation,  
grant that we may all find comfort in your merciful love.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



### **For those in tribulation**

Let us pray, dearly beloved,  
to God the Father almighty,  
that he may cleanse the world of all errors,  
banish disease, drive out hunger,  
unlock prisons, loosen fetters,  
granting to travellers safety, to pilgrims return,  
health to the sick, and salvation to the dying.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty ever-living God,  
comfort of mourners, strength of all who toil,  
may the prayers of those who cry out in any tribulation  
come before you,  
that all may rejoice,  
because in their hour of need  
your mercy was at hand.

**Amen.**

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## **The Adoration of the Holy Cross**

### **The Showing of the Holy Cross**

Behold the wood of the Cross,  
on which hung the salvation of the world.

**Come, let us adore.**

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### **The Adoration of the Holy Cross**

*You are invited to come forward and venerate the cross with a bow, or by touching the feet of the cross, or by kissing the feet of the figure of Jesus.*

*For those watching and praying at home, this is a moment to hold and to venerate the crucifix that you have in front of you, where this is possible.*

*We will be led in simple music by the choir – please join with this, using the sheets given for this service.*

*During the time of veneration, this reading – usually read at the beginning of the Good Friday service – could also be a focus for your prayer and reflection:*

**Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

See, my servant will prosper,  
he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights.

As the crowds were appalled on seeing him  
– so disfigured did he look  
that he seemed no longer human –  
so will the crowds be astonished at him,  
and kings stand speechless before him;  
for they shall see something never told  
and witness something never heard before:  
'Who could believe what we have heard,  
and to whom has the power of the Lord been revealed?'

Like a sapling he grew up in front of us, like a root in arid ground.  
Without beauty, without majesty we saw him,  
no looks to attract our eyes;  
a thing despised and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering,  
a man to make people screen their faces;  
he was despised and we took no account of him.

And yet ours were the sufferings he bore,  
ours the sorrows he carried.  
But we, we thought of him as someone punished,  
struck by God, and brought low.  
Yet he was pierced through for our faults,  
crushed for our sins.

On him lies a punishment that brings us peace,  
and through his wounds we are healed.

We had all gone astray like sheep,  
each taking his own way,  
and the Lord burdened him  
with the sins of all of us.  
Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly,  
he never opened his mouth,  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-house,

like a sheep that is dumb before its shearers  
never opening its mouth.

By force and by law he was taken;  
would anyone plead his cause?

Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living;  
for our faults struck down in death.

They gave him a grave with the wicked,  
a tomb with the rich,  
though he had done no wrong  
and there had been no perjury in his mouth.

The Lord has been pleased to crush him with suffering.  
If he offers his life in atonement,  
he shall see his heirs, he shall have a long life  
and through him what the Lord wishes will be done.

His soul's anguish over  
he shall see the light and be content.

By his sufferings shall my servant justify many,  
taking their faults on himself.

Hence I will grant whole hordes for his tribute,  
he shall divide the spoil with the mighty,  
for surrendering himself to death  
and letting himself be taken for a sinner,  
while he was bearing the faults of many  
and praying all the time for sinners.

*At the end of the time of veneration, Fr Dominic will bring the Blessed Sacrament to the altar, for the distribution of Holy Communion. Please kneel. We pray the **Our Father** together and then Fr Dominic prays:*

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

## **Act of Spiritual Communion**

*For those watching and praying at home*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

## **Prayer after Communion**

### **Dismissal**

*Today as we leave the church, we genuflect to the cross. We leave as solemnly and silently as possible – please be guided by the Stewards.*

*On your way from church there will be a special collection for the **Holy Places in Palestine** – for the upkeep of the places where Jesus lived and taught, the places familiar to us from the pages of the Bible.*

*With the horrors of such a destructive and bloody war in Gaza, following the hostage taking and killing by Hamas in Israel last October, we pray fervently for a ceasefire, for justice and for peace. In the heat of such desolate conflict, it can be very difficult for those trying to look after the Holy Places, especially in Palestine, where Bethlehem is located. Thank you for anything that you can give.*

# The Easter Vigil

*Weather permitting, we gather outside the church where a fire is lit; the Paschal Candle is then blessed, and lit from the fire. This is a sign of Resurrection – Jesus, the Light of the World, overcomes the darkness of death, and the anguish of suffering. We pray that this light illuminates the world – a light of love and hope*

*Fr Dominic proclaims, “**Lumen Christi**” (The Light of Christ)  
Everyone replies, “**Deo Gratias**” (Thanks be to God)*

*Once we have entered the church, the light spreads as our individual candles are lit; please follow the guidance of the altar servers and stewards.*

## The Easter Proclamation (Exsultet)

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,  
exult, let Angel ministers of God exult,  
let the trumpet of salvation  
sound aloud our mighty King’s triumph!  
Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her,  
ablaze with light from her eternal King,  
let all corners of the earth be glad,  
knowing an end to gloom and darkness.  
Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,  
arrayed with the lightning of his glory,  
let this holy building shake with joy,  
filled with the mighty voices of the peoples.

It is truly right and just,  
with ardent love of mind and heart  
and with devoted service of our voice,  
to acclaim our God invisible, the almighty Father,  
and Jesus Christ, our Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam’s debt to the eternal Father,  
and, pouring out his own dear Blood,  
wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness.

These, then, are the feasts of Passover,  
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb,  
whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night,  
when once you led our forebears, Israel's children,  
from slavery in Egypt  
and made them pass dry-shod through the Red Sea.

This is the night  
that with a pillar of fire  
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night  
that even now, throughout the world,  
sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices  
and from the gloom of sin,  
leading them to grace  
and joining them to his holy ones.

This is the night,  
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death  
and rose victorious from the underworld.

Our birth would have been no gain,  
had we not been redeemed.

O wonder of your humble care for us!  
O love, O charity beyond all telling,  
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

O truly necessary sin of Adam,  
destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault  
that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!

The sanctifying power of this night  
dispels wickedness, washes faults away,  
restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners.

O truly blessed night,  
when things of heaven are wed to those of earth,  
and divine to the human.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,  
accept this candle, a solemn offering,  
the work of bees and of your servants' hands,  
an evening sacrifice of praise,  
this gift from your most holy Church.

Therefore, O Lord,  
we pray you that this candle,  
hallowed to the honour of your name,  
may persevere undimmed,  
to overcome the darkness of this night.  
Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,  
and let it mingle with the lights of heaven.  
May this flame be found still burning  
by the Morning Star:  
the one Morning Star who never sets,  
Christ your Son,  
who, coming back from death's domain,  
has shed his peaceful light on humanity,  
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Dear brothers and sisters,  
now that we have begun our solemn Vigil,  
let us listen with quiet hearts to the Word of God.  
Let us meditate on how God in times past saved his people  
and in these, the last days, has sent us his Son as our Redeemer.  
Let us pray that our God may complete this paschal work of salvation  
by the fullness of redemption.

## First reading

Genesis 1:1-2:2

### God saw all that he had made, and indeed it was very good

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water.

God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night.' Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven.' Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself,  
in the image of God he created him,  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.



Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*We pause for a short time of silent reflection on what we have heard*

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**Psalm:** *Please see the hymn sheets for the Psalm response, and follow the lead of the choir.*

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Let us pray.

Almighty ever-living God,  
who are wonderful in the ordering of all your works,  
may those you have redeemed understand  
that there exists nothing more marvellous  
than the world's creation in the beginning  
except that, at the end of the ages,  
Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

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**Second Reading**

**Genesis 22:1-18**

### **The sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith**

God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham' he called. 'Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

Rising early next morning Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He chopped wood for the burnt offering and started on his journey to the place God had pointed out to him. On the third

day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. Then Abraham said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there; we will worship and come back to you.'

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, loaded it on Isaac, and carried in his own hands the fire and the knife. Then the two of them set out together. Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, 'Father' he said. 'Yes, my son' he replied. 'Look,' he said 'here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham answered, 'My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.' Then the two of them went on together.

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt-offering in place of his son.

Abraham called this place 'The Lord Provides', and hence the saying today:  
*On the mountain the Lord provides.*

The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self – it is the Lord who speaks – because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of their enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*We pause for a short time of silent reflection on what we have heard*

---

**Psalm:** *Please see the hymn sheets for the Psalm response, and follow the lead of the choir.*

---

Let us pray.

O God, supreme Father of the faithful,  
who increase the children of your promise  
by pouring out the grace of adoption  
throughout the whole world  
and who through the Paschal Mystery  
make your servant Abraham father of nations,  
as once you swore,  
grant, we pray,  
that your peoples may enter worthily  
into the grace to which you call them.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Third Reading**

**Exodus 14:15-15:1**

**The sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea**

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of God, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and of cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried. 'The Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!'

'Stretch out your hand over the sea,' the Lord said to Moses, 'that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.'

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh's whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them.

That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

## Canticle

Exodus 15

### Hymn of victory after crossing the Red Sea

*I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!*

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!  
Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea!  
The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation.  
This is my God and I extol him,  
my father's God and I give him praise.

*I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!*

The Lord is a warrior! 'The Lord' is his name.  
The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea,  
the flower of his army is drowned in the sea.  
The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone.

*I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!*

Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power,  
your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy.  
In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe.

*I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!*

You will lead your people and plant them on your mountain,  
the place, O Lord, where you have made your home,  
the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made.  
The Lord will reign for ever and ever.

*I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!*

---

Let us pray.

O God, whose ancient wonders  
remain undimmed in splendour even in our day,  
for what you once bestowed on a single people,  
freeing them from Pharaoh's persecution  
by the power of your right hand  
now you bring about as the salvation of the nations  
through the waters of rebirth,  
grant, we pray, that the whole world  
may become children of Abraham  
and inherit the dignity of Israel's birthright.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The altar candles are now lit.*

### **The Gloria**

*In this joyful moment, the church bells ring, and we sing the Gloria, led by the choir.*

---

Let us pray.

O God, who make this most sacred night radiant  
with the glory of the Lord's Resurrection,  
stir up in your Church a spirit of adoption,  
so that, renewed in body and mind,  
we may render you undivided service.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

**Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again**

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin.

When a Christian dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him:

Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again.

Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*We stand to greet the Gospel.*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

**Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, has risen**

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, ‘Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?’ But when they looked they could see that the stone – which was very big – had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, ‘There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him. But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, “He is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you.”’

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**The Homily****Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation**

*Tonight we are delighted to celebrate with eight members of our parish community: Candice, James, Kim, Marlon, Michael, Rachael, Racheal and Sally, praying for them as we celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Communion and Confirmation. Through eight months of prayer and discernment they have been prepared to receive these Sacraments, so as to become full members of the Catholic Church.*

*Anyone, at any time, is welcome to enquire about becoming a Catholic. Some come from different faiths, some from different Christian denominations, and some from no faith background at all. Some were Baptised as Catholics when young, but did not pursue faith into teenage years and so were never Confirmed. Whatever brings people, everyone is welcome, always, and the “Journey in Faith” programme is just that – a journey, exploring aspects of faith, and giving people space for their personal journey. Call us at any time if you want to know more.*



*We pray particularly for those being Baptised and Confirmed tonight, and we begin by joining our prayers with the intercessions of the saints. These include those Saints chosen by candidates as Confirmation names.*

*Fr Dominic invites Sally and Michael, who are to be Baptised, to stand.*

Dearly beloved,  
with one heart and one soul, let us by our prayers  
come to the aid of our brother and sister  
in their blessed hope,  
so that, as they approach the font of rebirth,  
the almighty Father may bestow upon them all his merciful help.  
**Amen.**

#### **LITANY OF SAINTS**

Lord have mercy  
Christ have mercy  
Lord have mercy

**Lord have mercy**  
**Christ have mercy**  
**Lord have mercy**

Holy Mary, Mother of God  
St Michael  
St Raphael  
Holy Angels of God  
St John the Baptist  
St Joseph  
St Peter and St Paul  
St Andrew

**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**

**All you holy men and women pray for us.**

St John  
St Matthew  
St Jude  
St Mary Magdalene  
St Stephen  
St Ignatius of Antioch

**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**  
**Pray for us**

St Agnes Pray for us  
St Perpetua and St Felicity Pray for us

**All you holy men and women pray for us.**

St Cecilia Pray for us  
St Helena Pray for us  
St Gregory Pray for us  
St Augustine Pray for us  
St Athanasius Pray for us  
St Basil Pray for us  
St Patrick Pray for us  
St Dymphna Pray for us

**All you holy men and women pray for us.**

St Francis of Assisi Pray for us  
St Dominic Pray for us  
St Anthony of Padua Pray for us  
St Ignatius of Loyola Pray for us  
St Francis Xavier Pray for us  
St John Vianney Pray for us  
St Catherine of Siena Pray for us  
St Teresa of Avila Pray for us

**All you holy men and women pray for us.**

St John Bosco Pray for us  
St Vincent de Paul Pray for us  
St Therese of Lisieux Pray for us  
St Cedd and St. Erconwald Pray for us  
St Patricia of Naples Pray for us  
St Bernadette Pray for us  
All Martyrs of England and Wales Pray for us  
The Holy Innocents Pray for us

**All you holy men and women pray for us.**

Lord be merciful  
From all evil  
From every sin  
From everlasting death

**Lord, deliver us we pray**  
**Lord, deliver us we pray**  
**Lord, deliver us we pray**  
**Lord, deliver us we pray**

By your Incarnation  
By your Death and Resurrection  
By the outpouring  
of the Holy Spirit

**Lord, deliver us we pray**  
**Lord, deliver us we pray**  
**Lord, deliver us we pray**

**All you holy men and women pray for us.**

Be merciful to us sinners  
Bring these chosen ones to new birth  
Through the grace of Baptism  
Jesus, Son of the living God

**Lord, we ask you hear our prayer**  
**Lord, we ask you hear our prayer**  
**Lord, we ask you hear our prayer**  
**Lord, we ask you hear our prayer**

**Christ hear us, Christ graciously hear us.**

### **The Blessing of the font, and the renewal of Baptismal Promises**

Dearly beloved,  
let us humbly invoke upon this font the grace of God the almighty Father,  
that those who from it are born anew  
may be numbered among the children of adoption in Christ.

### **The Blessing of Water**

*Fr Dominic then blesses the baptismal water, saying the following prayer with hands extended:*

O God, who by invisible power  
accomplish a wondrous effect  
through sacramental signs  
and who in many ways have prepared water, your creation,  
to show forth the grace of Baptism;

O God, whose Spirit  
in the first moments of the world's creation  
hovered over the waters,  
so that the very substance of water  
would even then take to itself the power to sanctify;

O God, who by the outpouring of the flood  
foreshadowed regeneration,  
so that from the mystery of one and the same element of water  
would come an end to vice and a beginning of virtue;

O God, who caused the children of Abraham  
to pass dry-shod through the Red Sea,  
so that the chosen people,  
set free from slavery to Pharaoh,  
would prefigure the people of the baptised;

O God, whose Son,  
baptized by John in the waters of the Jordan,  
was anointed with the Holy Spirit,  
and, as he hung upon the Cross,  
gave forth water from his side along with blood,  
and after his Resurrection, commanded his disciples:  
"Go forth, teach all nations, baptising them  
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"  
look now, we pray, upon the face of your Church  
and graciously unseal for her the fountain of Baptism.

May this water receive by the Holy Spirit  
the grace of your Only Begotten Son,  
so that human nature, created in your image  
and washed clean through the Sacrament of Baptism  
from all the squalor of the life of old,  
may be found worthy to rise to the life of newborn children  
through water and the Holy Spirit.

*The Paschal Candle is lowered three times into the font, as part of the blessing on this sacred night.*

May the power of the Holy Spirit,  
O Lord, we pray,  
come down through your Son  
into the fullness of this font,  
so that all who have been buried with Christ  
by Baptism into death  
may rise again to life with him.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

*Fr Dominic invites Michael and Sally to come to the Font together with their sponsors.*

### **The Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

Dear brothers and sisters, through the Paschal Mystery  
we have been buried with Christ in Baptism,  
so that we may walk with him in newness of life.  
And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded,  
let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism,  
by which we once renounced Satan and his works  
and promised to serve God in the holy Catholic Church.  
Our elect make these promises for the first time.

And so I ask you:

Do you renounce Satan?                    **I do.**

And all his works?                         **I do.**

And all his empty show?                 **I do.**

Do you believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth?         **I do.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered death and was buried,  
rose again from the dead  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?     **I do.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting?     **I do.**

And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit  
and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins,  
keep us by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.  
**Amen.**

## **CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM for Michael and Sally**

### **CLOTHING WITH A WHITE GARMENT**

### **PRESENTATION OF LIGHTED CANDLE**

### **CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION**

My dear friends, you are now to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptised.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of his Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love.

Dearly beloved, let us pray to God the almighty Father, for these, his adopted sons and daughters, already born again to eternal life in Baptism, that he will graciously pour out the Holy Spirit upon them to confirm them with his abundant gifts, and through his anointing conform them more fully to Christ, the Son of God.

*Pause for the whole congregation to pray in silence.*

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who brought these your servants to new birth  
by water and the Holy Spirit,  
freeing them from sin:  
send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete;  
give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety;  
fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

***We warmly congratulate all those who have been Confirmed!***

#### **BLESSING OF THE CONGREGATION**

*The candles of the whole congregation are lit once more. We stand together and are blessed with the waters of Baptism. We sing together:*

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me  
Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me,  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me**

***(V2 ... on us; V3 .... on them)***

*We sit for the offertory & extinguish our candles.*

#### **The Offertory**

*There will be a basket for your offerings at the end of Mass, or you can make an offering using the contactless device in the narthex or the side chapel. At Easter your offerings are your personal gift to Fr Dominic. Thank you for whatever you give; thank you for all your kindness and encouragement throughout the year.*

## The Communion Rite

### Act of Spiritual Communion

*For those watching and praying at home*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.  
I love you above all things,  
and I desire to receive you into my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you as if you were already there,  
and I unite myself wholly to you.  
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

### Prayer after Communion

#### Solemn Blessing

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

May almighty God bless you  
through today's Easter Solemnity and, in his compassion,  
defend you from every assault of sin. **Amen.**

And may he, who restores you to eternal life  
in the Resurrection of his Only Begotten,  
endow you with the prize of immortality. **Amen.**

Now that the days of the Lord's Passion have drawn to a close,  
may you who celebrate the gladness of the Paschal Feast  
come with Christ's help, and exulting in spirit,  
to those feasts that are celebrated in eternal joy. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

#### Dismissal

Go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.

**Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.**



**Many congratulations and blessings  
to those who have celebrated Sacraments  
for the first time this evening.**

It has been a delight to journey with you  
– and we pray that tonight is the beginning of a  
wonderful next chapter in your journey in faith.

You and your families are warmly welcome  
to the Parish centre for some simple refreshments after Mass –  
and anyone else who would like to pop in is warmly welcome too!

Many thanks to the catechists who have given their time, energy,  
prayer and wisdom to lead the preparation for today –  
Margaret, Geraldine, Rosemary and Kelly

If you would like to become a Catholic, or perhaps were  
Baptised as a Catholic but never celebrated Confirmation,  
you are always welcome on the next programme,  
starting in the summer. Please just call or email for a chat.

Blessings

Fr Dominic

# Easter Sunday

*At the 9.30am and 11.30am Mass, there will also be hymn sheets –  
this is a day to sing gloriously!*

## Opening Hymn

At the start of Mass, we are **blessed with the holy water from the font** – the water blessed at last night's Easter Vigil. A sign of Resurrection hope and joy.

## Gloria

*In this joyful moment, the church bells ring, we pray the Gloria together (at the 9.30 and 11.30am Masses this will be sung – follow the musicians and choir)*

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.**

**We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
    have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
    receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
    have mercy on us.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

## Opening Prayer

## First reading

**Acts 10:34,37-43**

### **'We have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection'**

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: 'You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses – we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead – and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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## Responsorial Psalm

**Psalm 117(118):1-2,16-17,22-23**

*Response: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;  
his right hand raised me up.  
I shall not die, I shall live  
and recount his deeds.  
*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.  
This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.  
*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

**Gospel Acclamation**

**1Cor5:7-8**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed:  
let us celebrate the feast then, in the Lord.  
Alleluia!

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**Gospel**

**Mark 16:1-8**

**Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, has risen**

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' But when they looked they could see that the stone – which was very big – had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him. But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you."'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Homily

### Renewal of Baptismal promises

Dear brothers and sisters, through the Paschal Mystery we have been buried with Christ in Baptism, so that we may walk with him in newness of life.

And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded, let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and his works and promised to serve God in the holy Catholic Church.

And so I ask you:

Do you renounce Satan? **I do.**

And all his works? **I do.**

And all his empty show? **I do.**

Do you believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth? **I do.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered death and was buried,  
rose again from the dead  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father? **I do.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting? **I do.**

And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit  
and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins,  
keep us by his grace,  
in Christ Jesus our Lord,  
for eternal life. **Amen.**

## **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

### **The Offertory**

*There will be a basket for your offerings at the end of Mass, or you can make an offering using the contactless device in the narthex or by the side chapel. At Easter, your offerings are your personal gift to Fr Dominic. Thank you for whatever you give; thank you for all your kindness and encouragement.*

### **The Communion Rite**

#### **Act of Spiritual Communion**

*For those watching and praying at home*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.  
I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you as if you were already there,  
and I unite myself wholly to you.  
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

### **Prayer after Communion**

#### **Solemn Blessing**

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

May almighty God bless you  
through today's Easter Solemnity  
and, in his compassion,  
defend you from every assault of sin.

**Amen.**

And may he, who restores you to eternal life  
in the Resurrection of his Only Begotten,  
endow you with the prize of immortality.

**Amen.**

Now that the days of the Lord's Passion have drawn to a close,  
may you who celebrate the gladness of the Paschal Feast  
come with Christ's help, and exulting in spirit,  
to those feasts that are celebrated in eternal joy.

**Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on you and remain with you for ever.

**Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.

**Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.**

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## ***Many blessings for Easter***

**Thank you to all of those who help throughout the year, and who give especially generously of their time, gifts and skills during Holy Week.**

The flowers are magnificent all year, and the “Petals” excel themselves at Easter. They are such a wonderful group; as the church is decorated there is always the sound of laughter, and people helping each other with arrangements and ideas. Anyone is welcome to join.

There is a dedicated group who help to keep the church clean – could you help too? It’s a monthly commitment – different teams clean, chat and enjoy coffee on a Thursday between about 9.30-10.30.

We are blessed with over thirty Altar Servers; anyone who has made their First Holy Communion is welcome to serve. Today we particularly thank the Senior Servers who are so committed and kind, nurturing the younger servers, and keeping everything flowing during the Masses.

Our musicians and singers are magnificent. We are blessed to have Daniel as the fortnightly organist. The Youth Choir, full of rizz, go from strength to strength. The 11.30 choir are ever more glorious, filling the church with amazing music. If you would like to join, then just ask after any Mass.

The Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Readers, Catechists, Stewards, Livestreamers, parish group leaders, those who visit the ill and elderly, the SVP, the Legion of Mary, Knit’n’Natter, Scouts, Cubs, Rainbows, Beavers, Brownies and Guides, the Finance Committee and Parish Council; so many people, with so much involvement. You are all deeply appreciated, along with those who organise and provide cakes, arrange social events, and much else besides, sustaining parish life and friendships. And – of course – the wonderful, dedicated and kind Julia who goes over and beyond in the parish office, and who is such a support to me, and to so many people and so many aspects of parish life.

***Today, the love story moves from Lent to Easter and continues, eternally.  
Rest with that, and celebrate it, wherever you most need to today.***

*With Resurrection hope, blessings and prayers,  
Fr Dominic*