

Holy Saturday

A Service of Evening Meditation

Saturday, April 11th

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

The Officiant says to the people

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.

In the darkness, fire is kindled

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.*

The Paschal Candle is then lighted from the newly kindled fire. The following is said three times

Officiant The light of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

The Exsultet

Cantor

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.

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

All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame, pray with me to God the Almighty for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light; through Jesus Christ his Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Cantor The Lord be with you.

Answer And also with you.

Cantor Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Answer It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Cantor

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 ancestors, 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 God, 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 for who he gives light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Gospel

Matthew 28:1-10

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People Glory to you Lord Christ.

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Paschal Sermon

St. John Chrysostom

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

The Officiant says to the people

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.

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

People I do.

Officiant Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Officiant 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.

Officiant 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.

Officiant 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.

Officiant 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.

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

People I will, with God's help.

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

People I will, with God's help.

Officiant 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 Officiant 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.*

The Pronouncement

Officiant Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!