

*“In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light” and there was light. God then separated the light from the darkness...”*

It is fitting that these are the first words of the Holy Scriptures for the Great Easter Vigil Mass that we will celebrate tonight, eagerly anticipating Christ's resurrection. The mass takes place at sundown and begins with the Service of Light. Our church lies in darkness and waiting. The light of Christ has gone out of the world, and darkness has covered the earth. A match will be struck in the darkness, and the Easter fire will be lit outside of the church, representing Christ's return from the tomb. From this fire, the new Paschal candle will be lit, which symbolizes Jesus, the light that dispels darkness out of our world.

On this most holy night, we joyfully welcome our new members into the church. They, along with everyone, will enter the church with candles lit from the Paschal candle, bringing the light of Christ into the church for the first time since Good Friday. Some will receive the sacrament of Baptism, and all will receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

For those of us on the RCIA team, the Easter Vigil is indeed a special occasion as these Candidates and Catechumens enter into full communion with the Catholic Church. Being a part of their journey has been such an honor and privilege, and we invite you all to come to the Easter Vigil at 7:30 tonight to rejoice with them and pray for them as they dedicate their lives to Jesus Christ, who is the source of all the light, love, and goodness in our lives. May we all be reminded to walk as sons and daughters of the light and to be the light of Christ to the world.