

# VI Sunday of Easter

5th May 2024

Take me  
Home !!



Love one  
another, as I  
love you!

## Priest's Tidings

We are again reminded today that the heart of Christianity is love: love of God, love of one another. Jesus tells us that we have to love one another as he has loved us. This is a very demanding love, for it commits us to love not only those we like and who love us or like-minded fellow Christians, but also the difficult ones, the "unlovable," people far from perfect, outsiders... That is not so easy, and this is probably why he calls it a commandment. Let us ask our Lord in this eucharist that we may grow in this openness of genuine love.

We are often surprised how inventive love can be and to discover it where we had not expected it. It makes a dour husband surprise his wife with an unpredictable gesture of tenderness or a couple in the slums adopt a child found abandoned in the street. God's astonishing love is the source of it all. He shows it when he gives up his own Son for us. Jesus kept giving a human shape to God's love when he cared for people and gave new chances even to outcasts, the unloved and the unlovable. Today he calls us his friends and he tells us: "Love one another as I have loved you." With these words he challenges us in today's eucharist.



*Fr Hugo*

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## H o l y C o m m u n i o n

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**Entrance Hymn:**

203 – Good Christians all, rejoice and sing!

### **Collect:**

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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### **First Reading:**

A reading from of the Apostles Acts (10:25-26,34-35,44-481):

As Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him, knelt at his feet and prostrated himself. But Peter helped him up. 'Stand up,' he said 'I am only a man after all!' Then Peter addressed them: 'The truth I have now come to realise' he said 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.' While Peter was still speaking the Holy Spirit came

down on all the listeners. Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter were all astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should be poured out on the pagans too, since they could hear them speaking strange languages and proclaiming the greatness of God. Peter himself then said, 'Could anyone refuse the water of baptism to these people, now they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have?' He then gave orders for them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterwards they begged him to stay on for some days..

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

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### **Responsorial Psalm: (98)**

**R./ The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done wondrous deeds; His right hand has won victory for him, his holy arm.. **R./**

The LORD has made his salvation known: in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice. He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel. **R/**

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation by our God. Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands; break into song; sing praise.. **R./**

### **Second Reading:**

A reading from the first letter of 1 John (4:7-10):

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away..

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

**Gradual Hymn:**

202 – Earth, earth, awake: your praises sing: Alleluia!

# Gospel Reading

Hear the The Gospel of our Lord Jesus according to John (15:1-8):

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love.

If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete.

This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me: no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name. What I command you is to love one another.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, O Christ**



## Prayers of Intercession

As you have called us to be friends, to reveal your love and the joy of your presence, we come with sorrow for the divisions of the Church and the world. We seek forgiveness for rivalry and disunity within the Church, Lord, strengthen us in love and lead us to a unity that reflects that we are one in you. May any divisions within our community be healed and well-being restored.

Lord, as you love us,  
**help us to love one another.**

We come before you as part of a world caught up in violence, war, hatred, greed and hunger. There are people who are oppressed and treated as slaves. There are people who are counted as nothing, rejected and unloved. Lord, forgive us and change us. Strengthen all who work for the peace and well-being of May we share in the care of all suffering people.

Lord, as you love us,  
**help us to love one another.**

We give you thanks for all our loved ones. for their and sacrifice for us. all who feel unloved and unwanted. generosity We pray for homes where there is hatred or violence. Where there are a little respect for each other, where there is neglect. We ask your blessing upon all who have been taken into care.

Lord, as you love us,  
**help us to love one another**

Lord of love, we remember before you all who are lonely. We ask your blessing upon those who are ill or injured. We pray for all who are raging against life and all who are not at peace with themselves or the world. for all who have hardened their hearts against love.

Lord, as you love us,  
**help us to love one another.**

We rejoice in your saving love and that you have called us to eternal life. We remember loved ones departed from us. As we give thanks for their friendship we pray that they may know you as their friend in your eternal kingdom.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Offertory Hymn**

809 – Thou art the way: by thee alone,

**Communion Hymn**

461 – one bread, one body, one Lord of all,

**Post Communion Prayer**

God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever **Amen.**

**Recessional Hymn**

484 – You shall go out with joy,

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## **Prayer and Meditation**

Jesus speaks these words to his disciples just a few hours before he is crucified and before his disciples abandon him in terror. They also form part of the longer teaching Jesus gives his disciples in John 13-17. Jesus wants his disciples to share his joy. He is a deeply joyful person and here he tells them the way to share this joy for themselves: remaining in his love

and loving one another. The love between Jesus and God the Father is mutual. Jesus makes it clear that the way he remains in his Father's love is through obedience. It's just the same for us. This on-going relationship between us and Jesus transforms us from being servants into Jesus' friends (verses 14-15). Jesus gives the disciples one commandment 'love one another, just as I love you' (verse 12). They are to follow his example of love. To love each other in the same way he loves them. Without this they cannot share his joy, nor can we. This deep and practical love in a community makes Jesus' love and life a reality to the giver and the receiver. By living constantly in his presence, Jesus is in our midst and through his Word we receive confidence about life with the Father. In short, this is the mystery of Christian living.

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## Oratio

We do not just choose the Christian life ourselves; we are in fact 'chosen and appointed' (John 15:16). It is an overwhelming idea to think God knew and chose us for his own loving purpose. We can join this great song of praise in Psalm 98. Read these verses through several times and offer them as your own prayer of praise to God pictured on your branch. This is harder to do, but ask the Holy Spirit to help you. On some of the other branches write the names of people who strengthen your relationship with Jesus. Consider this prayerfully. It may take a little time, but when you're ready offer it to God in thanksgiving and trust for future crops.

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## Contemplation

Acts 10:25-48 tells of the events after Peter sees a vision (Acts 10:1-24) and goes to visit a man called Cornelius. Peter receives the revelation that the Good News of the gospel is not just for a chosen few but for all mankind. Peter tells Cornelius' household that 'God treats everyone on the same basis' (verse 34). 1 John 4:7-10 reinforces this point. God demonstrated his love for us by sending Jesus into the world so our sins can be forgiven.

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## Mediation

- Why does Jesus insist on love as the critical condition? How do we remain in his love?
- Consider what it means to love fellow Christians the way Jesus loves us. What does it mean in practice to lay down your life for your friends? What can we learn from 1 Corinthians 13 about love?

# What's happening in our Parish!

**Sunday — Mass at 9:30 am**  
**Support St Matthew's Church:**

On our website ([www.stmatt.co.uk](http://www.stmatt.co.uk)) in the donations section, where you can donate by card.

- Make instant donations with our wireless contact less machine.
- Scanning this QR code to continue supporting us.



## • Communion

We now offer communion in both bread and wine. If you do not feel comfortable drinking from the common cup, please receive in bread only or ask for a blessing. Please do not dip the bread in the wine

## • Next Mission Morning

Our next Mission Morning is Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May, when we welcome the Revd Canon Wendy Robins to talk to us about lay ministry and discipleship

- **Save the Dates:** Future Cultural Celebrations and Meals:

**Pentecost Sunday** 19th May 12.30pm Bilingual Service - **English Cultural Celebration** Sunday 9th June 9.30am - **Summer Picnic** Sunday 14th July after the service - **St Mathew's Day** Sunday 22nd September 12.30pm Bilingual Service.

## • Bible Verses this week

Fr Steve, is posting reflections on a Bible verse Monday-Friday, available on our website, and the WhatsApp group. If you would like to join the WhatsApp group, please let us know:

**Monday** Acts 16:14 - **Tuesday** Acts 16:33 - **Wednesday** Acts 17:30 - **Thursday** Acts 1:8- **Friday** Acts 18:9.

## CONTACT US:

**Rector:** Fr Hugo Adán [rector@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:rector@stmatt.co.uk) ☎ 0759 331 0487 - Associate Rector: Fr Miguel Angel Pino [assoc.lector@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:assoc.lector@stmatt.co.uk) ☎ 07547976623 - Curate: Fr Steve Jullien [curate@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:curate@stmatt.co.uk) ☎ 07857 913 278 - Churchwardens: Ms Cynthia Grant [churchwarden.eng@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:churchwarden.eng@stmatt.co.uk) Mrs Carolina Giraldo - [churchwarden.esp@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:churchwarden.esp@stmatt.co.uk) - PCC Secretaria: Vacant [pcc.secretary@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:pcc.secretary@stmatt.co.uk) - Tesorero: Mr John Brent [treasurer@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@stmatt.co.uk) - Salvaguarda niñ@s: Mrs Daliana Ruiz [safeguarding@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stmatt.co.uk) - Registro Electoral: Mrs Carolina Giraldo [electoral.roll@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:electoral.roll@stmatt.co.uk) - Youth worker Monica Pons Robles [youthworker@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:youthworker@stmatt.co.uk) - Worship Director: Ubeimar Llantes [worshipdirector@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:worshipdirector@stmatt.co.uk). Parish Administrator : Monica Hernandez Ingles: [admin.eng@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:admin.eng@stmatt.co.uk) - Español: [admin.esp@stmatt.co.uk](mailto:admin.esp@stmatt.co.uk) Office Hours: 9:00 am to 4:00 - Address: Meadow Row . London SE1 6RG  
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