

tapers to use at the funerals of the poor.

The word "paschal" is the equivalent of the Greek paschs, derived from the Aramaic pashā and Hebrew pesah, meaning the passing over. In the Old Testament it refers to the night the Israelites left Egypt for the Promised Land, when God struck the houses of the Egyptians but left the Israelites untouched, thus "passing over" or sparing them. With Christianity the word "paschal" took on a new meaning, referring to Our Lord's passion, death, resurrection, and glorification. These events stand at the centre of our faith. God's saving plan for us was accomplished by the redemptive suffering and death of Jesus. His resurrection and glorification are our assurances of eternal life - if we follow His words and His way. **-Bernard Kellett**

Entrance Antiphon: Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth: The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

First Reading: Acts 10.25-26, 34-35, 44-48

Responsorial Psalm: 97 Response: The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.

Second Reading: 1 John 4: 7-10

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.' Alleluia!

Gospel: John 15: 9-17

Memorial Acclamation: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

Communion Antiphon: If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.



Sixth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B, 2024 Weekly Reflection:

Reflection: Paschal Candle (ii) This candle, also called the Easter Candle, originated in the earliest days of Christianity, when evening prayer began with the lighting of a candle.

This practice was probably inspired by the Jewish custom of lighting a lamp at the conclusion of the Sabbath. Historical references mention the Lucernarium, the evening prayer rite with which the early Christians began each Sunday vigil. The lighting of the candle dispelled the darkness and represented Christ – the Light of the World. This solemn rite was carried out with even greater reverence during the Easter Vigil. In the time of Constantine we are told by the historian Eusebius that the emperor "transformed the night of the sacred Easter Vigil into the brilliancy of day, by lighting throughout the whole city pillars of wax, so that this mystic vigil was rendered brighter than the brightest daylight."

In Italian basilicas the paschal candle stand was made of marble and designed as a permanent attachment to the ambo (a large pulpit or reading desk in early churches). Several of these candle stands still survive, as in the Basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura (Saint Lawrence outside the Walls) in Rome, which was built in the 3rd century. By the second half of the 4th century, a hymn in praise of the candle and the Easter mystery was sung, as referenced by Saint Jerome in 384 AD. Saints Ambrose and Augustine are known to have composed these hymns of praise. The precise use of the Paschal candle has varied over the centuries. Initially it was broken up after the Easter Vigil and fragments were given to the faithful, but from the 10th century onward it was kept in a place of honour near the Gospel until the Feast of the Ascension. By the 12th century, it was common to inscribe the candle with the current year. Over time the candle grew in size to merit the description of "pillar". By the mid-sixteenth century, some Paschal candles weighed as much as three hundred pounds, and, after use, were melted into tapers as much as three hundred pounds, and, after use, were melted into