



Going Deeper: The Paschal Candle

The Paschal Candle is a symbol of the light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the light which defeats darkness and death.

The Paschal Candle also symbolizes the light that God first created in the Bible. Light is considered a sign of God's presence and manifestation of His greatness.

But it is with Jesus that the symbolic value of light obtains its most important role. Jesus speaks of himself as the true light, and of his disciples as the light of the world, which must "shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Mt 5:16).

The Paschal candle should be at the center of all celebrations for the fifty days of Easter. It will be consumed, just as Jesus was "consumed" before God, by the love for men, sacrificing himself completely. His sacrifice is renewed every year by the burning of this symbol of salvation and redemption; the smoke, going up to the sky, reminds the rise of the One who came back from the dead, to bring light and peace to men until the end of time.

There are 3 basic elements onto the decoration of a Paschal Candle:

- As a symbol of Christ, the Candle's dignity and significance is emphasized by decorating it with a cross ('Christ yesterday and today the beginning and the end'),
- The Greek alpha and omega
- The numerals of the current year ('...all time belongs to him and all the ages to him be glory and power through every age for ever. Amen.')
- The alpha and omega go on the vertical bar of the cross and the numerals fit in the four corners