

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Solemnity of
Christ the King

Year A



A kingdom of love and service

The Parish Mass

Sunday 26th November 2023

10.15 am



Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church

Matthew's Eschatological Sermon ends with the Last Judgement. The central point here is to show that judgement will be based on the treatment of deprived outcasts – a warning to the Church not to follow the world that pays more attention to the rich and powerful.

Matthew portrays Christ as a stern King and Judge. But this image shouldn't be over-emphasised. Jesus himself put forward a gentler image – that of a good shepherd who cares for all the sheep in his flock, but shows particular care for the weak and wounded ones. This was the image Jesus used to describe his person and his mission. And his followers show that they truly belong to his kingdom by their care for 'the little ones'.

We don't know exactly how the last judgement will happen, but we do know on what the followers of Jesus will be judged on. They will be judged on whether or not they rendered loving service to the poor. Care for one's neighbours is the core value of Christianity.

It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following reflection, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Reflection

In the evening of our lives we will be examined on love.

Mother Teresa said:

'The biggest disease in the world today
is the feeling of being unwanted.

And the greatest evil in the world
is the terrible indifference towards one's neighbour.'

Lord, open our hearts when they are closed,
and warm them when they are cold,
so that we may produce the fruits of love,
and be found worthy of belonging to your kingdom.

Setting

Communion Service in C and F

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

§ *The choir are in their stalls*

§ *Stand at the sound of the bell*

§ *An introit may be sung*

§ *The sanctuary party enter and form up in the centre aisle*

§ *The priest intones ...*

Let us go forth in peace.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Processional Hymn

All **Crown him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon his throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own:
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of him who died for thee,
And hail him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity.**

**Crown him the Virgin's Son,
The God incarnate born,
Whose arm those crimson trophies won
Which now his brow adorn:
Fruit of that mystic Rose,
As of that Rose the Stem;
The Root whence mercy ever flows,
The Babe of Bethlehem.**

**Crown him the Lord of Love!
Behold his hands and side,
Rich wounds yet visible above
In beauty glorified:
No angel in the sky
Can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends his burning eye
At mysteries so bright.**

**Crown him the Lord of peace,
Whose power a sceptre sways
From pole to pole, that wars may cease,
And all be prayer and praise:
His reign shall know no end,
And round his piercèd feet
Fair flowers of Paradise extend
Their fragrance ever sweet.**

**Crown him the Lord of years,
The Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
Ineffably sublime.
Glassed in a sea of light,
Where everlasting waves
Reflect his throne - the Infinite!
Who lives - and loves - and saves.**

Words Matthew Bridges (1800-1894)
v.4 Godfrey Thring (1823-1903)

Music Diademata
George Elvey (1816-1893)

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

The Greeting

All Blessed be God.
**Blessed be God's kingdom now and for ever.
Amen.**

The feast is introduced

Invitation to Confession

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'
So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Silence for recollection

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.**

Kyries

The kingdom is yours, but we turn away from your just rule:
Kyrie eleison.

All **Kyrie eleison.**

The power is yours, but we trust in our own power and strength:
Christe eleison.

All **Christe eleison.**

The glory is yours, but we fall short of the glory of God:
Kyrie eleison.

All **Kyrie eleison.**

Absolution

Almighty God,
who in Jesus Christ has given us
a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
forgive † you your sins,
open your eyes to God's truth,
strengthen you to do God's will
and give you the joy of his kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

Choir

Glory be to God on high,
and in earth peace, good will towards men.

We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy;
thou only art the Lord;
thou only, O Christ,
with the Holy Ghost,
art Most High,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

The Collect

Let us pray.

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All

Amen.

§ *Sit*

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

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

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards 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.

Ephesians 1.15-end

This is the word of the Lord.

All

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Stephen Moore



Choir O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us heartily rejoice in the rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving
and be glad in him with psalms. **Response**

For the Lord is a great God
and a great king above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth
and the heights of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands have moulded the dry land. **Response**

Come, let us worship and bow down
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is our God;
we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. **Response**

Psalm 95.1-7

§ *Stand, and turn to face
the Book of the Gospels*

Holy Gospel

Acclamation



Choir Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
All **Alleluia.**

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

All

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

Matthew 25.31-46

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Homily

§ Sit

The Nicene Creed

§ *Stand*

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

*All may
bow* ***For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.***

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of the Faithful

Priest Let us with confidence present our prayers to the throne of grace.

§ *Kneel*

Intercessor Faithful God,
bless those who care for Emilia
and grant them your gifts of love, wisdom and faith.
Pour upon them your healing and reconciling love,
and protect their home from all evil.
Fill them with the light of your presence
and establish them in the joy of your kingdom.

Your kingdom come.

All **Your will be done.**

We pray for all those in positions of power,
that they may govern with wisdom and authority,
serving the needs of their people.

Your kingdom come.

All **Your will be done.**

We pray for the Church, the sign of your reign,
that it may extend your welcome to people
of every race and background.

Your kingdom come.

All **Your will be done.**

We pray for Christians of every denomination,
that together we may come to understand
the royal priesthood you bestowed on us in baptism.

Your kingdom come.

All **Your will be done.**

We pray for those whose commitment to truth
brings them into conflict with earthly powers,
that they may have the courage to endure.

Your kingdom come.

All **Your will be done.**

We pray for this community of faith,
that attentive to your word
we may always worship in spirit and truth.
For the sick and suffering (*acutely ill*) ...
For those who have died (*recently departed, anniversaries*) ...

Your kingdom come.

All

Your will be done.

Priest

Eternal Father,
we give thanks to you for all that you do in our lives.
We commend to you all those for whom we have prayed
and ask that you use us and our prayers
to make a difference in their lives
for we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our Saviour and our King.

All

Amen.

§ *Stand*

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Sign of Christ's Peace

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles,
'The greatest among you is the one who serves.'
Cleanse our hearts of selfishness,
and give us a spirit of loving service,
so that we may enjoy the peace and unity of your kingdom
where you live for ever and ever.

All

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

Let us offer one another a sign of Christ's peace.

Hymn

The Gifts are presented and the altar is prepared

A collection is taken. Please give as you are able.

All

**Hail Redeemer, King divine!
Priest and Lamb, the throne is thine,
King, whose reign shall never cease,
Prince of everlasting peace.**

*Angels, saints and nations sing
'Praised be Jesus Christ our King;
Lord of life, earth, sky and sea,
King of love on Calvary.'*

**King whose name creation thrills,
Rule our minds, our hearts, our wills,
Till in peace each nation rings
With thy praises, King of kings. Chorus**

**King most holy, King of truth,
Guide the lowly, guide the youth;
Christ thou King of glory bright
Be to us eternal light. Chorus**

**Shepherd-King, o'er mountains steep,
Homeward bring the wandering sheep;
Shelter in one royal fold
States and kingdoms, new and old. Chorus**

**Eucharistic King, what love
Draws thee daily from above.
Clad in signs of bread and wine;
Feed us, lead us, keep us thine.**

*Angels, saints and nations sing
'Praised be Jesus Christ our King;
Lord of life, earth, sky and sea,
King of love on Calvary.'*

Words Patrick Brennan, C.S.S.R. (1877-1952)

Music King Divine
Charles Rigby (1901-1962)

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

O Lord, as we offer you the sacrifice
by which the human race is reconciled to you,
we humbly pray that your Son may bestow on all nations
the gifts of unity and peace.
We ask this through Jesus 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,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For with the oil of gladness
you have anointed Christ the Lord, your only Son,
to be our great high priest and king of all creation.
As priest, he offered himself once for all
upon the altar of the cross
and redeemed the human race
by this perfect sacrifice of peace.

As king he claims dominion over all your creatures,
that he may bring before your infinite majesty
a kingdom of truth and life,
a kingdom of holiness and grace,
a kingdom of justice, love and peace.
And so with angels and archangels
and all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join their unending hymn of praise:

Choir *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.*

*Blessed is he that cometh 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.

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.

Jesus Christ is Lord:

Musical notation for the hymn 'Jesus Christ is Lord'. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked as *mf* (mezzo-forte), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *f* (forte). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Lord, by your cross and re sur rec-tion you have set us free. You are the Sa viour of the world.

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

Musical notation for the hymn 'Blessing and honor and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.' The score is in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked as *mf* (mezzo-forte). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Bless-ing and hon-our and glo-ry and pow'r be yours for ev-er and ev-er. A - men.

The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung

§ *Kneel*

The Lord's Prayer

God's kingdom is a kingdom of truth and life,
holiness and grace, justice, love and peace.
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 We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Invitation to Communion

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

The clergy receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

The Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore. The Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

*Baptised persons who are communicant members of other Churches
are warmly invited to receive Holy Communion.*

*The Blessed Sacrament is available in both kinds (bread and wine).
If you prefer to receive the consecrated bread only, please feel free to do so.*

*Alternatively, if you wish to receive a blessing, please bring this booklet
with you as a sign.*

Spiritual Communion – for those at home

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.

The choir sing Agnus Dei

Motet

Choir

Judge eternal, throned in splendour,
Lord of lords, and King of kings,
with thy living fire of judgement
purge this realm of bitter things:
solace all its wide dominion
with the healing of thy wings.

Still the weary folk are pining
for the hour that brings release:
and the city's crowded clangour
cries aloud for sin to cease;
and the homesteads and the woodlands
plead in silence for their peace.

Crown, O God, thine own endeavour;
cleave our darkness with thy sword:
feed the faithless and the hungry
with the richness of thy word:
cleanse the body of this nation
through the glory of the Lord.

Words Henry Scott Holland (1847-1918)
Music Malcolm Archer (born 1952)

Hymn

All

**O King enthroned on high,
Thou Comforter divine,
Blest Spirit of all truth, be nigh
And make us thine.**

**Thou art the source of life,
Thou art our treasure-store;
Give us thy peace, and end our strife
For evermore.**

**Descend, O heavenly Dove,
Abide with us always;
And in the fullness of thy love
Cleanse us, we pray.**

Words Basileu ouranie, Paraklete
Greek Pentecostarian (c 8th century)
translated by John Brownlie (1857-1925)

Music Temple
Walford Davies (1869-1941)

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

§ *Stand*

Lord, in the vision of your heavenly kingdom
you reveal among us the promise of your glory;
may that glory be ours
as we claim our citizenship in the kingdom
where you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever.

All

Amen.

**We thank you, Lord,
that you have fed us in this sacrament,
united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet
prepared for all peoples.
Amen.**

Hymn

All

**Christ triumphant ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
Hear us as we sing:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name.***

**Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing
By your humble birth**

**Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
Victim crucified!
Death is through the cross defeated,
Sinners justified:**

**Priestly king, enthroned for ever
High in heaven above!
sin and death and hell shall never
Stifle hymns of love:**

**So, our hearts and voices raising
Through the ages long,
Ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name.***

Words Michael Saward (1932-2015)

Music Guiting Power
John Barnard (born 1948)

§ Sit

Notices for the Community

¶ Sending Out

§ Stand

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Solemn Blessing

All May the Lord bless you with a noble and generous heart.
Amen.

All May he keep you joyful in his service.
Amen.

And may he lead you through the darkness of this world
to the radiant glory of his everlasting kingdom.

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.**

Acclamation and Dismissal

Lift up your heads, O gates;
be lifted up, you everlasting doors;
All **and the King of glory shall come in.**
'Who is the King of glory?'

All **'The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord who is mighty in battle.'**

Lift up you heads, O gates;
be lifted up, you everlasting doors;
All **and the King of glory shall come in.**
'Who is this King of glory?'

All **The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.'**

Go in the peace of Christ the King.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Organ Voluntary

Imperial March

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

§ *The procession departs*

§ *Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish
to listen to the organ voluntary*

§ *Refreshments are being served in the parish centre, please do join us*

§ *If you are a newcomer to the parish, please introduce yourself to the clergy or speak to a member of our Welcome Team.*

This evening at 5.30 pm
Solemn Choral Evensong
sung by the Pattishall Popup Choir

Collection – responding to God’s generosity

We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew’s Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes - *using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.*

Contactless giving - *using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.*

Giving on your smart phone - *using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.*

Giving online - *click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.*

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



*Our thanks are due to Anonymous Donor 2
who has generously financed
the production of this week’s service booklet.*

**Please take this booklet home
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,
and then re-cycle it.**

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St Matthew's Parish Church, The Parish Office, 27A The Drive, Kingsley, Northampton NN1 4RY
Tel: 01604 791251 www.stmatthews-northampton.org.uk office@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk