

The Parish Church of St Matthew  
Northampton

## The Second Sunday of Easter



*The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*  
Duccio di Buoninsegna (1255-1319) – *The Maesta Altarpiece*, 1308

## The Parish Mass

during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021

10.15 am



## ¶ Keeping everyone safe at St Matthew's

***If you have any of the recognized Covid-related symptoms, please self-isolate immediately and seek a test.***

*For all others, and in accordance with Government guidance and local decision,  
we respectfully require you to:*

**Go directly to a chair where there is an order of service booklet, and remain there.** Please fill up the available chairs in the centre of the nave and transepts first. Do not move from chair to chair, or remove a booklet from another chair. (NB - some chairs in the side aisles have a restricted view). Please do not move the chairs or handle any other furniture.

The wearing of a **face covering is mandatory** unless you belong to one of the medically exempted groups. This must cover both your mouth and your nose. (Plastic visors are not a substitute for a face covering and do protect others).

The church **toilet facilities are now available** for use. Please follow the instructions on the signs, leave the cubical light on and the door open after use to facilitate ventilation and the dispersal of aerosol.

**At communion** - remain at your chair. You are respectfully asked to ensure that your face covering is in place until the words of administration have been spoken by the priest and you have responded by saying 'Amen'.

**After the service** - please **depart directly via the north door** whilst maintaining the two-metre 'rule'. A monetary offering towards parish funds may be made there. Please sanitize your hands as you leave. Assistance is available for those who require help negotiating the steps. You may remove your face covering when you are clear of the building.

**The 'rule of six'** – you may gather **on the green** at the east end of the church building in physically distanced groups of up to six people, or two households. We asked that you do not congregate either at the side of the church or the end of the Lady Chapel where ashes have been interred. Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*

## ¶ Introduction to the Easter Season

In the Christian Year the Great Fifty Days of Eastertide have pride of place, and form a single festival period in which the tone of joy created at the Easter Vigil is sustained through the following seven weeks, and the Church celebrates the gloriously risen Christ:

Triumphant in his glory now,  
his sceptre ruleth all,  
earth, heaven and hell before him bow,  
and at his footstool fall. (Fulbert of Chartres)

Early Christians gave the name Pentecost to this whole fifty-day span of rejoicing, which Tertullian calls 'this most joyful period' (*laetissimum spatium*). It is sometimes also called 'Great Sunday'. In those places where the custom of lighting the Easter Candle at the beginning of Easter is followed, the lit Candle stands prominently in church for all the Eastertide services. The Alleluia appears frequently in liturgical speech and song; Morning Prayer begins with the traditional collection of Pauline texts known as the Easter Anthems, and white or gold vestments and decorations emphasize the joy and brightness of the season.

On the fortieth day there has from the late fourth century been a particular celebration of Christ's ascension. He commissions his disciples to continue his work, he promises the gift of the Holy Spirit, and then he is no longer among them in the flesh. The Ascension is therefore closely connected with the theme of mission. The arrival of the promised gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost completes and crowns the Easter Festival.

## Reflection

Faith is a great gift.  
But the story of doubting Thomas shows just how frail  
is the human container in which this gift is carried.  
It is very difficult to remain a believer on one's own.  
We really need to belong to a believing community,  
whose common faith strengthens the faith of each individual.  
The early Christians show us the way to go.  
They supported one another by praying and worshipping together,  
and by offering a loving service to one another.

# Order of Service

## ¶ The Gathering

*All stand at the sound of the bell*

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

## The Greeting

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

## The Easter Proclamation

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

*The Priest briefly introduces the Mass*

## Invitation to Confession

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,  
we come to you in sorrow for our sins,  
and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

*A pause for reflection*

## Confession

All **God our Father,  
long-suffering, full of grace and truth,  
you create us from nothing and give us life.  
You give your faithful people new life  
in the water of baptism.**

**You do not turn your face from us,  
nor cast us aside.  
We confess that we have sinned against you.  
We have wounded your love  
and marred your image in us.  
Restore us for the sake of your Son,  
and bring us to heavenly joy,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## Absolution

May the God of love and power  
forgive † and free you from your sins,  
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,  
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.

**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.

Almighty Father,  
you have given your only Son to die for our sins  
and to rise again for our justification:  
grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness  
that we may always serve you  
in pureness of living and truth;  
through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All Amen.**

***Please be seated***

## ¶ The Liturgy of the Word

### The Acts of the Apostles

Acts 4.32-35

*Reader* A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 133

Behold how good and pleasant it is  
to dwell together in unity.

**All Mercy and truth are met together,  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**

It is like the precious oil upon the head,  
running down upon the beard,  
Even on Aaron's beard,  
running down upon the collar of his clothing.

**All Mercy and truth are met together,  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**

It is like the dew of Hermon  
running down upon the hills of Zion.  
For there the Lord has promised his blessing:  
even life for evermore.

**All Mercy and truth are met together,  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**

Holy Gospel John 20.19-31

Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.  
Jesus said, 'Blessed are those who have not seen  
and yet have come to believe'.

**All Alleluia.**

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

**All Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.  
Glory to you, O Lord. Alleluia.**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All Praise to you, O Christ. Alleluia.**

## The Homily

***Please be seated***

# The Apostles' Creed

***Please stand***

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

***Priest*** In the power of the Spirit let us pray to the Father,  
who has raised Jesus from the dead and glorified him.

***Please be seated***

*After each petition the follow is used*

***All*** Jesus, Lord of life  
**in your mercy, hear us.**

*After the final petition*

*Priest* Support us, O Lord,  
all the day long of this troublous life,  
until the shadows lengthen and evening comes,  
the busy world is hushed,  
the fever of work is over  
and our work is done.  
Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging,  
a holy rest, and peace at the last;  
through Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## ¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### Sign of Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples  
and said, 'Peace be with you'.  
Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

*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.

***Please be seated***

*The altar is prepared*

### Music during the Offertory

Erschienen ist der herrlich' Tag  
(Appeared is the glorious day)

*Ethel Smyth (1858-1944)*

### Invitation to Prayer

***Please stand***

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

O Lord, accept the offerings of your people  
and those you have brought to new birth,  
that, renewed by confession of your name and by Baptism,  
they may attain unending happiness.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**All**      **Amen.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

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

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

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
almighty and eternal Father,  
and in these days of Easter to celebrate with joyful hearts  
the memory of your wonderful works.

For by the mystery of his passion Jesus Christ, your risen Son,  
has conquered the powers of death and hell  
and restored in men and women the image of your glory.  
He has placed them once more in paradise  
and opened to them the gate of life eternal.

And so, in the joy of this Passover,  
earth and heaven resound with gladness,  
while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation  
sing for ever the hymn of your glory:

**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.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

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.

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.

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

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world,  
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people  
and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one cup,  
so that we, in the company of Mary, the apostles, and all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;  
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

*The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung*

***Please be seated***

## The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,  
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

Jesus says, I am the bread of life,  
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

**All**      **Lord, our hearts hunger for you;  
give us this bread always.**

## 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

**All**      Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

## Giving of Communion

Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples and said to them:  
Peace be with you, alleluia.

*Please stand at your chair to receive Holy Communion or a blessing*

## 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:*

### Act of Reception

**All**      **In union, blessed Jesus,  
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church  
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,**

*(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)*

**I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,  
for creation and all the blessings of this life,  
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,  
and resurrection,  
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.**

*(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)*

**I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,  
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,  
I pray you to come into my heart.  
I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,  
my soul, and my mind.  
Let nothing separate me from you;  
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,  
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.  
Amen.**

## Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

***Please stand***

Lord God our Father,  
through our Saviour Jesus Christ  
you have assured your children of eternal life  
and in baptism have made us one with him:  
Deliver us from the death of sin  
and raise us to new life in your love,  
in fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

***All***

**Amen.**

**God of truth,  
we have seen with our eyes  
and touched with our hands the bread of life:  
strengthen our faith  
that we may grow in love for you  
and for each other;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## Notices for the Community

### Sending Out

***All***

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

## Solemn Blessing

God the Father,  
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,  
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

**All**      **Amen.**

God the Son,  
who in bursting the grave has won a glorious victory,  
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

**All**      **Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit,  
whom the risen Lord breathed into his disciples,  
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

**All**      **Amen.**

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

**All**      **Amen.**

*Please turn towards the Maddona and Child sculpture*

## Regina Caeli

**All**      **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.**

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.**

## The Dismissal

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

## Organ Voluntary

Prelude and Fugue in G Major BWV 541  
*Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*

*The procession departs*

Please take this booklet home with you

**After the service** - please **depart directly via the north door** whilst maintaining the 'two-metre rule'. A monetary offering towards parish funds may be made there. Please sanitize your hands as you leave. Assistance is available for those who require help negotiating the steps. You may remove your face covering when you are clear of the building.

**The 'rule of six'** – we may gather **on the green** at the east end of the church building in physically distanced groups of up to six people, or two households. We asked that you do not congregate on the grass either at the side of the church or the end of the Lady Chapel where ashes have been interred. Thank you.