



A Walk through the Mass

Over the course of 2019, the Office for Worship Newsletter will focus on the various elements of the Eucharistic liturgy as a means of providing an opportunity for you to stop and reflect on why we do what we do at Mass. This newsletter is designed to be a resource for parish music ministers, liturgists, liturgy committees, as well as priests and deacons, and anyone who wants to know more about the Order of Mass and why we do what we do! Please feel free to reproduce and share these materials with your parish community; just be sure to cite the Office for Worship, Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

This month's newsletter picks up where we left off in February as we take a closer look at each of the elements of the Mass.

LITURGY OF THE WORD – Part One

From the Roman Missal:

10. Then the reader goes to the ambo and reads the First Reading, while all sit and listen.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

11. The psalmist or cantor sings or says the Psalm, with the people making the response.

12. After this, if there is to be a Second Reading, a reader reads it from the ambo, as above.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

13. There follows the Alleluia or another chant laid down by the rubrics, as the liturgical time requires.

Proclamation of God's Word

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:

The Mass consists in some sense of two parts, namely the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, these being so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship. For in the Mass is spread the table both of God's Word and of the Body of Christ, and from it the faithful are to be instructed and refreshed...—GIRM, 28

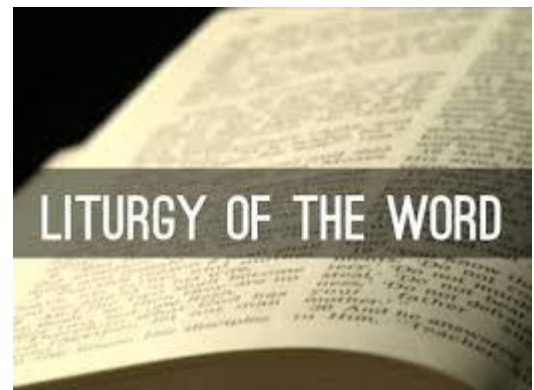
All of Christian worship is rooted in the biblical model of dialogue. God seeks us, approaches us, and initiates a relationship with us, and we respond. The last two months we have reflected on the Introductory Rites – God's invitation for us to gather as the People of God. Once gathered, we have a task to perform, that is, to offer praise to the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. We shift this month to the Liturgy of the Word, the time of the Mass when God speaks the message of our salvation in Christ Jesus. Gathered as one in the sacred time and place, we open our ears to hear God speaking to us.

The readings from sacred scripture, which we proclaim at Mass, form the parish community collectively in its weekly gathering. The word also affects each of us individually, in different and varied ways, as each person will hear the message uniquely because the Holy Spirit reaches into the hearts of all to place within them the message that comes from God.

One of the greatest contributions to Catholic worship since the Second Vatican Council was the revision of the *Lectionary for Mass*, significantly increasing the amount of scripture Catholics heard proclaimed. The number of readings increased from two to three, and the psalm verse, once known as the "gradual," expanded into what we know today as the Responsorial Psalm. Additionally, the one-year cycle of readings expanded to a three-year cycle. Prior to Vatican II, Catholics heard a mere 1% of the Old Testament and 16.5% of the New Testament at Mass. Today that has expanded to 13.5% of the Old Testament and 71.5% of the New Testament. The themes and interplay of these readings are arranged within a framework, moving from week to week and season to season, which aids in preaching to and catechesis of the community.

Jesus, the Word, Proclaims the Scriptures

Jesus reads the Scriptures only once in the gospels and he does it in the context of a liturgy. Upon arrival in Nazareth, Jesus enters the synagogue where he joins the assembly already gathered for prayer on the Sabbath. Having been handed the scroll, he stands up to read the prophecy of Isaiah and then comments on it. According to the gospel texts, the people gathered in that synagogue are the only people ever to have heard and seen Jesus read the scriptures aloud in a liturgical setting. How incredible for those people to have heard, with their own ears, Jesus, the Word, reading from Scripture!



In Luke's Gospel, this is the beginning of Jesus' preaching ministry and therefore, his first ministerial act was an act of worship. I think it is significant to note that he begins his ministry not in the temple offering sacrifice but in a synagogue reading Scripture! And he opens his ministry by opening the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and reading, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..." This is an affirmation of the earlier scenes in the Gospel where the Spirit of the Lord descended upon Jesus at his baptism (Luke 3:22) and then guided him into the desert (4:1). Again, the Spirit of the Lord guided him to read this passage from the scroll of the prophet, further demonstrating that the Spirit of the Lord always accompanies the reading of the Scriptures and inspires their interpretation.

The reading of this passage from the prophet becomes for Jesus the beginning of his presentation of himself to his followers. When he reads this passage, Jesus manifests himself as the Messiah, the anointed one. What happens in this passage is simultaneously liturgy, epiphany and theophany, because, in this seemingly insignificant town of Nazareth, Jesus brings to fulfillment that which, according to the Letter to the Hebrews, the Christ confesses as he enters the world: "As is written of me in the scroll, 'Behold, I come to do your will, O God.'" (Hebrews 10:7, cf. Psalm 40:7) Christ is the text, the beginning of the book in which the will of the Father is written.

What happened in that Nazareth synagogue is the institution of the Liturgy of the Word, in the very same way that the institution of the Eucharist happened at the Last Supper, in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. And so, by taking into his hands the scroll from the prophet Isaiah, Jesus initiated the *novum testamentum* (new testament), just as he did by taking the cup at the supper, when he instituted the *calix novum testament* (the cup of the new testament). In Nazareth, Jesus, the Word, read the scripture, and from that day, the reading offered by Jesus became the way Christians read Scripture. Just as Jesus read from Isaiah and interpreted it, Christians have read and interpreted Scriptures in liturgical assemblies.

Proclaiming the Scriptures Today

By proclaiming the scripture clearly and audibly, the original design and practice of the Early Church is expressed. It is important to understand that the Bible was written for public proclamation, not just for private devotion. By the Middle Ages, however, the public reading of scripture was nearly abandoned when the priest and other ministers read the texts of the Mass in a low voice in Latin. By 1960, after the Second Vatican Council had been announced, but not yet convened, Pope John XXIII issued a clarification of the rubrics of the Mass, asking that the readings all be proclaimed in a clear and loud voice – and in the vernacular!

Today the reader should be someone other than the priest or the deacon; however, if need be, they may proclaim the scripture. The readings

are always proclaimed from the *ambo*, which is specifically reserved for the proclamation of scripture and the Universal Prayer. The assembly, who were standing for the Introductory Rites, changes posture and sits, allowing for their attention to be focused on the proclamation.

The ambo is reserved for the key elements of the Liturgy of the Word

In rubric 10, we find the following note: **Then the reader goes to the ambo and reads the First Reading, while all sit and listen.** This is an interesting rubric because it speaks to the practice where parishes provide printed copies of the readings for people to follow. I don't think this was envisioned by the rubrics and I don't particularly encourage this practice, unless the printed reading is used to assist the assembly in a bilingual liturgy. God speaks to the people in the proclamation of the Word, not in the common silent reading of the Word; and Christ speaks to the people – in the present tense – whenever the Gospel is proclaimed.

First and Second Readings

On Sundays and solemnities, there are three Scripture readings. During most of the year, the first reading is from the Old Testament; the second reading is from one of the New Testament letters. During Easter Time, the first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, which tells the story of the Church in its earliest days.

**“The Word
of the Lord”**

Responsorial Psalm

The psalm that follows the first reading is the “responsorial” psalm, not because of its function, but because of its form. It is designed to be sung in alternation between the psalmist and the people, making it truly “responsorial.” It usually echoes a theme found in the First Reading, but on rare occasions, the psalm is chosen because it is cited in the Gospel of the day. I like to refer to it as “the golden thread” which weaves together the Liturgy of the Word.

Sing to the Lord: Music in Catholic Worship, a 2007 document of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), states that the Responsorial Psalm is “an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word, and is in effect a reading from Scripture...” For this reason, it is most properly sung from the ambo. As a general rule, it is sung, though *Sing to the Lord* does permit the response only to be sung while the lector reads the intervening verses. I have most often seen this done at weekday Masses.

Gospel Acclamation

After the reading that immediately precedes the Gospel, the *Alleluia*, or other chant prescribed by the rubrics according to the liturgical time, is sung. In Lent, it is most often the antiphon, “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!” The directive is to sing this acclamation – and if it is not sung, it is to be omitted. If there is a procession with the Gospel book, this acclamation is repeated as often as necessary to accompany the action.



From the Roman Missal:

14. Meanwhile, if incense is used, the Priest puts some into the thurible. After this, the Deacon who is to proclaim the Gospel, bowing profoundly before the Priest, asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice:

Your blessing, Father.

The Priest says in a low voice:

May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may proclaim his Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The Deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and replies:

Amen.

If, however, a Deacon is not present, the Priest, bowing before the altar, says quietly:

Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God, that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel.

15. The deacon, or the Priest, then proceeds to the ambo, accompanied, if appropriate, by ministers with incense and candles. There he says:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

The Deacon, or the Priest:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to N.

and, at the same time, he makes the Sign of the Cross on the book and on his forehead, lips, and breast. The people acclaim:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then the Deacon, or the Priest, incenses the book, if incense is used, and proclaims the Gospel.

16. At the end of the Gospel, the Deacon, or the Priest, acclaims:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All reply:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Then he kisses the book, saying quietly:

Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.

Gospel

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:

The reading of the Gospel constitutes the high point of the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy itself teaches the great reverence that is to be shown to this reading by setting it off from the other readings with special marks of honor, by the fact of which minister is appointed to proclaim it and by the blessing or prayer with which he prepares himself; and also by the fact that through their acclamations the faithful acknowledge and confess that Christ is present and is speaking to them and stand as they listen to the reading; and by the mere fact of the marks of reverence that are given to the Book of Gospels.—GIRM, 60

Several marks of respect are given to the Gospel:

-) The **Book of the Gospels** may be carried in procession from the altar to the ambo.
-) Candles and incense may lead the way.
-) The people stand.
-) The Gospel Acclamation is sung.
-) An ordained minister prepares himself for the proclamation.
-) The ordained minister greets the people; they respond.
-) The Gospel is announced and the Sign of the Cross is made over the book, the forehead, the lips and the breast, while the people respond and make similar gestures.
-) The book may be incensed.
-) The Gospel is proclaimed.

At the greeting before the Gospel, the ordained minister says, “The Lord be with you,” and we respond, “And with your spirit.” This is a prayer that the spirit, given to him at ordination, will be with him and enable him to worthily proclaim the Gospel. The priest then “picks up” the words from the book by tracing the finger over the text and then tracing his finger over his forehead, lips, and breast. We imitate these gestures, which symbolize the Gospel be “in our minds and the thoughts we think; on our lips and in the words that we speak; and in our hearts, by the way we live our lives.”

At the conclusion of the Gospel, the deacon or priest finishes with the formula, “The Gospel of the Lord.” The people respond, “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,” which affirms our belief in the presence of Jesus Christ in his proclaimed word. Following the proclamation of the Gospel and the dialogue between the ordained minister and the people, the priest or deacon kisses the book and recites a formula quietly for the forgiveness of sins: “Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.”

Commonly Asked Questions Concerning the Paschal Triduum

1. **When does the Triduum begin and end?**

The Easter Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday.

2. **May another Mass besides the Mass of the Lord's Supper be celebrated on Holy Thursday?**

No other Mass may be celebrated on Holy Thursday.

3. **When should the Good Friday Celebration of the Lord's Passion take place?**

Normally it should take place in the afternoon, at about 3:00 PM, to enable people to assemble more easily; however, pastoral discretion may indicate a time shortly after midday, or in the late evening, *though never later than 9:00 PM*.

4. **May a deacon officiate at the Celebration of the Lord's Passion?**

Although the Celebration of the Lord's Passion appears to be a service of the Word with the distribution of Holy Communion, the *Roman Missal* does not permit a deacon to officiate at the celebration. Historically, even though the Eucharist is not celebrated on this day, the liturgy of Good Friday bears resemblance to a Mass. At one time it was even called the "Mass of the Presanctified" (referring to the pre-consecrated hosts used at Communion, even when only the priest received Communion). The liturgy of Good Friday, as an integral part of the single celebration of the Triduum, is linked to the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper and the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday. It is therefore not permissible to have a deacon officiate or for a parish to celebrate only part of the Triduum.

5. **Does the Church encourage any other liturgical celebrations on Good Friday?**

On this day the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer could appropriately be celebrated with the participation of the people in the churches. Evening Prayer is only prayed by those who do not participate in the Celebration of the Lord's Passion.

6. **Do devotions have a particular importance on Good Friday?**

The *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* (2002) provides the proper perspective in paragraphs 142-145. The central celebration of this day is the Good Friday Celebration of the Lord's Passion. In no way should manifestations of popular piety substitute for the solemn liturgical action. Nor should aspects of the various acts of piety be mixed with the Good Friday celebration, creating a hybrid.

In recent times, Passion processions, Stations of the Cross, and Passion Plays have become common. Care should be taken, however, to point out to the faithful that such devotions are "representation" which is commemorative and very different from "liturgical actions" which are *anamnesis*, or the mysterious presence of the redemptive event of the Passion. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is not permitted on this day, even if this has been observed in the past as a local parish penitential practice.

7. **How is the cross venerated by members of the congregation on Good Friday?**

After the showing of the Cross, the priest or deacon may carry the Cross to the entrance of

the sanctuary or another suitable place. The first person to adore the Cross is the priest celebrant. *If circumstances suggest, he takes off his chasuble and his shoes.* The clergy, lay ministers and the faithful then approach the Cross.

The personal adoration of the Cross is an important feature in this celebration and every effort should be made to achieve it. The rubrics remind us that “only one Cross” should be used for adoration. If the numbers are so great that all cannot come forward, the priest, after some of the clergy and faithful have adored the Cross, can take it and stand in the center before the altar. In a few words he invites the people to adore the Cross. He then elevates the Cross higher for a brief period of time while the faithful adore it in silence. It should also be kept in mind that when a sufficiently large Cross is used even a large community can reverence it in due time. The foot of the Cross as well as the right and left arm can be approached and venerated. Coordination with ushers and planning the flow of people beforehand can allow for this part of the liturgy to be celebrated with decorum and devotion.

8. When time can the Easter Vigil begin?

The Vigil, by its very nature, must take place at night – after sunset. It is not begun before nightfall and should end before daybreak on Easter Sunday. The Easter Vigil begins and ends in *darkness*. 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. Fire is blessed and the paschal candle is lighted to illumine the night so that all may hear the Easter proclamation and listen to the word of God proclaimed in the Scriptures. For this reason the Solemn Beginning of the Vigil (*Lucernarium*) takes place before the Liturgy of the Word. Since sunset varies at different locations throughout the country, keeping in mind that twilight concludes (*i.e.*, nightfall occurs) somewhat later, **this year the Worship Office has recommended 8:30 p.m. as the appropriate start time.**

9. What considerations should be given for the paschal candle used at the Easter Vigil?

This candle should be made of wax, never be artificial, be replaced each year, be only one in number, and be of sufficiently large size that it may convey the truth that Christ is the light of the world. The paschal candle is the symbol of the *light of Christ, rising in glory*, scattering the darkness of our hearts and minds. Above all, the paschal candle should be a genuine candle, the pre-eminent symbol of the light of Christ. Choice of size, design, and color should be made in relationship to the sanctuary in which it will be placed.

10. At what point are the lights in the church lit during the Easter Vigil?

The deacon or minister carrying the paschal candle arrives at the altar, faces the people, lifts the candles, and starts the dialogue “The Light of Christ” for the third time. He then places the candle in the stand near the ambo or in the center of the sanctuary. All lights in the church are then lit, except for the altar candles.

This is probably the most ignored rubric in Holy Week. Many communities leave the electrical lights off until after the proclamation, or even until the readings have concluded. The prescribed pattern signifies that the light of the paschal candle spreads to every light in the building, not just to the candles in the hands of the faithful. Some communities prefer the effect of experiencing the Easter Proclamation and the readings in darkness, but this creates an additional symbol not foreseen in the rubrics: a further illumination not directly

connected with the light of the candle as the lit paschal candle symbolizes the Light of Christ, which is progressively heralded on its journey to the sanctuary.

11. How are the readings proclaimed at the Easter Vigil?

One of the unique aspects of the Easter Vigil is the recounting of the outstanding deeds of the history of salvation. These deeds are related in seven readings from the Old Testament chosen from the Law and the Prophets and two readings from the New Testament, namely from the Apostle Paul and from the Gospel. Thus, the Lord meets us once again on our journey and, “beginning with Moses and all the prophets” (Lk 24:27) opens up our minds and hearts, preparing us to share in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup.

- a) The faithful are encouraged to meditate on these readings by the singing of a responsorial psalm, followed by a silent pause, and then by the celebrant’s prayer. *Meditation on these readings is so significant for this night that we are strongly urged to use all the readings whenever it can be done. Only in the case of grave pastoral circumstances can the number of readings be reduced. In such cases, at least three readings from the Old Testament should be read, always including Exodus 14.*
- b) The readings are to be proclaimed “as usual.” A lector goes to the ambo and proclaims the reading. A psalmist or cantor leads the people in the psalm. A priest concludes each reading with a prayer. *The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts (20 February 1988) states, “Great care is to be taken that trivial songs do not take the place of the scriptures.” This includes any musical settings of any of the readings proclaimed at the Easter Vigil (i.e. Exodus 14).*

12. What directions are given for the celebration of Masses on Easter Sunday?

Mass is to be celebrated on Easter Day with great solemnity. A full complement of ministers and the use of liturgical music should be evident in all celebrations. On Easter Sunday in the dioceses of the United States, the rite of the renewal of baptismal promises may take place after the homily, followed by the sprinkling with water blessed at the Vigil, during which the antiphon *Vidi aquam*, or some other song of baptismal character should be sung. If the renewal of baptismal promises does not occur, then the Creed is said. The *Roman Missal* notes that the Apostles' Creed, "the baptismal Symbol of the Roman Church," might be appropriately used during Easter Time. The holy water fonts at the entrance to the church should also be filled with the same water. *On the subsequent Sundays of Easter, it is appropriate that the Rite for the Blessing and Sprinkling of Water take the place of the Penitential Act.*

Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

Ritual Script

Roman Missal and Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults



Explanatory Notes

The following is the text for the celebration of The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night with *both* Elect & Candidates (unbaptized and baptized).

The order of service varies slightly if the Vigil is celebrated with candidates, catechumens (elect), or both. If you are not celebrating the Vigil with both the Elect and Candidates, you will need to make some modifications to the text that follows.

Elect Only (RCIA #206-243)	Candidates only (RCIA #473-498)	Elect & Candidates (RCIA #566-594)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baptism 2. Confirmation 3. Renewal of Baptismal Promises & Sprinkling with baptismal water 4. Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Renewal of Baptismal Promises & sprinkling with baptismal water (at the Vigil this replaces the Creed) 2. Celebration of Reception 3. Celebration of Confirmation 4. Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baptism of the Elect 2. Renewal of Baptismal Promises & sprinkling with baptismal water 3. Celebration of Reception 4. Confirmation of Elect & Candidates 5. Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)

Note: Text in red print = rubrics from the Roman Missal (or from the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults where indicated)

Note: Text in blue print = notes from the Archdiocesan Office for Worship.

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

1. By most ancient tradition, this is the night of keeping vigil for the Lord (Ex 12:42), in which, following the Gospel admonition (Lk 12:35-37), the faithful, carrying lighted lamps in their hands, should be like those looking for the Lord when he returns, so that at his coming he may find them awake and have them sit at his table.
2. Of this night's Vigil, which is the greatest and most noble of all solemnities, there is to be only one celebration in each church. It is arranged, moreover, in such a way that after the Lucernarium and Easter Proclamation (which constitutes the first part of this Vigil), Holy Church meditates on the wonders the Lord God has done for his people from the beginning, trusting in his word and promise (the second part, that is, the Liturgy of the Word) until, as day approaches, with new members reborn in Baptism (the third part), the Church is called to the table the Lord has prepared for his people, the memorial of his Death and Resurrection until he comes again (the fourth part).
3. The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on the Sunday.
4. The Mass of the Vigil, even if it is celebrated before midnight, is a paschal Mass of the Sunday of the Resurrection.
5. Anyone who participates in the Mass of the night may receive Communion again at Mass during the day. A Priest who celebrates or concelebrates the Mass of the night may again celebrate or concelebrate Mass during the day.

The Easter Vigil takes the place of the Office of Readings.

6. The Priest is usually assisted by a Deacon. If, however, there is no Deacon, the duties of his Order, except those indicated below, are assumed by the Priest Celebrant or by a concelebrant.

The Priest and Deacon vest as at Mass, in white vestments.

7. Candles should be prepared for all who participate in the Vigil. The lights of the church are extinguished.

First Part:

The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium

The Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle

8. A blazing fire is prepared in a suitable place outside the church. When the people are gathered there, the Priest approaches with the ministers, one of whom carries the paschal candle. The processional cross and candles are not carried.

Where, however, a fire cannot be lit outside the church, the rite is carried out as in no. 13, below.

9. The Priest and faithful sign themselves while the Priest says: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and then he greets the assembled people in the usual way and briefly instructs them about the night vigil in these or similar words:

Dear brethren (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.

10. Then the Priest blesses the fire, saying with hands extended:

Let us pray.
O God, who through your Son
bestowed upon the faithful the fire of your glory,
sanctify +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 splendor.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

11. After the blessing of the new fire, one of the ministers brings the paschal candle to the Priest, who cuts a cross into the candle with a stylus. Then he makes the Greek letter Alpha above the cross, the letter Omega below, and the four numerals of the current year between the arms of the cross, saying meanwhile:

1. Christ yesterday and today

(he cuts a vertical line);

2. the Beginning and the End

(he cuts a horizontal line);

3. the Alpha

(he cuts the letter Alpha above the vertical line);

4. and the Omega

(he cuts the letter Omega below the vertical line).

5. All time belongs to him

(he cuts the first numeral of the current year in the upper left corner of the cross);

6. and all the ages

(he cuts the second numeral of the current year in the upper right corner of the cross).

7. To him be glory and power

(he cuts the third numeral of the current year in the lower left corner of the cross);

8. through every age and for ever. Amen

(he cuts the fourth numeral of the current year in the lower right corner of the cross).



12. When the cutting of the cross and of the other signs has been completed, the Priest may insert five grains of incense into the candle in the form of a cross, meanwhile saying:

1. By his holy

1

2. and glorious wounds,

3. may Christ the Lord

4

2

5

4. guard us

5. and protect us. Amen.

3

13. Where, because of difficulties that may occur, a fire is not lit, the blessing of fire is adapted to the circumstances. When the people are gathered in the church as on other occasions, the Priest comes to the door of the church, along with the ministers carrying the paschal candle. The people, insofar as is possible, turn to face the Priest.

The greeting and address take place as in no. 9 above; then the fire is blessed and the candle is prepared, as above in nos. 10-12.

14. The Priest lights the paschal candle from the new fire, saying:

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

As regards the preceding elements, Conferences of Bishops may also establish other forms more adapted to the culture of the different peoples.

Procession

15. When the candle has been lit, one of the ministers takes burning coals from the fire and places them in the thurible, and the Priest puts incense into it in the usual way. The Deacon or, if there is no Deacon, another suitable minister, takes the paschal candle and a procession forms. The thurifer with the smoking thurible precedes the Deacon or other minister who carries the paschal candle. After them follows the Priest with the ministers and the people, all holding in their hands unlit candles.

At the door of the church the Deacon, standing and raising up the candle, sings:

The Light of Christ.

And all reply: Thanks be to God.

The Priest lights his candle from the flame of the paschal candle.

16. Then the Deacon moves forward to the middle of the church and, standing and raising up the candle, sings a second time:

The Light of Christ.

And all reply: Thanks be to God.

All light their candles from the flame of the paschal candle and continue in procession.

NOTE: While not explicitly mentioned, catechumens would *not* use candles at this point. The candles are a sign of Christ indwelling the baptized; the catechumens will receive their candles after their own baptism.

17. When the Deacon arrives before the altar, he stands facing the people, raises up the candle and sings a third time:

The Light of Christ.

And all reply: Thanks be to God.

Then the Deacon places the paschal candle on a large candlestand prepared next to the ambo or in the middle of the sanctuary. And lights are lit throughout the church, except for the altar candles.

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, not just to the candles held by members of the Assembly.

The Easter Proclamation (Exsultet)

18. Arriving at the altar, the Priest goes to his chair, gives his candle to a minister, puts incense into the thurible and blesses the incense as at the Gospel at Mass. The Deacon goes to the Priest and saying, Your blessing, Father, asks for and receives a blessing from the Priest, who says in a low voice:

May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips,
that you may proclaim his paschal praise worthily and well,
in the name of the Father and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.

The Deacon replies: Amen.

This blessing is omitted if the Proclamation is made by someone who is not a Deacon.

19. The Deacon, after incensing the book and the candle, proclaims the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) at the ambo or at a lectern, with all standing and holding lighted candles in their hands.

The Easter Proclamation may be made, in the absence of a Deacon, by the Priest himself or by another concelebrating Priest. If, however, because of necessity, a lay cantor sings the Proclamation, the words Therefore, dearest friends up to the end of the invitation are omitted, along with the greeting The Lord be with you.

The Proclamation may also be sung in the shorter form.

(Chant notation for both the long and short forms of the Exsultet may be found in the Roman Missal.)

Second Part: The Liturgy of the Word

20. In this Vigil, the mother of all Vigils, nine readings are provided, namely seven from the Old Testament and two from the New (the Epistle and Gospel), all of which should be read whenever this can be done, so that the character of the Vigil, which demands an extended period of time, may be preserved.
21. Nevertheless, where more serious pastoral circumstances demand it, the number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced, always bearing in mind that the reading of the Word of God is a fundamental part of this Easter Vigil. At least three readings should be read from the Old Testament, both from the Law and from the Prophets, and their respective Responsorial Psalms should be sung. Never, moreover, should the reading of chapter 14 of Exodus with its canticle be omitted.
22. After setting aside their candles, all sit. Before the readings begin, the Priest instructs the people in these or similar words:

Dear brethren (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.

23. Then the readings follow. A reader goes to the ambo and proclaims the reading. Afterwards a psalmist or a cantor sings or says the Psalm with the people making the response. Then all rise, 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 observed, in which case the pause after Let us pray is omitted.

Prayers after the Readings

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

37. After the Homily the Baptismal Liturgy begins. The Priest goes with the ministers to the baptismal font, if this can be seen by the faithful. Otherwise a vessel with water is placed in the sanctuary.
38. Catechumens, if there are any, are called forward and presented by their godparents in front of the assembled Church or, if they are small children, are carried by their parents and godparents.
39. Then, if there is to be a procession to the baptistery or to the font, it forms immediately. A minister with the paschal candle leads off, and those to be baptized follow him with their godparents, then the ministers, the Deacon, and the Priest. During the procession, the Litany (no. 43) is sung. When the Litany is completed, the Priest gives the address (no. 40).
40. If, however, the Baptismal Liturgy takes place in the sanctuary, the Priest immediately makes an introductory statement in these or similar words.

If there are candidates to be baptized:

Dearly beloved,
with one heart and one soul, let us by our prayers
come to the aid of these our brothers and sisters
in their blessed hope,
so that, as they approach the font of rebirth,
the almighty Father may bestow on them
all his merciful help.

If the font is to be blessed, but no one is to be baptized:

Dearly beloved,
let us humbly invoke upon this font
the grace of God the almighty Father,
that those who from it are born anew
may be numbered among the children of adoption in Christ.

41. The Litany is sung by two cantors, with all standing (**because it is Easter Time**) and responding.

If, however, there is to be a procession of some length to the baptistery, the Litany is sung during the procession; in this case, those to be baptized are called forward before the procession begins, and the procession takes place led by the paschal candle, followed by the catechumens with their godparents, then the ministers, the Deacon, and the Priest. The address should occur before the Blessing of Water.

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42. If no one is to be baptized and the font is not to be blessed, the Litany is omitted, and the Blessing of Water (no. 54) takes place at once.
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NOTE: This option is most appropriate in places where baptisms do not take place – religious houses, nursing home chapels, etc.

43. In the Litany the names of some Saints may be added, especially the Titular Saint of the church and the Patron Saints of the place and of those to be baptized.

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

After the Litany of Saints:

If there are candidates to be baptized, the Priest, with hands extended, says the following prayer:

Almighty ever-living God,
be present by the mysteries of your great love
and send forth the spirit of adoption
to create the new peoples
brought to birth for you in the font of Baptism,
so that what is to be carried out by our humble service
may be brought to fulfillment by your mighty power.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Blessing of Baptismal Water

44. The Priest then blesses the baptismal water, saying the following prayer with hands extended:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

And, if appropriate, lowering the paschal candle into the water either once or three times, he continues:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

and, holding the candle in the water, he continues:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

45. Then the candle is lifted out of the water, as the people acclaim:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Text without music:

46. The Priest then blesses the baptismal water, saying the following prayer with hands extended:

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.

And, if appropriate, lowering the paschal candle into the water either once or three times, he continues:

May the power of the Holy Spirit,
O Lord, we pray,
come down through your Son
into the fullness of this font,

and, holding the candle in the water, he continues:

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.

R. Amen.

47. Then the candle is lifted out of the water, as the people acclaim:

Springs of water, bless the Lord;
praise and exalt him above all for ever.

48. After the blessing of baptismal water and the acclamation of the people, the Priest, standing, puts the prescribed questions to the adults and the parents or godparents of the children, as is set out in the respective Rites of the Roman Ritual, in order for them to make the required renunciation.

If the anointing of the adults with the Oil of Catechumens has not taken place beforehand, as part of the immediately preparatory rites, it occurs at this moment.

(Note: Anointing with the Oil of Catechumens is amended by RCIA no. 33.7 (USA); this oil is used only in the Period of the Catechuminate and the Period of Purification and Enlightenment and neither in the Rites for Holy Saturday nor during the Sacraments of Initiation at the Vigil or at other times.)

Profession of Faith

(RCIA 572) After the blessing of the water, the celebrant continues with the profession of faith, which includes the renunciation of sin and the profession itself.

Renunciation of Sin

(RCIA 573) Using one of the following formularies, the celebrant questions all the elect together; or, after being informed of each candidate's name by the godparents, he may use the same formularies to question the candidates individually.

A

Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

Candidates: I do.

Do you reject the glamour of evil,
and refuse to be mastered by sin?

Candidates: I do.

Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?

Candidates: I do.

B

Do you reject Satan,
and all his works,
and all his empty promises?

Candidates: I do.

C

Do you reject Satan?

Candidates: I do.

And all his works?

Candidates: I do.

And all his empty promises?

Candidates: I do.

49. Then the Priest questions the adults individually about the faith and, if there are children to be baptized, he requests the triple profession of faith from all the parents and godparents together, as is indicated in the respective Rites.

Where many are to be baptized on this night, it is possible to arrange the rite so that, immediately after the response of those to be baptized and of the godparents and the parents, the Celebrant asks for and receives the renewal of baptismal promises of all present.

Profession of Faith

(RCIA 574) Then the celebrant, informed again of each candidate's name by the godparents, questions each candidate individually. Each candidate is baptized immediately after his or her profession of faith.

[If there are a great many to be baptized, the profession of faith may be made simultaneously either by all together or group by group, then the baptism of each candidate follows.]

Priest: N., do you believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth?

Candidate: I do.

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

Candidate: 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?

Candidate: I do.

50. When the interrogation is concluded, the Priest baptizes the adult elect and the children.

Baptism

(RCIA 575) The priest baptizes each candidate either by immersion, option A, or by the pouring of water, option B. Each baptism may be followed by a short acclamation, sung or said by the people.

- A If baptism is by immersion, of the whole body or of the head only, decency and decorum should be preserved. Either or both godparents touch the candidate. The celebrant, immersing the candidate's whole body or head three times, baptizes the candidate in the name of the Trinity.

N., I baptize you in the name of the Father,

He immerses the candidate the first time.

and of the Son,

He immerses the candidate the second time.

and of the Holy Spirit.

He immerses the candidate the third time.

- B If baptism is by the pouring of water, either or both godparents place the right hand on the shoulder of the candidate, and the celebrant, taking baptismal water and pouring it three times on the candidate's bowed head, baptizes the candidate in the name of the Trinity.

N., I baptize you in the name of the Father,

He pours water the first time.

and of the Son,

He pours water the second time.

and of the Holy Spirit.

He pours water the third time.

51. After the Baptism, the Priest anoints the infants with chrism. A white garment is given to each, whether adults or children. Then the Priest or Deacon receives the paschal candle from the hand of the minister, and the candles of the newly baptized are lighted. For infants the rite of Ephphetha is omitted.

Anointing After Baptism

(RCIA 577) If the confirmation of those baptized is separated from their baptism, the celebrant anoints them with chrism immediately after baptism.

The celebrant first says the following over all the newly baptized before the anointing.

The God of power and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
has freed you from sin
and brought you to new life
through water and the Holy Spirit.

He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation,
so that, united with his people,
you may remain for ever a member of Christ
who is Priest, Prophet, and King.

New Baptized: Amen.

In silence each of the newly baptized is anointed with chrism on the crown of the head.

Clothing with a Baptismal Garment

(RCIA 578) The garment used in this rite may be white or of a color that conforms to local custom. If circumstances suggest, this rite may be omitted.

The celebrant says the following formulary, and at the words "Receive this baptismal garment" the godparents place the garment on the newly baptized.

N. and **N.**, you have become a new creation
and have clothed yourselves in Christ.
Receive this baptismal garment
and bring it unstained to the judgment seat
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
so that you may have everlasting life.

Newly baptized: Amen.

Presentation of a Lighted Candle

(RCIA 579). The celebrant takes the Easter candle in his hands or touches it, saying:

Godparents, please come forward to give to the newly baptized the light of Christ.

A godparent of each of the newly baptized goes to the celebrant, lights a candle from the Easter candle, then presents it to the newly baptized.

Then the celebrant says to the newly baptized:

You have been enlightened by Christ.
Walk always as children of the light
and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts.
When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him
with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Newly baptized: Amen.

52. Afterwards, unless the baptismal washing and the other explanatory rites have occurred in the sanctuary, a procession returns to the sanctuary, formed as before, with the newly baptized or the godparents or parents carrying lighted candles. During this procession, the baptismal canticle *Vidi aquam* (I saw water) or another appropriate chant is sung (no. 56).
 53. If adults have been baptized, the Bishop or, in his absence, the Priest who has conferred Baptism, should at once administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to them in the sanctuary, as is indicated in the Roman Pontifical or Roman Ritual.
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The Blessing of Water

54. **If no one present is to be baptized** and the font is not to be blessed, the Priest introduces the faithful to the blessing of water, saying:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

And after a brief pause in silence, he proclaims the following prayer with hands extended:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Text without music:

Dear brothers and sisters,
let us humbly beseech the Lord our God
to bless this water he has created,
which will be sprinkled upon us
as a memorial of our Baptism.
May he graciously renew us,
that we may remain faithful to the Spirit
whom we have received.

And after a brief pause in silence, he proclaims the following prayer, with hands extended:

Lord our God,
in your mercy be present to your people
who keep vigil on this most sacred night,
and, for us who recall the wondrous work of our creation
and the still greater work of our redemption,
graciously bless this water.
For you created water to make the fields fruitful
and to refresh and cleanse our bodies.
You also made water the instrument of your mercy:
for through water you freed your people from slavery
and quenched their thirst in the desert;
through water the Prophets proclaimed the new covenant
you were to enter upon with the human race;
and last of all,
through water, which Christ made holy in the Jordan,
you have renewed our corrupted nature
in the bath of regeneration.

Therefore, may this water be for us
a memorial of the Baptism we have received,
and grant that we may share
in the gladness of our brothers and sisters,
who at Easter have received their Baptism.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

The Renewal of Baptismal Promises

55. When the Rite of Baptism (and Confirmation) has been completed or, if this has not taken place, after the blessing of water, all stand, **holding lighted candles in their hands**, and renew the promise of baptismal faith, unless this has already been done together with those to be baptized (cf. no. 49).

Note: The way the Roman Missal reads (cf. no. 53), it implies that the Rite of Confirmation takes place before the Renewal of Baptismal Promises of the Assembly. A reading of RCIA 580ff is reflected in the order below.

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.

56. The Priest sprinkles the people with the blessed water, while all sing:

Antiphon

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Or:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Ant. I saw water flowing from the Temple,
from its right-hand side, alleluia;
and all to whom this water came were saved
and shall say: Alleluia, alleluia.

Another chant that is baptismal in character may also be sung.

The celebrant then concludes with the following prayer (RCIA 583):

God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a
new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and forgiven all our sins.

May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

57. Meanwhile the newly baptized are led to their place among the faithful.
If the blessing of baptismal water has not taken place in the baptistery, the Deacon and the ministers
reverently carry the vessel of water to the font.

If the blessing of the font has not occurred, the blessed water is put aside in an appropriate place.

58. After the sprinkling, the Priest returns to the chair where, omitting the Creed, he directs the Universal
Prayer, in which the newly baptized participate for the first time.
NOTE: *If there are candidates for reception, then after the sprinkling, the Celebration of Reception
begins.*

Celebration of Reception

Invitation

(RCIA 584) If baptism has been celebrated at the font, the celebrant, the assisting ministers, and the newly baptized, with their godparents proceed to the sanctuary. As they do so the assembly may sing a suitable song.

Then in the following or similar words the celebrant invites the candidates for reception, along with their sponsors, to come into the sanctuary and before the community to make a profession of faith.

N. and **N.**, of your own free will you have asked to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. You have made your decision after careful thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I now invite you to come forward with your sponsors and in the presence of this community to profess the Catholic faith. In this faith you will be one with us for the first time at the eucharistic table of the Lord Jesus, the sign of the Church's unity.

Profession by the Candidates

(RCIA 585). When the candidates for reception and their sponsors have taken their places in the sanctuary, the celebrant asks the candidates to make the following profession of faith. The candidates say:

I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God.

Act of Reception

(RCIA 586). Then the candidates with their sponsors go individually to the celebrant, who says to each candidate (laying his right hand on the head of any candidate who is not to receive confirmation):

N., the Lord receives you into the Catholic Church. His loving kindness has led you here, so that in the unity of the Holy Spirit you may have full communion with us in the faith that you have professed in the presence of his family.

Celebration of Confirmation

(RCIA 587). Before the celebration of confirmation begins, the assembly may sing a suitable song.

(RCIA 588). If the Bishop is not present, the priest who conferred baptism and received the candidates into full communion is authorized to confirm.

Invitation

(RCIA 589). The newly baptized with their godparents and, if they have not received the sacrament of confirmation, the newly received with their sponsors, stand before the celebrant. He first speaks briefly to the newly baptized and the newly received in these or similar words:

My dear candidates for confirmation, by your baptism you have been born again in Christ and you have become members of Christ and of his priestly people. Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptized.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death, and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love.

With hands joined, the celebrant next addresses the people:

My dear friends, let us pray to God our Father, that he will pour out the Holy Spirit on these candidates for confirmation to strengthen them with his gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ, the Son of God.

All pray briefly in silence.

Laying on of Hands

(RCIA 590). The celebrant holds his hands outstretched over the entire group of those to be confirmed and says the following prayer:

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.

Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their helper and guide.

Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Anointing with Chrism

(RCIA 591). A minister brings the chrism to the celebrant.

Each candidate, with godparent or godparents or with sponsors, goes to the celebrant; or, if circumstances require, the celebrant may go to the candidates.

Either or both godparents and sponsors place the right hand on the shoulder of the candidate; a godparent or a sponsor or the candidate gives the candidate's name to the ministers of the sacrament. During the conferral of the sacrament an appropriate song may be sung.

The minister of the sacrament dips his right thumb in the chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed as he says:

N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Newly confirmed: Amen.

The minister of the sacrament adds:

Peace be with you.

Newly confirmed: And with your spirit.

After all have received the sacrament, the newly confirmed as well as the godparents and sponsors are led to their places in the assembly.

58. . . . the Priest returns to the chair where, omitting the Creed, he directs the Universal Prayer, in which the newly baptized participate for the first time.

Fourth Part: The Liturgy of the Eucharist

59. The Priest goes to the altar and begins the Liturgy of the Eucharist in the usual way.
60. It is desirable that the bread and wine be brought forward by the newly baptized or, if they are children, by their parents or godparents.
61. **Prayer over the Offerings**
- Accept, we ask, O Lord,
the prayers of your people
with the sacrificial offerings,
that what has begun in the paschal mysteries
may, by the working of your power,
bring us to the healing of eternity.
Through Christ our Lord.
62. **Preface I of Easter: The Paschal Mystery** (... on this night above all ...).
63. In the Eucharistic Prayer, a commemoration is made of the baptized and their godparents in accord with the formulas which are found in the Roman Missal and Roman Ritual for each of the Eucharistic Prayers.

***NOTE:** The texts to be inserted are found in the back of the Missal under Ritual Masses: I. For the Conferral of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, 3. For the Conferral of Baptism. They are reprinted below:*

a) In **Eucharistic Prayer I**, the proper form of the *Hanc igitur* (Therefore, Lord, we pray) is said:

Therefore, Lord, we pray:
graciously accept this oblation of our service,
that of your whole family,
which we offer you
also for those to whom you have been pleased to give
the new birth of water and the Holy Spirit,
granting them forgiveness of all their sins
so as to find them in Christ Jesus our Lord;
and command that their names be written
in the book of the living.
(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

b) In the intercessions of **Eucharistic Prayer II**, after the words and all the clergy, the following is added:

Remember also, Lord, the newly baptized who, through Baptism (and Confirmation), have today been joined to your family, that they may follow Christ, your Son, with a generous heart and a willing spirit. Remember also our brothers and sisters . . .

c) In the intercessions of **Eucharistic Prayer III**, after the words whom you have summoned before you, the following is added:

Strengthen, we pray, in their holy purpose your servants who by the cleansing waters of rebirth (and the bestowing of the Holy Spirit) have today been joined to your people and grant that they may always walk in newness of life. In your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world. To our departed brothers and sisters . . .

***NOTE:** Eucharistic Prayer IV is not to be used at the Easter Vigil because its preface cannot be replaced with a seasonal one.*

64. Before the Ecce Agnus Dei (Behold the Lamb of God), the Priest may briefly address the newly baptized about receiving their first Communion and about the excellence of this great mystery, which is the climax of Initiation and the center of the whole of Christian life.

For some inspiration, the words that follow are the words used by Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican's Easter Vigil in 2011:

Dearest sons and daughters, I turn to you who in this glorious night, reborn by water and the Holy Spirit, receive for the first time the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

May the Body and Blood of Christ the Lord always make you grow in his friendship and in communion with the whole Church, may it be the constant food for the journey of your life, and a pledge of the eternal banquet of heaven.

65. It is desirable that the newly baptized receive Holy Communion under both kinds, together with their godfathers, godmothers, and Catholic parents and spouses, as well as their lay catechists. It is even appropriate that, with the consent of the Diocesan Bishop, where the occasion suggests this, all the faithful be admitted to Holy Communion under both kinds.

Note: The norm for Reception of Holy Communion in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is under both kinds at all Masses.

66. **Communion Antiphon** 1 Cor 5: 7-8

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed;
therefore let us keep the feast
with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia.

Psalm 118 (117) may appropriately be sung.

67. **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.
Through Christ our Lord.

68. **Solemn Blessing**

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

R. Amen.

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

R. Amen.

Now that the days of the Lord's Passion have drawn to a close,
may you 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.

R. Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit,
come down on you and remain with you for ever.

R. Amen.

The final blessing formula from the Rite of Baptism of Adults or of Children may also be used,
according to circumstances.

69. To dismiss the people the Deacon or, if there is no Deacon, the Priest himself sings or says:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Go forth, the Mass is ended, alleluia, alleluia.

Or:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.

All reply:

(See Roman Missal for text with chant notation.)

Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.

This practice is observed throughout the Octave of Easter.

70. The paschal candle is lit in all the more solemn liturgical celebrations of this period.