

St Thomas the Apostle Church

EASTER *Vigil*

4 April 2026



celebrated by Fr Garner Vergara

## **CEREMONY OF LIGHT**

*The Easter Vigil begins outside the church. Father will light the Pascal candle (the new Easter candle) from the brazier outside.*

*Parishioners will be given a small candle. We all follow Father into the darkened church, lighting each other's candles.*

**Fr Garner:** The light of Christ!

**All:** *Thanks be to God.*

## **Exultet**

## **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

### **First Reading** (Genesis 1:1-2:2)

A reading from the book of Genesis

*God saw all he had made, and indeed it was good.*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water.

God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night'. Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven'. Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day. God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself,  
in the image of God he created him,  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

*The word of the Lord.*

*Thanks be to God.*

## **First Psalm**

### **Second Reading (Exodus 14:15-15:1)**

A reading from the book of Exodus

*Tell the children of Israel to march on, to walk through the sea on dry ground.*

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel,

changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his own horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried 'the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!' 'Stretch out your hand over the sea,' the Lord said to Moses 'that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.' Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh's whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant. It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

## **Second Psalm**

### **Third Reading** (Isaiah 55:1-11)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*Come to me and your soul will live. With you I will make an everlasting covenant.*

Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;

though you have no money, come!

Buy corn without money, and eat,

and, at no cost, wine and milk.

Why spend money on what is not bread,

your wages on what fails to satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and you will have good things to eat

and rich food to enjoy.

Pay attention, come to me;

listen, and your soul will live.

With you I will make an everlasting covenant  
out of the favours promised to David.

See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and a master of the nations.

See, you will summon a nation you never knew,  
those unknown will come hurrying to you,  
for the sake of the Lord your God,  
of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,  
call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,  
the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him,  
to our God who is rich in forgiving;  
for my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth  
as my ways are above your ways,  
my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return  
without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for  
the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not  
return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was  
sent to do.

*The word of the Lord.*

*Thanks be to God.*

## **Third Psalm**

### **Gloria**

#### **Epistle** (Romans 6:3-11)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again.*

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other  
words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in  
death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too  
might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his  
resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him

to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

### **Gospel (Matthew 28:1-10)**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee.*

After the Sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre. And all at once there was a violent earthquake, for the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow. The guards were so shaken, so frightened of him, that they were like dead men. But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, 'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him." Now I have told you.' Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.

And there, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings,' he said. And the women came up to him and, falling down before him, clasped his feet. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there.'

*Gospel of the Lord.*

*Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

### **Homily**

## **CONFIRMATION OF CANDIDATES**

### **Profession of Faith**

**Fr Garner:**

Dear friends,

through the paschal mystery

we have been buried with Christ in baptism,

so that we may rise with Him to a new life.

Now that we have completed our Lenten observance,

let us renew the promises we made in Baptism

when we rejected Satan and his works,

and promised to serve God faithfully  
in His holy Catholic Church.

And I ask you:

Do you reject Satan?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** And all his works?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** And all his empty show?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the Apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in Confirmation?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** Do you believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**All:** *I do.*

**Fr Garner:** This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **Prayer of Invitation**

**Fr Garner:** *to the Candidate*

My dear Candidate for Confirmation, by your Baptism you have been born again in Christ and you have become member of Christ and of His priestly people. Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon His apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the Baptized.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to His suffering, death, and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love.

**Fr Garner:** *to the assembly*

My dear friends, let us pray to God the Father, that He will pour out the Holy Spirit on this Candidate for Confirmation to strengthen her with His gifts and anoint her to be more like Christ, the Son of God.

## **Laying of Hands**

**Fr Garner:**

*Hand outstretched over the Candidate*

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
by the water and the Holy Spirit  
You freed Your sons and daughters from sin and gave them  
new life.

Send Your Holy Spirit upon her  
to be her helper and guide.

Give her the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of right judgement and courage,  
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.

Fill her with the spirit of wonder and awe in Your presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All:** *Amen.*

## **Anointing with oil of Chrism**

*Sponsor places right hand on right shoulder of the Candidate*

**Fr Garner:** *Name, be sealed with the Holy Spirit*

Candidate: *Amen*

**Fr Garner:** *Peace be with you*

Candidate: *And with your spirit*

## **Asperges Ceremony**

*Father blesses everyone in the church with holy water. This is a reminder of our own baptism and the new life born at Easter.*

## **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

## **FINAL BLESSING & DISMISSAL**