

EASTER SERVICES

This guide assumes familiarity with the normal 9:30am Sunday service.

Palm Sunday

This service begins in St. Lawrence's church. The crucifer leads the procession across the road, through the lych-gate and into St. Mary's church through the north door. The rest of the service is as usual except that the Passion is read in place of the gospel. Hence there is no gospel procession.

Maundy Thursday

This service features a Eucharist, washing of feet, the stripping of the church and a procession to St. Lawrence's (the Garden of Gethsemane). Acolytes need to use the candles by the icon instead of the usual ones as these latter feature integral stands. It is advisable to have matches or a lighter to hand for the trip to St. Lawrence's church as the acolyte's candles will almost certainly go out on the way.

The service runs as normal until after the sermon, when there is the "Washing of Feet". The priest will pour water over and wash the feet of a number of members of the congregation sitting at the front of the church. The MC must hold a bowl to catch the water, and be ready with a towel to allow people to dry their feet. When completed, put the bowl and the towel out of the way. The crucifer does nothing at this time.

The service continues as normal until the communion is complete. There is no benediction at the end of this service.

After communion, line up in front of the altar platform. The crucifer should not have the cross, but the acolytes must have their candles. The order should be: crucifer, acolyte, clergy, acolyte and finally MC in order from north to south. All genuflect when the priest turns while holding the sacrament. MC leads everyone to the sacrament chapel. Assemble as before, but this time in front of the sacrament chapel altar. The altars etc. are then stripped. Assist the clergy as necessary, placing things handed to you in the sacristy or St. Paul's centre as appropriate. Normally, two servers assist at the high altar, and two at the nave altar.

When the church has been stripped, line up before the sacrament chapel altar as before. All genuflect when the priest turns while holding the sacrament. Process to St. Lawrence's church. Acolytes lead, followed by the adult servers and then the clergy. Go slowly, as the congregation will follow us. On arrival at in St. Lawrence's church, relight the acolytes candles if necessary, then process to the altar. Acolytes should place their candles on each side of the altar and then all assemble before it as we did in St. Mary's church. All genuflect with the clergy, then wait with them for the congregation. After prayers, all genuflect before the acolytes lead everyone back to the choir vestry in St. Mary's church.

Liturgy on Good Friday

This service features veneration of the cross and holy communion (using host brought back from St. Lawrence's). Two adult servers are required, who have special roles in this service. Remember that one of you must have matches or a lighter.

The servers should lead the clergy to the nave altar, but we are not processing at this point – the church is still bare, and the crucifer carries no cross. Use the "short way", i.e. go adjacent to the front pew rather than going via the back of the church. Line up in front of the altar, just in front of the platform. The servers must be at the edges and the clergy in the middle.

The clergy will lay before the altar; servers should kneel at the edge of the altar platform when the clergy do this. When the clergy stand, servers should go to their seats. Do not bow before the altar.

There is nothing further to do until after the intercessions. Servers should lead the celebrant to the back of the church where there is a cross on the table near the font. Stand on either side of the cross, allowing room for the celebrant in the middle. Light the two candles on the table.

Carrying the candles, lead the celebrant down the centre aisle, stopping three times: once at the rearmost pew, another in the centre of the church, and finally on the altar platform in front of the nave altar. Turn to face the congregation. The celebrant and servers should be in a line as before, with the servers on the outside. Place the candles on the nave altar, and venerate the cross after the celebrant. Wait while congregation venerates. When the veneration is complete, the celebrant will take the cross to the altar. Bow to the cross and lead the celebrant to the altar in St. Lawrence's church.

In St. Lawrence's, stand either side of the celebrant in front of the altar. Light and pick up the oil "candles" there. Lead the celebrant back to the nave altar in St. Mary's church. Pause in the porch to re-light the candles using the matches or lighter one of you thoughtfully placed about your person. Place the candles either side of the altar. Genuflect to the host, then return to your seats. Receive communion standing, as usual.

After the final prayer, form up either side of the clergy and lead them out the "short way".

Easter Saturday

The service starts with the church in darkness. It features the lighting of the Easter candle from the fire outside the church, spreading this light through the church, sprinkling the congregation with holy water (to remind everyone of their baptism) and a Eucharist.

Lead the clergy down the centre aisle and outside to the fire by the west door. The order of procession should be as usual, except that the Thurifer is ahead of the Crucifer. No candles should be lit at this stage. Stand in a line behind the clergy in the following order (from left to right): Thurifer, Acolyte, Crucifer, Acolyte and MC. The MC must be ready with the "words" and a taper.

Having lit the Easter candle from the fire, process into the church in the following order: Thurifer, Crucifer, acolytes, MC and then the clergy. Stop at the 2nd pew from the back. The MC should light the acolytes' candles from the Easter candle using the taper, and the congregation's candles are also lit at this time. Process to the nave altar, and sit in the usual places. A bench will be provided for the Thurifer on the north side of the altar. The MC and crucifer should light the altar candles etc. during the Gloria, taking care only to use the Easter candle as a source of ignition.

The service then proceeds as usual except that the gospel is read from the lectern. The acolytes should stand either side of the priest with their candles when the gospel is read. After the sermon, the MC should lead the clergy to the back of the church, then stand to the right of the priest, holding the bowl while everyone is splashed with holy water. On return to the back of the church, leave the bowl in the font and lead the clergy back to the front. The remainder of the service is as usual.