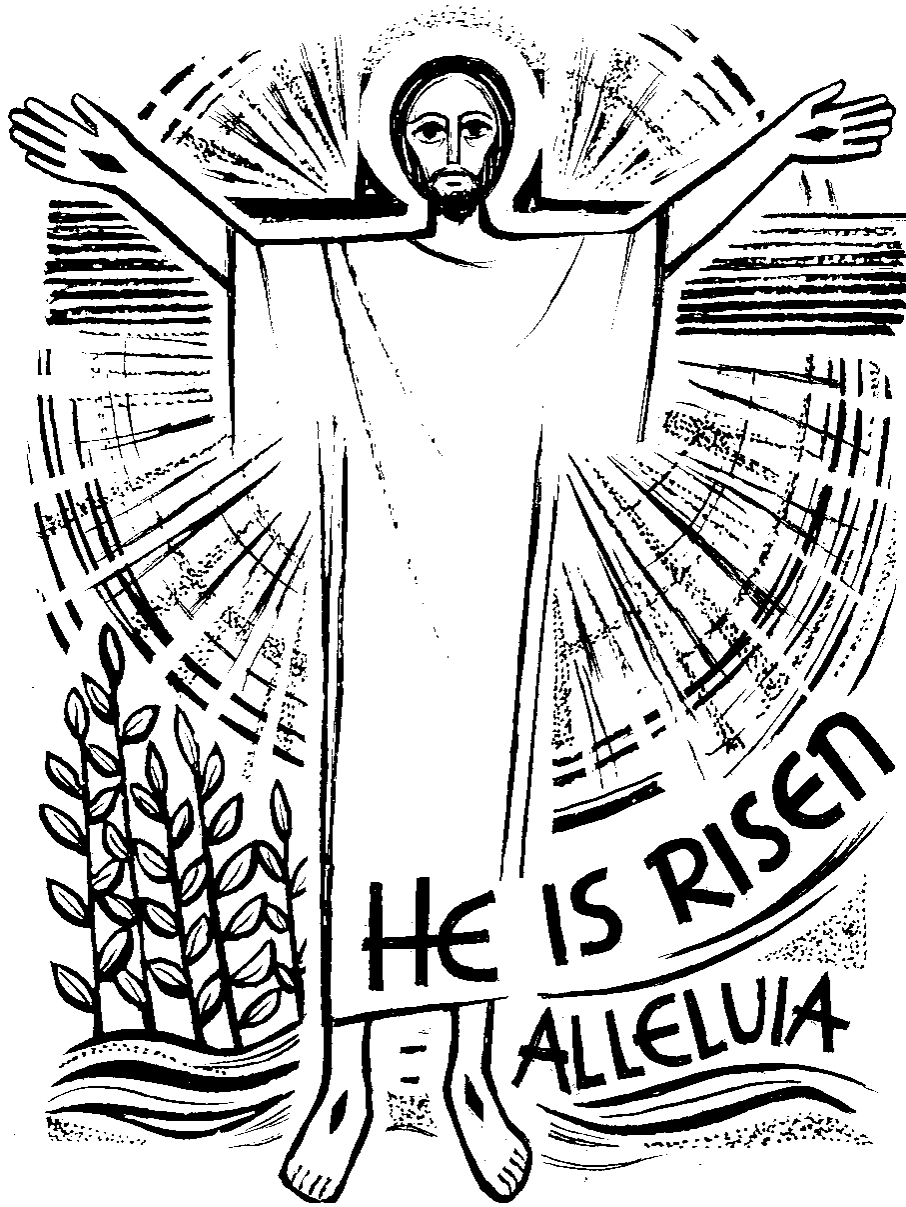


St Margaret of Antioch, Leigh
Serving West Leigh Since 1919



Easter Sunday

Vigil Mass 05:30

31st March 2024

We gather in the dark outside the West end of the church

The Service of Light

My dear brothers and sisters, on this most holy day when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life, the Church invites her children throughout the world to come together in joyful celebration. This is the Passover of the Lord: if we honour the memory of his death and resurrection by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries, then we may be confident that we shall share in his victory over death and live with him for ever in the life of the most Holy Trinity.

The fire is blessed

Let us pray.

Father, we share in the light of your glory
through your Son, the light of the world.

Make this new fire + holy, and inflame us with new hope.

Purify our minds by this Easter celebration
and bring us one day to the feast of eternal light.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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 for ever. **Amen**

By his holy wounds

may Christ guard us and keep us. **Amen**

The Easter candle is lighted from the new fire

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Procession of the Paschal Candle

The priest takes the candle, lifts it high and sings three times at different points in the procession:

Christ our Light.

Thanks be to God.

All light their candles from the Easter Candle and follow the paschal candle to their places at the front of the nave please.

The Easter Proclamation – *the deacon or priest sings the Exsultet – the hymn includes the sursum corda*

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.

At the end of the Exsultet we all sing AMEN, our candles are normally extinguished but may be kept alight as we sit for the vigil of readings

The Liturgy of the Word (Please sit)

The Story of our Salvation

NR Now we will hear about when our relationship with God began. We will hear how his love for us goes on through good times and bad. We will hear about his son Jesus, who came to offer us God's love, peace and joy.

Our first reading is taken from the Book of Genesis. Today, above all days, we celebrate the creation of the world, because through Christ's death and resurrection it has been renewed.

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

1 On the first day, God created and separated the heavens from the earth. But the earth was shapeless and dark. Then God made light and darkness which he called day and night. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

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

2 On the second day, God split the seas to create dry land.

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

3 Next in his plan, God created plants and trees and so the earth was covered in lush greenness.

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

4 God created the brilliant sun to produce light and warmth. At night the moon glowed and the dark skies were filled with millions of stars. All upon the fourth day.

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

1 Now the world was ready to be filled with animal life. On the fifth day, God created all the creatures of the seas and rivers. He filled the skies overhead with birds of many species. He blessed every creature and promised that they would multiply across the earth.

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

2 On the sixth day of creation, God created every kind of animal and set them in their habitats. He made people, in his own image, to live in creation and to care for it. Every creature lived in harmony, sharing God's creation.

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

4 And so heaven and earth were created, with all their beauty and variety. On the seventh day God completed his work. He took rest.

**All Send forth your Spirit, O Lord,
and renew the face of the earth.**

Celebrant

Let us pray,
Almighty and eternal God,
you created all things in wonderful beauty and order.
Help us now to perceive
how still more wonderful is the new creation
by which, in the fullness of time, you redeemed your people
through the sacrifice of our Passover, Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you for ever and ever. **Amen**

NR Now we hear the story of Abraham and his son Isaac; a story of sacrifice and of loving trust and obedience. It indicates how Jesus' death and resurrection renewed the earth.

'The sacrifice of Abraham, our father in the faith.'

God Abraham, go with your only son Isaac to a mountain in the land of Moriah. There, offer him as a sacrifice to me.

AB Lord, Isaac is all I have. I love him and hope that he will continue my work for you when I am gone. He will go on after me and live in the land you promised.

NR But Abraham obeyed God and took Isaac to Moriah. On the mountain, he made a fire and prepared to make the sacrifice.

IS Father, we've got everything ready: here is the fire and the wood, the knife even, but where is the sacrifice?

AB God will provide us with the sacrifice.

NR Abraham took up the knife to sacrifice his only beloved son.

God Abraham, Abraham!

AB I am here. Ready to do as you asked.

God Stop! Do not harm Isaac. You were ready to offer me your only son. I will bless you with all that you need and have hoped for. You are obedient and all the world will know of your devotion to me. I will watch over your family, as it continues and grows, for years and years to come. This is your reward from me.

***All* Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.**

Celebrant

Let us pray,
God and Father of all who believe in you,
you promised Abraham
that he would become the father of all nations,
and through the death and resurrection of Christ
you fulfil that promise, everywhere, throughout the world,
you increase your chosen people.
May we respond to your call
by joyfully accepting your invitation to the new life of grace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NR Our next reading from the book of Exodus tells us how God led the people of Israel through the wilderness for forty years as he prepared to lead them into the promised land of Canaan. Our own journey through Lent has also lasted for 40 long days. But now it is Easter Day!

‘The sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea.’

God Why do you complain to me?

2 We are hungry, Lord. At least in Egypt we had food to eat.

3 We are tired, Lord. We used to have beds to sleep in.

4 Now we are lost and afraid. How can we go beyond the Nile? We know the Egyptians are stronger than us!

NR The Lord led them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. At the sea, Moses did as God said and the waters parted for the Israelites to cross safely while the Egyptians finally failed. The Israelites put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

All I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph.

Celebrant

Let us pray,
Father, even today we see the wonders
of the miracles you worked long ago.
You once saved a single nation from slavery,
and now you offer that salvation to all, through baptism.
May all the peoples of the world
become true sons of Abraham
and prove worthy of the heritage of Israel.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NR In the next reading we hear the prophet Isaiah calling back an unfaithful Israel to her God just as God is calling us now. We can struggle to stay loyal to God, especially in difficult times, but God will always welcome us when we turn back to him.

***‘With everlasting love the Lord your Redeemer
has taken pity on you.’***

God Yes! My love for you is everlasting. Mountains and hills may be shaken, but not my love for you! I have promised that I will never leave you. We have a promise to each other. You may be thirsty and hungry. Be close to me, you will enjoy fine food and drink. Listen to me and your souls will be full.

1 Find the Lord before it is too late, call to him while he is still close by. Turn back to God who is loving and forgiving.

God I am the Lord, you God, and I speak to you. Just as the rain comes down from the sky and waters the earth to give it goodness, my words need to be acted upon. Your lives and what you do will show me that you have heard and understood me.

All With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

Celebrant

Let us pray,
Almighty and ever-living God,
only hope of the world, by the preaching of the prophets
you proclaimed the mysteries we are celebrating today.
Help us to be your faithful people,
for it is by your power alone that we grow in holiness.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

NR Even when we make bad choices, God does not give up on us. He continually calls us back to himself. In the next reading from the prophet Baruch, God tells us that his call is a call to life in his light.

'In the radiance of the Lord make your way to life and light.'

God Listen to the commands that bring you life and let them guide you. Without me you cannot have life. Who will give you knowledge and help you? Who will give you strength and power to live long, blessed lives?

1 The one who knows all, God.

4 God, who protects the world. He controls the sun and stars which shine joyfully at their set times. They obey him. No one else compares to him! He knows everything, and speaks with his servant Jacob and to Israel, his well-beloved.

All You have the message of eternal life, O Lord.

Celebrant

Let us pray,
Father, you increase your Church
by continuing to call all people to salvation.
Listen to our prayers and always watch over
those you have cleansed in baptism.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NR Jesus' resurrection at Easter is a celebration of hope. The hope that God's promises will come to happen; the hope that we will share in his kingdom; and that one day everyone in creation will know about his love and blessings.

***'I shall pour clean water over you, and I shall give you
a new heart.'***

God All people will learn that I am the Lord. Then I will gather you together again. I will you with a loving heart and refresh you with a new spirit. You will live as my people, keeping my laws and respecting me. You will belong to me and I will be your God.

**All Like the deer that yearns for running streams
so my soul is yearning for you, my God.**

Celebrant All stand if able

Let us pray,
God of unchanging power and light,
look with mercy and favour on your entire Church.
Bring lasting salvation to all mankind,
so that the world may see the fallen lifted up,
the old made new, and all things brought to perfection,
through him who is their origin, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen**

Gloria (Taizé)

(with Fanfare, Bells and symbols of joy)

Gloria Gloria in excelsis deo Gloria Gloria Alleluia Alleluia
Gloria Gloria in excelsis deo Gloria Gloria Alleluia Alleluia

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Gloria Gloria in excelsis deo Gloria Gloria Alleluia Alleluia

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; have mercy on us.

Gloria Gloria in excelsis deo Gloria Gloria Alleluia Alleluia

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit.

Gloria Gloria in excelsis deo Gloria Gloria Alleluia Alleluia

Opening Prayer

Let us pray,
In the depths of our isolation
we cry to you, Lord God:
give light in our darkness
and bring us out of the prison of our despair;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading (Please sit)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans (6:3-11)

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 Christian 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn (Please stand if able)

***Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord;
alleluia, alleluia give praise to His name.***

**Jesus is Lord of all the earth,
He is the King of creation.**

**Spread the good news o'er all the earth,
Jesus has died and is risen.**

Gospel

The Lord be with you,
And also with you.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark (16:1-8)
Glory to you, O Lord.

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' But when they looked they could see that the stone – which was very big – had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him. But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you."'

This is the Gospel of Christ.
Praise to Christ our Lord.

Hymn (continues)

***Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord;
alleluia, alleluia give praise to His name.***

**We have been crucified with Christ;
now we shall live for ever.**

Sermon (Please sit)

The Blessing of the Baptismal Waters

The litany of the Saints is sung.

Pray, for us.

Father, you share your life with us through sacramental signs, which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power. In baptism we use your gift of water, which you have made a rich symbol of the new life you give us in this sacrament. At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness.

The waters of the great flood you made a sign of the waters of baptism, that make an end of sin and a new beginning for us all.

Through the waters of the Red Sea you led Israel out of slavery, to be an image of God's holy people to come, set free from sin by the waters of baptism.

In the waters of the Jordan your Son was baptised by John and anointed with the Spirit.

Your Son willed that water and blood should flow from his side as he hung on the cross.

After his resurrection he told his disciples: "Go out and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Father, look now with love upon your Church, and unseal for her the fountain of baptism.

By the power of the Spirit give to these waters the grace of your Son.

You created man in your own image and likeness: cleanse him from sin to a new birth of innocence by water and the Spirit.

While the priest lowers the paschal candle three times into the water he says:

We ask you, Father, with your Son to send the Holy Spirit upon the waters of this font.

May all who are buried with Christ in baptism rise also with him to newness of life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing Alleluia Alleluia
Thou flowing water pure and clear
Make music for thy Lord to hear
O praise him O praise him
Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia**

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

Priest: The Lord is loving to everyone

People: And his mercy is over all his works

Priest: Do you turn to Christ

People: I turn to Christ

Priest: Do you repent of your sins

People: I repent of my sins

Priest: Do you renounce evil

People: I renounce Evil

Priest: Do you believe and trust in God the Father who made the world

People: I believe and trust in Him

Priest: Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ who redeemed mankind

People: I believe and trust in Him

Priest: Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God.

People: I believe and trust in Him

Priest: This is the faith of the Church

People: This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God Father Son and Holy Spirit

The celebrant sprinkles the congregation whilst we sing

Hymn

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.**

The Peace (said at the font)

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

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

Let us offer one another a sign of that peace.

Offertory Hymn (*We process back to our places at the front of the Nave while the offertory hymn is sung.*)

**Jesus Christ is risen today, *alleluia!*
our triumphant holy day, *alleluia!*
who did once, upon the cross, *alleluia!*
suffer to redeem our loss, *alleluia!***

**Hymns of praise then let us sing, *alleluia!*
unto Christ, our heavenly King, *alleluia!*
who endured the cross and grave, *alleluia!*
sinners to redeem and save, *alleluia!***

**But the pains that he endured, *alleluia!*
our salvation have procured; *alleluia!*
now above the sky he's King, *alleluia!*
where the angels ever sing, *alleluia!***

Offertory Prayers

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread and wine to offer, fruits of the earth and vine and work of human hands; they will become for us the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

Let us pray my brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept this sacrifice at your hands,
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and the good of all his Church.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

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.

Preface

Father, all powerful and ever living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks.

We praise you with greater joy than ever
on this Easter Day,
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

He is the true lamb who took away the sins of the world.
By dying he destroyed our death;
by rising he restored our life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels in heaven
we proclaim your glory
and join in their unending hymn of praise singing:

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.

We kneel or sit for the Eucharistic Prayer

Lord, you are holy indeed,
the source of all holiness;
grant that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Who in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying.
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying.
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith (said):

Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of all,
rejoicing at his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate the memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of Holy Mary mother of God,
St Margaret and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

By whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Communion

Our Father

Let us pray with confidence to the Father
in the words our Saviour gave 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.**

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.**

Lamb of God

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world;
grant us peace.**

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,
happy are those who are called to his supper

**Lord I am not worthy to receive you but only say the word and
I shall be healed.**

***Communion is now administered out of camera shot at live
streamed masses. Organist and musicians receive first during the
communion music.***

*All who are baptised and desirous to receive communion and/or receive
communion in their own churches and traditions are very welcome at the
altar – if you would prefer to receive a personal blessing please come
forward and hold your service book to your chest.*

Communion Music followed by Hymn

**Father, we love you
We worship and adore you
Glorify your name in all the earth**

**Jesus, we love you
We worship and adore you
Glorify your name in all the earth**

**Spirit, we love you
We worship and adore you
Glorify your name in all the earth**

Prayer after Communion (All stand if able)

Father of love,
watch over your Church
and bring us to the glory of the resurrection
promised by this Easter sacrament.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

Alleluia! The Lord is risen
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

May almighty God bless you on this solemn feast of Easter, and
may he protect you against all sin.
Amen.

Through the resurrection of his Son
God has granted us healing.
May he fulfil his promises,
and bless you with eternal life.
Amen.

You have mourned for Christ's sufferings;
now you celebrate the joy of his resurrection.
May you come with joy to the feast which lasts for ever.
Amen.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia Alleluia!
Amen.

Final Hymn

**Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory Thou o'er death has won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.**

*Thine be the glory, rise, conquering Son,
endless is the victory Thou o'er death hast won.*

**Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the Church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth; death has lost its sting.**

**No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is nought without Thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through Thy deathless love:
bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above.**

Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way to our keeping of Lent, Holy Week and Easter. We are grateful to those who contributed to our liturgies; cleaned; decorated the church; arranged flowers; led the music; and those who have invited and encouraged their friends, families and neighbours to participate in any way.