The Easter Mass for Schools

**The Liturgy of Light**

*It is important that schools celebrate an Easter Mass, the principle feast of the Church’s year, at the beginning of the summer term.*

*Elements from the Easter Vigil Liturgy can be used to make this school Easter Mass different:*

1. *Gather outside around a fire and use the Liturgy of Light from the Easter Vigil adapted for children.*
2. *If you cannot have a fire, you might still begin your Mass with the lighting and blessing of the Paschal Candle (from the Liturgy of Light). This replaces the opening rites (including the penitential rite) of the Mass and is followed directly by the Collect (opening prayer) and then the readings.*
3. *Or you might want to simplify things further and move from the Liturgy of Light straight into the proclamation of the Easter gospel.*

*As in all good liturgy, the aim should be to communicate and celebrate straightforwardly and effectively, using strong and clear signs and symbols in a dramatic way. Movement (procession) and music can greatly enhance the Liturgy of Light.*

Blessing of the Paschal Candle

*The cross, alpha and omega, and year date are incised into the wax of the Paschal Candle:*

Christ yesterday and today. *(the vertical line of the cross is cut into the candle)*

The beginning and the end. *(the horizontal line of the cross)*

The Alpha *(the letter Alpha above the cross)*

and the Omega *(the letter Omega below the cross)*

All time belongs to him *(the first numeral of the current year, top left)*

and all the ages *(the second numeral, top right)*

To him be glory and power *(the third numeral, bottom left)*

through every age and forever. Amen. *(the fourth numeral, bottom right)*

*Then the five grains of incense (usually in brass containers with spikes to press into the candle) are put in place:*

By his holy *(first incense grain is inserted at the top of the cross)*

and glorious wounds, *(the second in the middle of the cross)*

may Christ the Lord *(the third at the bottom)*

guard us *(the fourth, at the left)*

and protect us. Amen. *(the fifth at the right)*

Priest/Leader Christ our light.

**All Thanks be to God.**

*Or you could ask the children to repeat what is said (adding Alleluias makes this work better):*

Priest/Leader Christ our light. Alleluia! Alleluia!

**All Christ our light. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Priest/Leader Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

**All Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Either (a) process with the candle and place it in its stand. Then begin the Mass with the Collect (opening prayer).*

*Or (b) process with the candle to the place where the Easter gospel is to be read; then stand with the candle, next to the Book of Gospels, and proclaim the Easter gospel. Then continue with the homily.*