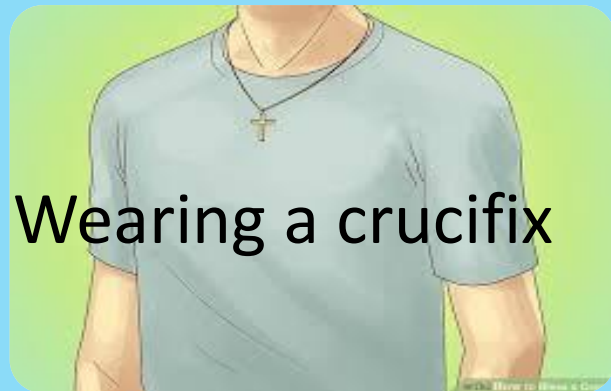


Catholics are a huge Family which, like all families have symbols, memories and traditions that mean a lot to us.



Wearing a crucifix



Receiving a Bible at Baptism



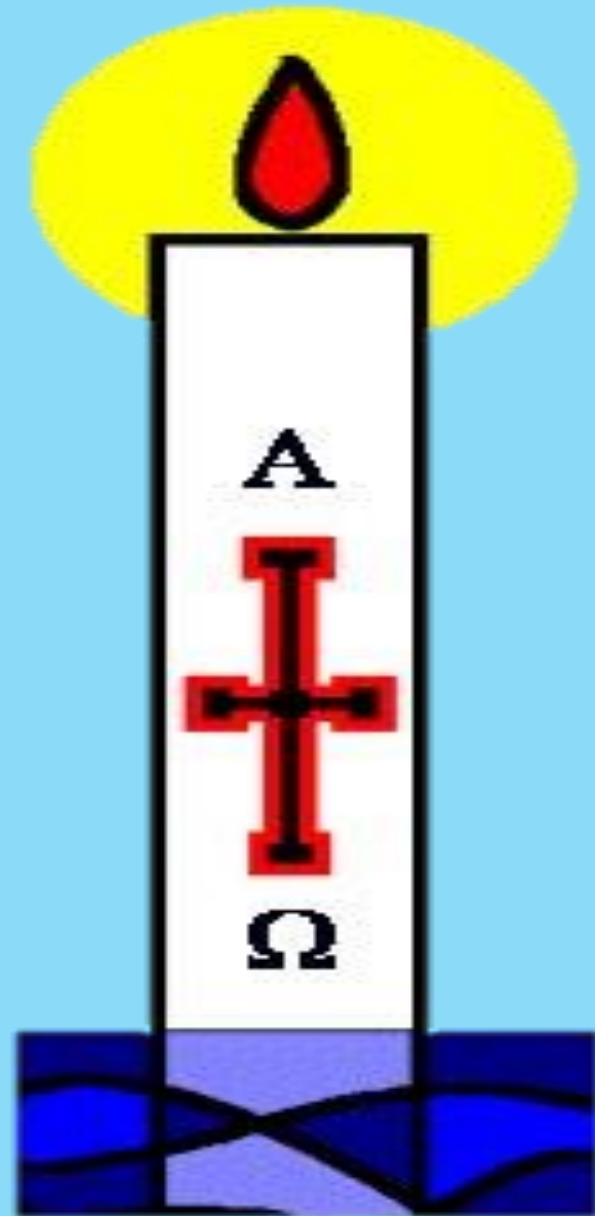
Our First Holy Communion



Marriage

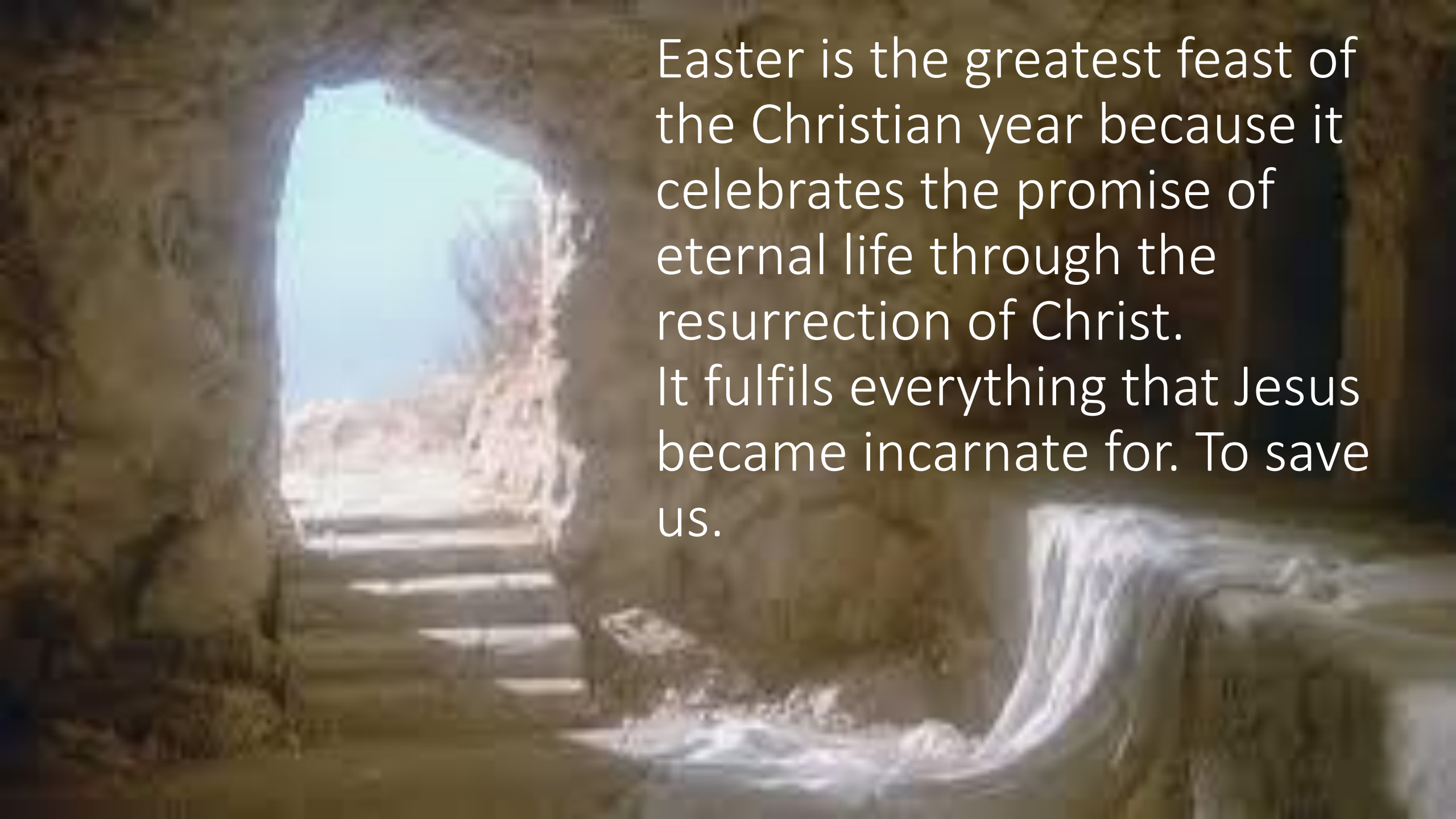
This includes the Paschal candle

Where?
What?
Why?





The Paschal candle:
symbol of Christ's
resurrection

A photograph of an open tomb. A white cloth lies on the floor of the tomb. A bright light shines from the entrance of the tomb, illuminating the interior. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Easter is the greatest feast of the Christian year because it celebrates the promise of eternal life through the resurrection of Christ. It fulfils everything that Jesus became incarnate for. To save us.

The Paschal Triduum (Latin) or Easter Triduum begins on Holy Thursday and ends with Easter Saturday (Sunday Vigil).



There are 3 special ceremonies that mark the three days of prayer

Holy Thursday: The Last Supper is commemorated.

Good Friday: the crucifixion

Easter Saturday (Sunday Vigil): recalls the passion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

Together this triduum captures the Paschal mystery.
Freedom from sin to new life.

Paschal Triduum

The Paschal Triduum (Latin) or Easter Triduum begins on Holy Thursday and ends with Easter Sunday.

Holy Thursday:
The Last Supper
is
commemorated.

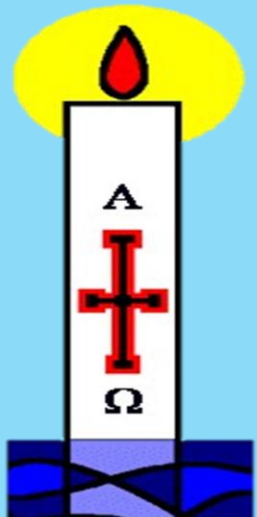


Good Friday: the
Crucifixion

Easter Sunday:
recalls the passion,
death, burial and
Resurrection of
Jesus.

As night falls on Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil begins:

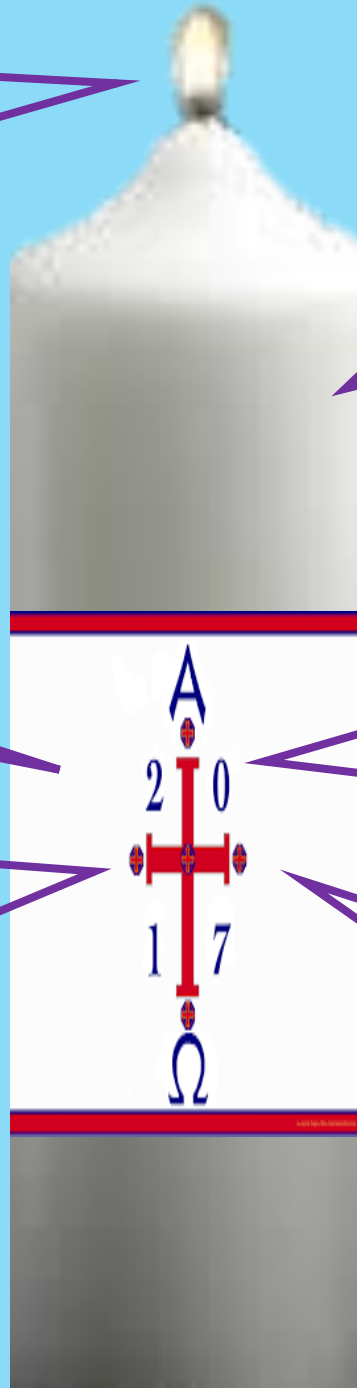
- ✓ The first action of the priest is to prepare and light the Easter or paschal candle.
- ✓ It is the symbol of the resurrection of Jesus.
- ✓ The congregation are led in a procession, singing 'Christ our Light'
- ✓ The Church has been in darkness as we have been remembering that Jesus was in the tomb and the light had gone out on the world.
- ✓ But tonight he has risen and the Church comes out of darkness as each person lights a small candle from the Paschal candle.
- ✓ The congregation make a river of light as they take their place and the Exsultet is sang.
- ✓ This is the time when we begin the celebration of the joy of Easter.



The **FLAME** symbolises the light of Christ which has come into the world and which 'darkness could not overpower' **John 1:5**

Anno Domini – 'the year of the Lord' is always written on the candle to remind the faithful that Jesus is Lord of time 'the same yesterday, today and forever' **Hebrews 13:8**

FIVE WOUNDS – five spiked studs each containing a grain of incense are inserted into the candle as the priest finishes consecrating (blessing) the candle saying: 'By his holy and glorious wounds, may Christ our Lord guard us and keep us, AMEN'



The **CANDLE** contains a high proportion of beeswax which is very precious and expensive. This is because it represents Christ and should be of the highest quality. Bees are even mentioned in **Exsultet** (The Easter Proclamation sung at the vigil)

The **ALPHA and OMEGA** are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Reminding us that Christ is 'the first and last, at the beginning and the end' of all things. Of life, death and creation.
Revelation 22:13

The **CROSS** is the symbol of Christ's death, which is remembered on Good Friday as the saving action of love by which 'Christ our Passover, has been sacrificed' for us **1Corinthians 5:7**

More facts about the Paschal Candle:

The Paschal Candle is always the **biggest candle** in the Church placed in a prominent position on the altar.

Because there is a new one each year the wax that is left is melted down and in the past was used to make little tapers for use at the funerals of the poor.

On Easter night it is used to bless the **waters of Baptism** and is placed on a high **pedestal** at the front of the Church so that its light is cast over all the people signifying

hope. During the **Sacrament of Baptism** it is placed by the **font** as a reminder of the risen Christ who gives the baptised new life.

A smaller candle is lit from it and given to the candidate or family with the words, '**Receive the light of Christ**'. This is kept as a souvenir of Baptism.