The Great Vigil of Easter
The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

In the darkness, fire is kindled; after which the Celebrant may address the people in these or similar words

Dear friends in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing his God’s Word and celebrating his the Sacraments, we share in his Christ’s victory over death.

The Celebrant may say the following prayer

Let us pray.
O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Paschal Candle is then lighted from the newly kindled fire, and the Deacon (the Celebrant if there is no deacon) bearing the Candle, leads the procession to the chancel, pausing three times and singing or saying The light of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

If candles have been distributed to members of the congregation, they are lighted from the Paschal Candle at this time. Other candles and lamps in the church, except for those at the Altar, may also be lighted.
The Paschal Candle is placed in its stand.
Then the Deacon, or other person appointed, standing near the Candle, sings or says the Exsultet, as follows (the indicated sections may be omitted)

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty King.
Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor,
for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King. 
Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, 
and let your holy courts, in radiant light, 
resound with the praises of your people. 
All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame, 
pray with me to God the Almighty 
for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light; 
through Jesus Christ his the Son our Lord, 
who lives and reigns with him the Father, 
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, 
one God, for ever and ever. Amen. 
The Lord be with you. 
Answer And also with you. 
Deacon Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. 
Answer It is right to give him our thanks and praise. 
Deacon 
It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our 
whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, 
almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, 
Jesus Christ our Lord; for he Christ is the true Paschal Lamb, who 
at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam’s sin, 
and by his blood delivered your faithful people. 
This is the night, when you brought our fathers ancestors, the children 
of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the 
Red Sea on dry land. 
This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered 
from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness 
of life. 
This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, 
and rose victorious from the grave. 
How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your 
mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you 
gave your Son. 
How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and 
sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy 
to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings 
peace and concord. 
How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined 
and humanity is reconciled to God. 
Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this
candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning— he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen. It is customary that the Paschal Candle burn at all services from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost.

The Liturgy of the Word
The Celebrant may introduce the Scripture readings in these or similar Words

Let us hear the record of God’s saving deeds in history, how he saved the people in ages past; and let us pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

At least two of the following Lessons are read, of which one is always the Lesson from Exodus. After each Lesson, the Psalm or Canticle listed, or some other suitable psalm, canticle, or hymn may be sung. A period of silence may be kept; and the Collect provided, or some other suitable Collect, may be said.
The story of Creation
Genesis 1:1—2:2
Psalm 33:1-11, or Psalm 36:5-10

Let us pray. (Silence)
O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of the one who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
The Flood
Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 49:8-13
Psalm 46
Let us pray. (Silence)
Almighty God, you have placed in the skies the sign of your covenant with all living things: Grant that we, who are saved through water and the Spirit, may worthily offer to you our sacrifice of thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac
Genesis 22:1-18
Psalm 33:12-22, or Psalm 16
Let us pray. (Silence)
God and Father of all believers, for the glory of your Name multiply, by the grace of the Paschal sacrament, the number of your children; that your Church may rejoice to see fulfilled your promise to our father Abraham; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Israel’s deliverance at the Red Sea
Exodus 14:10—15:1
Canticle 8, The Song of Moses

Let us pray. (Silence)
O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God’s Presence in a renewed Israel
Isaiah 4:2—6
Psalm 122

Let us pray. (Silence)
O God, you led your ancient people by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night: Grant that we, who serve you now on earth, may come to the joy of that heavenly Jerusalem, where all tears are wiped away and where your saints for ever sing your praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Salvation offered freely to all
Isaiah 55:1-11
Canticle 9, The First Song of Isaiah, or Psalm 42:1-7

Let us pray. (Silence)
O God, you have created all things by the power of your Word, and you renew the earth by your Spirit: Give now the water of life to those who thirst for you, that they may bring forth abundant fruit in your glorious kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A new heart and a new spirit
Ezekiel 36:24-28
Psalm 42:1-7, or Canticle 9, The First Song of Isaiah

Let us pray. (Silence)
Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who are reborn into the fellowship of Christ’s Body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
The valley of dry bones
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 30, or Psalm 143
Let us pray. (Silence)
Almighty God, by the Passover of your Son you have brought us out of sin into righteousness and out of death into life: Grant to those who are sealed by your Holy Spirit the will and the power to proclaim you to all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
The gathering of God’s people
Zephaniah 3:12-20
Psalm 98, or Psalm 126

Let us pray. (Silence)
O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him the one through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A homily may be preached after any of the preceding Readings. Holy Baptism (beginning with the Presentation of the Candidates, page 301, and concluding with the reception of the newly baptized) may be administered here or after the Gospel. Confirmation may also be administered. In the absence of candidates for Baptism or Confirmation, the Celebrant leads the people in the Renewal of Baptismal Vows, either here or after the Gospel. The Celebrant may first address the people in these or similar words, all standing
Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his Christ’s death, and raised with Christ him to into newness of life. I call upon you, therefore, now that our Lenten observance is ended, to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works of evil, and promised to serve God faithfully in his the holy catholic Church.

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Celebrant Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?
People I do.
Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?
People I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?
People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?
People I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
People I will, with God’s help.
Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
People I will, with God’s help.
Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
People I will, with God’s help.
Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
People I will, with God’s help.
Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
People I will, with God’s help.

The Celebrant concludes the Renewal of Vows as follows
May Almighty and everliving God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

At the Eucharist
The candles at the Altar may now be lighted from the Paschal Candle. One of the following Canticles is then sung. Immediately before the Canticle the Celebrant may say to the people

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

The Canticles
Gloria in excelsis
Te Deum laudamus
Pascha nostrum
The Celebrant then says

The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrant says one of the following Collects
Almighty God, who for our redemption gave your only begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his Christ’s glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him Christ in the joy of his the resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son
our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

or this

O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord’s resurrection: Stir up in your Church that Spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Epistle Romans 6:3-11
“Alleluia” may be sung and repeated.
Psalm 114, or some other suitable psalm or a hymn may be sung.
Gospel Matthew 28:1-10
If a sermon or homily was not preached earlier, it follows here.
The Nicene Creed is not used at this service.
Holy Baptism, Confirmation, or the Renewal of Baptismal Vows may take place here.
The celebration continues with the Prayers of the People.
Preface of Easter