

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Second Sunday of Easter

Year C



The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, 1613 by Peter Paul Rubens 1577-1640

The Parish Mass

Sunday 27 April 2025

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.

Live streaming Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.

GDPR Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.

Toilet and baby changing facilities may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.

For younger children In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted area equipped with age-specific Christian resources is provided. Please feel free to make use of these facilities.



Collection – ‘Building a Generous Church’



Our response to God’s generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of St Matthew’s is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

* * * * *

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.



This morning's themes

In the Gospel we have John's version of Pentecost, the traditional birthday of the Church. The risen Jesus appears to his apostles, showing them his wounds and bestowing peace on them. He gives them the gift of the Spirit and inaugurates the mission of the Church, which is the continuance of his own mission (to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins).

One of the effects of the gift of the Spirit was that the Church had the power to forgive sins. John did not tell us who could exercise this power or how it should be exercised. Though we cannot read back into this text the later Sacrament of Penance, we can confidently say that the Church's use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is one valid and legitimate way of exercising the power over sin given by the risen Jesus to his disciples.

Like the apostle Thomas, from time to time we all doubt. We should not hide our questions. We must do what Thomas did – bring those doubts to the Lord. And our risen Lord will say to us what he said to Thomas: 'Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas' profession of faith, 'My Lord and my God', is the supreme christological statement in the Gospel according to John. Originally, the Gospel according to John ended where this morning's passage ends.

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 may be found helpful:

Reflection

Whilst Jesus was alive Thomas was as strong as an oak.
But when Jesus was put to death,
he became a reed shaking in the wind of doubt.
The truth was, though he didn't realise it at the time,
that it was the Master who was the oak.
He was a mere sapling growing in his shade.
When the oak fell, he was defenceless.
All of us are shaken by the winds of doubt.
We need to look at the Lord's wounds,
and hear his gentle voice saying to us:
'Doubt no longer but believe.'
Then with Thomas we shall make bold to say:
'My Lord and my God.'

Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

§ *Stand at the sound of the bell*

Hymn

§ *The procession enters and the altar is honoured with incense*

All

**COME, ye faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness;
God has brought his Israel
Into joy from sadness;
Loosed from pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters;
Led them with unmoistened foot
Through the Red Sea waters.**

**'Tis the spring of souls today:
Christ hath burst his prison,
And from three days' sleep in death
As a sun hath risen;
All the winter of our sins,
Long and dark, is flying
From his light, to whom we give
Laud and praise undying.**

**Now the queen of seasons, bright
With the day of splendour,
With the royal feast of feasts,
Comes its joy to render;
Comes to glad Jerusalem,
Who with true affection
Welcomes in unwearied strains
Jesu's resurrection.**

**Neither might the gates of death,
Nor the tomb's dark portal,
Nor the watchers, nor the seal,
Hold thee as a mortal;
But today amidst thine own
Thou didst stand, bestowing
That, thy peace, which evermore
Passeth human knowing.**

Words Greek, St John of Damascus c675-749
translated by John Mason Neale 1818-1866

Music St John Damascene
Arthur Henry Brown 1830-1926

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

The Greeting

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

The Easter Acclamation

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

The service is introduced

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 † you 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.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
to discover further the meaning of this joyful Eastertide,
let us listen attentively to the Good News of Christ's resurrection.

§ *Sit*

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Reader A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

When the temple police had brought the apostles, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.' But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, so that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him

Acts 5.27-32

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Response **I will give thanks to you, for you have become my salvation.**

Reader The Lord is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.
Joyful shouts of salvation
sound from the tents of the righteous:
'The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds;
the right hand of the Lord raises up;
the right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.' **Response**

I shall not die, but live
and declare the works of the Lord.
The Lord has punished me sorely,
but he has not given me over to death. **Response**

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it. **Response**

I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
The stone which the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone. **Response**

This is the Lord's doing,
and it is marvellous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.
Come, O Lord, and save us we pray.
Come, Lord, send us now prosperity. **Response**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;
we bless you from the house of the Lord.
The Lord is God; he has given us light;
link the pilgrims with cords
right to the horns of the altar. **Response**

You are my God and I will thank you;
you are my God and I will exalt you.
O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures for ever. **Response**

Psalms 118:14-29

Holy Gospel

Acclamation



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

All Alleluia.

§ We turn to face the Book of the Gospels

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

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



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.

John 20:19-31

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Homily

§ Sit

At the end there is a period for quiet reflection

The Apostles' Creed

§ *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 As people who have not seen and yet believe, we bring our needs
to the God who conquers death.

After each petition

All Risen Christ, be known among us
and give us your peace.

After the final petition

Priest Lord, give us the certainty that beyond death
there is a life where broken things are mended
and lost things are found;
where there is rest for the weary and joy for the sad;
where all that we have loved and willed of good exists,
and where we will meet again our loved ones.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

§ *Stand*

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

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

The Offertory

§ *The Gifts are presented to the presiding priest and the altar is prepared*

Hymn

§ *A monetary collection is taken. For alternative ways of giving please refer to the front of this booklet. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.*

ALLELUYA, alleluya, alleluya!

**O sons and daughters of the King,
Whom heavenly hosts in glory sing,
Today the grave hath lost its sting. Alleluya!**

**On that first morning of the week,
Before the day began to break,
The Marys went their Lord to seek. Alleluya!**

**An angel bade their sorrow flee,
For thus he spake unto the three:
'Your Lord is gone to Galilee.' Alleluya!**

**That night the apostles met in fear,
Amidst them came their Lord most dear,
And said: 'Peace be unto you here!' Alleluya!**

**When Thomas afterwards had heard
That Jesus had fulfilled his word,
He doubted if it were the Lord. Alleluya!**

**'My piercèd side, O Thomas see;
My hands, my feet, I show to thee;
Not faithless, but believing be.' Alleluya!**

**No longer Thomas then denied;
He saw the feet, the hands, the side;
'Thou art my Lord and God,' he cried. Alleluya!**

**Blessèd are they that have not seen,
And yet whose faith hath constant been,
In life eternal they shall reign. Alleluya!**

Words Latin, Jean Tisserand, OFM d 1494
tr John Mason Neale 1818-1866

Music O filii et filiae
Melody in *Airs sur les hymnes sacrez*, 1683
arranged by Henry Walford Davies 1869-1941

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, accept the offerings of your people
and those you have brought to new birth,
that, renewed by the confession of your name and by Baptism,
we may attain unending happiness;
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 and just, 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:

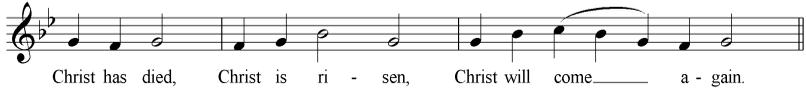
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

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.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All



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 Mary, the Virgin Mother of God,
Saint Thomas, 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



The Blessed Sacrament is elevated. Bells are rung.

§ *Kneel*

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

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

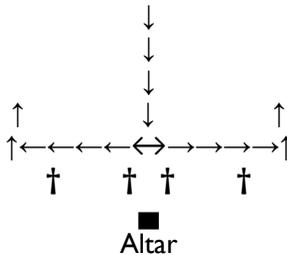
The clergy receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

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

Baptized persons who are communicant members of other Churches are warmly invited to receive Holy Communion, as indicated below.

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



Spiritual Communion – *for those watching 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.

Hymn

All

**JESU, my Lord, my God, my all,
Hear me, blest Saviour, when I call;
Hear me, and from thy dwelling place
Pour down the riches of thy grace:
*Jesu, my Lord, I thee adore,
O make me love thee more and more.***

**Jesu, too late I thee have sought,
How can I love thee as I ought?
And how extol thy matchless fame,
The glorious beauty of thy name?**

**Jesu, what didst thou find in me,
That thou hast dealt so lovingly?
How great the joy that thou hast brought,
So far exceeding hope or thought!**

**Jesu, of thee shall be my song,
To thee my heart and soul belong;
All that I am or have is thine,
And thou, sweet Saviour, thou art mine.**

Words Henry Augustine Collins, OCSO 1827-1919

Music Stella
based on an English traditional melody

Prayer after Communion

§ *All remain seated for period of personal reflection and thanksgiving*

Let us pray:

§ *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.
Amen.

All

**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.**

Hymn

All

**THE Lord is risen indeed!
Now is his work performed;
Now is the mighty captive freed,
And death's strong castle stormed.**

**The Lord is risen indeed!
Then hell has lost his prey;
With him is risen the ransomed seed
To reign in endless day.**

**The Lord is risen indeed!
He lives, to die no more;
He lives, the sinner's cause to plead,
Whose curse and shame he bore.**

Words Thomas Kelly 1769-1855

Music Narenza
Melody from Johann Leisentritt
Catholicum Hymnologium Germanicum, 1584
adapted by William Henry Havergal 1793-1870

Notices for the Community

§ Sit

¶ Sending Out

§ Stand

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Solemn Blessing

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

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

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

Sung Dismissal

Deacon

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

All

In the name of Christ, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

§ Please turn to face the Madonna and Child sculpture

Regina Caeli

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

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

God of life, you have given joy to the world (9 rings)
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.** Music The Easter Hymn

Organ Voluntary

Festive Procession

Paul Bryan (b.1950)

- § *Please remain standing until the procession has departed*
- § *Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary*
- § *Refreshments are served in the parish centre, please do join us*
- § *If you are a newcomer to the parish or area please introduce yourself to one of the clergy or speak to a member of our Welcome Team.*

This evening at 5.30 pm
BCP Evening Prayer
is said in Quire

Our thanks are due to Anonymous Donor 10
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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