

## **THE EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT**

For use in Parish Churches of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

April 11, 2020

The Vatican Decree from the Congregation of Divine Worship eliminates the lucernarium, which includes the preparation and lighting of the fire. The fire is entirely OMITTED. Any type of indoor fire is strictly prohibited.

The preparation of the candle is done prior to the celebration.

The Vigil still begins at nightfall (8:00 p.m.) or later. It is a nocturnal vigil, retaining its ancient character of vigilance and expectation, as the Christian people await the Resurrection of the Lord during the night.

### **FIRST PART:**

#### **The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium**

The celebration begins in or near the sanctuary in a “safe” level of darkness. Since there is no gathering or fire, rubric nos. 8 & 10 are OMITTED.

The Priest begins with the sign of the cross and greeting in the usual way. The introductory remarks in rubric no. 9 could still be used, or adapted, to begin the celebration (“in these or similar words”).

**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.**

Then the priest lights the paschal candle, saying:

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

The candle is placed in the stand and lights throughout the church are lit, except for the altar candles (cf. rubric no. 17). NOTE: This is possibly the most ignored rubric of the Roman Missal. Many parishes leave the lights off in the church until after the readings have concluded. This rubric signifies that the light of the Paschal Candle spreads to every light in the building.

### **The Easter Proclamation / Exsultet**

Cf. rubric no. 18, the paschal candle may still be incensed. If a deacon will sing Exsultet, he asked for a blessing from the priest in the way prescribed. If the person singing the Exsultet is not a deacon, the blessing is omitted.

The Exsultet is sung as prescribed in rubric no. 19. If it is not sung, it must be recited. For pastoral reasons, a short form is available.

## **SECOND PART:**

### **The Liturgy of the Word**

The Liturgy of the Word is done as usual (see rubric no. 20ff). In accordance with rubric no. 21, at least three (3) readings from the Old Testament must be used, and the reading from the Book of Exodus is never omitted.

Before the readings begin, the Priest's instructs these people in these or similar words:

Dear brothers and sisters,  
now that we have begun our solemn Vigil,  
let us listen with quiet hearts to the Word of God.  
Let us meditate on how God in times past saved his people  
and in these, the last days, has sent us his Son as our Redeemer.  
Let us pray that our God may complete this paschal work of salvation  
by the fullness of redemption.

The readings follow with their corresponding responsorial psalms. After the psalm, all rise and the Priest says, Let us pray and, after all have prayed for a while in silence, he says the prayer corresponding to the reading. In place of the Responsorial Psalm, a period of sacred silence may be observe, in which case the pause after Let us pray is omitted.

### **First Reading**

24. After the first reading (On creation: Gn 1: 1-2: 2 or 1: 1, 26-31a) and the Psalm (104 [103] or 33 [32]).

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 marvelous  
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.

R. Amen.

Or, On the creation of man:

O God, who wonderfully created human nature  
and still more wonderfully redeemed it,  
grant us, we pray,  
to set our minds against the enticements of sin,  
that we may merit to attain eternal joys.  
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

### Second Reading

25. After the second reading (On Abraham's sacrifice: Gn 22: 1-18 or 1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18)  
and the Psalm (16 [15]).

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.

R. Amen.

### Third Reading

26. After the third reading (On the passage through the Red Sea: Ex 14: 15-15: 1) and its  
canticle (Ex 15).

Let us pray.

O God, whose ancient wonders  
remain undimmed in splendor even in our day,  
for what you once bestowed on a single people,  
freeing them from Pharaoh's persecution  
by the power of your right hand  
now you bring about as the salvation of the nations  
through the waters of rebirth,  
grant, we pray, that the whole world  
may become children of Abraham  
and inherit the dignity of Israel's birthright.  
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Or:

O God, who by the light of the New Testament  
have unlocked the meaning  
of wonders worked in former times,  
so that the Red Sea prefigures the sacred font  
and the nation delivered from slavery  
foreshadows the Christian people,  
grant, we pray, that all nations,  
obtaining the privilege of Israel by merit of faith,  
may be reborn by partaking of your Spirit.  
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

#### **Fourth Reading**

27. **After the fourth reading (On the new Jerusalem: Is 54: 5-14) and the Psalm (30 [29]).**

Let us pray.

Almighty ever-living God,  
surpass, for the honor of your name,  
what you pledged to the Patriarchs by reason of their faith,  
and through sacred adoption increase the children of your promise,  
so that what the Saints of old never doubted would come to pass  
your Church may now see in great part fulfilled.  
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

**Alternatively, other prayers may be used from among those which follow the readings that have been omitted.**

### **Fifth Reading**

28. **After the fifth reading (On salvation freely offered to all: Is 55: 1-11) and the canticle (Is 12).**

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.

**R.** Amen.

### **Sixth Reading**

29. **After the sixth reading (On the fountain of wisdom: Bar 3: 9-15, 32-4: 4) and the Psalm (19 [18]).**

Let us pray.

O God, who constantly increase your Church  
by your call to the nations,  
graciously grant  
to those you wash clean in the waters of Baptism  
the assurance of your unfailing protection.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**R.** Amen.

### **Seventh Reading**

30. **After the seventh reading (On a new heart and new spirit: Ez 36: 16-28) and the Psalm (42-43 [41-42]).**

Let us pray.

O God of unchanging power and eternal light,  
look with favor on the wondrous mystery of the whole Church  
and serenely accomplish the work of human salvation,

which you planned from all eternity;  
may the whole world know and see  
that what was cast down is raised up,  
what had become old is made new,  
and all things are restored to integrity through Christ,  
just as by him they came into being.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**R. Amen.**

**Or:**

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.  
**R. Amen.**

31. **After the last reading from the Old Testament with its Responsorial Psalm and its prayer, the altar candles are lit, and the Priest intones the hymn Gloria in excelsis Deo (Glory to God in the highest), which is taken up by all, while bells are rung, according to local custom.**
32. **When the hymn is concluded, the Priest says the Collect in the usual way.**

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.

33. **Then the reader proclaims the reading from the Apostle.**
34. **After the Epistle has been read, all rise, then the Priest solemnly intones the Alleluia three times, raising his voice by a step each time, with all repeating it. If necessary, the psalmist intones the Alleluia.**

**Then the psalmist or cantor proclaims Psalm 118 (117) with the people responding Alleluia.**

35. The Priest, in the usual way, puts incense in the thurible and blesses the Deacon. At the Gospel lights are not carried, but only incense.
36. After the Gospel, the Homily, even if brief, is not to be omitted.

### **THIRD PART:**

#### **Baptismal Liturgy**

The entire baptismal liturgy is reduced, by Decree of the Vatican, to the Renewal of Baptismal Promises only. Nos. 37-54 are omitted. There is no Litany of the Saint, no blessing of water or the font, and no sprinkling.

#### **The Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

55. The Priest addresses the faithful in these or similar words:

Dear brethren (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:

**Priest:** Do you renounce Satan?

**All:** I do.

**Priest:** And all his works?

**All:** I do.

**Priest:** And all his empty show?

**All:** I do.

**Or:**

**Priest:** Do you renounce sin,  
so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?

**All:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you renounce the lure of evil,  
so that sin may have no mastery over you?

**All:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you renounce Satan,  
the author and prince of sin?

**All:** I do.

If the situation warrants, this second formula may be adapted by Conferences of Bishops according to local needs.

Then the Priest continues:

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

**All:** I do.

**Priest:** 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.

**Priest:** 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.

And the Priest concludes:

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 Universal Prayer is prayed.

## **FOURTH PART:**

### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

The Liturgy of the Eucharist continues as in the *Roman Missal* (nos. 59-67), omitting the references to the newly baptized (see nos. 60, 63-65).

### **Concluding Rites**

The Blessing and Dismissal happen in the usual way. The Solemn Blessing (no. 68) should be used.

The Dismissal as prescribed at no. 69 should be sung/recited by the Deacon, or in his absence, the Priest. The double Alleluia is retained.