

**The Paschal candle** represents Christ, the Light of the World.

The pure beeswax of which the candle is made represents the sinless Christ who was formed in the womb of His Mother. The wick signifies His humanity, the flame, His Divine Nature, both soul and body.

Five grains of incense inserted into the candle in the form of a cross recall the aromatic spices with which His Sacred Body was prepared for the tomb, and of the five wounds in His hands, feet, and side.

During the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night the priest or deacon carries the candle in procession into the dark church. A new fire, symbolizing our eternal life in Christ, is kindled which lights the candle. The candle, representing Christ himself, is blessed by the priest who then inscribes in it a cross, the first letters and last of the Greek alphabet, (Alpha and Omega `the beginning and the end') and the current year, as he chants the prayer below; then affixes the five grains of incense.

The Easter candle is lighted each day during Mass throughout the Paschal season until Ascension Thursday.

