

## **HOLY SATURDAY EASTER VIGIL MASS**

### **THEME: JESUS CHRIST, OUR TRUE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

On this Holy Saturday, like the early Christians, we also keep vigil waiting at the Lord's tomb in prayer and fasting, meditating on his Passion and Death, his Descent into Hell, and his Resurrection.

The Pascal Candle reminds us of Jesus Christ, our true Light of the world. The liturgy identifies darkness with sin, ignorance, and insecurity. Jesus, the true Light of the world, overcame the darkness of sin and insecurity through his passion, death, and resurrection.

Easter Vigil is considered the Mother of all Vigils in the liturgical calendar of the Church. There are nine readings, namely seven from the Old Testament and two from the New Testament (the Epistle and the Gospel). We have selected five out of the nine for our Easter Vigil Mass.

Holy Mother Church always reminds us to bear in mind that reading of the Word of God is a fundamental part of this Easter Vigil. The readings reflect on the wonders the Lord God has done for his people from the beginning of Creation through the Fall of humanity to the Redemption of humanity through his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world.

Our first reading taking from the Book of Genesis gives us the first Creation account when God created the world within six days and rested on the seventh day. Basic lessons we can learn from this Creation story is we work six days and keep one day free for rest and worship of him, our Maker. Another lesson is that there is only one God, who created heaven and earth, and he alone we must worship.

Our second reading, taken from the Book of Exodus 14:15-15:1, is a required reading for Easter Vigil. In this reading, the Church reminds us, just as God liberated the ancient Israelites from Egyptian slavery, through baptism, Jesus Christ has liberated us from slavery of sin and made us royal family, children of God.

Isaiah 55:1-11 is our third reading. Here, we're reminded that baptism does not only give us rebirth but also it gives us strength to keep moving. Through his Son, Jesus, God continues to invite us to him, the source of living water.

St. Paul's letter to the Romans is our fourth reading. The baptismal ceremony St. Paul mentions here is the baptism by immersion that was generally used in the early Church. You can still find it in some parishes today also. Our old self was buried in the baptismal water and new person is born, a Christian. 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. This explains why it is very important to renew our baptismal promises, especially during Easter Vigil Mass, to remind us of this ongoing conversion and commitment to Christ.

The Gospel of Mark 16:1-7 is our fifth reading. St. Mark gives us his account of the resurrection. It was Mary Magdalene and other women that Jesus' resurrection was made known to them. The young man they saw sitting at the empty of Jesus asked them to announce Jesus' resurrection to his disciples. Like these women, we must also continue to announce Jesus to the world.

During this Easter Vigil, let us continue to pray for our world that needs Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world. As followers of Christ, we must also keep Christ, the Light, shining so that many people we see Christ in us and come to know him also.

May Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world, continue to lead and guide us as we continue to make him known to the world. Happy and blessed Easter to you all!