

# COME JOURNEY AND PRAY THROUGH THE EASTER VIGIL

The Easter Vigil is a time of beauty, colour, wonder, holy expectation, prayer and joy. It is an ancient liturgy celebrated on the night before Easter Sunday. The early Christians' vigils took the whole night, beginning in the middle of the night and ending with the first rays of dawn when Mass began. It was a way to welcome the rising of the Son of God, who dispels the darkness of night. Let us seek to be immersed in heart of the Paschal Mystery.

Enjoy this brief guide. May it help you – even in your aloneness at this time – to pray.

## FIRST PART: THE LITURGY OF LIGHT

The church is in darkness as a fire is lit outside.

### ***Blessing of the Fire***

*Father, we share in the light of your glory through your Son, the light of the world.  
Make this new fire + holy, and inflame us with faith, hope and love today and for eternity.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.*

The candle is lit from the fire and symbolises for us Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

### ***Blessing of the Candle***

*Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega,  
All time belongs to him and all the ages.  
To him be glory and power  
through every age for ever. Amen*

Processing through the dark church, the priest stops three times, proclaiming

**“Christ, our Light!”**

From the light of the Easter Candle, the people pass to one another the flame.  
*The light of the Paschal Candle becomes a wave of lights, and speaks to us of Christ as the true morning star that never sets – the Risen Lord in whom light has conquered darkness.  
May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.*

## **The Easter Proclamation**

When the Easter candle arrives in the sanctuary, the deacon chants the “Easter Proclamation” (also called the *Exsultet*, from its first word in Latin, “Rejoice”). It is an ancient hymn that speaks of the many mysteries of this night.

*Rejoice, heavenly powers!  
Exult, all creation around God's throne!  
Rejoice, O Mother Church!*

*Let this place resound with joy, echoing the mighty song of all God's people!  
Jesus Christ, our King is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation.*

## **SECOND PART: THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Scriptures are read, still in the darkness of the church. From Genesis through the New Testament, God's plan of salvation is recounted. Psalms help us in our reflection.

*The Church offers us a panoramic view of salvation history - creation, God's call and faithfulness to his people, the prophecies of the prophets leading us Christ, our Light.*

- In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.....  
God created man in the image of himself, male and female he created them.  
God saw all that he had made, and indeed it was very good.....  
God rested on the seventh day. (from Genesis 1:1 – 2:2)
- I swear by my own self – it is the Lord who speaks – I will make your descendants, Abraham, as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore.  
(from Genesis 22:1-18)
- The Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians  
who put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant. (from Exodus 14:15 – 15:1)
- My love for you will never leave you  
and my covenant of peace with you will never be shaken. (from Isaiah 54:5-14)
- Come to the water all you who are thirsty.  
With you I will make an everlasting covenant. (from Isaiah 55:1-11)
- Listen, Israel, to commands that bring life.  
Those who keep her live. Those who desert he die. (from Baruch 3)
- I am going to take you from among the nations and bring you to your own land.  
I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. (from Ezekiel 36:16-28)

*The candles on the Altar are lit. Lights are turned on. Bells ring.*

**GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE TO PEOPLE OF GOODWILL...!**

Baptised, we went into the tomb joining him in death,  
so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory,  
we too might live a new life. (from Romans 6:3-11)

Mary went to visit the tomb...The angel spoke,  
"There is no need for you to be afraid.  
Jesus, who was crucified...is not here, for he has risen as he said he would..."

(from Mt 28:1-10)

### **THIRD PART: THE BAPTISMAL LITURGY**

The celebration of Baptism (for those who were not Christian)  
or a Profession of Faith (for those Christians already baptized who are becoming Catholic)  
and Confirmation takes place at this time.

Later in the Mass, they will be received at the Table of the Eucharist for the first time.

Even if there is no Baptism, the water of the baptismal font is blessed.

Baptism has opened for us our life in Christ and we pray for others yet to receive Baptism.

#### **LITANY OF THE SAINTS**

Our life with God has never and will never be just ourselves.

We are the Body of Christ and we ask saints in heaven and on earth to pray with and for us.

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.	Lord have mercy.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,	pray for us.
Holy angels of God,	pray for us.
St John the Baptist,	pray for us.....
All holy men and women,	pray for us.
By your death and rising to new life,	Lord, save your people.
By your give of the Holy Spirit,	Lord, save your people.
Jesus, Son of the living God,	Lord, hear our prayer.
Christ, hear us.	Lord Jesus, hear our prayer.

#### **BLESSING OF WATER**

Let us ask the Lord our God to bless this water  
which we shall use to recall our baptism.  
May God renew us and keep us faithful to the Spirit we have all received.

Lord our God,  
This night your people keep prayerful vigil.  
Be with us as we recall the wonder of our creation  
and the greater wonder of our redemption.  
Bless this water: it makes the seed to grow.  
It refreshes us and makes us clean.  
It is a servant of your loving kindness.  
Through water, you set your people free.  
You quenched their thirst in the desert.  
With water, the prophets announced a new covenant  
that you would make with man.  
By water, made holy by Christ in the Jordan,  
we are reborn to life and freedom in Christ beyond death of sin.

Let this water remind us of our baptism.  
Let us share the joys of all who are baptised this year.

### **WE RENEW OUR BAPTISMAL VOWS**

*God's life in us and our life in God can never be nulled.  
In Baptism we have a relationship for eternity in Christ who embraces us.  
We are called and empowered to live who we are and with our gifts  
through him, with him and in him and thus for others.*

### **FOURTH PART: THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

The liturgy culminates with the celebration of the Eucharist,  
which the newly baptized share in for the first time.

In these concluding petitions, may we be following in footsteps of Jesus  
who, at the Last Passover Supper, washed the feet of the disciples.

- May the Spirit of Christ Risen imbue the faith, hope and love of all Christians and all Australian Catholics preparing for the Plenary Council in Adelaide in October.
- May governments respond together to promote respect and justice for human life and for our natural environments, and be clear in and supported for their integrity.
- May all people affected by the Coronavirus or other effects of our current health, social and financial upheavals throughout the world be valued and protected.
- May peace and reconciliation transform all homes, relationships and regions of our world where there is violence, hatred and division.
- May the media inspire people in society through their professionalism and integrity.
- May God continue to embrace all who have died and with faith, hope and love, may we support their grieving families and friends.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.....

Mary, mother and first disciple of Christ Risen, pray for us.  
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

MAY THE 50 DAYS OF THE EASTER SEASON BE  
A RICH BLESSING FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED  
ONES!

Reference: <https://aleteia.org/2018/03/31/heres-a-step-by-step-guide-to-the-easter-vigil>