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Alleluia



The Easter Season

Easter is the most important season in the Church Year. It is the longest of the special liturgical seasons of the Church. It starts on

Easter Sunday and lasts for fifty days finishing with the Solemnity of Pentecost. The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated on the fortieth day of Easter.

The Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil is the most beautiful liturgy in the Catholic Church.

It is celebrated on Holy Saturday evening when it is dark and marks the beginning of Easter.

The darkness in the church reminds us of the darkness of the tomb from which Jesus rose.

The Easter Vigil is divided into four parts:

1. The Service of Light,
2. The Liturgy of the Word,
3. Baptismal Liturgy,
4. The Liturgy of the Eucharist.



First Part: The Service of Light

The service begins with the Church in darkness.

Outside the church the Easter fire is lit and blessed. The Paschal(Easter) Candle is lit from the fire. The candle is then processed through the church, with the priest lifting the candle at three different times, singing: The Light of Christ. (or *Lumen Christi*) and the congregation sings: Thanks be to God (or *Deo gratias*).

The smaller candles held by the people are lit from the Paschal Candle and shared around the church from person to person, showing how we spread the Light of Christ in the world through our service and kindness to others. Then the Exultate, an ancient hymn is sung. Exultet is the opening word in Latin of The Easter Proclamation.



WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PASCHAL CANDLE?

LIGHT

The light of Christ that shines in the darkness.

FIRE

It represents Christ's resurrection.

GRAINS OF INCENSE

They represent the 5 wounds of Christ.



ALPHA AND OMEGA

Christ is the beginning and end of all things.

CROSS

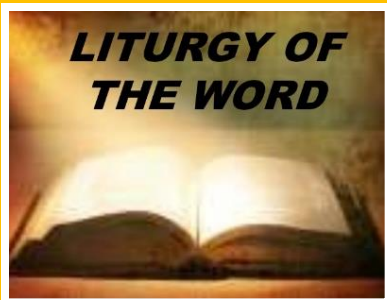
It represents Christ and his eternal light.

YEAR

It reminds us of God's presence here and now.

Second Part: The Liturgy of the Word.

Seven readings from the Old Testament and two New Testament readings are provided. At least three Old Testament readings must be read, including Exodus 14. These readings help us meditate on the wonderful works of God for his people since the beginning of time.



Third Part: Baptismal Liturgy

The waters of baptism are blessed and those who have been preparing to become Catholics are received into the Church. This includes the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Everyone is invited to renew the promises that were made for them at their own Baptism. The priest sprinkles the people with the blessed water.





*Rite of
Christian
Initiation
of Adults*

Fourth Part: Liturgy of the Eucharist

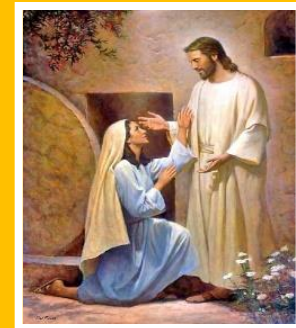
The liturgy of the Eucharist is the same as in any Mass. It includes the offering and the presentation of bread and wine at the altar, their consecration by the priest during the Eucharistic Prayer and people receiving the Body of Christ in Holy Communion.



Easter Sunday

Mt 18:1-8 Mk 16:1-8 Lk 24:1-10

After the Sabbath on Easter Sunday Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. They found the stone had been moved. An angel told them that Jesus was not there, and he had been raised as he said he would be. They were told to go and tell the disciples which they did with joy in their hearts.





Road to Emmaus Lk 24:13-32

The Road to Emmaus is the first of three resurrection appearances found in St Luke's Gospel. Two men were travelling to Emmaus just days after the crucifixion of Jesus when a third man "drew near to them." Together they walked and discussed the life of Jesus of Nazareth and how he may still be alive after his tomb was found empty.

When the men got to Emmaus they decided to eat together. The third man was recognised as Jesus himself as he broke and blessed the bread. Jesus then vanished, and the two men returned to Jerusalem where they told the disciples that the Lord had risen.!



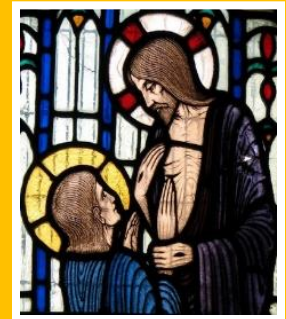
Jesus appears to the disciples Jn 20:19-23

Late on the Sunday evening when the disciples were gathered in the Upper Room behind locked doors Jesus came and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said to them and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing Jesus.



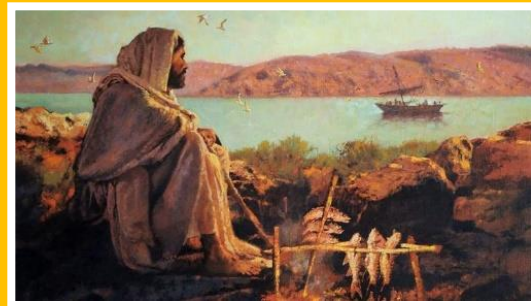
Jesus appears to Thomas John 20:24-29

When Jesus appeared to the disciples Thomas was not with them. He said unless he saw the marks made by the nails in Jesus' hands and his side he would not believe. A week later the disciples were in the Upper Room when Jesus came and stood amongst them. He called Thomas to him and told him to put his finger into his wounds and believe.

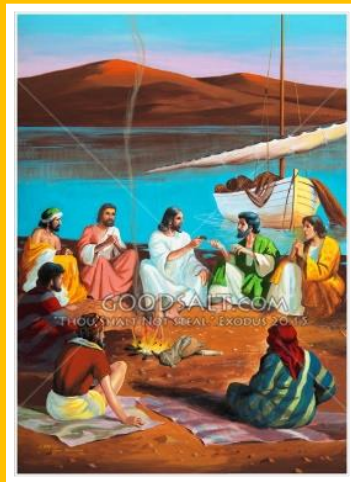


Breakfast on the Shore Jn21:1-19

Peter and some of the other disciples had just spent all night fishing, catching nothing. Jesus stood on the shore and called out to the men on the boat to cast their nets on the other side if they wanted to catch fish. Miraculously, they immediately caught lots of big fish.



When the disciples got to the shore, they found Jesus cooking breakfast. He invited them to eat with him. After breakfast, Jesus talked to Peter and asked him if he loved him three times. Even though Peter had denied Jesus during his trial, Jesus forgave Peter and asked him to take care of his sheep.



The Ascension of Jesus

The disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. Jesus drew near to them and asked them to go out to all people's and baptise them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. He promised to be with them always.



Easter Eggs

An egg is a symbol of new life. For Christians, Easter eggs are used as a symbol for the resurrection of Jesus.

Christians believe that, through his resurrection, Jesus overcame death and sin. This offers people the promise of eternal life if they follow his teachings.

Nowadays, most Easter eggs are made from chocolate and covered in coloured foil. Traditionally chicken eggs would be hard boiled and then decorated by hand.

