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“You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised” (Mark 16:6).

Easter Vigil

Gen 1:1—2:2; Gen 22:1-18; Exod 14:15—15:1; Isa 54:5-14; Isa 55:1-11; Bar 3:9-15, 32—44:4; Ezek 36:16-28; Rom 6:3-11; Mark 16:1-7

Liturgy at its best is both message and action. Tonight’s Vigil is God’s message received by God’s People, who must work it into the fabric of life, warp and woof, clothing us with hope and courage we can then take to our world. We begin by kindling fire in the darkness of loss, bearing the Paschal candle to our place of worship, where we once again tell the story of our salvation, receiving the Word that comes true in our hearing. God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son to save us from the power of sin and death.

With seven scripture readings from Genesis to Ezekiel, we hear the narrative of our long road through Lent, revealed now as God’s revelation, prophecy fulfilled and promises kept. God has been with us every step of the way, from chaos to creation, slavery to freedom, desert thirst to verdant homecoming, exile to return, law to grace, from death to new life. United with Christ in baptism, we now live with him. No tomb can hold him, and he summons us to follow him into the world to share his redemptive work of justice and mercy.

If our faith seems small, we remember this night when the darkness was turned back by a single flame. Each of us shared that turning point with a small candle, and together we lit the church where we prayed and opened our hearts to God’s response to the sadness and grief in the world that hungers for hope. It is essential

that each believer celebrate the baptism that made us one with Christ. He unites us to one another and urges us to feel the fire he has kindled in our hearts and the breath of the Spirit he has breathed into us.

Our participation in these holy mysteries is our faith formation. We have everything we need to be the light of the world. Love drives out fear, and a cloud of witnesses cheers us forward. Be Easter People.

Another refectio n will follow for Easter Sunday.

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