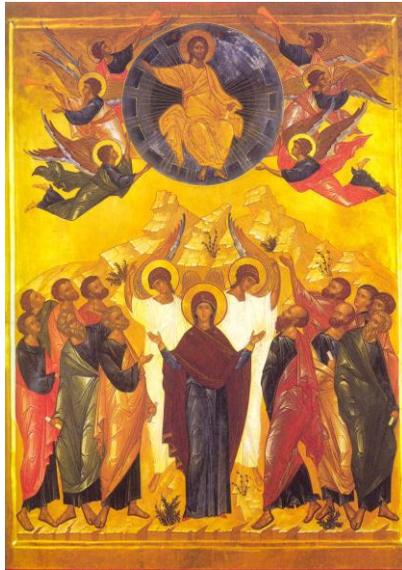


The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

Ascension Day

THE FORTIETH DAY OF EASTER



The Parish Mass
during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Thursday 21st May 2020

7.30 pm

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Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

Hymn

**Hail the day that sees him rise *Alleluya!*
Glorious to his native skies; *Alleluya!*
Christ, awhile to mortals given, *Alleluya!*
Enters now the highest heaven! *Alleluya!***

**There the glorious triumph waits; *Alleluya!*
Lift your heads, eternal gates! *Alleluya!*
Christ hath vanquished death and sin; *Alleluya!*
Take the King of glory in. *Alleluya!***

**See! the heaven its Lord receives, *Alleluya!*
Yet he loves the earth he leaves; *Alleluya!*
Though returning to his throne, *Alleluya!*
Still he calls mankind his own. *Alleluya!***

**Still for us he intercedes; *Alleluya!*
His prevailing death he pleads; *Alleluya!*
Near himself prepares our place, *Alleluya!*
Harbinger of human race. *Alleluya!***

**Lord, though parted from our sight, *Alleluya!*
Far above yon azure height, *Alleluya!*
Grant our hearts may thither rise, *Alleluya!*
Seeking thee beyond the skies. *Alleluya!***

**There we shall with thee remain, *Alleluya!*
Partners of this endless reign; *Alleluya!*
There thy face unclouded see, *Alleluya!*
Find our heaven of heavens in thee. *Alleluya!***

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) &
Thomas Cotterill (1779-1823)

Tune: Llanfair
Robert Williams of Anglesey (1781-1821)

Priest † In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All Amen.

The Greeting

The Lord be with you
All and also with you.

The Easter Proclamation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
All He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Introduction

Priest Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for forty days we have been celebrating with joyful hearts the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the power of sin and death. He appeared to his disciples many times and told them about the kingdom of God.

Today we recall how he left this earth and returned to his Father, ascending into heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. Trusting in his reign over all creation, and submitting to his kingly yet loving rule, let us hear the story of his parting.

¶ The Ascension Reading Acts 1:4-11

The reading is unannounced

While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This,' he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Invitation to Confession

Seeing we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens,
Jesus the Son of God,
let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,
and make our confession to our heavenly Father.

Confession

All **O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory:
holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.
In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Absolution

May God our Father † forgive us our sins
and bring us to the eternal fellowship of his table in heaven
with his saints for ever.

All **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

All **Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

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

**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.**

The Collect

Let us pray.

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ
to have ascended into the heavens,
so we in heart and mind may also ascend
and with him continually dwell;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

New Testament Reading Ephesians 1:15-23

Reader A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel Luke 24:44-53

Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Go and make disciples of all nations, says the Lord.

Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

All Alleluia.

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

All Glory to you, O Lord. Alleluia.

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you - that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you. O Christ. Alleluia.

The Homily

At the end, there may be a time of quiet reflection

The Apostles' Creed

Brothers and sisters,
I ask you to profess the faith of the Church.

All **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Prayers of the Faithful

Let us join our prayers with those of our Saviour Christ,
seeking the Father's blessing and the gifts of the Spirit.

Jesus Christ, great high priest,
living for ever to intercede for us,
pray for the Church, your broken body in the world ...
Lord, hear us.

All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, king of righteousness,
enthroned at the right hand of the majesty on high,
pray for the world, and make it subject to your gentle rule ...
Lord, hear us.

All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, Son of Man,
drawing humanity into the life of God,
pray for your brothers and sisters in need, distress or sorrow ...
Lord, hear us.

All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, pioneer of our salvation,
bringing us to glory through your death and resurrection,
surround with your saints and angels
those who have died in your faith and fear ...
Lord, hear us.

All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, Lord over all things,
ascended far above the heavens and filling the universe,
pray for us who receive the gifts you give us
for work in your service ...
Lord, hear us.

All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Silence for private prayer

Jesus Christ,
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at your feet;
for you are alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Sign of Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
If you love me, rejoice because I am going to the Father.'

All Alleluia. The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you. Alleluia.

As we are able, let us offer one another a sign of Christ's peace.

Hymn

**Eternal Monarch, King most high,
Whose blood hath brought redemption nigh.
By whom the death of Death was wrought
And conquering grace's battle fought:**

**Ascending to the throne of might,
And seated at the Father's right,
All power in heaven is Jesu's own,
That here his manhood had not known.**

**Yea, angels tremble when they see
How changed is our humanity;
For flesh hath purged what flesh had stained,
And God, the flesh of God, hath reigned.**

**Be thou our joy and strong defence,
Who art our future recompense:
So shall the light that springs from thee
Be ours through all eternity.**

**O risen Christ, ascended Lord,
All praise to thee let earth accord,
Who art, whilst endless ages run,
With Father and with Spirit One. Amen.**

Invitation to Prayer

Pray, my brothers and sisters,
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord, receive our offering
as we celebrate the ascension of Christ your Son.
May his gifts help us rise with him to the joys of heaven,
where he lives and reigns for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and good, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ the King of glory.
Born of a woman, he came to the rescue of our human race.
Dying for us, he trampled death and conquered sin.
By the glory of his resurrection
he opened the way to life eternal
and by his ascension,
gave us the sure hope that where he is we may also be.

Therefore the universe resounds with Easter joy
and with choirs of angels we sing for ever to your praise:

All

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

The Priest elevates the Host, and genuflects

In the same way,
after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

The Priest elevates the Chalice, and genuflects

All Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Therefore, heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of your kingdom,
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power**
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung

The Lord's Prayer

Looking for the coming of his kingdom
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All **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 evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

All Lord, we died with you on the cross.
Now we are raised to new life.
We were buried in your tomb.
All **Now we share in your resurrection.**
Live in us, that we may live in you.

Agnus Dei

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Invitation to Communion

I heard the voice of a great multitude crying, alleluia.
The Lord our God has entered into his kingdom.

**All Blessed are those who are called
to the supper of the Lamb. Alleluia.**

Giving of Communion

Jesus said to his disciples, I, the Lord, am with you always,
until the end of the world, alleluia.

Spiritual Communion – *for those at home*

It is an ancient practice of the Church that, when you are prevented from attending the Holy Eucharist, people are invited to express, in the words of St Thomas Aquinas, “an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace as though we had already received Him.” Therefore, during this time you are invited to pray this prayer, which may be said as often as you desire:

**All My Jesus,
I believe that you are in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love you above all things,
and I long for you in my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
As though you have already come,
I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you;
never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

God our Father,
you have raised our humanity in Christ
and have fed us with the bread of heaven:
mercifully grant that, nourished with such spiritual blessings,
we may set our hearts in the heavenly places;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Hymn

**The head that once was crowned with thorns
Is crowned with glory now;
A royal diadem adorns
The mighty victor's brow.**

**The highest place that heaven affords
Is his, is his by right,
The King of kings, and Lord of lords,
And heaven's eternal light;**

**The joy of all who dwell above,
The joy of all below,
To whom he manifests his love,
And grants his name to know.**

**To them the cross, with all its shame,
With all its grace is given:
Their name an everlasting name,
Their joy the joy of heaven.**

**They suffer with their Lord below,
They reign with him above,
Their profit and their joy to know
The mystery of his love.**

**The cross he bore is life and health,
Though shame and death to him;
His people's hope, his people's wealth,
Their everlasting theme.**

Words: Thomas Kelly (1769-1855)

Music: St Magnus
Jeremiah Clarke (c.1673-1707)

¶ Sending Out

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Solemn Blessing

All God the Father,
 who has given to his Son the name above every name,
 strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord.
Amen.

All God the Son,
 who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,
 plead for you at the right hand of the Father.
Amen.

All God the Holy Spirit,
 who pours out his abundant gifts upon the Church,
 make you faithful servants of Christ our King.
Amen.

All And the blessing of God almighty,
 the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
 be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

The Dismissal

All Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.
In the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Regina Caeli

All (9 rings) **Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven, alleluia**
He whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia
As he promised, hath arisen, alleluia
Pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia.

All Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia,
for the Lord is risen indeed, alleluia.

(9 rings) God of life, you have given joy to the world
by the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
Through the prayers of his mother, the Virgin Mary,
bring us to the happiness of eternal life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**