

We are going to be looking at the Easter Vigil... Does anyone know what this is?



Easter Vigil , also called the **Paschal Vigil** or the **Great Vigil of Easter** , is a service held in Catholic Churches and traditional Christian churches as the first official celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. It is held between the hours of Sunset of Holy Saturday and the sunrise of Easter Sunday.

It is split into 4 main parts: The Service of the Light, Liturgy of the Word, Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Eucharist

The Service of the Light

The vigil begins between sunset on and sunrise on outside the church, where an Easter Fire is kindled and the Paschal candle is blessed and then lit. This Paschal candle will be used throughout the season of Easter, remaining in the sanctuary of the church or near the lectern, and throughout the coming year at baptisms and funerals, reminding all that Christ is "light and life". Once the candle has been lit, it is carried by a deacon through the nave of the church, itself in complete darkness, stopping three times to chant the acclamation 'Light of Christ' (Lumen Christi), to which the assembly responds 'Thanks be to God' or 'Deo Gratias'. As the candle proceeds through the church, the small candles held by those present are gradually lit from the Paschal candle. As this symbolic "Light of Christ" spreads, darkness is decreased

- 1. What is the symbolism of the Flame?**
- 2. Why is the candle used?**
- 3. Why is it necessary for the candle to be blessed first?**
- 4. Why is the light used as a symbol of Resurrection?**

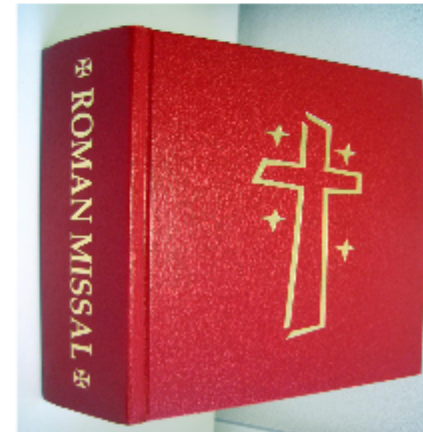


The Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word consists of seven readings from the Old Testament (i.e., 1. Genesis 1:1-2:2; 2. Genesis 22:1-18; 3. Exodus 14:15-15:1; 4. Isaiah 54:4a.5-14; 5. Isaiah 55:1-11; 6. Baruch 3:9-15.32-4:4; 7. Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28), although it is permitted to reduce this number for pastoral reasons to at least three, or for *very* pressing pastoral reasons two. The account of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea may never be omitted, since this event is at the centre of the Jewish Passover, of which Christians believe Christ's death and resurrection is the fulfillment. Each reading is followed by a psalm or biblical canticle (i.e., Psalm 10, Exodus 15:1-18, Psalm 30, Isaiah 12:2-6, Psalm 19, Psalm 42 & 43) sung responsorially and by a prayer that relates what has been read in the Old Testament to the mystery of Christ.

After these readings conclude, the altar candles are lit and the Gloria in Excelsis Deo is sung for the first time since before Lent (with the exception of Holy Thursday, as well as any solemnities or feasts that occurred during Lent), and the church bells and the organ, silent since that point on Holy Thursday, are sounded again - although it is customary in some churches to have no organ playing during Lent at all, except when accompanying hymns.

(In the pre-Vatican II rite, the statues, which have been covered during Passiontide, are unveiled at this time.) The collect is sung or recited. The reading from the Epistle to the Romans (Romans 6:3-11) is proclaimed, followed by the chanting of Psalm 118. The Alleluia is sung for the first time since before Lent and with special solemnity. The Gospel of the Resurrection (Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8 or Luke 24:1-12 follows, along with a homily.



Renewal of Baptismal Promises

After the conclusion of the Liturgy of the Word, the water of the baptismal font is solemnly blessed and any catechumens and candidates for full communion are initiated into the church, by baptism and/or confirmation , respectively. After the celebration of these sacraments of initiation, the congregation renews their baptismal vows and receive the sprinkling of baptismal water . The prayer of the faithful (of whom the newly baptised are now part) follow.

1. Why do you think Christians and Catholics alike, choose the Easter Vigil as a time for Baptism?

2. What is the significance of the water?

**3. Why is the water symbolic of this time?
How is this linked to Jesus' Resurrection?**



May 2020

The Easter Vigil

Using the table provided, list the 4 parts of the Easter Vigil, briefly explain what happens in each, draw a symbol for each part and explain why you have chose these symbols and the significance regarding Jesus' resurrection.

Time to reflect and Contemplate: How does this service express Catholic belief? What place does the Word of God have in other liturgies?

