

The Easter Vigil

Liturgy guide



KEY SYMBOLS

**The New Fire, the Paschal Candle
and the sharing of the Light.**

The Sprinkling of Holy Water

Singing and Bells!

How to use this guide

Read through the Guides before the Easter Retreat begins, allowing enough time to prepare well.

These Guides are designed to help you engage deeply and fully with the liturgy at home. By being active in the creation of your own para-liturgies our hope is you will deepen your understanding and participation in the essential realities of the Easter Triduum.

How you use the Guides will depend on who you live with and whether others in your home will be participating with you.

You can adapt the Guide according to what will work best for you, for instance:

- **Using the whole Guide to create your own para-liturgy at home.**
- **Focusing on just one or two actions/symbols from those outlined in the Guides.**
- **Combining Live Streaming with some actions/symbols.**
- **Praying with the Scriptures to deepen your personal participation.**

Preparation

Light a small (safe!) bonfire in your garden once it is dark (9pm or later) - a BBQ could work well, with some wood on it to symbolise the Wood of the Cross.

Turn off all the lights in your house before you begin - the darker the better for the symbolism. Choose readers for the prayers and scripture.

Prepare any music you are going to use: singing or on YouTube.

For Those who are Live Streaming Mass:

you might like to start earlier than the Mass time so that you can begin around your 'Paschal Fire', light your Easter Candle and pass the light together. (Most live streamed liturgies will not include a Fire). You could ring your own bells during the Gloria, and sprinkle Holy Water at the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

You will need:

- A candle - as your Easter Candle, representing the Risen Christ who is our Light.
- Smaller candles to light from the main one.
- Bells to ring during the Gloria.
- Holy Water - or normal water, if you don't have Holy Water.
- Readers
- A laptop/phone if you want to live stream and/or access the music playlist.
- To choose which music to use from the playlist or from hymn books if you want to sing.
- Printed Liturgy sheets for the readings (see below), or a Missal.

During the Easter Vigil, the Church reads the account of creation as a prophecy. In the resurrection, we see the most sublime fulfilment of what this describes as the beginning of all things. God says once again: "Let there be light!" The resurrection of Jesus is an eruption of light. Death is conquered, the tomb is thrown open. The Risen One himself is Light, the Light of the world. With the resurrection, the Lord's day enters the nights of history. Beginning with the resurrection, God's light spreads throughout the world and throughout history. Day dawns. This Light alone — Jesus Christ — is the true light: something more than the physical phenomenon of light. He is pure Light. God himself, who causes a new creation to be born in the midst of the old, transforming chaos into cosmos.

(Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI)

The Liturgy

Gather in darkness around your fire which signifies the New Fire of the Resurrection.

Prayer:

Dear brothers and sisters,

on this most sacred night, in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed over from death to life, the Church calls upon her sons and daughters, scattered throughout the world, to come together to watch and pray.

If we keep the memorial of the Lord's paschal solemnity in this way, listening to his word and celebrating his mysteries, then we shall have the sure hope of sharing his triumph over death and living with him in God.

Let us pray

O God, who through your Son bestowed upon the faithful the fire of your glory, bless this new fire, we pray, and grant that, by these paschal celebrations, we may be so inflamed with heavenly desires, that with minds made pure we may attain festivities of unending splendour.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Bring your candle that will symbolise the Paschal Candle, and say the following words:

Christ yesterday and today, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and the Omega. All time belongs to him and all the ages. To him be glory and power through every age and for ever. **Amen.**

By his holy and glorious wounds, may Christ the Lord guard us and protect us. **Amen.**

Light the Easter Candle from the bonfire:

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

Process behind the candle into your home. As you process sing “Lumen Christi, Deo Gratias” three times.

(see example video beforehand: <https://youtu.be/GZKF6w0PfeU>)

Enter your prayer/liturgy space and now pass the light, lighting individual candles from the Easter Candle.

We do this because Jesus is the light of the world.

Through our death in the waters of Baptism we share in the light of his resurrection.

Thus our light is lit from the candle that represents the Easter candle.

Listen to the Exsultet (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVlOGED_avw)

The Liturgy

A reading from the book of Genesis

Genesis 1:1-2:2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water. God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night.' Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven.' Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good. God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw that it was good. 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Liturgy

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 32(33):4-7,12-13,20,22

Response: The Lord fills the earth with his love.

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. (Response)

The Lord 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. (Response)

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. (Response)

Our soul is 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. (Response)

Let us pray

Almighty ever-living God, who are wonderful in the ordering of all your works, may those you have redeemed understand that there exists nothing more marvellous than the world's creation in the beginning except that, at the end of the ages, Christ our Passover has been sacrificed. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Liturgy

A reading from the book of Genesis

Genesis 22:1-18

God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham' he called. 'Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

Rising early next morning Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He chopped wood for the burnt offering and started on his journey to the place God had pointed out to him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. Then Abraham said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there; we will worship and come back to you.'

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, loaded it on Isaac, and carried in his own hands the fire and the knife. Then the two of them set out together. Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, 'Father' he said. 'Yes, my son' he replied. 'Look,' he said 'here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham answered, 'My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.' Then the two of them went on together.

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt-offering in place of his son.

Abraham called this place 'The Lord Provides', and hence the saying today: On the mountain the Lord provides. The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self – it is the Lord who speaks – because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of their enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Liturgy

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 15(16):5,8-11

Response Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. (Response)

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay. (Response)

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever. (Response)

Let us pray

O God, supreme Father of the faithful, who increase the children of your promise by pouring out the grace of adoption throughout the whole world and who through the Paschal Mystery make your servant Abraham father of nations, as once you swore, grant, we pray, that your peoples may enter worthily into the grace to which you call them. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 55:1-11

Thus says the Lord: Oh, 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 not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts. Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Liturgy

Responsorial Psalm (Canticle)

Isaiah 12

Response: With joy you will draw water from the wells 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. (Response)

Give thanks to the Lord,
give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name. (Response)

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. (Response)

Let us pray

Almighty ever-living God, sole hope of the world, who by the preaching of your Prophets unveiled the mysteries of this present age, graciously increase the longing of your people, for only at the prompting of your grace do the faithful progress in any kind of virtue. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A reading from prophet Ezekiel

Ezekiel 36:16-17,18-28

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 your 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.”’

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Liturgy

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 41(42):2-3,5,42:3-4

Response: Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God.

My soul is thirsting for God,
the God of my life;
when can I enter and see
the face of God? (Response)

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. (Response)

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. (Response)

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. (Response)

Let us pray

O God, who by the pages of both Testaments instruct and prepare us to celebrate the Paschal Mystery, grant that we may comprehend your mercy, so that the gifts we receive from you this night may confirm our hope of the gifts to come. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The Gloria - listen on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8Y3PPIVugc>) or sing together.
Ring bells!*

Let us pray

O God, who make this most sacred night radiant with the glory of the Lord's Resurrection, stir up in your Church a spirit of adoption, so that, renewed in body and mind, we may render you undivided service. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Liturgy

A reading from the letter to the Romans

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 Christian 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 117(118):1-2,16-17,22-23

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.'

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The Liturgy

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Matthew 28:1-10

Glory to you, O Lord.

After the sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre. And all at once there was a violent earthquake, for the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow. The guards were so shaken, so frightened of him, that they were like dead men. But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, 'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him." Now I have told you.' Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples. And there, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings' he said. And the women came up to him and, falling down before him, clasped his feet. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily - Listen to homily from Bishop Robert Barron

<https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/homily/three-easter-lessons/5116/>

The Liturgy

The Baptismal Liturgy:

Sprinkle water (Holy Water if you have some) over those in your household. Alternatively each person blesses themselves with the water. Relight and hold your individual candles.

Easter is an opportunity to begin again by remaking our Baptism promises. We see here the connection between the new life of resurrection and the rebirth of Baptism.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises:

Dear brothers and sisters, through the Paschal Mystery we have been buried with Christ in Baptism, so that we may walk with him in newness of life. And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded, let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and his works and promised to serve God in the holy Catholic Church.

And so I ask you:

Leader: Do you renounce Satan?

All: I do.

Leader: And all his works?

All: I do.

Leader: And all his empty show?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: I do.

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

All: I do.

Leader: And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins, keep us by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.

All: Amen.

The Liturgy

An Act of Spiritual Communion:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things and I long for You in my soul.
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
As though You were already there, I embrace You and unite myself wholly to You;
never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

Concluding Prayer

May almighty God bless us through today's Easter Solemnity and, in his compassion, defend us from every assault of sin. **Amen.**

And may he, who restores us to eternal life in the Resurrection of his Only Begotten, endow us with the prize of immortality. **Amen.**

Now that the days of the Lord's Passion have drawn to a close, may we who celebrate the gladness of the Paschal Feast come with Christ's help, and exulting in spirit, to those feasts that are celebrated in eternal joy. **Amen.**

And may the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil, and lead us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

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

Sing (very loudly!!!): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dT7dGcsrPkQ_

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia,
our triumphant holy day; alleluia,
who did once upon the cross; alleluia,
suffer to redeem our loss; alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing; Alleluia,
unto Christ our heavenly king; alleluia,
who endured the cross and grave; alleluia,
sinners to redeem and save: alleluia!

But the pains which he endured; Alleluia,
our salvation have procured; alleluia,
now above the sky he's King; alleluia,
where the angels ever sing; alleluia!