

Holy Saturday, Easter Vigil Mass. Reading: Genesis-1-2:2, Exodus 14:15-15:1, Isaiah 55:1-11, Romans 6:3-11 & Luke 24:1-12

As the introduction to the Easter Vigil put it so well: "On Holy Saturday. the Church waits at the Lord's tomb in prayer, fasting and meditation on his Passion and Death and on his Descent into Hell, and awaiting his Resurrection." Fellow parishioners, this is why we're gathered here on this Holy Saturday night to celebrate, just like those who have gone before us celebrated it.

Our Holy Mother Church considered Easter Vigil as "The Mother of All Vigils." The Church draws our attention to the symbolism of light and darkness. Liturgy identifies darkness with sin, ignorance, and insecurity. The Pascal candle symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world, our Savior and Redeemer. As we celebrate this Easter Vigil, we also continue to proclaim to the whole world that Jesus Christ is truly the Light of the World.

At the end of the homily, we will receive our 3 elects, Tammy Malcolm, Brogan Malcolm, and Debra Elliot, into the church through the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation). After we receive them in the Church, we shall all light our candles from the Pascal Candle and then renew our baptismal promises. By this renewal of our baptismal promises, we recommit ourselves to Christ, the true Light of the World. Once again, we reject Satan and all his empty promises and accept the freedom that comes from living as children of God.

On this Easter Vigil Mass, the Church gives us nine readings: seven from the Old Testament and two from the New Testament. The Creation story in Genesis, the Crossing of the Red Sea in Exodus, and the Gospel must be read. In our Holy Rosary Parish, we always pick five out of the nine readings.

These readings help us to understand and appreciate how our history of salvation came to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We hear of the creation account, the fall of humanity after creation that led to the promise of the advent of our Savior Jesus Christ into our world.

The first reading is taken from Genesis 1:1-2,2. The author narrates the Creation story as he envisioned it. The main lesson is this: God worked for six days during creation and took a rest on the seventh day. We also are to work but must keep a day free for rest and to worship Him our Maker on the seventh day/Sabbath. The second reading is taken from Exodus 14:15-15:1 where the author tells us just as God liberated the Israelites from slavery to their freedom, for us through baptism into Christ, God has liberated us from sin into His royal family. Our third reading is from Ezekiel 36:16-17a,18-28. The Prophet Ezekiel re-echoes our baptism into Christ.

St. Paul, in our fourth reading, talks of the baptismal ceremony practiced in the early Christian community. He is referring to baptism by immersion. As you know, baptism is either by immersion or by pouring of water on the heads of the candidates. Baptism takes away the original sin and makes us new people in Christ and his Church. St. Paul reminds us that "dying with Christ and rising up to a new life" is an ongoing process until it is fully realized in the life to come. Since we are in Year C, we picked Luke 24: 1-12 for our Gospel reading. In Luke's resurrection narrative, he has five sections: the women at the empty tomb, LK 23:56; Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the way to Emmaus, Lk 24:13-35; the appearance to the disciples in Jerusalem, LK 24:36-43; Jesus' final instructions, LK 24:44-49; and the ascension, LK 24:50-53.

Luke emphasizes the important role women play in the Church's life through their commission to be the first proclaimers/evangelists of Easter faith. They tell us the power of darkness gives way to the light of the dawn of Jesus' victory over death.

With the celebration of this Easter Vigil, let us also, like these 5 women, go out to announce that Jesus Christ is the true Light of the world. Let us also proclaim to the world, our mystery of faith that Jesus Christ has died, is rising, and will come again.

May Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world, guide and lead as we continue his mission here on earth so that one day, we will see him face to face in heaven.

Wishing you all, happy and blessed Easter!