



The Easter Vigil 2017, 9:15 pm

THE NIGHT OF NIGHTS

Late at night, in the darkness we gather—for this is the night of our passover, the night that darkness is overcome!

THE NIGHT OF ENDLESS WONDER!

Where else could we be on such a night, if not together?

The only place we can begin is in the **dark**, the dark of Holy Saturday night. The Church tells us that we begin our watch well after night-fall, for it is the darkness of the world that the new fire of Christ's light and hope pierces and overcomes!

So we begin our vigil in the outside darkness Holy Saturday Night at 9:15 p.m.

This year it is late because Easter is late; daylight savings time has started!

To be present is a sacrifice; it requires an effort and some inconvenience!

Yes, it is late, but this is **the night of nights—the night** the Church all over the world gathers in the darkness; **the night** when Christ overcomes death and the great bonfire of faith and light pierces through every dark place, every hidden fear; **the night** when God's creating Spirit stirs again and redeems the world from hatred, sin and strife; **the night** during which we tell the great stories of our faith by the new light of Christ; **the night** we bring those chosen to the font—the tomb of Christ—that they might enter his death and so rise with him; **the night** we anoint the baptized with the grace of Christ himself—the sacred Chrism, the gift of the Spirit; **the night** we renew our own baptismal promise to believe, to belong and to serve; **this is the night** we bring the newly baptized and the newly confirmed to the Lord's Table with us for the first time. **This is the night** we are sent forth newly alive!

Where else could we be if not TOGETHER?

In the darkness of Holy Saturday Night, the Light blazes forth and Life appears!

We tell the story, we enter the tomb, we baptize and confirm, we touch the new waters of life and proclaim that we will believe and belong—baptism is renewed and we are cleansed!

And once again we find ourselves at the Table of the Lord. Worth the sacrifice of time and presence.

Our parish communities gather together for one great celebration of Christ's life, death and resurrection. We gather TOGETHER as a testimony to our universal faith, our common heritage, and our shared mission.

We gather TOGETHER because

“this night's vigil is the greatest and most noble of all solemnities.”

All of our best efforts must be shared and poured into this “night of nights.”

***“O night that gave us back what we had lost! O night that made our sin a happy fault!
Beyond our deepest dreams this night, O God, your hand reached out to raise us up in Christ.
O night of endless wonder, night of bliss, when every living creature held its breath
as Christ robbed death and harrowed hopeless hell, restoring life to all those in the tomb!”***

Continental Breakfast served following the Vigil Mass.

Blessed Trinity Catholic Community ~ Spirit of Christ Mission

Triduum: THE GREAT THREE DAYS OF EASTER

THE EASTER VIGIL: *The Night of Nights*, April 14, 2015

The Easter Vigil occurs on the evening of Holy Saturday. **At Blessed Trinity we gather for the Vigil at 9:00 pm this year. It is the most powerful liturgical celebration of the entire church year. According to Church law, it must occur at night, starting about one hour after sunset.** A vigil implies watching and waiting for something. Christians watch and wait for the coming of the Lord, and at the Easter Vigil, God's people wait to experience the resurrected Christ just as the original disciples did on that first Easter morning. Jesus' death and resurrection brought about a new creation, and this is reflected at the Easter Vigil celebration which starts outside around a fire. The new flame is blessed and used to light the Easter Candle which will be lit for the entire Easter Season (until Pentecost). The candle is inscribed with the current year because Christ's light shines through the ages. During the Vigil, all members of the assembly receive a candle as a sign that they have been enlightened by Christ.



The readings used at the Easter Vigil are especially poignant. They trace the story of salvation history including the story of creation, Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac and Moses' parting of the Red Sea. The story of God's saving events is followed by Paul's reflection on baptism (Romans 6:3-11) and culminates with one of the gospel accounts of Jesus' resurrection. Having just traveled with Jesus to the cross on Good Friday, we now see how the story ends. The women who go to anoint Jesus' body do not find a tomb of death but a garden of life. This is true at the Easter Vigil as well. The church is left on Good Friday in the shadow of death, but at the Vigil, there is a movement from darkness to light. Voices that sang with sorrow now burst forth with "Alleluia." The church which was bare on Good Friday is filled with flowers and signs of new life.

The baptismal font, which was emptied on Palm Sunday, is filled with water to be blessed this night. The water is another sign of the new creation which comes about when members of the Church are born through baptism. On this particular night, the assembly renews its baptismal promises. At Blessed Trinity all are invited to "come to the font" while each person marks themselves with its life giving water to be reminded that through baptism all are reborn in Christ.



Liturgy is concerned with entering deeply into the mysteries of God in order to know the Lord better. At the Easter Vigil, the presence of the resurrected Christ is encountered in a very real way through the Eucharist. In the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup, all those present are united as one with the resurrected Christ.