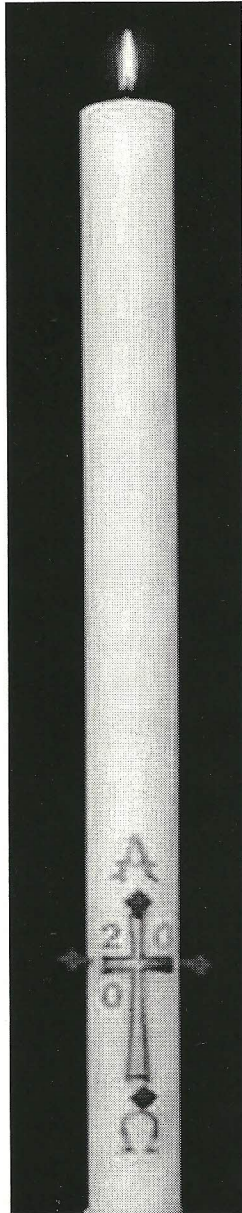


## Living your Baptismal Call – Mission of the Church

### Reflection Notes by Deacon Steve Moses



Turn off the lights except for the lit center candle which represents: "The Light of Christ"

**Holy Saturday** (in Latin, *Sabbatum Sanctum*), the 'day of the entombed Christ,' is the Lord's day of rest, for on that day Christ's body lay in His tomb. Recall the Apostle's Creed which says "*He descended unto he dead*" It is a day of suspense between two worlds, that of darkness, sin and death, and that of the Resurrection and the restoration of the Light of the World. It is for this reason no divine services are held until the Easter Vigil at night. This day between Good Friday and Easter Day makes present to us the end of one world and the complete newness of the era of salvation inaugurated by the Resurrection of Christ.

#### **The Light of Christ (*Lumen Christi*)**

The Paschal candle, also called the Easter Candle, represents Christ, the Light of the World: Christ said, "*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" [John 8:12 (NAB)].

The pure beeswax of which the candle is made represents the sinless Christ who was formed in the womb of His Mother. The wick signifies His humanity, the flame, His Divine Nature, both soul and body. Five grains of incense inserted into the candle in the form of a cross recall the aromatic spices with which His Sacred Body was prepared for the tomb, and of the five wounds in His hands, feet, and side.

During the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night the priest or deacon carries the candle in procession into the dark church. A new fire, symbolizing our eternal life in Christ, is kindled which lights the candle. The candle, representing Christ himself, is blessed by the priest who then inscribes on it a cross, the first letters and last of the Greek

alphabet, (Alpha and Omega 'the beginning and the end') and the current year, as he chants the a prayer...; then he affixes the five grains of incense.

**Christ yesterday and today,  
the Beginning and the End,  
the Alpha and Omega.  
His are the times and ages:  
To Him be glory and dominion  
Through all ages of eternity. Amen**

The Easter candle is the largest and most beautiful in the Church. It is a reminder of the Risen Redeemer "who shining in light left the tomb." It is lighted each day during Mass throughout the Paschal season until Ascension Thursday.

In Rome, the wax of the Easter candle from St. Peter's is used to make little locket-like *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) medals. The heart-shaped gold-colored locket is embossed with a cross and a lamb and contains a drop of blessed wax.

(Excerpts from Women for Faith & Family – [www.wff.org](http://www.wff.org).)



+ Bless the light of the candle at the center of the table.

After I baptise a child, I light a baptismal candle from the Easter Candle, and as I give it to the parents and godparents I say; "Receive the Light of Christ", "Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. This child of yours has been enlightened by Christ.

She is to walk always as a child of the light. May she keep the flame of faith alive in her heart. When the Lord comes, may she go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

So now, at this time, as baptized Christian adults I tell you...(Light a candle and hand it to each person saying); "Receive the Light of Christ"

Ask each person to go out from the table to a far wall apart from each other and sit holding their candles. Once they have settled in begin again. (Have chairs ready for this.)

Being a Catholic means following Jesus Christ. We trust in Jesus as the "Christ," the Messiah, the one chosen by God to save us. We also believe that Jesus was God come down from heaven who "became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14).

