



## EQSAINTS

### Holy Saturday

**Liturgical Text:** The Blessing of the Baptismal Water

*[L]owering 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.  
All: 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.**

To imitate the symbols used during the vigil, you may have a candle and a bowl of water. It is recommended that you use the same bowl that had been used on Holy Thursday.

After the reading of the passage is complete, explain the context.

**Scripture Passage: Romans 6:3-11**

**Context:**

During the Holy Thursday and Good Friday liturgies, the Church gave us the story of Jesus. Now, during the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night, we see that the story of Jesus doesn't end with his death. His conquer over death in the resurrection has to be told as well. When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked for the "cup" to pass him by.

That should strike us as a little bit odd. Why would Jesus ask for a "cup" to pass him by? It is obviously a metaphor of some sort, but what does it mean?

In the ancient Jewish world, "cup" was a symbol of destiny. When Jesus asks for the cup to pass him by, he was asking for a different destiny than what was going to happen

to him over the course of that night and the next day. He saw very clearly how intense the pain would be and how he would be betrayed and alone. He didn't want to go through that. Nonetheless, he asked for the Father's will to be done, not his.

On this night, we see that Jesus's destiny did not end on Good Friday. His destiny leads to his resurrection from the dead. This is the story that we hear during the Easter Vigil. It is the story of God and his promise to save his people from sin and death. The story of God now includes his Son rising from the grave in victory over suffering, futility, pain, sin, and ultimate death.

Now we reach a critical point in the liturgy. After hearing the story of Jesus, the attention comes to us. Those who wish to unite themselves to Jesus and his body, the Church, in baptism will be brought into communion with him through the water that is being blessed at this moment in the Easter Vigil.

If you and your family members have Bibles, you can look up the references together.

### **Key New Testament Words and Phrases:**

- *Were baptized:* Found in Romans 6:3, the Greek word “ebaptisthēmen” (eh-BAP-tis-THEE-men) has “baptisai” as its root. It literally means to be “submerged into”.
- *Grown into union with him:* Found in Romans 6:5, the Greek word is “symphytoi” (SOOM-foo-toy). It means to be “closely united to” and grow together as a branch is grafted into a tree.
- *Resurrection:* Found in Romans 6:5, the Greek word is “anastaseōs” (ahn-ah-STAH-see-ohs). It means to physically rouse and “to stand up”.
- *We shall also live with:* Found in Romans 6:8, the Greek word is “syzēsomen” (soo-zee-SOH-men). It means to continue to live in common with, to “co-survive”.
- *Death no longer has power over him:* Found in Romans 6:9, the phrase on Greek is “thanatos autou ouketi kyrieuei” (than-AH-tohs OW-too OO-keh-tee KOOR-ee-oy-ay). “Kyrieuei” has “kyrie” as its root which is the word for Lord. Death then is not Lord over those who have been raised with Christ.

Now you may provide the following interpretation.

### **Interpretation:**

In ancient Jewish worship, animals were sacrificed for sin. In particular, lambs were sacrificed. This provides powerful insights for us as to the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. He is the lamb of God. He is the once and for all offering to the Father in

atonement for our sins and those of the whole world. But if Jesus's work on the cross forgave sins and if the forgiveness of sins is all we needed, what point was the resurrection? In ancient Jewish worship, the lamb didn't rise from the dead. So why did Jesus rise?

We believe that the full work of Jesus did more than restore us to the Garden of Eden. His life, his death, and his resurrection brings something that is greater than Eden. He brings everlasting life and Jesus gives us a share of his relationship with the Father.

We are to submerge our self into him. We are to join him as a branch is grafted onto a tree and grow with him. In joining ourselves to him, his destiny is our destiny and we will live forever because our own death has been defeated. In the Baptism, Confirmation, and at every Eucharist, the invitation to join him is extended to us.

What will we do? Will we say to God, "not my will be done, but may your will be done"? This point in the liturgy, the Baptismal Liturgy, is place where we are invited to join Jesus. This is the time where we are baptized into him and his destiny becomes our destiny. Jesus lived and he died. We have no choice. We will live and we will die. The question is posed to us, "Will you unite yourself to the full destiny of Jesus that includes his resurrection and his victory over sin and death?" That is what is presented to us in the waters of Baptism. We have heard the story of Jesus over three days. Will our personal story be joined to his?

### **Ritual Moment:**

*At this point, invite one person to hold the candle and invite another person to hold the bowl of water while another person leads the renewal of the Baptismal Promises. Let them see that in these promises they are renewing their commitment to be united to Christ Jesus.*

Leader: 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.

Leader: Do you reject Satan?

All: I do.

Leader: And all his works?

All: I do.

Leader: And all his empty promises?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

All: I do.

Leader: 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?

All: I do.

Leader: 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.

Leader: 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 forever and ever.

All: Amen.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Ask someone else to read Roman 6:3-11 for a final time and then pray the following prayer.*

And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has 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. Amen.