

## ***The Great Vigil of Easter***

### **The Lighting of the Candle**

*In the darkness, fire is kindled; after which the Celebrant may address the people in these or similar words*

Dear friends in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing his Word and celebrating his Sacraments, we share in his victory over death.

*The Celebrant says the following prayer*

Let us pray.

O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Bearing a Candle, lit in lieu of the Paschal Candle, the Celebrant says or sings, three times,*

The light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

*The Candle is returned to its place.*

*Then the Deacon, or other person appointed, standing near the Candle, sings or says the Exsultet, as follows<sup>1</sup>*

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels,  
and let your trumpets shout Salvation  
for the victory of our mighty King.

Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth,  
bright with a glorious splendor,  
for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.

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<sup>1</sup> Sung by cantor: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kym7UbUDdyc> (Latin, Vatican Basilica, 2011), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvoOWqWe\\_l8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvoOWqWe_l8) (var. English version, J. Michael Thompson, 2014).

Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church,  
and let your holy courts, in radiant light,  
resound with the praises of your people.

The Lord be with you.

*Answer* And also with you.

*Deacon* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

*Deacon*

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night, when you brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you gave a Son.

How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord.

How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and we are reconciled to God.

Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning—he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## **The Liturgy of the Word**

*The Celebrant says*

Let us hear now of God's saving deeds in history, and how God saved people in ages past; and let us pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

### **Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea**

Exodus 14:10-15:1

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **Salvation offered freely to all**

Isaiah 55:1-11

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O God, you have created all things by the power of your Word, and you renew the earth by your Spirit: Give now the water of life to those who thirst for you, that they may bring forth abundant fruit in your glorious kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **The gathering of God's people**

Zephaniah 3:12-20

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his death, and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you, therefore, now that our Lenten observance is ended, to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his holy Catholic Church.

*Celebrant* Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and  
renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

*People* I do.

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God the Father?

*People* I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

*Celebrant* Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

*People* I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*People* I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

*Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*The Celebrant concludes the Renewal of Vows as follows*

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*



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For information about St. Mark's, please visit our website:

[www.stmarksfairland.org](http://www.stmarksfairland.org)

[www.stmarks-silverspring.org](http://www.stmarks-silverspring.org)

We hope that today's service has been a blessing to you.

We are here to serve you, and hope to see you again.

Please feel free to call us, email us, or visit us online.