

THE LIGHTING OF THE EASTER CANDLE AS WE OPEN OUR CHURCHES FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTAL MINISTRY

Needless to say that as we prepare to open, I've had a number on enquiries about what should be done *iro* the Easter Candle. Many churches did not have the opportunity to have the Easter Liturgy, as Lockdown Level Five was put in place a week before Easter.

Here are my suggestions for the Blessing of the Easter Candle, under these extraordinary and unusual circumstances.

1. That you bless, decorate and light the candle as the **Entrance Liturgy at the very first Service only.**
2. Light a small fire.
3. There is no need to hand out votive candles and the Easter proclamation need not be said or sung.
4. Here now is a way to move forward

Priest: Dear Friend in Christ, sadly as a parish community we did not have the opportunity to bless the Easter Candle due to the lockdown.
The Easter Candle is an important sign of our Lord's resurrection and usually burns throughout the fifty days of Easter and then at every baptism and funeral.
As these are extraordinary and unusual circumstances, Bishop has granted us permission to bless the Easter Candle.

*A small fire is lit
The candle is brought to the Priest*

Priest: In the Old Testament God made His presence known by the sign of the pillar of fire, so this new fire represents the return of Christ, the Light of the world, from the darkness of the grave.

Father
we share in the light of your glory
through your Son, the Light of the world:
sanctify this fire
and inflame us with new hope during these extraordinary
circumstances of our daily living.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Congreg: **Amen**

*The Priest may trace symbolic signs on the candle
Making the vertical line she/he says
Christ, yesterday and today*

*Making the horizontal line she/he says
The Beginning and the End*

Making the Alpha sign above the vertical line she/he says
Christ the Alpha

Making the Omega sign below the vertical line she/he says
Christ the Omega

Making the sign of 2020 she/he says
All times belong to him
And all ages
To him be glory and power
Through every age forever. Amen.

*The priest then inserts the grains at the **top, middle and bottom** of the vertical arm and says*
By his holy
And glorious wounds
May Christ our Lord

*The priest then inserts the grains on the **left** and then the **right** of the horizontal arm and says*
Guard us
And keep us. Amen

The Candle is then lit. There being no Solemn Procession, the priest holds up the candle and says
May the Light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our
hearts and minds.
Christ our Light

Congreg: **Thanks be to God**

The Priest takes the candle and places it its stand

Hereafter the Priest greets and welcomes the Congregation and the Service continues with the Gloria