

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST MARY'S MACLEAN



ST JOHN'S CHURCH



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ST JAMES CHURCH

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THE EASTER VIGIL: 4TH APRIL 2026

The Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle

A fire is prepared in front of St Mary's Church where the people are assembled.

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **All: Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you. **All: And with your spirit.**

Priest: Dear brothers and sisters, on this most sacred night, in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed over from death to life, the Church calls upon her sons and daughters, scattered throughout the world, to come together to watch and pray. If we keep the memorial of the Lord's paschal solemnity in this way, listening to his word and celebrating his mysteries, then we shall have the sure hope of sharing his triumph over death and living with him in God.

Let us pray: 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 splendour. Through Christ our Lord. **All: Amen.**

The Priest 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*).

The Priest inserts five grains of incense into the candle in the form of a cross, meanwhile saying:

1. By his holy; 2. and glorious wounds, 3. may Christ the Lord; 4. guard us; 5. and protect us. Amen.

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.

Procession: *The paschal candle is lit. At the door of the church the Priest, standing and raising up the light, sings: **The Light of Christ.** And all reply: **Thanks be to God.***

*Then the Priest 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.

*When the Priest 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 Priest places the paschal candle on a large candlestand prepared next to the ambo. Some lights are lit in the church. The altar candles are not lit.

STAND

THE EASTER PROCLAMATION (EXSULTET)

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Priest: 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.

SIT

FIRST READING

Genesis 1:1 – 2:2

A reading from the book of Genesis

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water. God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night'. Evening came and morning came: the first day. God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven'. Evening came and morning came: the second day. God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good. God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day. God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day. God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day. God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw that it was good. God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.' God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day. Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been

doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing. The word of the Lord. *All: Thanks be to God.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 103:1-2. 5-6. 10. 12-14. 24. 35 R. see v.30

(R.) Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

1. Bless the Lord, my soul!

Lord God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe. (R.)

2. You founded the earth on its base, to stand firm from age to age.

You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak: the waters stood higher than the mountains. (R.)

3. You make springs gush forth in the valleys: they flow in between the hills.

On their banks dwell the birds of heaven; from the branches they sing their song. (R.)

4. From your dwelling you water the hills; earth drinks its fill of your gift.

You make the grass grow for the cattle and the plants to serve man's needs. (R.)

5. How many are your works, O Lord!

In wisdom you have made them all.

The earth is full of your riches.

Bless the Lord, my soul! (R.)

Priest: Let us pray: 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. *All: Amen.*

SECOND READING

Exodus 14:15-15:1

A reading from the book of Exodus

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his own horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried 'the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!'

‘Stretch out your hand over the sea,’ the Lord said to Moses ‘that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.’ Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh’s whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

(The canticle follows immediately)

CANTICLE Exodus 15:1-6. 17-18 R. v.1
(R.) *Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.*

1. I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!
Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea!
The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation.
This is my God and I extol him,
my father’s God and I give him praise. (R.)
2. The Lord is a warrior! The Lord is his name.
The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea,
the flower of his army is drowned in the sea.
The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone. (R.)
3. Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power,
your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy.
In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe. (R.)
4. You will lead your people and plant them on your
mountain, the place, O Lord, where you have made your
home, the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made.
The Lord will reign for ever and ever. (R.)

Priest: Let us pray.

O God, whose ancient wonders remain undimmed in splendour 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. *All: Amen.*

THIRD READING Ezekiel 36:16-28

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel
The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: ‘Son of man, the members of the House of Israel used to live in their own land, but they defiled it by their conduct and actions. I then discharged my fury at them because of the blood they shed in their land and the idols with which they defiled it. I scattered them among the nations and dispersed them in foreign countries. I sentenced them as their conduct and actions deserved. And now they have profaned my holy name among the nations where they have gone, so that people say of them, “These are the people of the Lord; they have been exiled from his land.” But I have been concerned about my holy name, which the House

of Israel has profaned among the nations where they have gone. And so, say to the House of Israel, “The Lord says this: I am not doing this for my sake, House of Israel, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I mean to display the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord – it is the Lord who speaks – when I display my holiness for your sake before their eyes. Then I am going to take you from among the nations and gather you together from all the foreign countries, and bring you home to your own land. I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement and all your idols. I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws and sincerely respect my observances. You will live in the land which I gave your ancestors. You shall be my people and I will be your God.”’ The word of the Lord. *All: Thanks be to God.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 41:3. 5; 42:3. 4 R. Ps 41:2

(R.) *Like a deer that longs for running streams, my soul longs for you, my God.*

1. My soul is thirsting for God,
the God of my life;
when can I enter and see
the face of God? (R.)
2. These things will I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd
into the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
the throng wild with joy. (R.)
3. O send forth your light and your truth;
let these be my guide.
Let them bring me to your holy mountain
to the place where you dwell. (R.)
4. And I will come to the altar of God,
the God of my joy.
My redeemer, I will thank you on the harp,
O God, my God. (R.)

Let us pray.

O God of unchanging power and eternal light, look with favour 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. *All: Amen.*

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

COLLECT

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, God, for ever and ever. *All: Amen.*

EPISTLE

Romans 6:3-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans
Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin. But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord. *All: Thanks be to God.*

ALLELUIA...ALLELUIA...ALLELUIA...

(R.) Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

1. 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.' (R.)

2. The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
his right hand raised me up.

I shall not die, I shall live
and recount his deeds. (R.)

3. The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes. (R.)

GOSPEL

Matthew 28:1-10

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

And there, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings,' he said. And the women came up to him and, falling down before him, clasped his feet. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there.'
The gospel of the Lord. *All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

HOMILY

THE BLESSING OF WATER

RITE OF RECEPTION INTO FULL COMMUNION

THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

Priest: Dear brothers and sisters, through the Paschal Mystery we have been buried with Christ in Baptism, so that we may walk with him in newness of life.

And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded, let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and his works and promised to serve God in the holy Catholic Church.

And so I ask you:

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.*

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.*

Priest: 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 priest sprinkles the people with blessed water.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

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. *Amen*

PREFACE: EASTER I & EUCHARISTIC PRAYER I

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. *Amen*

SOLEMN BLESSING

DISMISSAL

Priest: Go forth, the Mass is ended, alleluia, alleluia.
All: Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.

Easter Water: You are encouraged to take home some of the newly blessed Easter water.

HAPPY EASTER!