



St. James the Great Church & St Paul's Church

Palm Sunday – 29th March 2026



WELCOME! A warm welcome to visitors joining us today. Please stay for refreshments after Mass—we would love to meet you. A small bouquet of flowers for everyone present and a traditional Simnel cake will be served after Mass.

SUNDAY SERVICES TODAY

- **8.00 am:** Said Mass 🕯️
- **9.30am Palm Sunday Procession and Sung Parish Mass.** 🎵
- **4.00 pm:** Stations of the Cross Via Dolorosa

✠ **HOLY WEEK SERVICES** ✠ **29th March – 5th April**

WALKING THE FINAL WEEK WITH JESUS

Dear Pilgrims in Christ We have walked the Lenten wilderness, and now we stand at the gates of Jerusalem. Do not let these early days of Holy Week slip by as mere calendar entries. They are the final, urgent beats of our Lord's heart before the silence of the tomb. I urge you to use these scriptural anchors for your daily office and mental prayer.

Journeying Together: The Chrism Mass As we travel to Chelmsford to gather around our Bishop, we celebrate a profound moment of ecclesial unity. The Chrism Mass is not a mere ceremony; it is the vital source of our sacramental life for the entire coming year.

Monday: The Chrism Mass Midday at Chelmsford Cathedral

The Rt Rev'd Luke Irvine-Capel presiding.

- **Renewal of Promises:** Priests renew their commitment.
- **Blessing of Holy Oils:** Oleum Infirmorum (infirm/dying), Oleum Catechumenorum (baptism), and Sacrum Chrisma (Confirmation/Ordination).

The Oil of the Sick: To bring comfort and healing.

The Oil of Catechumens: To give strength to those preparing for Baptism, that they may turn from sin and be prepared for the grace of Christ.

The Holy Chrism: The fragrant oil that seals us in Baptism, Confirmation, and Ordination.

These oils are the tangible means by which the Holy Spirit acts in our lives. When the Bishop breathes over the Chrism, he invokes the very breath of God to animate our faith. Moreover, at the Chrism Mass, your priests renew their ordination promises, and the entire community of our church and parishioners are invited to reflect on the primacy of Jesus' Great Commission that we read about in St. Matthew's Gospel 28:16-20

The Commissioning of the Disciples 16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Our shared mission. We are all anointed in Christ—the Anointed One—to be a royal priesthood. Let our journey to the Cathedral be a living witness to the grace that flows from the altar into our world.

The following rail timetable for those travelling by train on the day.

Departing from Colchester Town Train Station

Recommended for the fastest direct travel from the City.

·09:35 → Arrives 10:10 ·

10:35 → Arrives 11:10

Departing from Colchester (North Station) *Recommended for the fastest direct transit.*

10:30 → Arrives 10:47 ·

10:43 → Arrives 11:10

Note to Parishioners: Please allow sufficient time to walk from Chelmsford station to the Cathedral. May our journey be one of shared fellowship and spiritual preparation.

Scriptural references in the Bible about the Last Week

Monday of Holy Week: 'Jesus' in the Temple On this day, Jesus moves from the quiet of Bethany into the heart of the religious establishment. It is a day of righteous fire and prophetic signs.

The Cursing of the Fig Tree Matthew 21:18–19 | Mark 11:12–14 On the road from Bethany, Jesus hungers. Finding a fig tree with leaves but no fruit, He curses it. This is a "living parable"—a warning to a religious system that looks alive on the outside but bears no spiritual fruit.

The Cleansing of the Temple Matthew 21:12–17 | Mark 11:15–19 | Luke 19:45–48 Jesus enters the Temple courts and is consumed by zeal for His Father's house. He overthrows the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling doves. He famously declares: "My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you make it a den of robbers."

Healing and Hosannas Matthew 21:14–16 Even in His anger, Jesus shows His mercy. The blind and the lame come to Him inside the Temple, and He heals them. When the chief priests hear the children crying out "Hosanna!", Jesus defends them, quoting the Psalms: "Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise."

Holy Tuesday: The Great Conflict in the Temple **11.00 am Confession • Midday Mass**

On this day, Jesus enters the Temple for the last time. He is met not with prayer, but with a series of intellectual "ambushes" by the religious authorities.

The Snares and the Silence · The Challenge to His Authority: The chief priests demand to know who gave Him the right to cleanse the Temple. (Matthew 21:23–27 | Mark 11:27–33 | Luke 20:1–8)

- **The Trap of the Tribute Money:** The Pharisees and Herodians try to force Him into a political death-trap regarding Caesar's taxes. (Matthew 22:15–22 | Mark 12:13–17 | Luke 20:20–26)
- **The Sadducees and the Resurrection:** A theological debate intended to make Jesus look foolish. (Matthew 22:23–33 | Mark 12:18–27 | Luke 20:27–40)
- **The Greatest Commandment:** A lawyer asks the defining question of the Law. (Matthew 22:34–40 | Mark 12:28–34)

The Final Warnings

- **The Woes to the Scribes and Pharisees:** Jesus publicly denounces the hypocrisy of the leaders. (Matthew 23:1–39)
- **The Widow's Mite:** In the treasury, Jesus observes the only person truly "all in" for God. (Mark 12:41–44 | Luke 21:1–4)

The Departure: The Olivet Discourse

As evening falls, Jesus leaves the Temple for good and sits on the Mount of Olives, looking back at the city and foretelling its destruction and His Second Coming. (Matthew 24:1–51 | Mark 13:1–37 | Luke 21:5–36)

Spy Wednesday and The Shadows of Betrayal **11.00 am Confession • Midday Mass**

As we reach the midpoint of Holy Week, we observe Spy Wednesday. This traditional name draws our attention to the somber moment when Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, acted as a "spy" for the chief priests, seeking an opportunity to betray our Lord for thirty pieces of silver. In our liturgy today, we reflect on the fragility of human loyalty and the immense cost of the sacrifice Christ was prepared to make. While the world plotted His downfall, Jesus remained steadfast in His love for us.

Scriptural Foundation for Meditation:

- **The Plot to Betray Jesus:** Matthew 26:14–16
- **The Cost of Betrayal:** Zechariah 11:12–13
- **The Foretelling of the Betrayal:** John 13:21–30

"Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?'" — Matthew 26:14–15

Maundy Thursday 7.00 pm: Mass

(Foot Washing & Stripping of Altars). Vigil: Until Midnight at the Altar of Repose in the Lady Chapel.

This evening we shall gather where in heart and mind we are in the Upper Room with the Lord and his disciples: We hear his command to love one another, we demonstrate his loving serving as the priest kneels to wash the feet of twelve members of the congregation, we receive the broken bread of his body and the cup of his blood, and then go out from the table to watch with him in the Garden of Gethsemane, as the sanctuary is stripped of ornament and left bare as we begin contemplating the arrest, desertion and trial of Jesus. Following the Mass a watch of prayer is kept at the Altar of Repose until midnight, with an invitation to come and go through the night and to spend some time in prayer there. **Do please sign up to pray for 30 mins at the Altar of Repose. See list on the notice board. It may be you can't stay for 30 minutes but you might be able to return for Night Prayer at 11:45p.m Finishing at Midnight.**

Maundy Thursday: Scriptural Foundations · The Institution of the Eucharist: Matthew 26:26–29, Mark 14:22–25, Luke 22:14–20, 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 · **The Mandatum (The Washing of Feet):** John 13:1–17, 34–35 · **The Institution of the Priesthood:** Luke 22:19, John 17:1–26 · **The Agony in the Garden (The Watch):** Matthew 26:36–46, Mark 14:32–42, Luke 22:39–46 · **The Betrayal and Arrest:** John 18:1–11

Good Friday: From the Altar to the Cross The Stations of the Cross (Via Dolorosa) Good Friday, 10:30 am

To grasp the depth of the Liturgy of the Passion, we must first walk the dust of the Via Dolorosa—the Way of Sorrow. Before the solemnity of the afternoon, we gather to walk the Way of the Cross. We follow the footsteps of Christ from the Praetorium to Calvary, remembering the raw reality of our salvation. Following the service, we will share in fellowship with Hot Cross Buns.

The Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord Good Friday, 2:00 pm

I urge you to return as the Church gathers for a stark and deeply poignant Liturgy. This day is about the crux of our faith. The service consists of: The Liturgy of the Word (John 18:1 – 19:42); The Homily; The Solemn Intercessions; The Veneration of the Cross; Holy Communion. We depart the church in solemn silence, reflecting on the sacrifice made for our redemption.

Scriptural Foundations for Meditation: · **The Suffering Servant:** Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12 · **The High Priest:** Hebrews 4:14–16; 5:7–9 · **The Seven Last Words:** Luke 23:34, 43; John 19:26–27; Matthew 27:46; John 19:28, 30; Luke 23:46

Holy Saturday 8.30–11.30 am 4th April

Cleaning of the Church & Easter Prep (Hot Cross Buns provided).

🙏🙏 A LOT OF HELP NEEDED – EASTER PREPARATIONS. READ NOTICE OF CHURCH NOTICE BOARD. We also need help set out tables and chairs, dress the tables in the Pilgrim Centre and decorate for Easter. Glasses, crockery, cutlery, etc.

EASTER DAY 5TH APRIL

The Dawn Vigil at 6AM : "While it was still dark"

We gather at the threshold of the Resurrection. Scriptural Focus: John 20:1; Matthew 28:2–4; Luke 24:5. Move from darkness into the first light of the New Creation. I invite you to attend the most important service of our church year. We begin "while it was still dark," gathered outside around a new fire. This fire is a physical sign of life returning to a world that felt cold and empty after the sorrow of Good Friday; it represents the spark of the Resurrection that begins in the darkness of the tomb and can never be put out. From this single flame, we light our great Paschal Candle, which represents the Risen Lord Himself—our "pillar of fire"—which we follow into the dark church. As we process, we light our own smaller candles from its flame, witnessing the light of Christ literally reclaiming our building as the darkness is pushed back bit by bit.

Once inside, I will sing the *Exsultet*, the ancient song of victory that tells us the long wait is over. We don't just sit and listen to the story of our faith; we walk through it together, reflecting on the great turning points of the Bible before preparing for the baptisms by singing the Litany of the Saints. This is a powerful moment where we chant the names of the holy men and women who have gone before us, and as each name is called, you respond by singing "*Pray for us.*" At the font, I will bless the baptismal water and baptise three adults who have been preparing for this moment. Just as their candles are lit from the Paschal Candle, we are reminded that our own light comes directly from the Risen Christ. We will each hold our own flames, a sea of light showing that we are all part of His New Creation as we finally celebrate the first Mass of Easter together at the altar.

Easter Day Eucharist: "The Lord is Risen Indeed" 10AM

A triumphant celebration of victory. Scriptural Focus: John 20:16; Matthew 28:10. Transition to the presence of the Resurrected Lord.

PLEASE PRAY FOR 🙏 Adam, Ava Mills, Gaby, Christine & Emma, Clive French, David Beattie, Donna Canning, Joyce & Ralph, Jon Hawkings, Lubomira, Madeline Bates, Naomi & family, Noreen Cunliffe, Ronnie, Sheila Townsend, Sharon, Shirley.

🌿 **Recently Departed:** Colin Burwell. 📖

Years' Mind: 29th: Hilda Sharman, Jessie Croydon, Albert Dawkins, Ronald Cross, Ethel Woods, John Evered. **30th:** Kenneth Jones.

31st: Edith Harknet. **1st** Royce Somerset, Jack Mizen, Dorothy Lipscomb **2nd** William Millican, Grace Hunwicke, Thomas Arthur Pawsey, Harry Davies, Ernest Jackson, Alan Chaplin **3rd**. Beatrice Annie May Black, Audrey Rogers, Peter Townsend **4th** Alice Tibbs, Eliza Prior.

SANCTUARY LAMPS:

Blessed Sacrament lamp: Sponsored for Archbishop of Canterbury. .
Aumbry Lamp: Sponsored for Society of Bishops & Forward in Faith
St James the Great lamp: Sponsored for the Bishop of Chelmsford and the Bishop of Richborough.

- **EASTER FLOWER SPONSORSHIPS** Help us beautify the sanctuary for our greatest celebration. You may sponsor lilies and flowers for the Altar of Repose and Easter Sunday in memory of a loved one or as a thank offering. · To Contribute: Sign the sheet at the back of the church. Place donations in an envelope marked "Easter Lilies/Flowers" and hand it to Jean Hecker. **Help with the flower arranging is required.**
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** Join us in preparing for the Paschal Mystery: · Wed 1st April (1.30 pm): Altar of Repose & initial Easter prep. Or by prior arrangements · Good Friday: Final Easter displays following the Liturgy. Or by prior arrangements.
MISSION & LEADERSHIP · Giving: Our Gospel work is funded by your sacrifice. We ask for your profoundest generosity (2 Cor 9:7). · Affiliation: St James the Great is a parish of The Society and Forward in Faith, under the care of the Bishop of Richborough.
- **CONTACTS** · Parish Priest: Fr James SSC: 01206 860419 · Wardens: Lucy Mason (01206 386766); Dr Desirée Campbell (01206 617263). · Safeguarding: Clare Moles 07751 329314. · Prayer: 7.45 am & 6.00 pm. · Web: stjamesthegreat.wordpress.com ·  infostjamesthegreat@gmail.com ·  st-james-colchester-essex.co.uk

✠ HOLY WEEK SERVICES Summary

Palm Sunday 8.00am and 9.30 am & 4.00 pm.

Monday: Chrism Mass Midday at Chelmsford Cathedral

Tuesday/Wednesday: 11.00 am Confession • Midday Mass.

Maundy Thursday 7.00 pm.

Good Friday 10.30am Stations of the Cross

2.00 pm. Holy Saturday 8.30 am.

Easter Day 6.00 Dawn Vigil and 10.00 Sung Easter Mass.