

Mass at Home
Easter Vigil 2021
Year B



Introduction

Welcome to the greatest night in our Church's year, as together we celebrate the Easter Vigil. We have journeyed with Jesus to the Cross and we are now invited to experience the transforming love of the Risen Lord.

Blessing of the fire in gathering space

Dear Sisters and Brothers

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.

The priest blesses the fire saying with his hands outstretched

Eternal God, we share in the light of your glory through your Son, the light of the world. Make this new fire + holy, and fill us with new hope.

Transform our lives and bring us one day to the feast of eternal light. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Incense the Candle *(Priest)*

Dear Friends. 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 last days, has sent his Son as our redeemer.

Let us pray that our God may complete this paschal work of salvation by the fullness of redemption.

The Vigil Readings

Commentator:

The story of our salvation is a story of God's love for us. It is the story of a God who knows our pain and has shared our darkness. And even when, as so often happens, the suffering is self-inflicted, God still shares the affliction, still carries the pain for us. So this Easter night, let us listen to God's story because it is our story; let us listen to the story of God's love for us.

First Reader:

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over the wild animals of the earth and over creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' So God created humankind in God's own image. In the image of God they were created. Male and female they were created. God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it. I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, you shall have them for food. And to everything

that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food. And it was so, God saw all that had been made, and indeed it was very good.

But the peacefulness of the Garden of Eden was not to last (pause)

Those first parents abused the home God had given them and their children, Cain and Abel, fell upon each other in murderous envy.

Corruption spread throughout God's beautiful earth (pause)

Until it reached the point where the book of Genesis tells us "God's heart grieved" but God's love was greater than God's disappointment and so God began the long task of re-affirming the covenant.

God began to gather people, the Children of Abraham. But would they be willing to sacrifice everything for God's sake, and so God tested Abraham. Would Abraham be willing to give up even his son for God?

So God said, "Take your son, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and there on a mountain that I will show you, offer him as a sacrifice to me." Abraham built an altar there. He put Isaac on the altar and stretched out his hand, seizing a knife to kill him.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham, do not raise your hand against the boy, for now I know you fear God. You did not refuse me your son, your only son. I swear by my own self that I will shower blessings on you. I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of the sands of the sea.

Unfortunately, Abraham's descendants did not share his faith. When times were difficult, rather than trusting in God, they tried to find their own solutions. And so, the children of the Hebrews ended up oppressed and enslaved in Egypt.

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father in law (pause)

He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountains of God. There, God appeared to him in the shape of a flame, coming from the middle of the bush. And God said, "I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free. Yes, I know well their suffering. I mean to deliver them from the hands of the Egyptians, and bring them to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow. I now send you to Pharaoh, to bring my people out of Egypt. So God freed the people from their slavery and led them through the middle of the Red Sea.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea and made dry land on it. The children of Israel went onto the dry ground right into the sea, with walls of water on either side. That day, the Lord rescued them from the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord.

Commentator:

And God continued to lead the chosen people towards their new home, going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. During forty years in the desert, God bound the people to his heart, promising to be their God, if only they would be a faithful people. God gave Israel a law to live by and, in the Tabernacle, the promise that God would dwell in their midst.

Second Reader:

And Adonai descended in the form of a cloud, and Moses stood before him. And Adonai spoke to him saying, "I am a god of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich

in kindness and faithfulness. I am about to make a covenant with you. In the presence of your people I will work wonders that have never been seen.

So Israel had its own homeland. Through the judges and then the Kings, Israel had a stable government and a prosperous economy. But some of God's people continued to complain and some of the Kings, the chosen servants of God, began to exploit them.

Once again, God's children, ended in exile; this time in Babylon. Their country was ravaged, Jerusalem destroyed and God's dwelling place, the Temple, left in ruins.

God sent many prophets to console Israel, to tell them that God's love had not come to an end, even when the power of their enemies seemed unassailable, and Israel's future seemed hopeless.

It is I, Isaiah who speaks, yes, I like a forsaken wife, distressed in spirit, the Lord calls you back. "I did forsake you for a brief moment, but with great love, I will take you back. In excess of anger and for a moment, I hid my face from you. But with everlasting love I have taken pity on you," says the Lord. "But my love for you will never leave you and my covenant of peace will never be shaken."

It is I, Isaiah who speaks, come to the water all you are thirsty, though you have no money come! Why spend money on what is not bread, your labour on what fails to satisfy.

Pay attention, come to me; listen and your soul will live. Will make an everlasting covenant with you. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let God's people return to the Lord who will take pity on them. For our God is rich in forgiving. God's thoughts are not our thoughts. God's ways are not our ways.

It is I, Baruch who speaks, listen Israel to the commandments that bring life; hear and learn what wisdom means. If you had walked in the way of God, you would be living in peace. Learn where there is wisdom, where there is strength, where there is understanding, so that you may discern where there is life and peace.

It is I, Ezekiel who speaks, "I am going to take you from among the nations and gather you from all the foreign countries, and bring you home to your land. I shall pour clean water over you, I shall give you a new heart, and I shall 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. You will live in the land which I have your ancestors. You shall be my people and I will be your God.

Commentator:

So our people regained their own land. But once again, after a few years, they were occupied, first by the Syrians, then by the Romans. And worse, even the law, God's gift, had become so complicated that it was a burden that they were unable to keep. So much of the suffering had been brought on by themselves, and yet, so much was beyond their control. They appeared to be helpless and hopeless. Happiness in this life and a place in God's kingdom, seemed beyond them. No matter which way they turned, God's chosen people felt condemned, even, it seemed to them, by God. And so it was then, that there came amongst them a man called Jesus.

A simple and ordinary man, but one who could speak God's own word and love with God's own heart-for he was God's own son.

Jesus stood in the synagogue in Nazareth, and taking the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, he began to read the words, "The spirit of the lord has been good given to me, for he has anointed me. He has send me to bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the down trodden free and to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.

Choir to sing Gloria (Lights turned on)

Opening Prayer:

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. This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading:

Romans 6:3-11

Responsorial Psalm

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.'

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

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

Gospel Acclamation:

Gospel:

Mark 16: 1-7

Homily

Blessing of the Baptismal Water

O God, who by invisible power.
Accomplish a wondrous effect through sacramental signs and who in many ways have prepared water, your creation, to show forth the grace of Baptism;

O God, whose Spirit
in the first moments of the world's creation hovered over the waters, so that the very substance of water would even then take to itself the power to sanctify;

O God, who by the outpouring of the flood foreshadowed regeneration,
so that from the mystery of one and the same element of water would come an end to vice and a beginning of virtue;

O God, who caused the children of Abraham to pass dry-shod through the Red Sea, so that the chosen people, set free from slavery to Pharaoh, would prefigure the people of the baptized;

O God, whose Son, baptized by John in the waters of the Jordan, was anointed with the Holy Spirit, and as he hung upon the Cross, gave forth water from his side along with blood,

and after his Resurrection, commanded his disciples: 'Go forth; teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', look now, we pray, upon the face of your Church and graciously unseal for her the fountain of Baptism.

May this water receive, by the Holy Spirit, the grace of your Only Begotten Son, so that human nature, created in your image and washed clean through the Sacrament of Baptism from all the squalor of the life of old, may be found worthy to rise to the life of newborn children through water and the Holy Spirit.

May the power of the Holy Spirit, O Lord, we pray, come down through your Son into the fullness of this font, so that all who have been buried with Christ by Baptism into death may rise again to life with him. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Presider:

The risen Lord opens our eyes to the needs of the world around us. Let us pray for the Church and the world in which we live.

Reader:

We pray for Pope Francis and all the Bishops that God will fill them with strength as they reveal the compassionate Heart of Christ to all. Risen Lord hear us

We pray for our Church community that we will continue to be instruments of Christ's light and hope for all who know pain, rejection and suffering. Risen Lord, hear us.

We pray for Hui, Stephanie and Madeline and all those who have been baptised during the Easter Season, that they may be filled with joy and as faithful disciples of Christ bear witness to him in their words and deeds. Risen Lord, hear us

We pray for the human family throughout the world, may all those who are experiencing human disasters, be supported in practical ways and strengthened by the Risen Lord. Risen Lord, hear us.

We pray for peace throughout the world, that the risen Lord will guide the human family away from violence and towards new efforts for peace in all areas of war and violence. Risen Lord, hear us.

We pray for those who are in need: the sick, and the house bound, that the healing spirit of the Risen Christ may bring light and wholeness to them. Risen Lord, hear us.

Let us pray our PARISH PRAYER (reader/ commentator, pls say this)

God, Creator and Life-giver we thank you for the gift of one another in our Parish of St Paul Apostle. Bless us and our families with the power of your Spirit.

Inspired and motivated by St Paul's courage and commitment to the person of Christ, may we continue to be open to change and challenge!

Make us passionate and courageous in our mission of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Presider:

O God of all time, this is the day that you have made. Hear these prayers and help us to live as faithful witnesses who proclaim the good news of our salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen

Anima Christi Prayer (Spiritual Communion)

Soul of Christ, sanctify me; Body of Christ, save me;
Blood of Christ, inebriate me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me;
Passion of Christ, strengthen me;
O good Jesus hear me; Within your wounds hide me;
From all harm protect me;
At the hour of my death, call me;
And close to you bid me; So that with your saints,
I may praise you forever and ever. Amen

Prayer after Communion:

Pour out on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, and in your kindness make those you have nourished by this paschal sacrament one in mind and heart. WE ask this through Christ our Lord.