

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Passion Sunday

Year A



'The Raising of Lazarus' by Duccio di Buoninsegna, 1310–11

The Parish Mass

Sunday 22 March 2026

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.



Passiontide begins As we gather for Mass on this Fifth Sunday of Lent, the Church places before us one of the most powerful and moving stories in the Gospel: the raising of Lazarus. In this deeply human scene we encounter grief, tears, and the sorrow that accompanies the death of someone we love - experiences that many of us know personally through loss, bereavement, and the pain of separation.

At the heart of the story stands Jesus. He does not remain distant from human suffering; he shares in it and weeps with those who mourn. Yet this moment of grief becomes the setting for a profound revelation of faith. Martha, even in the face of death, declares her trust: "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God."

When Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb, he commands those around him: "Unbind him, and let him go." The sign points beyond the restoration of earthly life. Jesus reveals himself as "the resurrection and the life," the one who brings a life that death cannot destroy. As we continue our Lenten journey toward Holy Week, we bring our own experiences of loss and hope before the Lord, trusting in the promise of life he offers to all who believe in him.

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 prayer, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Reflection

We are born to die so that we may live more fully.
Every time we pass from one stage of life to another,
something in us dies and something new is born.
We taste death in moments of loneliness,
rejection, sorrow, disappointment, and failure.
We are dying before our time when we live in bitterness,
in hatred, and in isolation.
Each day we are creating our own death by the way we live.
For those with faith, death is not extinguishing the light;
it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.

Setting

Communion Service in C

John Ireland 1879-1962

Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

§ *The choir are in their stalls*

§ **All stand** *at the sound of the bell*

§ *The sanctuary party enter in silence and go to their places*

§ **All sit** *with the priest for a period of silent recollection and prayer*

§ **All stand** *with the priest*

Hymn

§ *The priest reverences the altar and honours it with incense*

All

**THERE is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where our dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all.**

**We may not know, we cannot tell
What pains he had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.**

**He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good;
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by his precious blood.**

**There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven, and let us in.**

**O dearly, dearly has he loved,
And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming blood,
And try his works to do.**

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

The Greeting

All The Lord our redeemer be with you
 and also with you.

The Mass is introduced

Invitation to Confession

God shows his love for us
in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
let us then show our love for him
by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Silence is kept

Confession

All **Almighty God,
long-suffering and of great goodness:
I confess to you,
I confess with my whole heart
my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,
my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking;
the hurts I have done to others,
and the good I have left undone.
O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;
and raise me to newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Kyries

Lord Jesus, you raise the dead to life in the Spirit:
Kyrie eleison.

All **Kyrie eleison.**

You bring pardon and peace to the sinner:
Christe eleison.

All **Christe eleison.**

You bring light to those who walk in darkness
and in the shadow of death:
Kyrie eleison.

All **Kyrie eleison.**

Absolution

May the Father † forgive you by the death of his Son
and strengthen you to live in the power of the Spirit
all our days.

All **Amen.**

The Collect

Let us pray.

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
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 Romans.

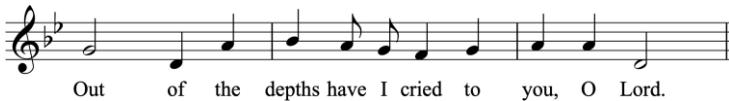
To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Romans 8.6-11

All This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm



Choir Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication. **Response**

If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?
But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you shall be feared. **Response**

glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But

some of them said, ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?’

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, ‘Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?’ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, ‘Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.’ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

John 11.1-45

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



All Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

§ Sit

At the end, a period for personal reflection

§ Stand with the priest

Affirmation of Faith

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

All **Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.
Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Prayers of the Faithful

On this day that the Lord has made
let us give God the glory,
who suffered on the Cross for the world's redemption.

§ *Kneel*

Intercessor For forgiveness for the many times we have denied Jesus,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For grace to seek out those habits of sin
which mean spiritual death,
and by prayer and self-discipline to overcome them,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For Christian people,
that through the suffering of disunity
there may grow a rich union in Christ,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who make laws, interpret them, and administer them,
that our common life may be ordered in justice and mercy.
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who still make Jerusalem a battleground,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who have the courage and honesty to work openly
 for justice and peace,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For those in the darkness and agony of isolation,
that they may find support and encouragement,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who, weighted down with hardship, failure, or sorrow,
 feel that God is far from them,
for the sick and suffering ... (*the acutely ill*)
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who are tempted to give up the way of the cross,
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

That we, with those who have died in faith,
may find mercy in the day of Christ ... (*the recently departed,*
anniversaries of death)
let us pray to the Lord.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Choir *Holy God, holy and strong,*
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.

§ Stand

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Sign of Peace

Once we were far off
but now in union with Christ Jesus
we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood,
for he is our peace.

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.

The Offertory

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

Hymn

§ *A monetary collection is taken towards our ministry and mission.
For alternative ways of giving please refer to the front of this booklet.*

All

**SING, my tongue, the glorious battle,
Sing the ending of the fray,
O'er the cross, the victor's trophy,
Sound the loud triumphant lay:
Tell how Christ, the world's Redeemer,
As a victim won the day.**

**God in pity saw man fallen,
Shamed and sunk in misery,
When he fell on death by tasting
Fruit of the forbidden tree:
Then another tree was chosen
Which the world from death should free.**

Therefore when the appointed fulness
Of the holy time was come,
He was sent, who maketh all things,
Forth from God's eternal home:
Thus he came to earth, incarnate,
Offspring of a maiden's womb.

Thirty years among us dwelling,
Now at length his hour fulfilled,
Born for us, he meets his Passion,
For that this he freely willed,
On the cross the Lamb is lifted,
Where his life-blood shall be spilled.

Laud and honour to the Father;
Laud and honour to the Son;
Laud and honour to the Spirit;
Ever three and ever one:
Consubstantial, co-eternal,
While unending ages run. Amen.

Words Latin. Venantius Fortunatus c530-c609
vv 1-3 tr Percy Dearmer 1867-1936
vv 4-5 tr John Mason Neale 1818-1866

Music Grafton (Tantum ergo)
from *Chants Ordinaires de l'Office Divin*, 1881

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

Hear us, almighty God,
and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith,
graciously purify them by the working of this holy sacrifice.
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 and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For as the time of his passion and resurrection draws near
the whole world is called to acknowledge his hidden majesty.
The power of the life-giving cross
reveals the judgement that has come upon the world
and the triumph of Christ crucified.

He is the victim who dies no more,
the Lamb once slain, who lives for ever,
our advocate in heaven to plead our cause,
exalting us there to join with angels and archangels,
for ever praising you and singing:

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.

All glory be to you, our heavenly Father,
who, in your tender mercy,
gave your only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption;
who made there by his one oblation of himself once offered
a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction
for the sins of the whole world;
he instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue,
a perpetual memory of his precious death until he comes again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray,
and grant that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,
we receiving these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine,
according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution,
in remembrance of his death and passion,
may be partakers of his most blessed body and 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.



Response

Lord, by your cross and re - sur - rec - tion you have set us free.

You are the Sa - viour of the world.

Therefore, Lord and heavenly Father,
 in remembrance of the precious death and passion,
 the mighty resurrection and glorious ascension
 of your dear Son Jesus Christ,
 we offer you through him this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Grant that by his merits and death,
 and through faith in his blood,
 we and all your Church may receive forgiveness of our sins
 and all other benefits of his passion.

Although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins,
 to offer you any sacrifice,
 yet we pray that you will accept this
 the duty and service that we owe.

Do not weigh our merits, but pardon our offences,
 and fill us all who share in this holy communion
 with your grace and heavenly blessing;

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

A- men.

The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung

§ *Kneel*

The Lord's Prayer

'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but may have eternal life.'

Let us pray with confidence to the God of love as Jesus 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,
communion in Christ's body once broken.

Agnus Dei

Choir O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
grant us thy peace.

Invitation to Communion

Let us receive into our hearts and minds the living Lord.
All **May we live in him and he in us.**

Giving of Communion

Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

Spiritual Communion – *for those at home*

Act of Reception

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.

Motet

Choir

DROP, drop, slow tears,
And bathe those beautiful feet
Which brought from heaven
The news and Prince of Peace:

Cease not, wet eyes,
His mercy to entreat;
To cry for vengeance
Sin doth never cease.

In your deep floods
Drown all my faults and fears;
Nor let his eye
See sin, but through my tears.

Words Phineas Fletcher 1582-1650

Music A Litany
William Walton 1902-1983

Hymn

All

**DROP, drop, slow tears,
And bathe those beautiful feet,
Which brought from heaven
The news and Prince of Peace.**

**Cease not, wet eyes,
His mercies to entreat;
To cry for vengeance
Sin doth never cease.**

**In your deep floods
Drown all my faults and fears;
Nor let his eye
See sin, but through my tears.**

Words Phineas Fletcher 1582-1650

Music Song 46
First strain of Song 46 melody and bass by
Orlando Gibbons 1583-1625

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

§ *Stand*

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us that what we do for the least
of our brothers and sisters
we do also for you:
give us the will to be the servant of others
as you were the servant of all,
and gave up your life and died for us,
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

All

Amen.

**God of our pilgrimage,
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
Refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Hymn

All

**IT is a thing most wonderful,
Almost too wonderful to be,
That God's own Son should come from heaven,
And die to save a child like me.**

**And yet I know that it is true:
He chose a poor and humble lot,
And wept, and toiled, and mourned, and died,
For love of those who loved him not.**

**I cannot tell how he could love
A child so weak and full of sin;
His love must be most wonderful,
If he could die my love to win.**

**I sometimes think about the cross,
And shut my eyes, and try to see
The cruel nails and crown of thorns,
And Jesus crucified for me.**

**But even could I see him die,
I could but see a little part
Of that great love, which, like a fire,
Is always burning in his heart.**

**It is most wonderful to know
His love for me so free and sure;
But 'tis more wonderful to see
My love for him so faint and poor.**

**And yet I want to love thee, Lord;
O light the flame within my heart,
And I will love thee more and more,
Until I see thee as thou art.**

Words William Walsham How 1823-1897

Music Herongate
Essex folk tune
arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872-1958

Notices for the Community

§ Sit

¶ Sending Out

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

Solemn Blessing

May the Father,
who so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
bring you by faith to his eternal life.
All **Amen.**

May the Son,
who accepted the cup of sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will,
keep you steadfast as you walk with him the way of the cross.
All **Amen.**

May the Spirit,
who strengthens us to suffer with Christ that we may share his glory,
set your minds on life and 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.**

The Dismissal

The Mass is ended, go in peace.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Organ Voluntary

Fantasia in C minor BWV 562

J S Bach 1685-1750

- § *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 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 afternoon at 4.00 pm

*‘The Crucifixion’ by John Stainer
sung by St Matthew’s Choir*

Next Sunday - Holy Week begins

**9.30 am The Palm Liturgy, (in Parish Centre)
Procession of Palms, and Mass of the Passion**

5.30 pm Service of Penitence and Forgiveness

Our thanks are due to John Folwell
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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