

# PALM SUNDAY MARCH 29, 2026 10:00 AM

*A welcome and explanation of the service can be found at the end of the bulletin.*

*The congregation is invited to gather in the church courtyard, weather permitting. Palm crosses will be distributed. Those who would prefer not to stand and process may be seated in the Nave.*

## THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS



Celebrant  
People  
Celebrant

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!  
**Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!**

Let us pray. Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Gospel

*Matthew 21:1-11*

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

## Blessing of the Palms

Celebrant      The Lord be with you.

**People**        **And also with you.**

Celebrant      Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People**        **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Celebrant      It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The choir chants the Hosannas.*

Celebrant      Let us go forth in peace.

**People**        **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

*The congregation is invited to process into the church with palms. Once in your pew, please remain standing for our opening hymn.*

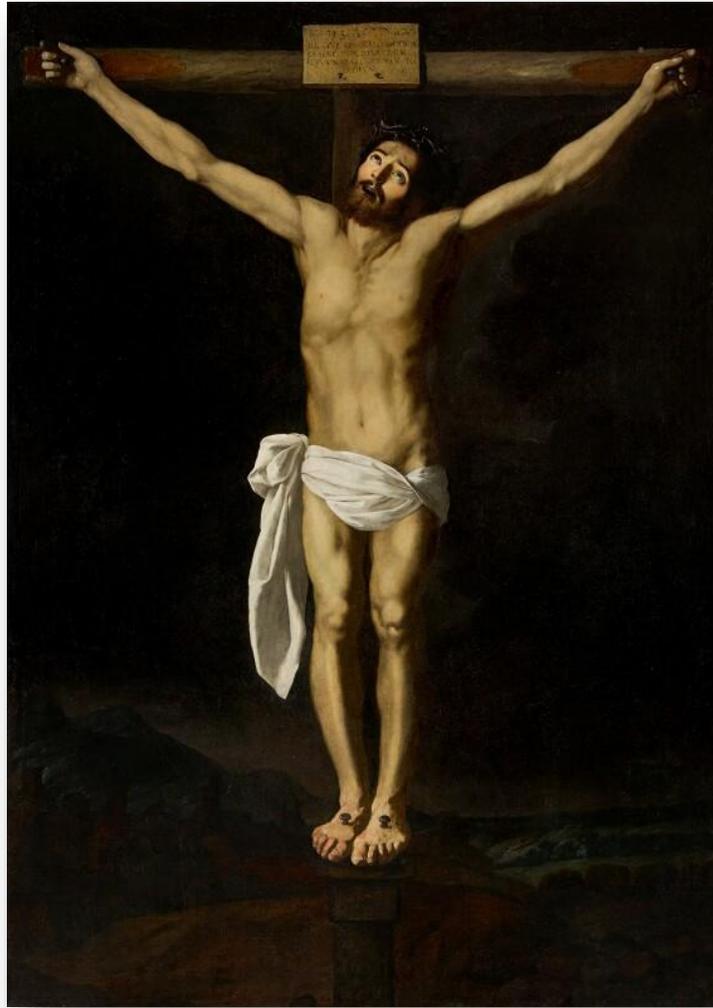
## Hymn 154, verses 1, 3, & 4

*All glory, laud, and honor*

*Sung by all.*

*Valet will ich dir geben*

# THE LITURGY OF THE WORD



## The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

**People And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray. Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*The people are seated.*

## The Homily

*The people remain seated throughout the readings and music.*

## The First Lesson

Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord God has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he wakens--  
wakens my ear  
to listen as those who are taught.  
The Lord God has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.  
I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.  
The Lord God helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;  
he who vindicates me is near.  
Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.  
Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.  
It is the Lord God who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?

*All sing the following verse as a response to our reading.*

6 Were you there when they cru-ci-fied my Lord? Were you there when they  
cru-ci-fied my Lord? O! Some-times it caus-es me to  
12 trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble. Were yu there when they cru-ci-fied my Lord?

*The congregation is invited to sing the subsequent bolded verses with this tune.*

## The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

Matthew 27:11-54

Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

***Were you there when they brought my Lord to trial? Were you there when they brought my Lord to trial? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they brought my Lord to trial?***

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

***Were you there when they shouted crucify? Were you there when they shouted crucify? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they shouted crucify?***

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

***Were you there when they flogged the Lord of Life? Were you there when they flogged the Lord of Life? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they flogged the Lord of Life?***

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

***Were you there when the soldiers mocked and spat? Were you there when the soldiers mocked and spat? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when the soldiers mocked and spat?***

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

*Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when nailed him to the tree?*

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

*We were there when Jesus was left to die. We were there when Jesus was left to die. Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. We were there when Jesus was left to die.*

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

## **Prolonged Quiet**

### **A Statement of Faith**

*Philippians 2:5-11*

*We will now, in place of the Nicene Creed, make an alternative statement of faith, which comes from Philippians. Often referred to as the kenotic hymn, this scripture describes the "self-emptying" (kenosis) of Jesus. It is in our lectionary as the second reading for today.*

Celebrant      Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
People          **who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death--  
even death on a cross.**

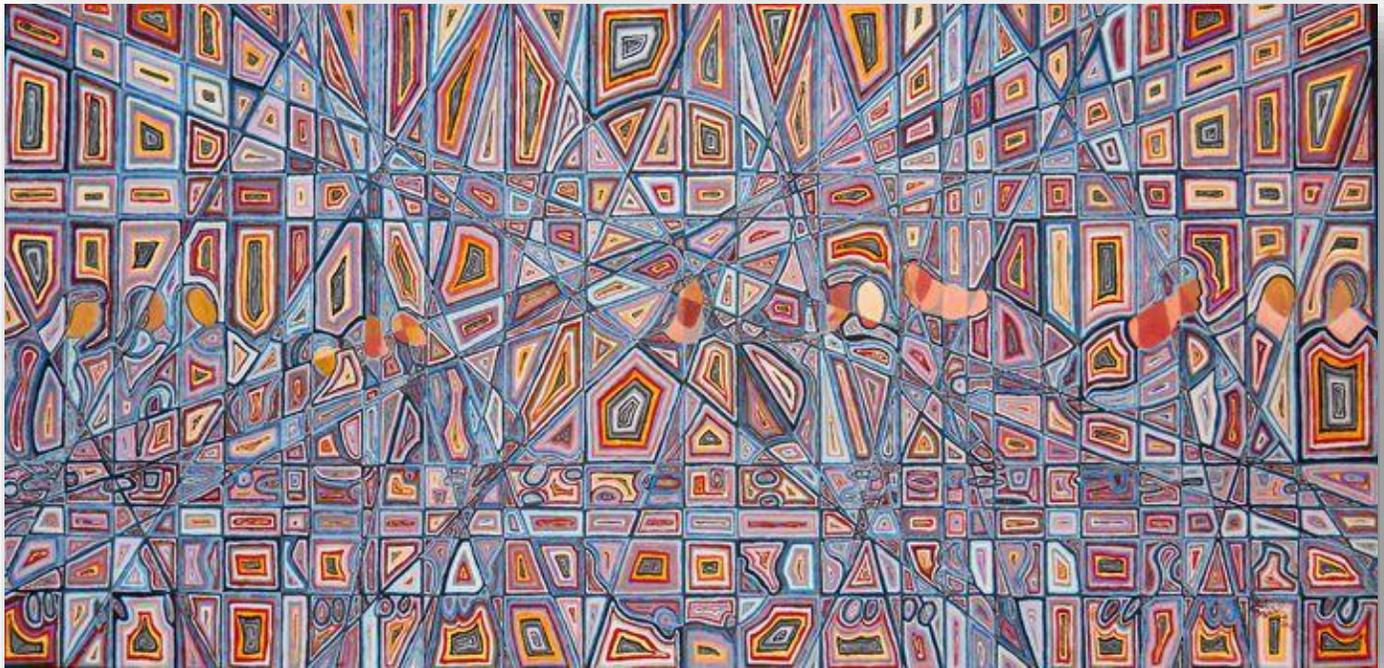
**Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.**

## **The Peace**

**Celebrant**      The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**People**         **And also with you.**

*The people greet one another with a sign of God's peace and are seated.*

# THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE



## The Offertory

*Having listened to the Word of God, affirmed our faith, confessed our sins, received forgiveness, and shared in the peace, we now prepare ourselves for the gift of the Holy Communion. At the offertory, we gratefully offer back to God some of what God has given us, both in the bread and wine, and in the money we give. Here at St. John's, it is tradition that people stand as the elements are brought forward and are seated once the bread and wine are on the altar.*

## Offertory Anthem

*When I survey the wondrous cross*

Gilbert Martin

## Doxology

*Hymn 380, verse 3*

*Sung by all.*

*Old 100<sup>th</sup>*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

## The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy. You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life. Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:

**Together**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hea-ven and earth are full \_\_\_\_\_ full \_\_\_\_\_ of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na  
 in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Bless - ed is he who comes \_\_\_\_\_ in the name of the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_ Ho -  
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Celebrant Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace. But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Together Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Celebrant Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world.

Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever.

People AMEN.

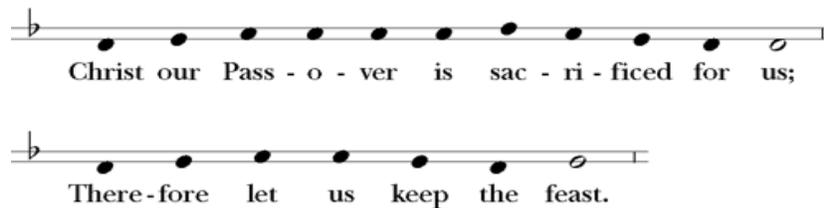
## The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## Fraction Anthem

*Sung by all.*



## The Invitation to Holy Communion

*The people are seated. Please move at the direction of the ushers. You may receive the bread in open and outstretched hands. Gluten-free wafers are available; please make your need known to the priest. Receiving the bread only is full participation in the Eucharist. Wine is also available. If you prefer to receive a blessing instead, please indicate your choice by crossing your hands across your chest. Those who wish to have Holy Communion brought to them at their seat should notify an usher. All who seek God and a deeper life in Christ are welcome to receive Holy Communion. While we believe that it is most meaningful when done as a baptized Christian, no one will ever be turned away from God's table.*

## Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray.

Together **Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## **The Blessing**

*The people stand as able.*

## **Hymn 435, verses 1-5**

*At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow*

*Sung by all.*

*King's Weston*

## **The Dismissal**

*The Celebrant offers a dismissal and the people respond:*

**People**      **Thanks be to God.**

## **The Postlude**

*The artwork throughout this bulletin gives us a window into how humanity encounters and understands God's story in holy scripture. Its inclusion is intended to ignite your own encounter with the Divine.*

*The Liturgy of the Palms art: Sabrina Squires, Triumphal Entry.  
<https://sabinajill.com/available-paintings/>*

*The Liturgy of the Word art: Francisco De Zurbarán, The Crucifixion, 1635-40.  
Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Mutriku, Spain.  
<https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/francisco-de-zurbarans-christ-on-the-cross>*

*The Liturgy of the Table art: Robert Rombeiro, Last Supper.  
<https://fineartamerica.com/profiles/robert-rombeiro>*

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## *Palm Sunday: A little history, a little theology, a lot of big feelings*

A warm welcome to all who come to worship at St. John's today. We are glad you are here! If you are visiting with us, we would like to get to know you better, so please fill out a visitor's card found in the pew and place in the offering plate.

There is no wrong way to worship. The people's responses are in bold and invitations for sitting, standing, and kneeling are in italics. We invite you to participate in the way that feels most comfortable and authentic to you.

Palm Sunday is also called The Sunday of the Passion and has three movements. The first is Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem when Jesus was proclaimed as King of kings, and those along the way spread garments and palm branches as a sign of his triumph. The service opens with The Liturgy of the Palms, when we process with palm branches singing, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." This practice follows both the story found in scripture and the liturgical practice from ancient Jerusalem, as witnessed by the pilgrim Egeria in about 381-384. During this observance there was a procession of people down the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem. The people waved branches of palms or olive trees as they walked. They sang psalms and shouted the antiphon, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The second movement of the service is in complete contrast, as the hosannas change to "crucify him" in the reading of Jesus' passion. As we participate in singing praise with the procession, so too we participate in the story of Jesus' suffering and death. The passion is framed by the prophet Isaiah and the kenotic hymn. Isaiah tells of both the bane and bravery of a prophet, citing the unshakeable call of God in the face of physical and psychological violence; he prepares both us and Jesus for darkness ahead. The kenotic hymn, written by Paul to the church in Philippi, helps followers of Christ name the paradox of Jesus being both fully divine and fully human. We accept the full humanity of Jesus, with its limitations, and believe that it did not compromise his divinity. We confess that God was uniquely and salvifically present and active in Jesus' humanity.

The final movement of the service is the Eucharist. We remember and celebrate in the reality of the present moment Christ's final supper with his friends. We recount the story of salvation and then break bread with one another. Holy Communion describes the sacred sharing of ourselves with God and with each other through the sacrifice of love made in Jesus, pointing us to the resurrection even amidst darkness.

This service is intentionally bizarre and challenging. If you have worshipped in an Episcopal church on Palm Sunday before, you may notice that The Liturgy of the Word (our second movement) is somewhat different from the usual service. It has been constructed using both traditional Book of Common Prayer elements and an order of service shared publicly by Cameron Merrill and Greg Moore.

The service of Palm Sunday begins our journey through Holy Week, as we await the glory of Easter. We invite you to walk this path with us here at St. John's.