



Saint Matthew's Church
Big Lamp ~ Summerhill Street
Newcastle

Text of the Mass for the Feast of the Holy Cross 2026

As the priest enters the church, the following is sung:

1. In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.
2. When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the Cross forsake me:
Lo! It glows with peace and joy.
3. When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the Cross the radiance streaming,
Adds more lustre to the day.
4. Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the Cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

Words: John Bowring 1782 - 1872

Music: Wychbold

Walter Whinfield 1865 – 1919

+ The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Christ Himself carried up our sins in His Body on the Tree, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by His wounds we have been healed. Let us confess our sins which inflict those wounds on His Body.

We are often slow to follow the example of Christ: Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

We often fail to be known as Christ's disciples: Christe eleison.

Christe eleison.

We often fail to walk the way of the Cross: Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *you*,
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,
and keep *you* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: for He is our salvation, our Life and our Resurrection; through Him we are saved and made free. May God have mercy upon us and bless us: may He cause His face to shine upon us and may He have mercy upon us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Bless you the Lord &c

*During the **Gloria in excelsis**, the Altar, the symbol of God's Presence, may be honoured with incense.*

Glory be to God on high.

And in earth peace, goodwill towards men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee,

we worship Thee, we glorify Thee,

we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory,

O Lord God, heavenly King,

God the Father almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ:

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sins of the world,

have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,

receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right

hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord;

Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,

art most high,

+ in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, Who in the Passion of Your blessed Son made an instrument of painful death to be for us the means of life and peace: grant us so to glory in the Cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer for His sake, Who is alive and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, throughout all ages, world without end.

Amen.

A Reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Church in Philippi.

Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hear my teaching, O my people; ♦ incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable; ♦ I will pour forth mysteries from of old,

Whenever he slew them, they would seek him; ♦ they would repent and earnestly search for God.

They remembered that God was their rock ♦ and the Most High God their redeemer.

Yet they did but flatter him with their mouth ♦ and dissembled with their tongue.

Their heart was not steadfast towards him, ♦ neither were they faithful to his covenant.

But he was so merciful that he forgave their misdeeds and did not destroy them; ♦ many a time he turned back his wrath and did not suffer his whole displeasure to be roused.

The Gospel book is carried to the Lectern:

Alleluia, alleluia! We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You: because by Your Cross You have redeemed the world. Alleluia!

Christ's Presence in the words of the Gospel may be honoured with incense.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

A homily may follow.

Let us pray to the Father, through His Son, Who suffered on the Cross for the world's redemption:

Simon of Cyrene was forced to carry the Cross for Your Son. Give us grace to lift heavy loads from people we meet and fill us with compassion for those on the point of death: Lord, hear us ... Lord graciously hear us.

Your Son watched soldiers gamble to share His clothes. Look with forgiveness on those who make profit from their victims, and on those whose hearts are hardened by their work: Lord, hear us ... Lord graciously hear us.

(continued over the page)

The thief looked for a part in the coming of Your Kingdom, and received Your Son's words of hope and comfort. Give hope and reconciliation, healing and peace: Lord, hear us ... [Lord graciously hear us.](#)

In Mary and John, Your Son created a new family at the Cross. Fill our relationships with mutual care that we may find a secure hope for the future: Lord, hear us ... [Lord graciously hear us.](#)

The centurion was astonished to see Your glory in the crucified Messiah. Open the eyes of those who do not believe to see in Your Son the meaning of life and death: Lord, hear us ... [Lord graciously hear us.](#)

Nicodemus came to take away Your Son's Body. Give gentleness, hope and faith to all who minister to the dying and bereaved and courage to those who must practice their faith in secret: Lord, hear us ... [Lord graciously hear us.](#)

For Jesus, death was the gate to eternal life. By His Cross draw all those who have died to the glory of Your eternal love: Lord, hear us ... [Lord graciously hear us.](#)

In union with our Lady, Saint Matthew, Saint Philip, the witnesses of the Passion, Saint Augustine and all the saints, we make our prayers through Him Who died upon the Cross that we might live, the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
[Amen.](#)

Once we were afar off, but now, in union with Christ Jesus, we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's Blood.
The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
[And with thy spirit.](#)

As the bread and wine are brought to the Altar and prepared for the Mass, the following is sung:

Protect Your people, O Lord, by the sign of the holy Cross, from the attacks of all enemies; so that our service may be agreeable unto You and our sacrifice acceptable.

Here, while the Cherubim within the veil, adore the blest, life-giving Trinity, we in earth's worship echoing their part, hymn the thrice-holy in their company. So let all earthly cares be laid aside, that we may welcome Him Who draweth nigh, the King of Glory entering His courts, girt by the hidden armies of the sky. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

1. Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle,
Sing the ending of the fray,
O'er the Cross, the Victor's trophy,
Sound the loud triumphant lay;
Tell how Christ, the world's Redeemer,
As a Victim won the day.

2. God in pity saw man fallen,
Shamed and sunk in misery,
When he fell on death by tasting
Fruit of the forbidden tree:
Then another tree was chosen
Which the world from death should free.

3. Faithful Cross! Above all other
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom
None in fruit thy peer may be;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron!
Sweetest weight was hung on thee.

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4. Thou alone was counted worthy
This world's Ransom to sustain,
That a shipwrecked race might ever
Thus a port of refuge gain,
With the sacred Blood anointed
From the Lamb for sinners slain.

5. So His hands and feet were fastened!
So He made His people free;
Not a wound whence Blood was flowing
But a fount of grace to be:
Yea, the very nails which nailed Him
Nail us also to the Tree.

6. Jesu, may those precious fountains
Drink to thirsting souls afford;
Let them be our cup and healing,
And at length our full reward:
So a ransomed world shall ever
Praise Thee, its redeeming Lord.

7. To the Trinity be glory,
To the Father and the Son
With the co-eternal Spirit,
Ever Three and ever One,
One in love and One in splendour,
While eternal ages run.

Words: Latin Venantius Fortunatus 530 - 609
Tr mainly by Percy Dearmer 1867 - 1936
Music: Webbe's S Thomas
Samuel Webbe c1740 - 1816

The preparation of the Altar continues; incense may be used to honour the place where Christ will become present. At the end:

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. All that is in Heaven and earth is Thine:

All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own do we give Thee.

Merciful God, as we proclaim Christ's Death at this Altar until He comes, receive our offering today and strengthen us daily to take up our Cross and follow Him; the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The priest begins the great prayer of thanksgiving:

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts;

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is indeed right and good,

our duty and our joy,

always and everywhere to give you thanks,

holy Father, almighty and eternal God,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today we celebrate with songs of praise

the cross, the victory-sign of Christ.

Once through the fruit of the forbidden tree we fell,

now through this tree our Saviour cancels all our sin.

An instrument of shameful death

has become for Christ a throne of glory.

The power of the life-giving cross

reveals the judgement that has come upon the world

and the triumph of Christ crucified.

And so, with choirs of angels

and with all the heavenly host,

we proclaim your glory

and join their unending hymn of praise:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.

+ Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his Apostles
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

The priest holds up the consecrated Host for the people to see.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
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.

The priest holds up the chalice of consecrated wine for the people to see.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

(continued over the page)

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with [*N and*] all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
By Whom and with Whom and in Whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

Instructed by saving precepts and taught by divine example, we are bold
to say:

Our Father,
*Who art in Heaven,
hallowed by 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.*

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.*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.

The priest holds up the consecrated elements and invites people to receive Holy Communion:

+ Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him, Who takes away the sin of the world; happy are they who are called to His Supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive You; but only say the Word and my soul will be healed.

When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to Myself, says the Lord.

Holy Communion follows.

1. When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

2. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the Cross of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His Blood.

3. See from His Head, His Hands, His Feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

(continued over the page)

4. His dying crimson like a robe,
Spreads o'er His Body on the Tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

5. Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

6. To Christ, Who won for sinners grace
By bitter grief and anguish sore,
By praise from all the ransomed race
For ever and for evermore.

Words: Isaac Watts 1674 - 1748

Music: Rockingham

Adapted by Edward Miller 1731 – 1807

Harmony chiefly from Webbe's Collection of Psalm Tones 1820

After Holy Communion:

By the sign of the Cross, deliver us from our enemies, O Lord our God.

Let us pray:

Faithful God, Whose Son bore our sins in His Body on the tree and gave us this Sacrament to show forth His Death until He comes; give us grace to glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He is our salvation, our life and our hope, Who reigns as Lord, now and for ever.

Amen.

Notices may follow.

Christ crucified draw you to Himself to find in Him a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope and the assurance of sins forgiven; and the + blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The Mass is ended. Go in the Peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

O, higher than the Cherubim, more glorious than the Seraphim, lead their praises, alleluia! Thou, bearer of the eternal Word, most gracious magnify the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia, (alleluia, alleluia,) alleluia!

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth Your Grace into our hearts, we beseech You O Lord, that as we have known the Incarnation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel, so by His Cross and Passion, we may be brought to the glory of His Resurrection; in and through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

1. We sing the praise of Him Who died,
Of Him Who died upon the cross;
The sinner's hope let men deride,
For this we count the world but loss.

2. Inscribed upon the cross we see,
In shining letters, "God is love";
He bears our sins upon the tree;
He brings us mercy from above.

(continued over the page)

3. The Cross! it takes our guilt away;
It holds the fainting spirit up;
It cheers with hope the gloomy day,
And sweetens every bitter cup.

4. It makes the coward spirit brave,
And nerves the feeble arm for fight;
It takes the terror from the grave,
And gilds the bed of death with light;

5. The balm of life, the cure of woe,
The measure and the pledge of love,
The sinner's refuge here below,
The angels' theme in heaven above.

Words: Thomas Kelly 1769 - 1854

Music: Bow Brickhill

Sydney Nicholson 1875 - 1947

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