

OUR PARISH

The Palm Gospel and Blessing of Palms at St Thomas's last Sunday.



Easter Bunny or a tree?

Parishioners at the recent launch of Caritas Southwark.



Parishioners on the recent Women's Retreat, with Sr Aileen Murphy, SAR



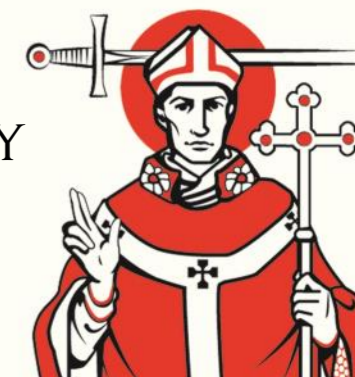
Parishioner Shirley Brigham was awarded the Sevenoaks District Council 'Making It Happen' trophy, for knitting 303 trauma bears.



Archdiocese of Southwark

PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS

CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD,
BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN



Parish Newsletter

9th April 2023

Today's Mass: *EASTER—THE RESURRECTION of the LORD*

At the **Easter Vigil (the Mass of the Resurrection)** there are at least three Old Testament readings, always including that from *Exodus 14* – the escape of the people of Israel through the Red Sea, which is a foreshadowing of Baptism. Each reading is followed by a psalm, silence, and a Collect.

St Paul, in the **Epistle**, explains how our Baptism in Christ means that we are “*dead to sin but alive for God*”. The **Gospel**, from *Matthew*, tells how Mary of Magdala and the other Mary meet the risen Jesus.

In the **First Reading at Mass of the Day** Peter preaches to the Gentiles. In this summary of the Gospel Peter emphasises that he and his fellow apostles themselves are witnesses to the risen Christ. In response to this good news we sing our thanksgiving and joy in the words of **Psalm 117**.

The **Second Reading** is taken from St Paul's *Letter to the Colossians* – in which Paul spells out the implications of rising with Christ.

Please stand to recite the **Easter Sequence**, if possible by singing it all together (see hymnbooks for sung versions). In simple but profound words it tells the story of the resurrection.

The **Gospel** is from the account in *John* of the empty tomb. But the empty tomb is not the only evidence for Christ's resurrection: Mary of Magdala is the first witness, followed by Simon Peter and “*the other disciple*” (perhaps John himself).

Fr David



ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS

Sunday Mass times:

Saturday
6:00pm

Sunday
8:00am (Latin)
9:15am (Children's Liturgy of Word)
11:15am
6:00pm

Weekday Mass times:

Monday 8:00am
Tuesday 9:30am
Wednesday 8:00am
Thursday 12:00noon
Friday 8:00am
Saturday 9:30am

Adoration:

Monday 8:30am - 9:30am
Tuesday 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday
10:00am - 10:30am,
5:15pm - 5:45pm



Granville Road,
Sevenoaks TN13 1ER

Parish Office: Magdalena Wiacek
Monday - Friday
9:00am - 12:00noon
Tel: 01732 454177
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk
www.sevrcparish.org.uk



High Street, Otford
TN14 5PH

MOST HOLY TRINITY OTFORD

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Wednesday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 10:00am
Adoration: Thursday 7:30pm - 8:30pm
Friday 11:00am - 12:00noon

Church contact:

Barry Authers
Tel: 01959 524362
sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk



Western Rd, Borough Green
TN15 8AG

ST JOSEPH'S BOROUGH GREEN

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Thursday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 6:00pm

Church contact:

Antoni Offert
Tel: 07513 041075
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



Fawkham Rd, West Kingsdown
TN15 6JP

ST BERNADETTE'S WEST KINGSDOWN

Mass times: Sunday 11:00am
Friday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 11:00am
Adoration: Wed 12:00noon- 1:00pm

Church contacts:

Jill & John Gobel
Tel: 01474 853676
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



ST THOMAS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Park,
Sevenoaks, TN13 1EH
www.saintthomas.co.uk

Executive Head:

Mrs Katherine Sexton
Academy Principal:
Ms Geraldine Leahy
Tel: 01732 453921

GOD LOVES HIS CHILDREN MASS ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN



JESUS IS HERE

Thomas believes

Thomas did not believe Jesus had risen from the dead until he actually saw Jesus for himself.

Spot the five differences between Thomas before and after he saw Jesus.



Jesus comes to see his friends, bring his peace and the Holy Spirit. Thomas is missing and doesn't believe the others. Jesus comes back and gives Thomas the proof he needs that he really is alive and he really is here!

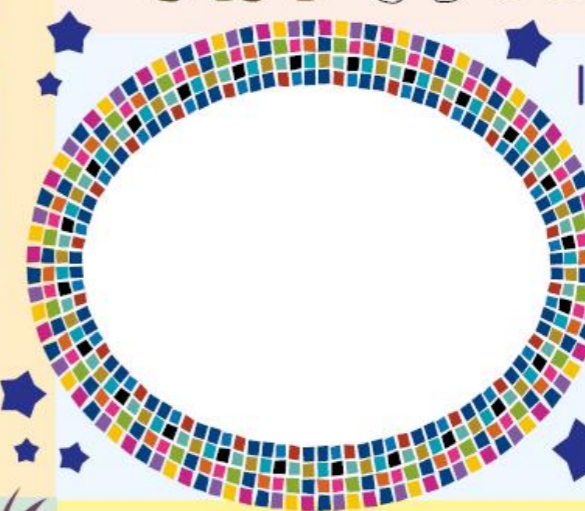
Who is here?

Join the dots to see who the disciples are with.



I am happy!

Thomas believed in Jesus because he could see him. Jesus says those who have not seen him but still believe are happy. We are happy because we believe! Draw a happy picture of you.



A PRAYER TO SAY

I am so happy, Jesus, that you are alive! Now I know that good things can come out of the worst situation. Thank you for showing me that love will always win. Amen.

What does Jesus bring us?

Jesus came to bring us peace. Unscramble the words to describe other things Jesus has brought us.

tapinece rlfnesd hpoe lvoe yoi



CONTACTS & ORGANISATIONS

Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury, Sevenoaks

Presbytery and Parish Office: 12 Granville Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1ER
Website: www.sevrparish.org.uk **Tel:** 01732 454177

Parish Priest: Fr David Gibbons, KCHS davidgibbons@rcaos.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Fr Peter Littleton peterlittleton@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Rev'd Neil Philipson neilphilipson@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Mrs Magdalena Wiacek sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Office hours: Monday - Friday 9:00am - 12:00noon

Safeguarding Rep: Ken Baines sevenoakssgl@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

The Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator can be contacted on 020 7261 1606; in an emergency dial 999

Adoration

Barry Authers adoration@sevrparish.org.uk

Altar Servers (St Thomas's)

Catherine Ingram Ingramfamily15@yahoo.com

Catenians

Social club for Catholic men

Aiden O'Mahony aidan.omahony@btinternet.com

Children's Liturgy of the Word, Sunday Mass

Sevenoaks, 9:15am Mass:

Mark O'Prey sevenoakscrow@rcaos.org.uk

Oxford, 9:30am Mass:

Magdalena Wiacek sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Borough Green, 9:30am Mass:

Fiona Newton - fionanewton321@btinternet.com

Choirs

Music Group:

Lonnie Christophers lonniechr@hotmail.com

Traditional Choir: Barbara Page 01732 454729

Borough Green: Chris Hurl chris.hurl@outlook.com

Church Cleaning (St Thomas's)

James McSharry jamesmcsharry@hotmail.com

Church Flowers (St Thomas's)

Kate Travers katetravers521@hotmail.com

Confirmation Programme

Gabrielle Ellis sevenoaksconfirmation@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Finance Committee

Secretary: Mary Scott 3maryscott@gmail.com

First Holy Communion & Reconciliation Programme

Fr Peter Littleton: peterlittleton@rcaos.org.uk

Gift Aid:

Sean Corrigan sevenoaksgac@rcaos.org.uk

Holy Trinity Committee

Secretary: Barry Authers sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk

Lectio Divina

Kathie Gonzalez 01732 761253

Listening to you (Bereavement Support)

Third Monday, 10:30am in Parish Room

Ronnie Campbell 01732 452988, Sarah Harrison 01959

522357, Kate Travers katetravers521@hotmail.com and Ann

Livingston annlivingston@hotmail.co.uk

Loaves and Fishes Foodbank

Isabelle Mercer: h.imercer@btopenworld.com

Mothers' Prayers

Mondays, 11:30am at Star House, Star Hill Road
01959 532505

Parent & Toddlers Group

Tuesdays 10:00am - 12:00noon, Parish Centre
Mary Hunt 07890 229794

RACET (Rural Africa Children's Education Trust)

MaryAnn Perasso 01959 522337, www.racet.org

Readers, Ministers & Welcomers Rota (St Thomas's)

Andrew Pembroke st.thomas.rota@gmail.com

Repository

Saturday 6:00pm, Sunday: 8:00 am, 11:15am

Sophie McBrien sophiemcbrien@yahoo.co.uk

RCIA

For adults becoming Catholic

Andrew La Trobe andrew.latrobe@gmail.com

Retreats

Catherine Roger c.rodger@btinternet.com

St Bernadette's Committee

Secretary: Jill Gobel jill.gobel@btinternet.com

St Joseph's Committee

Secretary: John Foley johnandmariefoley@gmail.com

The Pilgrims

For retired parishioners

Jackie Pembroke 01732 450197

Scripture Fellowship

Reading a Gospel together

Andrew Wilkinson andrewwilkos@gmail.com

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

Can help financially, practically, and through visits to the isolated or housebound. Contact Paul Boyle 07796564018 or Kathie Gonzalez sevenoakssvp@gmail.com

Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM) (West Kingsdown)

Monica Biggs mmdbbiggs@outlook.com

Webmaster

Barry Authers sevenoakswebmaster@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH NOTICES

Contents this Week

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TODAY

Easter Offering

Your donation today is your Easter Offering to Fr David and Fr Peter, for which they thank you in advance. If using the card reader please select the First Collection. If you are making a bank transfer please put Easter Offering and your name in the reference (so the parish can reclaim the Gift Aid).

First Holy Communion

Congratulations to Joseph Donohoe, who receives Holy Communion for the first time at the 11:15am Mass.

EASTER WEEK

Easter Monday

This is a Bank Holiday, so Holy Mass is at the new Bank Holiday time of 9:30am. The Parish Office is closed on Monday.

Parish Finance Committee

The Parish Finance Committee meets on Thursday at 8:00pm in the Presbytery.

John Berry RIP

Funeral Mass in St Thomas's on Friday at 12:00 noon, followed by Interment at the Greatness Cemetery.

Collection for Fr Peter

The Second Collection next weekend will be a leaving present for Fr Peter. You can alternatively put a donation in an envelope marked 'Fr Peter' and hand it to one of the Clergy or pop it through the Presbytery letter box.

Next Sunday: Divine Mercy Sunday

Devotions in St Thomas's, starting at 2:30pm, including Confessions, and followed by refreshments. To participate by Zoom, email Deacon Neil (neilphilipson@rcaos.org.uk). To join the Divine Mercy WhatsApp group in the parish, please also email him.

NOTICES

Garden Tidy-Up at Most Holy Trinity

Please come and help to tidy our lovely grounds at Most Holy Trinity on Saturday April 15th from 10:00am – 12:00 noon. No gardening experience necessary, tools can be provided – just bring enthusiasm.

Teaching and Leading in Catholic Schools

Are you a Catholic and a teacher, middle or senior leader in a community school or academy and interested in taking up a role in Catholic education? If so, the Archdiocese of Southwark Education Commission would like to invite you to a twilight session: Teaching and Leading in Catholic Schools. The session will include opportunities to meet current leaders and the education team, find out about Catholic schools and tips in relation to the application process. This event will be held on Thursday 27th April 2023 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at Amigo Hall, Lambeth Road SE1 6HR. If you are interested in attending please register at <https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/teaching-in-and-leading-catholic-schools/> or if you have any queries please contact Sharon Docherty, RE Team Leader and Professional Learning Manager: sharondocherty@rcaos.org.uk.

PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

Altar Servers 45th Annual Rally

At The Friars, Aylesford on Monday 1st May. Sung Mass 11:30am, Principal Celebrant Bishop Paul Hendricks. For further information or to order medals email john.bonnici@btopenworld.com.

Archdiocesan Life in the Spirit Seminars

The Archdiocesan Agency for Evangelization and Catechesis and the diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal team are again organising Life in the Spirit Seminars for the Archdiocese during Eastertide. The Seminars will run on five Tuesday evenings (2nd, 9th, 16th and 30th May and 6th June) at St George's Cathedral and at local hubs across the Archdiocese as well as on Zoom, with a Pentecost Saturday retreat day for all participants at St George's Cathedral on Saturday 27th May.

Inspiring talks and music, small group sharing and daily reflections (with food provided for those attending Tuesday evening sessions at the Cathedral). For further details, visit bit.ly/SOUTHWARK2023 or email kristinabcooper@gmail.com.



Easter Facts – DID YOU KNOW?

Every year we all rush to munch on the sweet treats that await us on Easter Sunday, but do you know some of the fascinating facts that are related to the upcoming days?

1. The Easter Bunny legend began in pre-Christian Germany—the origin of the Easter Bunny dates back hundreds of years.
2. The holiday was named after the Anglo-Saxon Goddess, Eostre — who was depicted as a Fertility Goddess and a Goddess of Dawn and Light.
3. More than 1.5 million Cadbury Creme Eggs are produced every day — if you piled them on top of each other, it would be 10 x higher than Mount Everest!!!
4. The act of painting eggs originates from a Ukrainian tradition— this traditional act of pysanka (“pih-sahn-kah”) is made by using wax and dyes, but this colourful custom didn't take off until

Ukrainian immigrants came to the U.S.

5. The world's largest Easter egg weighs in at 5000lbs— named the Vegreville Pysanka, it is made from 3500 pieces of aluminium.
6. Pretzels used to be associated with Easter— why because they are associated with the twists resemble arms crossing in prayer.
7. The UK's first chocolate egg was produced in Bristol in 1873—and two years later in 1875 that saw Cadbury's make their first Easter egg.
8. In Germany, it is illegal to dance on Good Friday— that day is considered to be holidays of silence.
9. Easter is celebrated on the Sunday after the full moon following March 21st—So the mystery why Easter Sunday changes date every year?
10. In 2007, possibly the world's most expensive Easter egg was sold at Christie's in London for £9 million.



From the Desk of the Parish Priest

The Resurrection of Jesus

When we speak of the Resurrection of Jesus, we need to be clear about three distinctions:

- 1) Unlike Lazarus, Jesus did not simply return to normal biological life, only to die again at a later date. “Death has no power over him any more” (Romans 6: 9).
- 2) The risen Jesus is not a ghost or spirit. In other words he does not belong to the realm of the dead but to the realm of the living.
- 3) The encounters of the disciples and St Paul (on the road to Damascus) were not mystical experiences (like those experienced by St Catherine of Siena, St Margaret Mary Alacoque, St Faustina Kowalska, or indeed by St Paul elsewhere, as he describes in 2 Corinthians 12). They were convinced they had met a living person.

The disciples recognised Jesus, so his resurrection body was in some ways the same: he ate fish, for example, and St Thomas was invited to touch him. But equally his body was different in some ways: he could enter closed rooms, and he could disappear (eg after his explanation to the disciples at Emmaus). Most significantly it was a glorified body; this is described in *Apocalypse* 1: 12-16. St Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae* (III, 54) cites St Gregory saying that “Christ's body is shown to be of the same nature, but of different glory, after the Resurrection”.

That is to say, a glorified body is still a body, but it is not subject to the normal processes of corruption and decay. It is, we might say, not subject to the usual laws and forces of physics and chemistry. Christ's resurrected body is composed of the same flesh and blood as our bodies, but His body has become perfect.

To assert this is not contrary to science, as some people think. Miracles, Resurrection and a glorified body do not violate the laws of physics, but are outside normal physical happenings (the definition of a miracle is something that happens outside the natural way of things).

The reality of the resurrected body is a fundamental truth of Christianity. The Eleventh Synod of Toledo (AD 675) held that Christ experienced ‘a real death in the flesh’. Christ's Resurrection completed His work of redemption, and so it was not just an important event for Jesus Christ. His Resurrection is of cosmic importance; it was an historical episode but one which transcends history. The Resurrection was not the same kind of historical happening as Christ's birth or death; it is something new, a new type of event, ushering in a new era and new possibilities.

His glorified body is a model of the glorified bodies of the saints and those judged worthy of admission into heaven. As St John puts it: “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). The Resurrection of Christ thus gives us hope, whatever misfortunes we may experience in this life.

We believe, as the Creed says, in the resurrection of the body, not just of the soul. That is, we believe that all who have died will rise again, with our own bodies — so we shall be able to recognise each other and have memories of our earthly life, for example — but in glorified bodies, bodies made perfect by Christ's victory over death. After the General Resurrection our transformed bodies will no longer suffer or die, so we shall enjoy immortality. The only question is whether individuals will be counted among the just and enjoy eternal happiness in heaven or shall be judged among the wicked and go elsewhere for eternal misery.

No wonder we sing in the Response to the Psalm on Easter Day (*Psalm* 117) ‘This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad’.

INAUGURATION OF CARITAS SOUTHWARK
ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL 18th MARCH 2023

"What I want is love, not sacrifice" (from Psalm 50(51))

In a celebration of the beginning of CARITAS in our Archdiocese, the Archbishop preached about *caritas* - the Latin word for love - and how, with the launch of CARITAS SOUTHWARK, we will have impetus to put our faith into action and make the love of Christ real, tangible and practical.

In case you didn't see the Archbishop's letter about CARITAS in a recent Newsletter, CARITAS is a worldwide network that seeks to develop the capacity of personal, parish, community and national action to address many forms of misery and to promote social justice; in England and Wales, it supports people who cannot access help elsewhere, by building on the dignity and strengths of each person, and being present over the long term. CARITAS' work draws on deep and lasting connections of volunteers and staff with their neighbourhoods. The Archbishop asks through this work that the parishes and schools of Southwark be ambitious for the higher gifts in caring for others; by introducing it to Southwark, he is seeking to give the already significant work being done a greater diocesan-level infrastructure.

He has appointed the energetic and engaging Canon Victor Darlington to spearhead the initiative - under four key areas:

- (1) support for young people in our parishes and schools, who are vulnerable and could easily be led to knife crimes, gangs, drugs, etc.;
- (2) a Deanery approach of strengthening and supporting Food Bank schemes in our parishes and reaching out to those who are struggling with a range of domestic needs;
- (3) supporting and caring for our elderly parishioners; and
- (4) bringing together the significant work being done to support migrants and refugees.

A small group of us from Sevenoaks braved the train strikes and attended the Mass on 18th March at St George's Cathedral; we also got to take part in the networking event in Amigo Hall afterwards - where a number of parish-based and charitable groups displayed the incredible work they have been engaged in to date.

The Archbishop was clear that the inauguration of CARITAS SOUTHWARK is not an attempt to "take over" any of the amazing work that is already being done - rather it was to give more strength, add an "engine" behind such efforts to give them even more power to help those in need. He urged every parish and school in our Archdiocese to "take up a new outreach to people who face poverty, homelessness, isolation, and rejection" and "plant seeds of practical love."

In particular, his ask was that we create opportunities to use the gifts and talents of the people of our Archdiocese, "especially young people in our parishes and schools, in loving and humble service of others".

So many people in our Sevenoaks Parish are doing so much already - can we do more? If you have ideas or thoughts - or are interested in getting involved in more - please do reach out through the CARITAS SOUTHWARK network, or feel free to reach out to Ben Andradi (email: ben.andradi@gmail.com) and Gina Hartnett (email: gina.hartnett@hotmail.com) who are engaged with the wider CARITAS SOUTHWARK team.

For further information, including a transcript of Archbishop John's homily, please see <https://southwarkarch.glownet.uk/mission/caritas-southwark/>.

Gina Hartnett



MASS INTENTIONS

ALL MASSES ARE AT ST THOMAS'S CHURCH UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

SUNDAY 9th April	EASTER SUNDAY (Year A)
8:00pm (Sat) <i>Oxford</i>	People of the Parish
9:00pm (Sat)	Kazimierz Kowalczyk RIP & Wlodzimierz Sapiejewski RIP
8:00am (Latin)	Paul & Jennifer Fisher RIP
9:15am	Nora Mc Caffrey
11:15am	Chris Latter—good health
6:00pm	In thanks for those serving the Parish — particularly those on the church cleaning rota
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Kathleen Connolly RIP; her husband John and the comfort of their family
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Eileen Teevan RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Berth & Ruth Lett RIP
Monday 10th	Monday within the Octave of Easter
9:30am	Lionel David Edwards (82 nd birthday)
Tuesday 11th	Tuesday within the Octave of Easter
9:30am	Mary Connole
Wednesday 12th	Wednesday within the Octave of Easter
8:00am	Kathleen Connolly RIP—The Pilgrims' Intention
10:00am <i>Oxford</i>	John Gibson RIP
Thursday 13th	Thursday within the Octave of Easter
10:00am <i>Borough Green</i>	Margaret Gallagher RIP
12:00noon	Fr Joe Andradi
Friday 14th	Friday within the Octave of Easter
8:00am	Ger Glavin RIP
10:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	John Gibson RIP
12:00noon	<i>Funeral Mass — John Berry RIP</i>
Saturday 15th	Saturday within the Octave of Easter
9:30am	Timothy & Clea Andradi RIP
SUNDAY 16th April	SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER (or of Divine Mercy)
6:00pm (Sat)	Eileen Pritchard RIP (birthday)
8:00am (Latin)	People of the Parish
9:15am	June RIP & Andy Hicks (wedding anniversary)
11:15am	Fr Peter Mansfield (40 th anniversary of ordination)
6:00pm	Ger Glavin RIP
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Parish Priests
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Margaret Vinson RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Andrew & Ewa Howard RIP

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Departed anniversaries

Arthur Stubbs, Joseph McGrath, Stephen Gill, Denis Leigh, Ingrid Kolli, Frederick Byrne, Frederick Pert, Eileen Manville, Isobel Joyce, Margaret Hickey, John Evans, Kate Turner, Lucien Benard, Malcolm Chapman, Stanley Dine, Janet Brett, Bob Clifford, Amy Player, Annie Hearn.

*Eternal rest grant unto them,
O Lord, and let perpetual light
shine upon them.
May they rest in peace*

The sick

Angela Brunning, Tony Barrett, Frank Eastbrooke, Lynne Stanley, Veronica Williams, Yvonne Bollen, Peter Ringham, Ann Steven, Lilian Spragg, Jane Tabor, Ken Holmes, Mary & Chris Scott, Sean Cloke, Ann Farren and all in care and nursing homes in the Parish.

For those preparing for the Sacraments

LATIN ANTIPHONS

Entrance

Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum: posuisti super me manum tuam: mirabilis facta est scientia tua, alleluia.

Communion

Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus; itaque epulemur in azymis sinceritatis et veritatis, alleluia.