MASS OF THE EASTER VIGIL



Year **B**

THE EASTER VIGIL

In this Easter Vigil, after a day's silence during which the Church, as it were, held her breath in suspense, a thrilling joy breaks out. Christ has gone down into the valley of death and has trampled death underfoot! On the third day he rose again . . .

'We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come' — this is the core of our faith.

THE EASTER LITURGY

The Vigil

The Priest, ministers and people gather outside the church. The New Fire is prepared.

The celebrant greets the congregation and introduces the Vigil with the following words:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, on this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus Christ 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 through word and sacrament we share in his victory over death.

The Service of Light

The New Fire is blessed:

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you sent your Son to be the light of the world and to bring to your people the radiance of your glory.

Bless $\underline{*}$ this new Fire, and set us aflame with the fire of your love, that with pure hearts and minds we may come to your feast of everlasting light, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And blessing the Paschal Candle, the Priest traces a cross on it, marking the Greek letters Alpha and Omega and the four numbers of the current year. He says:

- 1 Christ yesterday and today
- 2 the beginning and the end
- 3 Alpha
- 4 and Omega
- 5 all time belongs to Him
- 6 and all the ages
- 7 through every age and for ever. **Amen.**

And then inserting the nails he says:

- 1 By his holy
- 2 and glorious wounds
- 3 may Christ the Lord
- 4 guard us
- 5 and keep us. Amen.

The Priest lights the candle from the New Fire saying:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

The Procession

The candle is carried through the Church, the bearer pausing three times. The Priest, ministers and choir in turn, light their candles. (At home, feel free to light a candle as you participate online.) At each pause is sung:

The light of Christ! Thanks be to God.

When all are in their places the Candle is placed on its stand. The Deacon sings:

The Exsultet

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, Choirs of angels! Exult, all creation around God's throne! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation! . . .

... your Son who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The Readings

The people's candles are extinguished.

During the readings a minimum of electric light is used. The people remain seated for the Lessons and Psalms.

The Priest says:

My brothers and sisters, we have begun our solemn vigil. Let us listen attentively to the Word of God, recalling how he saved his people throughout history: and in the fullness of time, sent his own Son to be our Redeemer. Through this Easter celebration may God bring to perfection the saving work he has begun in us.

SIT

I. A reading from the Book of Genesis. (1: 1, 26–31)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps. 32)

\mathbb{R} The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

The word of the Lord is faithful and all his works to be trusted. The Lord loves justice and right and fills the earth with his love.

By his word the heavens were made, by the breath of his mouth all the stars. He collects the waves of the ocean: he stores up the depths of the sea.

They are happy, whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen as his own. From the heavens the Lord looks forth, he sees all the children of men.

Our souls are waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.

COLLECT STAND

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, you created all things in wonderful beauty and order. Help us now to perceive how still more wonderful is the new creation by which in the fullness of time you redeemed your people through the sacrifice of our Passover, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

R

SIT

II. A reading from the Book of Exodus.

(14: 15–15: 1a)

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and of cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried 'the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!' 'Stretch out your hand over the sea,' the Lord said to Moses 'that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.' Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh's whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

The choir takes up the Responsorial Psalm immediately

Responsorial Psalm (Ex. 15)

\mathbb{R} Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph! Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation. This is my God and I extol him, my father's God and I give him praise.

The Lord is a warrior! The Lord is his name. The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea, the flower of his army is drowned in the sea. The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone.

Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power, your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy. In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe. ₽

You will lead your people and plant them on your mountain, the place, O Lord, where you have made your home, the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made. The Lord will reign for ever and ever.

COLLECT STAND

Priest: Let us pray.

Father, even today we see the wonders of the miracles you worked long ago. You once saved a single nation from slavery, and now you offer that salvation to all through baptism. May the peoples of the world become true children of Abraham and prove worthy of the heritage of Israel. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SIT

Ho, come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come! Buy corn without money, and eat, and at no cost, wine and milk. Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen, listen to me. and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy. Pay attention, come to me; listen and your soul will live. With you I will make an everlasting covenant out of the favours promised to David. See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples, a leader and a master of the nations. See, you will summon a nation you never knew, those unknown will come hurrying to you, for the sake of the Lord your God, of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you. Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways are not your ways—it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above the earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Is 12: 2–6)

ℵ You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

Truly God is my salvation,
I trust, I shall not fear.
For the Lord is my strength, my song,
he became my saviour.
With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.
IX
Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples,

declare the greatness of his name.

Sing a psalm to the Lord for he has done glorious deeds, make them known to all the earth! People of Zion, sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

COLLECT STAND

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty, ever-living God, only hope of the world, by the preaching of the prophets you proclaimed the mysteries we are celebrating tonight. Help us to be your faithful people, for it is by your inspiration alone that we can grow in goodness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

R

SIT

IV. A reading from the Book of the prophet Ezekiel. (36: 16–28)

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: 'Son of man, the members of the House of Israel used to live in their own land, but they defiled it by their conduct and actions. I then discharged my fury at them because of the blood they shed in their land and the idols with which they defiled it. I scattered them among the nations and dispersed them in foreign countries. I sentenced them as their conduct and actions deserved. And now they have profaned my holy name among the nations where they have gone, so that people say of them, "These are the people of the Lord; they have been exiled from his land." But I have been concerned about my holy name, which the House of Israel has profaned among the nations where they have gone. And so, say to the House of Israel, "The Lord says this: I am not doing this for my sake, House of Israel, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I mean to display the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord-it is the Lord who speaks-when I display my holiness for your sake before their eyes. Then I am going to take you from among the nations and gather you together from all the foreign countries, and bring you home to your own land. I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement and all your idols. I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws and sincerely respect my observances. You will live in the land which I gave your ancestors. You shall be my people and I will be your God."'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Pss. 41 & 42)

My soul is thirsting for God. the God of my life; when can I enter and see the face of God? ₽

These things will I remember as I pour out my soul: how I would lead the rejoicing crowd into the house of God, amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving, the throng wild with joy. R7 O send forth your light and your truth; let these be my guide. Let them bring me to your holy mountain to the place where you dwell. R And I will come to the Altar of God, the God of my joy. My redeemer, I will thank you on the harp, O God, my God. R

COLLECT STAND

Priest: Let us pray.

God of unchanging power and light, look with mercy and favour on your entire Church. Bring lasting salvation to mankind, so that the world may see the fallen lifted up, and old made new, and all things brought to perfection, through him who is their origin, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A silence is kept; a silence which is creative of the presence of God.

THE MASS

The Gloria

The bells are rung. The altar candles are lit and the church illuminated as all STAND and sing the GLORIA.

Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One; you alone are the Lord; you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Priest says THE COLLECT.

Let us pray.

Lord God, you have brightened this night with the radiance of the risen Christ. Quicken the spirit of love in your church; renew us in mind and body to give you whole-hearted service. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

New Testament Reading

A reading from St Paul's letter to the Romans. (6: 3–11)

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ALL RISE, and the priest intones the Alleluia, which is repeated by all present.

Responsorial Psalm

R Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end. Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end.'

The Lord's right hand has triumphed; his right hand raised me up. I shall not die, I shall live and recount his deeds.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone. This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.

The Gospel

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' But when they looked they could see that the stone — which was very big — had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him. But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you."

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

The Homily

Blessing of the Font

All STAND.

The Litany of the Saints is sung with the following refrain, repeated the first time after the choir or cantor and then by all after each section:

Saints of God in glory, be with us, rejoice with us, sing praise with us, and pray with us now.

The Priest and Ministers go to the font. The paschal candle is carried in front of the procession.

Prayer over the Water

The Priest blesses the water; at the end of which all say: Amen

The people join with the Priest and sing:

Springs of water, bless the Lord. Give him glory and praise for ever.

Hymn (NEH 106) AVE VIRGO VIRGINUM

 COME, ye faithful, raise the strain Of triumphant gladness;
 God hath brought his Israel Into joy from sadness;
 Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke Jacob's sons and daughters;
 Led them with unmoistened foot Through the Red Sea waters. 'Tis the spring of souls to-day Christ hath burst his prison,
And from three days' sleep in death As a sun hath risen;
All the winter of our sins,
Long and dark, is flying
From his light, to whom we give Laud and praise undying.

2

 Now the queen of seasons, bright With the day of splendour,
 With the royal feast of feasts, Comes its joy to render;
 Comes to glad Jerusalem, Who with true affection
 Welcomes in unwearied strains Jesu's Resurrection.

 4 Neither might the gates of death, Nor the tomb's dark portal, Nor the watchers, nor the seal, Hold thee as a mortal;
 But today amidst thine own Thou didst stand, bestowing That thy peace which evermore Passeth human knowing.

> St. John of Damascus c. 750 *Tr* J. M. Neale 1816–66

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

All present stand with lighted candles and renew their baptismal profession of faith.

The Priest addresses the people as follows:

Dear Friends, now that we have completed our Lenten observance, let us all renew the promises we made in baptism when we rejected Satan and his works, received the light and new life of Christ, and promised to serve God faithfully in his Holy Catholic Church. And so I ask you:

Do you turn to Christ? I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins? I repent of my sins.

Do you renounce evil? I renounce evil.

And now I ask you to make the profession of Christian faith into which you were baptized, and in which you live and grow.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father who made the world? I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God.

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting?

This is our faith.

We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Almighty God, we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith with all those who have been baptized in your name. Keep us faithful to our baptism, and so make us ready for that day when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Priest sprinkles the people with Holy Water as a reminder of their baptism.

The Greeting of Peace

We prepare to participate in the Eucharistic meal by expressing the unity we have with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We are the Body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

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

The deacon or priest may say:

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All exchange the greeting of peace with those around them.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Altar and Gifts

The Priest offers the bread and wine to God, while the hymn is sung.

Offertory Hymn (NEH 104) SALZBURG

1 AT the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to our victorious King: Who hath washed us in the tide Flowing from his piercèd side; Praise we him whose love divine Gives the guests his blood for wine, Gives his Body for the feast, Love the Victim, Love the Priest.

- 2 Where the Paschal blood is poured, Death's dark angel sheathes his sword; Israel's hosts triumphant go Through the wave that drowns the foe. Christ the Lamb whose blood was shed, Paschal victim, Paschal bread! With sincerity and love Eat we manna from above.
- 3 Mighty Victim from on high, Powers of hell beneath thee lie; Death is broken in the fight, Thou hast brought us life and light. Now the banner thou dost wave, Conquering Satan and the grave. See the prince of darkness quelled; Heaven's bright gates are open held.
- 4 Paschal triumph, Paschal joy, Only sin can this destroy; From sin's death do thou set free, Soul's re-born, dear Lord, in thee, Hymns of glory, songs of praise, Father, unto thee we raise. Risen Lord, all praise to thee, Ever with the Spirit be.

From a Latin Breviary Hymn *Tr* Robert CampbellI1814–68

Pray, dear friends, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.

The Priest then says the Prayer over the Gifts and all respond:

The Eucharistic Prayer

In this prayer we give thanks to God for all he has done for us in Christ; by the Power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ; and we offer ourselves with Christ to the Father.

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Priest continues with the Preface, after which all say:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

KNEEL

After the Words of Institution, when he has replaced the chalice on the altar and genuflected, the Priest says:

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The Priest concludes the Eucharistic Prayer with these or similar words:

... in songs of never-ending praise: Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

Communion Rite

We make our final preparation to receive Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The Priest invites all to join in the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

As he begins to break the Bread, the Priest says:

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one Bread.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us your peace.

The Priest then invites the people to Communion:

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Christ has become our paschal sacrifice; let us feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, alleluia. *(1 Cor 5: 7–8)*

Those who are to receive Holy Communion or a Blessing come forward. At home, please make an act of Spiritual Communion.

CONCLUDING RITE STAND

The priest says the Post-Communion prayer.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

The Priest gives the blessing and all respond:

Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ, alleluia, alleluia. Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.

Final Hymn (NEH 124) ST FULBERT

Chorus novae Jerusalem

1	YE choirs of new Jerusalem, Your sweetest notes employ,
	The Paschal victory to hymn In strains of holy joy.
2	How Judah's Lion burst his chains, And crushed the serpent's head; And brought with him, from death's domains, The long-imprisoned dead.
3	From hell's devouring jaws the prey Alone our Leader bore; His ransomed hosts pursue their way Where he hath gone before.

- 4 Triumphant in his glory now His sceptre ruleth all, Earth, heaven, and hell before him bow, And at his footstool fall.
- 5 While joyful thus his praise we sing, His mercy we implore, Into his palace bright to bring And keep us evermore.
- 6 All glory to the Father be, All glory to the Son,
 All glory, Holy Ghost, to thee, While endless ages run. Alleluia! Amen.

S. Fulbert of Chartres d. 1028 *Tr* Robert Campbell 1814–68

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