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# Ashes to Fire

## The Seasons of Lent and Easter

1. At the heart of the Christian faith is our participation in the life, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ as Lord. We proclaim that „the Word became flesh and dwelt among us“ (John 1:14). Jesus Christ was born into human history in the fullness of time for our salvation. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are delivered from sin and death, and by the Holy Spirit we are born into eternal life with God. This is the faith we are called to live in our lives and to continually renew in our worship.
2. A whole range of meaning is associated with the death and resurrection of Jesus. The New Testament made the Passover lamb a central symbol of redemption, especially John’s gospel and the writings of St. Paul. “Our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the festival” (1 Corinthians 5:7-8). The Passover recalls the deliverance of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt into the promised land. In Christ this is given new meaning so that we are liberated from slavery to sin and death and delivered into eternal life. This is often referred to as the Paschal Mystery. In Lent and Easter, the Christian community dramatises the narrative story of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus and identifies itself in that story. Easter proclaims the reality and power of the risen Christ present in the sacraments and in scripture, so that Jesus’ death and resurrection opens up a continuing experience of a living relationship with the risen Christ.

3. The seasons of Lent and Easter are, therefore, laden with a richness and power that leads God's people to a deeper personal commitment to Christ and to a deeper sense of what it is to be church, the people of God. In these seasons God's entire story with God's people is brought into focus. By entering into and proclaiming the redemptive work of God in Christ through the seasons of Lent and Easter, we are formed in the pattern of his death and resurrection and his life-giving Spirit.

## Lent

1. The origins of Lent lie in this time being a focus for evangelism and true conversion; a time for journeying with Christ to the cross and beyond. Since Easter is the time when the church celebrates God's most definitive redemptive acts, Lent is a time for intentional growing into God through deep reflection on scripture, fellowship together, prayer, and reflection on our baptismal covenant from which we derive our identity as Christian people. Preparation for sharing in and "doing the story" of Jesus' death and resurrection is basic, for all this leads to a renewal of our baptismal faith in the season of Easter.
2. The observance of Lent was first undertaken by those undergoing their final preparation for initiation into the Christian community through baptism. In preparing to worship in this season, therefore, we do well to explore the meaning of baptism as entry into a lifelong process of being transformed into the life and holiness of Christ. As reflected all through scripture, this is a journey or pilgrimage that is bigger than the private experience of an individual. This journey engages the whole Christian community and it is the heartbeat of the church's mission and worship.

3. The meaning of Lent is made clearest when each mission and ministry unit intends to prepare new Christians and members for initiation, whether that be baptism, confirmation, or renewal of baptismal vows. In doing so the whole community of faith is thereby engaged in a common process of renewal and reliving their experience of coming to faith. The processes of searching the scriptures, engaging in Lent study groups, prayer and fellowship, reflecting on Christian discipleship, of taking seriously the need for reconciliation and repentance, is all seen in the light of true conversion of heart.
  
4. The season of Lent is a time when the church seeks a new pace for itself. We should avoid exhausting ourselves with “busyness”, sprinting through a series of events only to get to Easter Day and collapse with tiredness. Lent should be a time of refreshment so that the season helps the community of faith see more clearly how to live a balanced Christian life, so that they can give authentic witness for the rest of the year.

# Notes

1. The popular idea of „giving things up“ in Lent, however inadequately that is often understood, has its liturgical expression in the stark simplicity of Lenten worship. In part this is to express a spirit of penitence. But it is also to provide a striking contrast with the joyful celebration of Easter. This „giving up“ traditionally includes the omission of the „Glory to God in the Highest“ in the Eucharist, the absence of flowers from church or perhaps the use of purple flowers, the restrained use of instruments to accompany worship, and the careful selection of texts to avoid the use of the word „Alleluia“ and similar expressions of joy which will greet the resurrection on Easter Day. These are examples of how a distinctive atmosphere can be introduced into the worship of the season.
2. Veiling of crosses is a custom that has grown up in some churches from Palm Sunday. This has grown from an early custom of covering the splendour of rich and jewelled metalwork. To obscure the cross in Lent or Holy Week is misplaced, though the substitution of a simple wooden cross or crucifix for a more colourful or expensive one might be an impressive symbol, and the removal of banners and pictures could enhance the atmosphere of Lent.
3. Local adaptations may be made to reflect the New Zealand context. Care should be taken that the ethos of Lent is not disturbed.

# Ash Wednesday

## A Service for the Beginning of Lent

### Introduction

1. Ash Wednesday is a call to return to God with all our hearts (See Joel 2:12). It marks the beginning of Lent, the forty day period of preparation for Easter and begins the journey to Good Friday and Easter. This day has become, for Christians, the day when we hear God's call to repentance and reconciliation, in a manner that has some similarities to the Day of Atonement in Judaism. This is a day for new beginnings with God, for putting aside the sins and failures of the past and beginning afresh. It is also a day when we are brought face to face with our own mortality, upon which we reflect in the light of the redeeming love of Christ.
2. Ash may be used as a sign of our repentance and mortality, although the liturgy offered may be used without it. Ash is an ancient biblical sign and its use in worship is a powerful non-verbal way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. The focus of the service should be on the scriptures, the imposition of ash, if used, and characterised by reflection, silence and penitence.

## **The Structure of the Liturgy**

### *The Gathering of the Community*

Greeting

Introduction to the Rite (or at the beginning of the  
Liturgy of Penitence)

Collect

### *The Proclamation*

The Readings

Gospel Reading

Sermon (optional)

### *The Liturgy of Penitence (as provided below)*

Examination of Conscience and Confession

Imposition of Ashes

Absolution

### *The Prayers of the People*

Prayers of Intercession

Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)

### *The Ministry of the Sacrament*

The Peace

The Preparation of the Gifts

The Great Thanksgiving

The Communion (with the Lord's Prayer before or after it, if not  
said elsewhere)

Prayer after Communion

### *The Dismissal of the Community*

Blessing (optional)

Dismissal

## Notes

1. This service is intended primarily for use on Ash Wednesday. Where this is not possible it may be used on the First Sunday in Lent.
2. The ash is by tradition the ash of the burned palms from the previous Palm Sunday, but other provision may be made.
3. Imposition of Ashes: The president may be assisted by others. Where there is a large congregation, it is better that several assist the presiding priest than that the words of imposition be abbreviated. Nevertheless, the presiding priest may, if necessary, use only one of the two sentences or impose ashes in silence.
4. The service begins in the usual way with one of the Liturgies of the Eucharist, but the opening Song of Praise (e.g. Glory to God in the highest) is omitted (or replaced with The Prayer of Manasseh, *NZPB*, p. 98), as is the penitential section of the service (the introduction to the confession, the confession, and the absolution).
5. In ecumenical contexts, this service may be adapted according to local custom, or replaced with an approved service (e.g. the Anglican/Roman Catholic Ash Wednesday service).



## THE LITURGY OF PENITENCE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

*The following may be used as an introduction to the service as a whole*

E te whānau a te Karaiti/ Dear friends in Christ, every year we celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration. In order that our Lent may be a time of renewal and growth we begin this season by remembering our need for repentance and for the forgiveness of God proclaimed by Jesus Christ.

Let us, therefore, observe a holy Lent by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, self-denial and giving to those in need, and by reading and meditating on the word of God.

### THE LITURGY OF PENITENCE

*After the Gospel Reading or Sermon, if one is given, the presiding priest or minister says*

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, an ancient sign, speaking of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marking the penitence of the community as a whole.

Let us kneel and in silence call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

*Silence*

*The following litany of penitence may be used.*

We have not loved you with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength.

We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.  
Lord have mercy.  
**Lord have mercy.**

We have been deaf to your call to serve.  
We have been unfaithful, proud, and hypocritical.  
Christ have mercy.  
**Christ have mercy.**

We have been self-centred, and have taken advantage of others.  
Lord have mercy.  
**Lord have mercy.**

We have been envious of those more fortunate than ourselves.  
Christ have mercy.  
**Christ have mercy.**

We have loved worldly goods and comforts too much.  
We have been dishonest in daily life and work.  
Lord have mercy.  
**Lord have mercy.**

We have neglected prayer and worship, and have failed to commend  
the faith that is in us.  
Christ have mercy.  
**Christ have mercy.**

We have been blind to human need and suffering, and indifferent to  
injustice and cruelty.  
Lord have mercy.  
**Lord have mercy.**

We have thought uncharitably about others, and we have been prejudiced towards those who differ from us.

Christ have mercy.

**Christ have mercy.**

We have wasted and polluted your creation, and lacked concern for those who come after us.

Lord have mercy.

**Lord have mercy.**

*Then the presiding priest or minister and people say together the following or another confession.*

**Merciful God,**

**we have sinned**

**in what we have thought and said,**

**in the wrong we have done and in**

**the good we have not done.**

**We have sinned in ignorance:**

**we have sinned in weakness:**

**we have sinned through our own deliberate fault.**

**We are truly sorry.**

**We repent and turn to you.**

**Forgive us, for our Saviour Christ's sake,**

**and renew our lives to the glory of your name. Amen.**

## THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*If the imposition of ashes is to follow, the presiding priest says*

Gracious and everloving God,  
you create us from the dust of the  
earth; grant that these ashes may be  
for us

a sign of our penitence  
and a symbol of our mortality;  
for it is by your grace alone that  
we receive eternal life  
in Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

*The presiding priest or minister receives the imposition from another minister, then it is given to all those desiring it. The presiding priest or minister may receive the imposition after it has been administered to all others.*

*The imposition may be done in silence, or with the following words.*

Dust you are, and to dust you shall return.

*and/or*

Turn from sin and be faithful to the gospel.

*During this time a psalm, hymn, or anthem may be used.*

*When all who wish to have received the imposition of ashes, the presiding priest pronounces the following, or another one.*

Through the cross of Christ,  
God have mercy on you,  
pardon you  
and set you free.  
Know that you are forgiven  
and be at peace.  
God strengthen you in all goodness  
and keep you in life eternal.  
**Amen.**

*The Eucharist continues with **The Prayers of the People***



# The Sixth Sunday in Lent – **Palm Sunday**

The Sunday of the Passion with the Liturgy of the Palms

## Introduction

1. On Palm Sunday the Church commemorates Christ's entry into Jerusalem to accomplish his saving work by dying and rising again. The Liturgy has two distinctive features, the procession with palms and the reading of the Passion Gospel.
2. The procession is a dramatic way to recall and celebrate the beginning of these days of the passion and death of Our Lord. Palm or other branches are carried although they are secondary to the procession itself. The procession does not simply remind us of what happened in the past. It is in itself an act of praise to Christ. However our praise is offered to the One whose reign is on a cross, and it expresses our readiness to take up our cross and follow our crucified and risen Lord, as we go with him to the place of suffering and death.
3. The reading of the Passion Gospel takes us into the heart of Holy Week. Although the services of Holy Week are shaped by the historical commemoration of the events of the last week in Jesus' earthly life, taken together they form an extended celebration of the whole mystery of his redemptive work. The solemn reading or singing of the narrative of the passion and death of Jesus Christ is an essential part of the liturgy of Palm Sunday. For this reason the full form of the Passion should be used whenever possible. Coming after the procession, it reminds us that at the centre of Christ's Reign is the power of costly, unconditional love alone.

## **The Structure of the Liturgy**

### *The Gathering of the Community*

Greeting

The Liturgy of the Palms (*as provided below*)

The Collect

### *The Proclamation*

The Readings

Gospel Reading - The Passion Gospel

Sermon

### *The Prayers of the People*

Prayers of Intercession

Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)

### *The Ministry of the Sacrament*

The Peace

The Preparation of the Gifts

The Great Thanksgiving

The Communion (with the Lord's Prayer before or after it, if not said elsewhere)

Prayer after Communion

### *The Dismissal of the Community*

Blessing (optional)

Dismissal

## Notes

1. In the Revised Common Lectionary, Palm Sunday is referred to as Passion Sunday. In the New Zealand Prayer Book – He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, following the tradition of the Book of Common Prayer, the Fifth Sunday in Lent is Passion Sunday.
2. Whenever possible the congregation gathers in a place apart from the church to which the procession will go. When this is not possible, the gathering of the people takes place at a convenient place, and the procession takes place inside or outside the church as circumstances permit.
3. Palms or other branches may be used. The congregation may bring palms with them or be given them when they arrive. A sign of blessing may be used.
4. Palm crosses may be blessed and distributed at this service. This may be done at any appropriate point in the service (e.g. as part of The Liturgy of the Palms, before the Peace, before the Prayer after Communion, before the blessing). The following or some other suitable prayer may be used to bless the palm crosses. A sign of blessing may be used.

God of all people and all places,  
the cross is a symbol for us  
of your boundless compassion.  
Bless these crosses, we pray,  
that they may be reminders  
of your great love for us in Christ.  
Help us to take up our own cross daily  
and follow you;  
through the same Jesus Christ our Redeemer.  
**Amen.**



5. The collect is said after the procession, when all are in their places. It may be introduced by the words “Let us pray” and a brief bidding, after which silence should be kept.
6. Prayers of Penitence are omitted.
7. The Gospel of the Passion should always be read. It is announced “The Passion of our Lord according to *N*” and concluded “This is the Passion of the Lord”. No responses are used. It may be read or sung by three or more people. Afterward silence may be kept. Where appropriate the congregation may be invited to sit during the reading of part of the Passion.
8. The Creed may be omitted.
9. The Prayers of the People should be especially adapted for use on Palm Sunday.

## THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS

*The people may be greeted informally.*

*Then, all standing, the presiding priest or minister says*

Grace and peace to you from God.

Kia tau ki a koutou, te atawhai me te rangimārie o te Atua.

**God fill you with truth and joy.**

**Ma te Atua koe e whakaū, ki te pono me te hari.**

*Or*

The Lord be with you.

Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou.

**The Lord bless you.**

**Ma Ihowa koe e manaaki.**

*The Sentence of the Day is read.*

Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven! *Matthew 21:9*

*The presiding priest or minister introduces the celebration with these or similar words.*

E te whānau a te Karaiti/Brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing to celebrate our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings, we may share his risen life.

*The people hold up their palms while this prayer is said.*

God our Saviour,  
your Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah  
to suffer and to die;  
let these palms be for us  
signs of his victory;  
and grant that we who bear them in his name  
may ever hail him as our king,  
and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life;  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

*Then follows the reading for the Liturgy of the Palms.*

*The reader says*

The Holy Gospel according to . . . (chapter . . . beginning at . . . )

A Matthew 21:1-11    B Mark 11:1-11    OR    John 12:12-16    C  
Luke 19:28-40

*After the reading, the reader says*

This is the Gospel of Christ  
**Praise to Christ the Word.**

*The presiding priest or minister then says*

Let us go forth, praising Jesus our messiah.

*During the procession all hold palms in their hands, as did the crowds who welcomed him to Jerusalem. Appropriate hymns, psalms, canticles or anthems may be sung.*

*At A Eucharist, the service continues with **The Collect of the Day** and **The Readings**.*

# Chrism Eucharist in Holy Week

## Introduction

1. The Chrism Eucharist is about anointing. The Greek word chrism means “anointing”. Christ is the messiah (which means the same thing in Hebrew) or anointed one of God, and we are the anointed ones of God as Christians.
2. The Chrism Eucharist in Holy Week links the anointing of Christ and his “baptism” fulfilled at Easter and our participation in that through our baptism and consequential involvement in Christ’s priestly ministry of reconciliation and healing. So all anointing is linked to the saving work of Christ.

## **The Structure of the Liturgy**

### *The Gathering of the Community*

Greeting  
Song of Praise  
Act of Penitence  
The Collect

### *The Proclamation*

The Readings  
Gospel Reading  
Sermon

### *The Prayers of the People*

Prayers of Intercession  
Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)

### *The Ministry of the Sacrament*

The Peace  
The Preparation of the Gifts  
The Blessing of the Oils  
The Great Thanksgiving  
The Communion (with the Lord's Prayer before or after it, if not  
said elsewhere)  
Prayer after Communion

### *The Dismissal of the Community*

Blessing (optional)  
Dismissal

### *The Reception of Holy Oils in the Place where they will be used*

## Notes

- 1) The bishop presides at the Chrism Eucharist, which is traditionally held on Maundy Thursday.
- 2) The Song of Praise, “Glory to God in the highest”, or a suitable alternative may be used at this service.
- 3) The oil normally used for the healing ministry of the church is pure olive oil. It is customary for perfume and balsam to be added to the Oil of Chrism for possible use in Christian Initiation.
- 4) It is preferable for there to be a single glass container for each type of oil, which may be placed on the altar, and the oil distributed after it has been blessed.
- 5) A rite is provided below for the public reception of the newly blessed oils in the place where they will be used. They may then be used in Christian Initiation and in the ministry of the church throughout the year. Where this provision is used:
  - a) The oils are blessed by the bishop at a diocesan celebration at some time convenient during Holy Week
  - b) The oils may be received into the parish on Maundy Thursday at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Last Supper or at some other convenient time.
- 6) The consecrated oil should be kept in the same safe place set apart for the keeping of the consecrated eucharistic elements.

# The Chrism Eucharist

## THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

*At a Chrism Eucharist, the following sentence, readings and collect are used in place of those for the day:*

### **Sentence**

Through us God in Christ spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him. For we are the aroma of God.

*2 Corinthians 2:14f.*

### **Collect**

Everloving God,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
you anointed your only Son  
as messiah and Lord of all creation,  
and have given us a share in his consecration  
by making us members of his body;  
help us to be faithful witnesses in the world to  
the salvation Christ won for all humanity;  
through him, who lives and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

*Or*

Gracious God,  
you anointed your Son Jesus Christ  
with the Holy Spirit and with power  
to bring to the world the blessings of your kingdom:  
anoint your Church with the same Holy Spirit,  
that we who share in his suffering and his victory  
may bear witness to the gospel of salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm	89:19-29	133
OT Reading	Isaiah 61:1-3,6,8-9	
Epistle	Revelation 1:4b-8	
Gospel	Luke 4:16-21	

## THE BLESSING OF THE OILS

*One of the following options is used.*

### *EITHER*

## THE BLESSING OF THE OILS AT THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

*At **The Preparation of the Gifts**, the oils to be blessed are presented to the bishop, who says the following prayers.*

### **Consecration of the Oil for the Ministry of Healing**

Blessed are you, sovereign God, gentle and merciful,  
creator of heaven and earth.

Your Word brought light out of darkness,  
and daily your Spirit renews the face of the earth.

Your anointed Son brought healing  
to those in weakness and distress.

He broke the power of evil and set us free from sin and death that  
we might praise your name for ever.

By the power of your Spirit may your blessing rest on  
those who are anointed with this oil in your name; may  
they be made whole in body, mind and spirit, restored  
in your image, renewed in your love,  
and serve you as sons and daughters in your kingdom.

**Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation, now  
and for ever. Amen.**



## Consecration of the Oil of Chrism

Blessed are you, Sovereign God and Eternal Father,  
upholding by your grace all who hear your call.  
Under your Old Covenant priests and rulers were anointed to serve  
you and in the fullness of time you anointed your Son with the Holy  
Spirit as the Christ, the Saviour and Servant of all.  
By the power of your Spirit may your blessing rest  
on those who are anointed with this chrism in your  
name; let it be for them a sign of joy and gladness  
as they share in the royal priesthood of the New  
Covenant and make known the kingdom of Jesus  
Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy  
Spirit we lift our voices in thanks and praise.  
**Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*The Eucharist continues with **The Great Thanksgiving.***

OR

## THE BLESSING OF THE OILS IN THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*The following words are inserted in the place of the variation for Lent in any  
of the Great Thanksgivings in A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia  
Mihinare o Aotearoa.*

You anointed Jesus the Christ  
with the Holy Spirit and with  
power to bring healing and  
reconciliation to those in  
weakness and distress.  
You anoint us  
with this same Spirit in baptism,  
making us a holy people  
in the royal priesthood of the new covenant.

*In the final section of the Great Thanksgiving, the following words are inserted after*

- or           “...for the service of your kingdom.” (page 423)
- or           “...your everlasting kingdom.” (page 438)
- or           “...to do your will.” (page 470)
- or           “...from the one true vine.” (page 487)

Send your Holy Spirit on these oils;  
may your blessing rest on those who are anointed:  
heal the sick in body, mind, and spirit,  
lead the baptised into the joy of new life,  
and strengthen all who share in the royal priesthood of Jesus Christ.

*The Great Thanksgiving then continues to its end.*

## THE RECEPTION OF HOLY OILS IN THE PLACE WHERE THEY WILL BE USED

*The following prayers are provided for the public reception of the newly blessed oils in the place where they will be used.*

*The oils may be carried in an entrance procession. After the greeting that begins the service the oils may be presented and the presiding priest may speak briefly of their significance in the life of the Church. Reference should be made to the service at which the oils were blessed.*

*The presiding priest or minister says*

E te whānau a te Karaiti/People of God,  
through Holy Week and Easter  
we enter into the celebration of our Lord’s paschal victory,  
his death and resurrection.  
As he was anointed by the Holy Spirit  
for carrying out his work,  
so may we spread abroad

the fragrance of the new life and  
wholeness he came to bring.  
So now we receive from our bishop *N*,  
the holy oils blessed and set apart  
for the sacramental life of this place.

*The oils are presented in turn.*

*The one presenting the oil for the ministry of healing says*

The oil for the ministry of healing.

*The presiding priest or minister says*

By the laying on of hands and anointing with this oil,  
and with the prayerful support of this community,  
may those who are sick experience the healing presence of Christ.  
**Amen.**

*The one presenting the oil of Chrism says*

The oil of Chrism

*The presiding priest or minister says*

Anointed with this fragrant oil,  
may all who are baptised:  
know that Christ calls them by name;  
fill the world with the sweet fragrance of Christ's gospel;  
and be built up as living stones into a temple  
filled with the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

*The oils are then taken to the place set apart for their safe keeping,  
and the Eucharist continues with the Prayers of Penitence.*

# Thursday in Holy Week, commonly called **Maundy Thursday**

## Introduction

1. On this night we remember and celebrate the final supper Jesus shared with his disciples in the context of Passover. Maundy Thursday marks a new beginning, the beginning of the end. From this point on, our Christian worship is a continuum through to Easter morning. The Jewish beginning of the day (in the evening) unites the events of Maundy Thursday with the death of Christ the next afternoon. The provision that the services may continue into a Vigil underlines this continuity.
2. One explanation of the term Maundy Thursday is that it derives from the Latin *mandatum novum do vobis* (A new commandment I give you), associated with John 13:34 and with the footwashing that takes place earlier in that chapter.
3. While the Ministry of the Word places this commemoration in the context of Passover, care should be taken to avoid confusing Maundy Thursday commemorations with a celebration of the Jewish Passover. The Gospels witness to two different traditions about the timing of the Last Supper. The first three Gospels have the Last Supper as a Passover meal, while John places it on the Day of Preparation.

4. The essentials of this commemoration include the Ministry of the Word, footwashing, Eucharist, the stripping of the church, and the Vigil of the night. These all arise out of scripture and the worship of the early church, enabling the faithful to participate in the story of Christ's passion and death.
5. The rite of footwashing dramatises vividly the humility and servanthood of Jesus, both on the night of his betrayal and in his continuing presence in our midst. As we enter into the footwashing, we give witness to our own role in loving service and make our response to the new commandment, to love one another as he has loved us.
6. The stripping of the church is a vivid and dramatic way of showing forth the desolation and abandonment of the long night in Gethsemane. The stark, bare church reflects fittingly the tone of the occasion and the church remains bare until Easter Eve when the process is reversed.
7. The Vigil of the Night enables the faithful to enter into the agony of the Garden of Gethsemane. This vigil of prayer may be maintained in silence, but suitable psalms, readings and meditations may also be used.

## **The Structure of the Liturgy**

### *The Gathering of the Community*

Greeting  
Song of Praise  
Act of Penitence  
The Collect

### *The Proclamation*

The Readings  
Gospel Reading - The Passion Gospel  
The Footwashing  
Sermon (optional)

### *The Prayers of the People*

Prayers of Intercession  
Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)

### *The Ministry of the Sacrament*

The Peace  
The Preparation of the Gifts  
The Great Thanksgiving  
The Communion (with the Lord's Prayer before or after it, if not  
said elsewhere)  
Prayer after Communion

### *The Journey towards Calvary*

The Stripping of the Altar  
The Vigil

## Notes

1. The Footwashing normally takes place after the gospel. Where the congregation is small, it may be possible for everyone to participate. Where customary, twelve people represent those gathered. The minister kneels before each, pours water over the uncovered foot and dries it with a towel.
2. Appropriate songs may be sung during the footwashing.
3. The Vigil should be observed at least for an hour, preferably until midnight, if not until the liturgy on Good Friday.
4. If it is intended that the people should receive Holy Communion on Good Friday from previously consecrated eucharistic elements, these elements should be kept in a safe and fitting place.
5. There is no blessing given as the services on the next three days are in fact one service spread over three days.

## THE FOOTWASHING

*When observed, the footwashing follows the gospel reading. This may be introduced by these or other appropriate words.*

Fellow servants of Christ,  
on this night Jesus set an example for the disciples  
by washing their feet.  
As your feet are washed  
remember that strength and growth in God's reign come  
by humble service such as this.

*During the footwashing suitable anthems, songs, or a psalm may be sung.*

*The washing of feet may end with this prayer.*

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 in obedience gave your life for us,  
**Amen.**

*The service continues with **The Prayers of the People.***



## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*On Maundy Thursday evening the words in **The Great Thanksgiving** referring to “the night before he died”, or equivalent, may be changed as follows:*

- p. 422                on this very night before he died  
p. 437                On this very night before he died  
p. 469                who in this very night in which he was betrayed  
p. 487                I tēnei pō i mua i tōna matenga On  
                         this very night before he died  
p. 506                nō tēnei pō i mua i tōna ripekatanga  
p. 513                on this very night before he died  
p. 733                on this very night before he died

*The following seasonal variation may be used between the opening dialogue and the “Holy, holy, holy” or its equivalent of **The Great Thanksgiving**.*

It is truly right to give you thanks, it  
is fitting to give you glory,  
most holy and loving God, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.  
For on this very night he wrapped himself with a  
towel and, taking the place of a servant,  
washed his disciples’ feet.  
He gave us a new commandment  
that we should love one another as he has loved us.  
Knowing that his hour had come,  
in his great love he gave this holy meal to his disciples  
to be a memorial of his passion,  
that we might proclaim his death until he comes again,  
and feast with him in his kingdom.  
Therefore earth unites with heaven  
to sing a new song of praise.  
we too join with the angels and archangels *and say / saying:*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*The following may be used as the Prayer after Communion*

Holy God,  
source of all love,  
on the night of his betrayal  
Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment, to  
love one another as he had loved them.  
Write this commandment in our hearts.  
Give us the will to serve others  
as he was the servant of all,  
who gave his life and died for us,  
yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*If it is intended that people should receive Holy Communion on Good Friday, the consecrated elements are carried to a suitable place after all have received communion.*

## THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

*The vessels and altar coverings may be removed and the lights extinguished. The stripping may be done in silence or appropriate music or readings used.*

## THE DISMISSAL OF THE COMMUNITY

*The presiding priest or minister then says*

When the disciples had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus prayed to the Father, „If it is possible, take this cup of

suffering from me". He said to his disciples, „How is it that you were not able to keep watch with me for one hour? The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners.“

Christ was obedient unto death. Go in his peace.

*If there is no Vigil, the people depart in silence. No blessing is given.*

## THE VIGIL

*The following readings may be used during the Vigil.*

John 13:16-30

Psalm 113

John 13:31-38

Psalm 114

John 14:1-14

Psalm 115

John 14:15-31

Psalm 116:1-9

John 15:1-17

Psalm 116:10-18

John 15:18-16:4a

Psalm 117

John 16:4b-15

Psalm 118:1-9

John 16:16-33

Psalm 118:10-18

John 17:1-19

Psalm 118:19-29

John 17:20-26

*Then may follow Psalm 54 and the Gospel of the Vigil, or The Gospel of the Vigil is read without ceremony, followed by silence.*

Year A

Year B

Year C

Matthew 26.30-end

Mark 14.26-end

Luke 22.31-62

*Or*

*Seven lighted candles are placed on the altar and the Church lights are put out. After each gospel and psalm reading, the candles are extinguished in succession, until, at the end, one candle only is left alight.*

**OR**

**OR**

Matthew 26:30-32

*Silence*

Psalm 69:1-4

Mark 14:26-28

*Silence*

Psalm 69:1-4

Luke 22:28-30

*Silence*

Psalm 69:1-4

Matthew 26:33-35

*Silence*

Psalm 69:6-9

Mark 14:29-31

*Silence*

Psalm 69:6-9

Luke 22:31-34

*Silence*

Psalm 69:6-9

Matthew 26:36-39

*Silence*

Psalm 69:13-16

Mark 14:32-36

*Silence*

Psalm 69:13-16

Luke 22:35-38

*Silence*

Psalm 69:13-16

Matthew 26:40-41

*Silence*

Psalm 69:17-19

Mark 14:37-38

*Silence*

Psalm 69:17-19

Luke 22:39-42

*Silence*

Psalm 69:17-19

Matthew 26:42-43

*Silence*

Psalm 69:20-23

Mark 14:39-40

*Silence*

Psalm 69:20-23

Luke 22:43-44

*Silence*

Psalm 69:20-23

Matthew 26:44-46

*Silence*

Psalm 69:31-34

Mark 14:41-42

*Silence*

Psalm 69:31-34

Luke 22:45-46

*Silence*

Psalm 69:31-34

*Or*

*Some other appropriate readings and prayers may be used.*

*The people leave in silence.*



# Good Friday

## Introduction

1. The service for Good Friday is divided into three or four main parts: The Ministry of the Word, the Solemn Intercession, the Proclamation of the Cross, and Holy Communion (where customary).
2. The central theme of any service for Good Friday must be the cross. It is our participation in the events leading up to the crucifixion, historically from St John's Gospel, which lies at the heart of the service. It is therefore to be recommended that the whole of the Passion Narrative be used on this occasion. "They shall look on the one whom they have pierced" is the climax of the portion to be read. The Proclamation of the Cross and Holy Communion, where used, are a dramatic and sacramental outworking of that conclusion to the Passion Narrative.
3. The Proclamation of the Cross is a powerful, non-verbal expression of devotion to Christ. It needs careful management according to local custom, and involves a large wooden cross as a focus for meditation and devotional acts where customary. The Reproaches, devotions before the cross, are traditionally used as a meditation. They dramatise God bringing accusations against the people in the light of the death of Jesus. They reveal our own complicity in the sufferings of Christ and in the sufferings and evils of our world today.
4. There is a custom and tradition within this church that the eucharist should not be celebrated on Good Friday. In some places Holy Communion is given from the sacrament consecrated at the service of Maundy Thursday. Provision is made for those places where this course of action is followed.

## **The Structure of the Liturgy**

*The Gathering of the Community*  
The Collect

*The Proclamation*  
The Readings  
The Reading of the Passion  
Sermon

*The Solemn Intercession*  
Prayers of Intercession  
Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)

*The Proclamation of the Cross*  
Anthems and devotions before the cross

[*The Holy Communion*  
Lord's Prayer (if not said  
elsewhere) The Communion  
Prayer after Communion]

*The Dismissal of the Community*  
Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)  
Concluding Prayer

## Notes

1. The structure as outlined above is often found with **The Solemn Intercession** and **The Proclamation** in the reverse order. The above structure emphasises that The Proclamation of the Cross is in effect the equivalent of the Great Thanksgiving at a Eucharist in which the central place of the cross in the story of our redemption is proclaimed. The alternative structure emphasises that The Proclamation of the Cross is the key message of the words of our salvation and the foundation of all our praying. Which structure is followed will depend on local tradition and experience.
2. Silence is a significant part of the observance of Good Friday.
3. Hymns and songs and other music will need to be carefully selected, and sensitive to the nature of this service, which is to enable people to enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ's death. As St. Paul puts it, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that just as Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6: 3-4).
4. The Gospel of the Passion is announced "The Passion of our Lord according to John" and concluded "This is the Passion of the Lord". No responses are used. It may be read or sung by three or more people. Afterward silence may be kept.



# A LITURGY FOR GOOD FRIDAY

## THE MINISTRY OF WORD AND PRAYER

### THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

*The ministers enter in silence.*

*All kneel for a time of silent prayer.*

***The Sentence for the Day*** may be read.

*The following or one of the other Collects of the Day* is said.

Gracious and eternal God,  
look with mercy on this your family  
for which our Lord Jesus Christ was willing  
to be betrayed into the hands of his adversaries  
and to suffer death upon the cross;  
and grant us to rejoice  
in the benefits of his passion;  
through him who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God now and for ever.

**Amen.**

### THE PROCLAMATION

*The Old Testament Reading* appointed follows, the reader first saying

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah  
(chapter 52, beginning at verse 13)  
Isaiah 52:13-53:12

*Silence may follow the reading.*  
*The reader may say*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.  
**Thanks be to God.**

***Psalm 22 or The Song of Praise***, “The Exalted Lord” (*A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, p. 83), *may then be said or sung.*

***The New Testament Reading*** appointed follows, *the reader first saying*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews (chapter 4, beginning at verse 14)  
Hebrews 4:14-16;5:7-9

*Silence may follow the reading.*

*The reader may say*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.  
**Thanks be to God.**

***The Song of Praise***, “Saviour of the World” (*A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, p. 86), *may then be said or sung.*

*The account of The Passion is then read, the Reader (or the narrator if there is more than one reader) first saying*

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (chapter 18, beginning at verse 1)  
John 18:1-19:42

There is ***Silence*** following the reading.

*There is no congregational response after the Passion reading.*

*The Sermon may be preached here.*

## THE SOLEMN INTERCESSION

*The Solemn Intercession may come at this point or after The Proclamation of the Cross.*

*The presiding priest or minister says*

Jesus offers life in all its fullness to the whole world. Let us, therefore, pray to God for all people everywhere according to their needs.

*The following or other suitable prayers are said.*

Let us pray for the Church of God throughout the world:

for unity in faith, in witness and in service

for bishops and other ministers, and those whom they serve

for *N.* Archbishop of Canterbury

for the bishops in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

for *N.* our bishop, and the people of this diocese

for all Christians in this place

for those to be baptised

for those who are mocked and persecuted for their

faith that God will confirm the Church in faith,

increase it in love,

and preserve it in peace.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by your Spirit the whole body of the Church  
is governed and sanctified;  
hear the prayers we offer  
for all your faithful people,  
that in the particular ministry  
to which you have called us,  
we may serve you in holiness and truth;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

**Amen.**

Let us pray for the nations of the world and their leaders:

for the heads of state of the nations of this church

[for Elizabeth our Queen and for the Governor-General and Parliament of this land]

for those who administer the law and all who serve in public office for those whose conscience leads them into conflict with authority for all who strive for justice and reconciliation

that by God's help the world may live in peace and freedom.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Gracious and eternal God,  
in your will is our peace;  
turn the hearts of all people to yourself,  
that by the power of your Spirit  
the peace which is founded on justice may  
be established throughout the world;  
through the Prince of Peace,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

Let us pray for God's ancient people,  
the Jews, the first to hear God's call:  
for greater understanding between Christian and Jew  
that we may be faithful to the covenant  
and grow in the love of God's name.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer.**

Lord God of Abraham,  
bless the children of your covenant, both Jew and Christian;  
take from us all blindness and bitterness of heart,  
and hasten the coming of your kingdom,  
when the Gentiles shall be gathered in,  
all Israel shall be saved,  
and we shall dwell together in mutual love and peace  
under the one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

Let us pray for those who do not believe the Gospel of  
Christ: for those who have not heard the message of  
salvation for all who have lost faith  
for the contemptuous and scornful  
for those who are enemies of Christ and persecute those  
who follow him for all who deny the faith of Christ  
crucified that God will open their hearts to the truth and  
lead them to faith and obedience.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer.**

Merciful God,  
creator of all the people of the earth,  
have compassion on all who do not know you,  
and by the preaching of your Gospel with grace and power,  
gather them into the one fold of the one Shepherd;  
Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us pray for all those who suffer:  
for those who are deprived and oppressed  
for all who are sick and disabled  
for those in darkness, in doubt and in despair, in loneliness and  
in fear  
for prisoners  
for the victims of false accusations and violence  
for all at the point of death and those who watch beside them  
that God will in mercy sustain them  
with the knowledge of that love which supports us always.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer.**

Ever loving God,  
the comfort of the sad  
and the strength of those who suffer;  
hear the prayers of your children  
who cry out of any trouble,  
and to all in distress  
grant mercy, relief, and refreshment;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
**Amen.**

Let us commend ourselves and all people everywhere to the unfailing love of God, and pray for grace to live a holy life, that with all who have died in the peace of Christ, we may come to the fullness of eternal life and the joy of the resurrection.

Most merciful God,  
**accept these prayers  
for the sake of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Blessed Saviour,  
at this hour you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms; grant that all the peoples of the earth may be drawn to your uplifted love; for your kingdom's sake.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer may be said here or at **The Communion** if there is one, or in **The Dismissal of the People**.*

## THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CROSS

*The Proclamation of the Cross may occur before **The Solemn Intercession**.*

*A wooden cross may be brought into the church and placed in the sight of the people.*

*As the cross is carried in, the procession may stop three times and one of the following versicles and responses may be said or sung.*

The cross of Christ,  
**The cross on which the Saviour of the world was hung.**

*or*

This is the wood of the cross on which hung the Saviour of the world.  
**Come, let us worship.**

*Appropriate devotions may follow, which may include any or all of the following or other suitable anthems. Traditionally the hymn “Crux Fidelis” (“Faithful cross, above all other”, often printed as verses of “Sing, my tongue the glorious battle”) may also be sung. Other suitable hymns are: “When I survey the wondrous cross”, “There is a green hill far away”, “O sacred head, sore wounded”, and “We sing the praise of him who died”.*

### **Anthem 1**

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

I am your Creator, Lord of the universe;  
I have entrusted this world to you,  
but you have created the means to destroy it.

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

I made you in my image,  
but you have degraded body and spirit  
and marred the image of your God.  
You have deserted me and turned your backs on me.

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*



I filled the earth with all that you need,  
so that you might serve and care for one another,  
as I have cared for you;  
but you have cared only to serve your own wealth and power.

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

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

I made my children of one blood  
to live in families, rejoicing in one another;  
but you have embittered the races  
and divided the nations.

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

I commanded you to love your neighbour as yourself,  
to love and forgive even your enemies;  
but you have made vengeance your rule  
and hate your guide.

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

In the fullness of time I sent you my Son,  
that in him you might know me,

and through him find life and peace;  
but you put him to death on the cross.

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

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

Through the living Christ, I called you into my Church  
to be my servants to the world,  
but you have grasped at privilege  
and forgotten my will.

*My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.*

I have given you a heavenly gift  
and a share in the Holy Spirit;  
I have given you the spiritual energies  
of the age to come;  
but you have turned away  
and crucified the Son of God afresh.

My people, what wrong have I done to you?  
What good have I not done for you?  
Whakarongo mai ki ahau / Listen to me.

I have consecrated you in the truth;  
I have made you to be one

in the unity of the Father and the Son,  
by the power of the Spirit;  
but you have divided my Church  
and shrouded my truth.

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

*Hoki mai, whakarongo mai ki ahau, e taku iwi / Turn  
again, my people, listen to me.*

Let your bearing to one another  
arise out of your life in Christ Jesus.  
He humbled himself  
and in obedience accepted death on the cross.  
But I have bestowed on him  
the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus,  
every knee should bow  
and every tongue confess,  
Jesus Christ is Lord.

*Hoki mai, whakarongo mai ki ahau, e taku iwi /  
Turn again, my people, listen to me.*

**Loving God, hear our prayer and forgive us.  
Unstop our ears  
that we may receive the gospel of the cross.  
Lighten our eyes  
that we may see your glory in the face of your Son.  
Penetrate our minds  
that your truth may make us whole.**

**Irradiate our hearts with your love  
that we may love one another for Christ's  
sake.**

**Father, forgive us.**

### **Anthem 2**

You are worthy, O Christ, for you were slain;  
for by your blood you ransomed people for God:  
from every race and language,  
from every people and nation,  
to make them a kingdom of priests  
to stand and serve before our God.

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,  
because by your holy cross  
you have redeemed the world.**

To him who loves us  
and has freed us from our sins by his blood,  
and made us a kingdom of priests  
to stand and serve before our God;

**To the one who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb  
be praise and honour, glory and might,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **Anthem 3**

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,  
because by your holy cross  
you have redeemed the world.**

Christ was manifested in the body,  
vindicated in the spirit,  
seen by angels,  
proclaimed among the nations,  
believed in throughout the world,  
glorified in highest heaven.

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,  
because by your holy cross  
you have redeemed the world.**

#### **Anthem 4**

We glory in your cross, O Lord,  
**and praise you for your mighty resurrection;  
for by virtue of your cross  
joy has come into our world**

Be gracious to us O God and bless us,  
and make the light of your face to shine upon us,  
**that your ways may be known upon earth,  
your saving power among all nations.**

Let the peoples praise you O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.

**We glory in your cross, O Lord,  
and praise you for your mighty resurrection;  
for by virtue of your cross  
joy has come into our world.**

## **Acclamations**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,  
**because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

This is the wood of the cross,  
on which hung the Saviour of the world.  
**Come, let us worship.**

O Saviour of the world,  
who by your cross and precious blood have redeemed us.  
**Save us and help us, we humbly pray.**

*The service may conclude at this point with  
the form provided for **The  
Dismissal of the Community.***

## **THE MINISTRY OF THE SACRAMENT**

### **THE HOLY COMMUNION**

*In places where Holy Communion is to be administered, the holy table  
or altar is now covered with a clean white cloth.*

*The consecrated elements are placed on the holy table or altar in  
silence.*

*The Lord's Prayer may be said at this point.*

*The Communion then follows, using **The Invitation** and words of  
administration from any of the Eucharistic Liturgies.*

*Silence is kept after The Communion.*

*One of the following prayers is said.*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
Son of the living God,  
set your passion, cross, and death  
between your judgement and us,  
now and at the hour of our death.  
Give mercy and grace to the living,  
rest to the faithful departed,  
to your holy Church peace and concord,  
and to us sinners eternal life and glory;  
for you live and reign with the Father  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

Or

Gracious and eternal God,  
you have restored us to life  
by the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ.  
Continue this healing work within us.  
May we who partake of this mystery  
never cease to give you dedicated service.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

#### THE DISMISSAL OF THE COMMUNITY

*If the Lord's Prayer has not been said in this  
service, it is said at this point.*

Jesus, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

E te Ariki, maharatia mai mātou i tōu rangatiratanga; akona hoki mātou ki te inoi

**E tō mātou Matua i te rangi  
Kia tapu tōu Ingoa.  
Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.  
Kia meatia tau e pai ai  
ki runga ki te whenua,  
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.  
Hōmai ki a mātou āiane  
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.  
Murua ō mātou hara,  
Me mātou hoki e muru nei  
i ō te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.  
Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whakawaia;  
Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:  
Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha,  
me te korōria,  
Ake ake ake. Āmine.**



*Either of the following or some other suitable prayer is said.*

*No blessing or dismissal is added.*

Most merciful God,  
by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
you delivered and saved us all;  
grant that through faith in him  
who suffered on the cross,  
we may be found acceptable in your sight,  
through our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

Or

Send down your abundant blessing, Lord, on your people  
who have faithfully recalled the death of your Son  
in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.  
Grant them pardon, bring them comfort.  
May their faith grow stronger  
and their eternal salvation be assured.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*The ministers depart in silence.*

# The Easter Liturgy

## Introduction

1. The high point of Holy Week celebrations is known as the Great Vigil of Easter, for it proclaims and celebrates the whole of salvation history and Christ's saving work.
2. The Easter Vigil has historic and symbolic roots in the Jewish Passover. For Christians, Christ, whose abiding presence is celebrated in the Eucharist, is our Passover. The Christian Pasch (the term used for the great three days of Easter) is Christ's passing over from death to life, which is ultimately celebrated during the Great Vigil of Easter, and on Easter Day.
3. Many of the images in the Easter Vigil are from the Old Testament, and are fulfilled in Christ, e.g. "lamb of God", "good shepherd", "living water". In this service we experience the passage from slavery to freedom, from death to life. This vigil of the Christian Pasch marks the beginning of the Sunday of all Sundays, the Lord's Day above all others.
4. The Easter Vigil consists of four principal parts: The Service of Light; the Ministry of the Word; The Liturgy of Water (Baptism); and the Eucharist.
5. In the **Service of Light** the resurrection is proclaimed in both spoken word and dramatic ceremony, the Paschal/Easter candle symbolising Christ the light of the world, risen from the darkness of the grave. The main feature is the procession of the Easter candle through the church during which light is passed

progressively to all present, culminating in the ancient Easter song of praise, known as the Exsultet, “Rejoice, heavenly host! Sing, choirs of angels!” The candle is prepared with the cross, the symbol of life and death; the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, proclaiming Christ as the beginning and end of all things; and the numerals of the current year, a reminder that the Lord of all ages is present here and now.

6. The **Ministry of the Word** is the oldest feature of this celebration. The readings rehearse the mighty acts of God. This powerful sweep of scripture focuses the whole history of God’s creating and redeeming work in Jesus Christ.
7. The **Liturgy of Water** follows in response to the proclamation of the resurrection in scripture. Throughout the church’s history, baptism has been intimately linked with Easter. New converts entered into Christ’s redeeming death and resurrection at the same time as the Church was celebrating its memorial of those events. It is, therefore, most appropriate that the Easter Liturgy include Baptism within it. Even when there are no baptisms, the congregation renews their baptismal vows as the completion of their Lenten preparation and as an affirmation of their union with Christ in his death and resurrection.
8. The natural and proper climax of the whole Christian Pasch is **the Eucharist**, the culmination of the great three days, in which we are united with our risen Lord, and we enjoy a foretaste of Christ’s heavenly banquet at the end of time. Thus we can say that this Easter celebration is the most evangelical, biblical, sacramental and liturgical occasion in the whole of Christian year.

## **The Structure of the Liturgy**

### *The Service of Light*

- Lighting of the New Fire (optional)
- Marking of the Paschal/Easter Candle (optional)
- The lighting of the Easter Candle
- The Exsultet

### *The Ministry of the Word - The Great Vigil of Easter*

- Old Testament Readings, with Prayers and Canticles
- Gloria in Excelsis or hymn
- The Collect for Easter Day
- New Testament reading
- Psalm or Easter Anthems
- Gospel reading
- Sermon

### *The Liturgy of Water*

- The Liturgy of Baptism and
- The Laying on of Hands for Confirmation and Renewal  
(if there are candidates for these liturgies)
- The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

### *The Prayers of the People*

- Prayers of Intercession
- Lord's Prayer (if not said elsewhere)

### *The Ministry of the Sacrament*

- The Peace
- The Preparation of the Gifts
- The Great Thanksgiving
- The Communion (with the Lord's Prayer before or after it, if not said elsewhere)
- Prayer after Communion

The Dismissal of the Community  
Blessing (optional)  
Dismissal

## Notes

1. According to local circumstances, the Vigil may be kept in a different place from the rest of the Easter Liturgy.
2. Silence is an important aspect of the waiting and should form a key element during the Vigil readings, even if the Vigil is to be informal in nature. Silence should also be observed at the points prescribed in the rubrics for the celebration of the Eucharist.
3. In the darkness fire is kindled outside, in the porch, or at the back of the church. The Paschal/Easter candle is lit from the fire.
4. During the Vigil the building should be lit by the Paschal/Easter candle and candles held by the individual participants. If possible no other lights should be used. It is desirable for the building to be as dark as possible during the Vigil. If possible, the Paschal/Easter candle should illuminate the place from which the Bible is read during the Vigil, or the lights surrounding that place should be lit directly from the Paschal/Easter candle.
5. Flowers, banners and other colourful decorations should be used in plenty to mark the festival.

Marking the Paschal/Easter candle. The presiding priest or bishop may trace a cross in the Paschal/Easter candle, Alpha and Omega, and the numerals of the current year as the prayers are said. If the Paschal/Easter candle has been prepared beforehand, these signs may be pointed to as the prayer is said.

Christ yesterday and today (*tracing the vertical arm of the cross*)  
the beginning and the end (*the horizontal arm*)

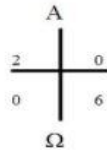
Alpha and Omega (*these letters, above and below the cross*)

All time belong to him (*the first numeral, in the upper left corner of the cross*)

and all ages; (*the second numeral in the upper right corner*)

to him be glory and power (*the third numeral in the lower left corner*)

through every age and for ever. Amen. (*the last numeral in the lower right corner*).



If grains of incense are inserted into the candle at the points of the cross and the centre, the following may be said:

- 1 By his holy
- 2 and glorious wounds
- 3 may Christ our Lord
- 4 guard
- 5 and keep us. Amen.



6. Where possible, for the lighting of the Paschal/Easter candle the ministers should go to the entrance of the church without passing through the building itself. If a fire is lit outside the building, it is desirable for the people not to remain inside the building but to gather around the fire and to follow the ministers in the procession into the church.
7. Small, unlit candles should be distributed to members of the congregation before the service begins. These will be lit from the Paschal/Easter candle during the Service of Light. They should be extinguished during the singing of the Glory to God in the highest after the church lights have been switched on.
8. The Paschal/Easter candle should be placed in a prominent position from Easter Day until the end of the Day of Pentecost. It is traditional for it to be lit at all principal services during this period. It should also be used at Baptisms and may be used at Funerals throughout the year.
9. The joy of the resurrection is properly demonstrated by noise, bells, fanfares, music, waving etc. This may introduce the singing of Glory to God in the highest. People may be encouraged to bring small bells with them to use at this point. It may also be suitable for such noise to accompany the acclamations after the Gospel reading. It is, however, inappropriate for bells to be rung before this. If possible, bells should be rung at the end of the service.
10. After the Renewal of Baptismal Vows the congregation may be sprinkled with the newly blessed water, or individuals may be invited to approach the Font and use the water to make the sign of the cross, as a reminder of their own baptism. Water for Baptism may be blessed before the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows.

# The Easter Liturgy

## THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

*The ministers gather at the main entrance of the Church. The building is in darkness, or made as dark as possible. Fire is kindled.*

*All stand and face the ministers.*

*The presiding priest or minister introduces the celebration in the following or similar words.*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,  
on this most holy night,  
when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,  
the Church invites her children throughout the world  
to come together in vigil and prayer.  
This is the Passover of the Lord.  
We remember his death and resurrection  
by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries,  
confident that we shall share his victory over death  
and live with him for ever in God.

*The new fire may be kindled. This prayer may be said.*

Redeeming God, source of life and light,  
you made this most holy night  
to shine with the brightness of your one true light;  
bless this new fire,  
set us aflame with the fire of your love,  
and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The Easter Candle may be marked here. (See the Notes for the marking of the Paschal/Easter candle.)*



Christ yesterday and today,  
the beginning and the end,  
Alpha and Omega,  
all time belongs to him,  
and all ages;  
to him be glory and power,  
through every age and for ever.  
**Amen.**

By his holy and glorious wounds may  
Christ our Lord guard and keep us.  
**Amen.**

*The presiding priest or bishop lights the Easter Candle, saying*

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, banish  
all darkness from our hearts and minds.

*The Easter candle is carried in procession through the Church, and three times the procession stops; the person carrying the Easter candle raises it high, and says or sings*

Christ our light.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*The procession of the Easter Candle moves further into the building and then stops. The versicle and response are repeated (on a higher note if sung), and the candles of those around may be lit from the Easter Candle.*

*The procession continues to the centre of the building and stops once more. The versicle and response are again repeated (on a higher note if sung), and the candles of those around may be lit.*

*The Easter Candle is placed on a stand in a prominent place, and all other candles in the church are now lit.*

*The following **Easter Song of Praise** (Exsultet) is then said or sung by a minister standing near the Easter candle, or a suitably triumphant Easter hymn may be sung by all present.*

Rejoice, heavenly host! Sing, choirs of angels!  
Exult, all creation in the presence of our God!  
Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace, is risen!  
Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendour,  
radiant in the brightness of your Saviour!  
Christ has triumphed! Glory fills you!  
Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Church! Exult in glory!  
The risen Christ shines upon you!  
Let this place resound with joy,  
echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

*Alternatively, the Introduction to the Exsultet could be sung by the whole congregation to a suitable tune of the metre 10.10.10.10 using the following form.*

**Sing, choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!  
Around God's throne exult in harmony!  
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!  
Salute your King in glorious symphony!**

**Sing, choirs of earth! Behold, your light has come!  
The glory of the Lord shines radiantly!  
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!  
The night is past. the day of life is here!**

**Sing, Church of God! Exult your joy outpoured!  
The gospel trumpets tell of victory won!  
Your Saviour lives; he's with you evermore!  
Let all God's people sound the long Amen!**

The Lord is here!

Kei konei te Ariki!

**God's Spirit is with us.**

**Kei a mātou te Wairua o te Atua.**

Lift your hearts to heaven

Whakareia ō koutou ngākau ki te rangi

**where Christ in glory reigns!**

**kei reira nei te Karaiti kei tōna ahurewa tapu.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Kia whakapai tātou ki tō tātou Ariki ki te Atua.

**It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

**He mea tika ki te whakapai ki a ia.**

It is indeed right that with full hearts and minds and voices we should praise you, O God, the source and ground of all our being, the Father almighty, and your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who out of love for those estranged from you, stretched out his arms upon the cross to enfold us all in his embrace.

For this is the Passover of that true Lamb of God, by whose blood the homes of all the faithful are marked as yours for ever.

This is the time [night] when of old you delivered the people of Israel from slavery, leading them dry-shod through the sea, and calling them to be a people after your own heart.

This is the time [night] when Jesus your anointed one vanquished the power of death and rose triumphant from the grave.

This is the time [night] when all who believe in him are set free, and empowered to serve in grace and holiness.

Most blessed of all days, when mourning is turned to joy, for evil could not destroy the Lord of love, and we have a foretaste of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Day truly blessed, when heaven is wedded to earth and all creation reconciled to the one who fashions it!

Therefore, everloving God, in the joy of this day, receive our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering. Accept this Easter candle. May it always make our darkness light; for Christ our Morning Star has risen and sheds his peaceful light on all creation, and is alive and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD – THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

*The presiding priest or minister introduces the Ministry of the Word for the Great Easter Vigil in the following or similar words.*

Fellow pilgrims on the Christian way, let us now listen to the story of how God saved the people of Israel by mighty acts in their history, and in the fullness of time came among us in Christ Jesus as our Redeemer.

*Some or all of the following nine Readings, Psalms and Prayers are used. The reading from Exodus should always be used.*

Genesis 1:1-2:4a Psalm 136:1-9,23-26

OR Benedicite Aotearoa (A *New Zealand Prayer Book*  
- *He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, p. 63f.)

Gracious and eternal God,  
you created all things with a marvellous beauty and order;  
help us now to recognise how still more wonderful  
is the new creation you have fashioned in the fullness of time  
by redeeming your people through Jesus Christ,  
the true Passover lamb,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

Genesis 7:1-5,11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13

**Psalm 46**

Faithful God,  
you have placed the rainbow in the skies  
as a sign of your covenant with all living things;  
may we who are saved through water and the Spirit  
worthily offer you our sacrifice of thanksgiving.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Genesis 22:1-18

**Psalm 16**

God, the hope of all who believe in you,  
in Abraham and Sarah  
you founded a family of faith for all the nations,  
and through the death and resurrection of Christ  
you made it all-embracing;  
may we respond to your call by accepting with joy  
your invitation to the new life of grace.  
Grant this through Christ our Redeemer.

**Amen.**

Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 The Song of Moses  
or Exodus 12:21-32 (A New Zealand Prayer Book  
or Exodus 14:21-31 - *He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, p. 100)

God of steadfast love,  
by the power of our mighty arm  
you delivered your chosen people  
from slavery under Pharaoh,  
giving us a sign of salvation through the waters of baptism;  
grant that all the peoples of the earth  
may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham,  
and rejoice in the inheritance of your promises;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Isaiah 55:1-11      God is my Salvation (*A New Zealand Prayer Book*  
- *He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, p. 77)

Everloving God,  
by the power of your Word  
you have created all things,  
and by your Spirit you renew the earth;  
give now the water of life to those who thirst for you,  
that they may bring forth abundant fruit  
in your glorious reign that knows no end.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Baruch 3:9-15,32-4:4  
OR Proverbs 8:1-8,19-21; 9:4b-6

**Psalm 19**

Creator of the universe,  
source of all light,  
teach us to hold fast to the ways of wisdom,  
that we may live for ever in the radiance of your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

**Amen.**

Ezekiel 36:24-28

**Psalms 42 and 43**

Gracious God,  
in the mystery of your Son's death and resurrection  
you established the new covenant of reconciliation;  
grant that all who in baptism are born again  
may show forth in their lives  
what they profess by their faith.  
Grant this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Ezekiel 37:1-14

**Psalm 143**

Living God,  
by the Passover of your Son  
you have brought us out of sin into righteousness,  
and out of death into life;  
grant to those who are sealed by your Holy Spirit  
the will and power to proclaim you to all the world;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Zephaniah 3:14-20

**Psalm 98**

O God of light and life, of love ever-renewed,  
proclaiming Yes to all that Jesus is  
and all that he said and did and suffered:  
bursting the gates of hell, destroying sin and death,  
rendering the powers helpless to harm,  
bringing all humanity from death to life;  
may the whole world see  
that what was cast down is being raised up,  
that what has grown old is being made new,

and that all things are being brought to their perfection  
by the one through whom all things were made,  
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The minister says*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

*This acclamation may be used at other points in the service, e.g., before the gospel or before the final blessing.*

**Glory to God in the highest, The Song of the Church** (A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, p. 44), or some other suitable song of praise is sung. Bells may be rung (See the Note on Noise, Music and Light). Then follow the **Sentence and Prayer for Easter Day** (A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, p. 592f.).

*The New Testament Reading appointed follows, the reader first saying*

A reading from Romans chapter 6, beginning at verse 3.

Romans 6:3-11

*Silence may follow the reading.*

*The reader may say*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

*Psalm 114 is then said. The Easter Anthems* (A New Zealand Prayer Book He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, p. 94) *may be used in place of or in addition to the Psalm.*



*Either of these acclamations may herald the Gospel reading.*

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead

**Alleluia!**

He has defeated the powers of death

**Alleluia!**

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing

**Alleluia!**

He has the words of eternal life.

**Alleluia!**

*or*

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;

I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

*Then, all standing, the reader of the **Gospel** says*

The Holy Gospel according to . . . (chapter . . . beginning at . . .)

**Praise and glory to God. Alleluia!**

*A Matthew 28:1-10; B Mark 16:1-8; C Luke 24:1-12*

*After the Gospel, silence may be kept.*

*The reader says*

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ, the Word. Alleluia!**

*The Sermon is then preached.*

## THE LITURGY OF WATER

*If there is to be a Baptism or Laying on of Hands for Confirmation or Renewal, the Liturgy of Baptism and The Laying on of Hands for Confirmation and Renewal from A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa takes the place of the following.*

## THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

*Water is placed in the font, and the following thanksgiving for water may be said. Water may be sprinkled on the people after the Creed.*

*The presiding priest or minister stands by the font, and says*

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery we have died and been buried with him in Baptism, so that we may rise with him to a new life within the family of his Church. Now that we have completed our observance of Lent, we renew the promises made at our Baptism, affirming our allegiance to Christ, and our rejection of all that is evil.

Praise to God who has given us life.

Whakamoemititia te Atua, te Kai-homai i te ora.

**Blessed be God for the gift of love.**

**Kia whakapaingia te Atua, mo tana oha o te aroha.**

Praise to God who forgives our sin.

Whakamoemititia te Atua, e muru nei i ō tātou hara.

**Blessed be God who sets us free.**

**Kia whakapaingia te Atua, e whakawatea nei i a tātou.**

Praise to God who kindles our faith.

Whakamoemititia te Atua, te ahi kā o te whakapono.

**Blessed be God, our strength, our hope.**

**Kia whakapaingia te Atua, tō mātou kaha, tō mātou tumanako.**

*The presiding priest or minister says to all those present who are baptised Christians*

Let us, the baptised, affirm that we renounce evil and commit our lives to Christ.

*All respond*

**Blessed be God,  
JESUS IS LORD!**

**Whakapaingia te Atua,  
KO IHU TE ARIKI!**

*The presiding priest or minister then says*

Let us now celebrate the faith into which we were baptised and in which we live and grow.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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,  
is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

*The Commitment to Christian Service may follow.*

Those who are baptised are called to worship and serve God. From the beginning, believers have continued in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

Will you commit yourself to this life?

**I will, with God's help**

Will you forgive others as you are forgiven?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you seek to love your neighbour as yourself,  
and strive for peace and justice?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you accept the cost of following Jesus Christ in your daily life  
and work?

**I will, with God's help.**

With the whole Church will you proclaim by word and action  
the Good News of God in Christ?

**I will, with God's help**

*The bishop or priest says*

Praise God who made heaven and earth,  
**whose promise endures for ever.**

*The bishop or priest prays*

We thank you God for your love in all creation,  
especially for your gift of water  
to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life.

We thank you for your covenant with your people Israel;  
through the Red Sea waters  
you led them to freedom in the promised land.  
In the waters of the Jordan  
your Son was baptised by John  
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Through the deep waters of death  
Jesus fulfilled his baptism.  
He died to set us free  
and was raised to be exalted Lord of all.  
It is Christ who baptises with the Holy Spirit and with fire.  
**Amen. Come Holy Spirit.**

We thank you that through the waters of baptism  
you cleanse us, renew us by your Spirit and raise us to new life.  
In the new covenant  
we are made members of your Church  
and share in your eternal kingdom.

Therefore, in joyful obedience to Christ,  
we celebrate our fellowship in him through faith.  
We pray that all who pass through the waters of baptism  
may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
**Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom,  
thanksgiving and honour,  
power and might,  
be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!**

*Water may now be sprinkled on the people.*

*The bishop or priest prays*

Almighty Father,  
grant that we your children  
may never be ashamed  
to confess the faith of Christ crucified,  
but continue his faithful servants to our lives" end;  
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

**Amen**

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The presiding priest or minister says

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, giving thanks for  
God"s goodness.

*The following intercession, or some other suitable form of prayers,  
is said.*

Gracious God, we praise you for the resurrection of your Son Jesus  
Christ from the dead. Shed his glorious light on all Christian people  
that we may live as those who believe in the triumph of the cross.

God of grace

**You hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who at this season are receiving in Baptism your  
Son"s new life by water and the Spirit. Dying with Christ, may they  
know the power of his resurrection.

God of grace

**You hear our prayer.**

We pray for all whom we know and love, both near and far. May their eyes be opened to see the glory of the risen Lord.

God of grace

**You hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who suffer pain and anguish. Grant them the faith to reach out towards the healing wounds of Christ and be filled with his peace.

God of grace

**You hear our prayer.**

We remember before you those who have died in the hope of the resurrection. Unite us with them in your undying love.

God of grace

**You hear our prayer.**

Join our voices, we pray, loving God, to the songs of all your saints in proclaiming that you give us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Risen Christ,  
come in your victorious power,  
affirm in us the goodness of God,  
give us new life,  
reconcile us in peace,  
assure us of your final triumph,  
make us faithful in witness,  
fulfil in us your promises.

**Amen.**

## THE EUCHARIST

*The service continues with any **Liturgy of the Eucharist**, from **The Peace**.*

*See Sentences, prayers and blessings in A New Zealand Prayer Book – He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, pp. 536-538.*

# The Season of Easter

## Introduction

1. The great fifty days should be the greatest, most festive season of the Christian Year and should continue the joy and festivity of Easter Day. These Sundays are not only “the Lord’s Day”, they are the season that is to the rest of the Christian Year what the Lord’s Day is to the week.
2. A study of the scripture readings in the lectionary will reveal a rich variety of themes on which the church reflects in this season. We remember the accounts of Jesus’ appearances during the forty days between his resurrection and his ascension and then the ten days of waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. However, there is far more to the season. It is also the time when passages are read concerning the Holy Spirit and the life of the earliest church as it was empowered by the Spirit.
3. Thus, we are reminded of the presence of the risen, living Christ in our midst through Word and Sacrament and in the lives of his holy people. We are reminded that it is through the work of the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to be in a living relationship with the risen Christ.
4. Pentecost, the Jewish Feast of Weeks, falls seven weeks after Passover. In the Christian tradition, Pentecost is the fiftieth day of Easter and marks the end of the season. It is the concluding climax of the Easter season, the day on which the church celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit with all God’s gifts and commissioning power. This great occasion should be marked with special gatherings and festivity.