

Why Do You Seek the Living Among the Dead?

Luke 24:1–12 | Romans 6:3–11 | Genesis 1, 22; Exodus 14; Isaiah, Baruch, Ezekiel,
Psalms

1. The Longest Night, the Greatest Story

The Easter Vigil is not merely a long liturgy—it is the **culmination of salvation history**, told in sacred fire, sacred Scripture, sacred water, and the glorious shout: "**Alleluia!**"

On this holy night:

- The Church **waits at the tomb** with Mary of Magdala.
- We **light a fire** against the backdrop of darkness.
- We **read salvation history** from the beginning of creation to the Resurrection.
- We **baptize**, for those buried with Christ in water rise with Him.
- We **renew our promises**, declaring that sin and death no longer have power.

St. John Paul II once said:

“In the liturgy of the Easter Vigil, the Church relives the most profound mystery of faith... this is the night when death gives way to life.”

2. The Readings: The Story of Our Salvation

Let us walk through the **seven Old Testament readings**, each a moment in the grand mosaic of redemption.

Genesis 1:1–2:2 – Creation: The Gift of Being

We begin with creation—“God said, ‘Let there be light.’” This echoes in the **blessing of the fire** at the start of the Vigil.

Creation is not an accident or the result of chaos, but an act of **divine love and order**. Against the secular myth that we are cosmic orphans, the Church proclaims:

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.”

Genesis 22:1–18 – Abraham and Isaac: Obedience and Substitution

Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac is a **type** of the Father offering His Son.

St. Irenaeus saw Isaac carrying the wood as a figure of Christ carrying His Cross. God provided a **ram**, but on Calvary, He provides **the Lamb**.

This reading rebukes our age's fear of obedience and suffering. It reveals a **love that costs everything**.

Exodus 14–15 – The Red Sea: Freedom Through Water

This is the most dramatic moment in the Old Testament: Israel crosses the sea, and Pharaoh's army is drowned.

The Church sings the **Exodus canticle** because Baptism is our **exodus from sin**.

“They were saved through water... prefiguring baptism” (cf. 1 Peter 3:20–21).

Here we see why Baptism is not a symbol—it is **liberation, death to sin, and entry into the People of God**.

Isaiah 54 & 55 – Covenant of Mercy and Invitation to Grace

God's love is compared to a faithful husband, whose mercy is greater than human failure.

“Though the mountains fall... my love shall never fall away.” (Isaiah 54:10)

We hear the divine thirst:

“Come to the water... without money, without price.” (Isaiah 55:1)

These readings challenge the world's transactional love. God gives **freely**, and the only condition is a **thirsting heart**.

Baruch 3:9–15, 32–4:4 – Wisdom and the Law

Baruch invites us to return to the **law of the Lord**, not as burden, but as the **way of life**.

It affirms Catholic teaching: that God's commandments are not opposed to grace, but are part of His loving design.

As **St. Augustine** said:

“The law was given that grace might be sought; grace was given that the law might be fulfilled.”

Ezekiel 36:16–28 – A New Heart and a New Spirit

Here God promises to **sprinkle clean water** upon His people and give them **new hearts**.

This is fulfilled in **Baptism**, where we receive not just forgiveness, but **the indwelling Holy Spirit** (cf. Acts 2:38).

In an age of spiritual confusion, this is powerful apologetics: We do not reform ourselves—**we are recreated by God**.

3. The Gloria and the Light Breaks In

After the readings, we burst into **the Gloria**, bells ring, candles shine, and the Church sings again after the silence of Lent.

We read **Romans 6:3–11**: “If we have died with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him.”

The Paschal Candle is now central. It reminds us that Christ is the **Light of the World**, and the Church stands not in nostalgia, but in **Resurrection reality**.

4. The Gospel: “Why Do You Seek the Living Among the Dead?” (Luke 24:1–12)

The tomb is empty.

The angel’s question is our call to conversion: **Why do you still cling to dead things?**

This Gospel ends not with complete understanding, but **wonder and amazement**. The Resurrection is not just a doctrine—it is a **shockwave of new life**.

St. Gregory the Great wrote:

“The women sought Jesus in the tomb, but He was not there... Let us not seek life among things that cannot give life.”

5. The Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist

Catechumens are baptized and confirmed, reminding all of us that **the Church grows not by marketing, but by mission and mystery.**

We renew our Baptismal promises. We reject Satan. We affirm belief in the Trinity. This is **our exodus, our rebirth, our allegiance.**

And then we receive the **Eucharist**, the same Risen Christ who walked with the disciples and broke bread in Emmaus (cf. Luke 24:30-31).

6. Relevance Today: In a World of Despair, the Empty Tomb Is Our Protest

In an age of:

- **Materialism**, the Resurrection says: We are made for eternal life.
- **Cynicism**, it says: God is faithful to His promises.
- **Violence**, it says: Death does not get the last word.
- **Identity confusion**, it says: You are a beloved child of God, redeemed in Christ.

As **Pope Benedict XVI** said:

“The resurrection is not a myth or metaphor—it is a historical event with cosmic significance.”

Easter Vigil is not about remembering a story—it is about **participating in a victory.**

7. “Christ Is Risen!” – The Cry That Changed the World

Let us go forth tonight as **witnesses**, like Mary Magdalene and Peter:

- Not as fans of Jesus, but as **disciples of the Risen Lord.**
- Not as consumers of religion, but as **bearers of the Light** in the night of the world.

Let us proclaim with the Church:

“Christ is Risen! He is truly Risen! Alleluia!”