

Westminster Abbey

3rd April 2021

PASCHAL VIGIL

AND FIRST EUCHARIST OF EASTER



8.00 pm

This service will be livestreamed—please could the priests and congregation not join in any sung responses. The choir will sing them on our behalf.

The Service of Light

All stand as the clergy enter. The president welcomes the congregation.

The new fire is kindled and is blessed

Eternal God, who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of your one true light: 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 president marks the paschal candle with the letters A and Ω and the figures 2-0-2-1 and says

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.**

As grains of incense are inserted into the candle the president says

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

The president lights the paschal candle and says

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

From the west of the Nave the deacon raises the lighted candle and sings, the choir responding

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

The ministers and taperers light the candles of the congregation. Please pass the flame to those around you, whilst keeping maximum distance from one another. Led by the deacon with the paschal candle, the ministers move to the east of the Nave. The deacon sings, the choir responding

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

The deacon, ministers, choir, and congregation move through the Screen to their places in Quire, the Lantern, and the Sacrament. The deacon sings, the choir responding

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

The deacon sings Exsultet

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels! O Universe, dance around God's throne! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the victorious trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in glory, revealing the splendour of your creation, radiant in the brightness of your triumphant King! Christ has conquered! Now his life and glory fill you! Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory! The risen Saviour, our Lord of life, shines upon you! Let all God's people sing and shout for joy.

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

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

It is right and good that with hearts and minds and voices we should praise you, Father almighty, the unseen God, through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who has saved us by his death, paid the price of Adam's sin, and reconciled us once again to you.

For this is the Passover feast, when Christ, the true Lamb of God, is slain, whose blood consecrates the homes of all the faithful.

This is the night when you first saved our ancestors, freeing Israel from her slavery and leading her safely through the sea.

This is the night when Jesus Christ vanquished hell, broke the chains of death, and rose triumphant from the grave.

This is the night when all who believe in him are freed from sin, restored to grace and holiness, and share the victory of Christ.

This is the night that gave us back what we had lost; beyond our deepest dreams you made even our sin a happy fault.

Most blessed of all nights! Evil and hatred are put to flight and sin is washed away, lost innocence regained, and mourning turned to joy.

Night truly blessed, when hatred is cast out, peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth and all creation reconciled to you.

Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering. Grant that this Easter candle may make our darkness light.

For Christ the morning star has risen in glory; Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us! Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!

Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The Vigil

The president says

In the light of the risen Christ, let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, recalling how he saved his people in ages past, and in the fullness of time sent his Son to be our Redeemer; and let us pray that through this Easter celebration God may bring to perfection in each of us the saving work he has begun.

All sit for the first Reading The Creation

Genesis 1: 1-4, 26-2: 3

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings Psalm 136: 1–9, 23–27

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious :
and his mercy endureth for ever.

O give thanks unto the God of all gods :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

O thank the Lord of all lords :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who only doeth great wonders :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who by his excellent wisdom made the heavens :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who laid out the earth above the waters :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who hath made great lights :
for his mercy endureth for ever;

the sun to rule the day :
for his mercy endureth for ever;

the moon and the stars to govern the night :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who remembered us when we were in trouble :
for his mercy endureth for ever;

and hath delivered us from our enemies :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who giveth food to all flesh :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

O give thanks unto the Lord of lords :
for his mercy endureth for ever.

All stand for the Collect

Let us pray that we may see God's image restored.

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All sit for the second Reading Crossing the Red Sea Exodus 14: 15—15: 1a

The choir sings The Song of Moses and Miriam Exodus 15: 1b–6, 17–18

I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously :
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and song, and he has become my salvation :
this is my God and I will praise him;
my father's God, and I will exalt him.

The Lord is a man of war :
the Lord is his name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host has he cast into the sea :
his chosen officers are sunk in the Red Sea.

The floods cover them :
they went down into the depths like a stone.

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power :
thy right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.

Thou wilt bring in thy people and plant them on thine own mountain :
the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thine abode;
the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.

The Lord will reign :
for ever and ever.

All stand for the Collect

Let us pray that God will give freedom to his enslaved people.

Lord God our redeemer, who heard the cry of your people and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery: free us from the tyranny of sin and death and, by the leading of your Spirit, bring us to our promised land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All sit for the third Reading Sprinkled with the water of life Ezekiel 36: 24–28

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings the Motet

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum,
ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c 1525–94)

Psalm 42: 1

All stand for the Collect

Let us pray that God will give to the thirsting
a new outpouring of his refreshing spirit.

Heavenly Father, by the power of your Holy Spirit you give to your faithful people new life in the water of baptism. Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit, that we who are born again may serve you in faith and love, and grow into the full stature of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit now and for ever. **Amen.**

The president makes the Easter Proclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia!

The organ plays and the church is filled with light.

All sit after the opening phrase Gloria in excelsis Deo sung by the choir

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te, gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam, Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe; Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram; qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

*Francisco Guerrero (1528–99)
from Missa Surge propera*

All stand for the Easter Collect

Let us pray.

A short period of silence is kept

Grant, Lord, that we who are baptized into the death of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ may continually put to death our evil desires and be buried with him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection; through his merits, who died and was buried and rose again for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

All sit for the Reading from the Old Testament Romans 6: 3–11

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All stand. The choir sings

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!

All remain standing for the Gospel Mark 16: 1–8

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, ‘Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?’ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, ‘Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.’ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

All remain standing

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.

The president addresses the congregation

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you turn to Christ?
I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?
I repent of my sins.

Do you renounce evil?

I renounce evil.

Praise God who made heaven and earth,
who keeps his promise for ever.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

*The president says the Prayer Over the Water to which all respond **Amen.***

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

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

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe and trust in 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.

All remain standing. The president sprinkles the congregation with holy water from the font in affirmation of our baptismal faith

The choir sings Vidi aquam

I saw water coming forth from the temple on the right side, Alleluia! And all those to whom this water came were saved, and shall say: Alleluia, Alleluia! Give praise to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever.

Ezekiel 47: 1; Psalm 118: 1

The president says

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith with all who have been baptized in your name. Keep us faithful to our baptism, and so make us ready for that day when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The president introduces the Peace

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

Alleluia! The peace of the risen Christ be always with you
and also with you. Alleluia!

*All may greet one another with the words **Peace be with you.** Please do not shake hands*

All sit. The cantor sings the Motet

Credo quod Redemptor meus vivit, et in novissimo die de terra surrecturus sum; et in carne mea videbo Deum salvatorem meum.	<i>For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he shall stand upon the earth; then in my flesh I shall see God my Saviour.</i>
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Robert Parsons (c 1535–c 72)

Job 19: 25, 26b

All stand for the Eucharistic Prayer. The president sings, the choir responding

The Lord be with you
and also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

The president continues the Eucharistic Prayer

The choir sings Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth, pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.	<i>Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</i>
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*Francisco Guerrero
from Missa Surge propera*

All remain standing. The president continues the Eucharistic Prayer

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

*The president continues the Eucharistic Prayer, to which all respond **Amen.***

All remain standing. The president introduces the Lord's Prayer

Let us pray, with confidence, in the words our Saviour taught us:

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.

All remain standing for the Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Alleluia! Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The president receives communion, then says

The body and blood of Christ keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The clergy and congregation receive Holy Communion in one kind (bread only). Gluten-free wafers are available. No words of distribution are said. Hand-sanitiser is provided, and those receiving communion are advised to use it before and after adjusting their face-coverings

During the giving of communion, the cantor sings Agnus Dei and the Motet

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

Francisco Guerrero

from Missa Surge propera

*Surrexit Pastor bonus, qui animam
suam posuit pro ovibus suis et pro
grege suo mori dignatus est.*

Alleluia!

*The Good Shepherd is risen, who laid
down his life for his sheep and who
humbled himself to die for his flock.*

Alleluia!.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

Respond for Easter Monday

All stand. The president says the Prayer after Communion

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

The president pronounces the Blessing, to which all respond **Amen.**

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

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

God the Holy Spirit, who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord, empower you and fill you with Christ's peace. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The president sings

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia!

The choir responds

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

All remain standing as the choir and clergy leave the church.

Music after the service

Incantation pour un jour saint

Jean Langlais (1907–91)

Please remember to maintain social distancing when leaving the church

The Abbey is grateful for your support. Cash and contactless donations may be given as you leave via the Great West Door and will be divided equally between the work of the Abbey and charities working with disadvantaged young people.

UK residents may also donate £5 or £10 to the work of the Abbey by texting respectively ABBEY5 or ABBEY10 to 70025. Donations can also be made via the Abbey's website westminster-abbey.org