



Introduction: The flame that speaks beyond fire

In the immense beauty of Catholic liturgy, there are signs that, even in silence, proclaim eternal truths. One of these is the **Paschal Candle**—that tall white candle which, on the Holy Night of Easter, breaks through the darkness just as Christ shatters the chains of death. But on the feast of Pentecost, or in some places at the end of the Easter Season, that light is extinguished. And this is not a trivial gesture. **What does it mean when the Paschal Candle goes out? What is the Church telling us through this deeply symbolic act? How can this help us in our daily lives?**

This article is an invitation to contemplate that moment deeply, not to let hope, faith, and the mission Christ entrusts to us be extinguished as well. Because when the Paschal Candle goes out, something ends... but so much begins.

1. The Paschal Candle: light lit in the night of the Resurrection

Origin and history

The **Paschal Candle** has its roots in the earliest traditions of the Church. From the first centuries, Christians would light a great candle during the Easter Vigil to symbolize that **Christ is the Light of the world** (cf. Jn 8:12). That light was blessed with solemnity, and from it all other candles were lit, as a sign that every Christian receives their light from Christ.

Today's liturgy preserves this rite with majesty: in the darkness of the church, the priest lights the Paschal Candle with the new fire, proclaiming three times: **"Lumen Christi"** (The Light of Christ), to which the people respond: **"Deo gratias"** (Thanks be to God).

The Candle is decorated with a cross, the letters Alpha and Omega, and the current year—a visible proclamation that Christ is Lord of time and history.

2. Theology of the Candle: a Christ who burns without being



consumed

Living light of Easter

The Paschal Candle **is not just a big candle**: it is **the visible symbol of the Risen Christ**. Its flame represents **the victory of Life over death**, and its constant presence during the 50 days of Easter reminds us that we are called to live as children of the light.

*“For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
Walk as children of light.”
— Ephesians 5:8*

During this season, the Candle remains lit at every Mass, presiding from the sanctuary—visible, majestic, silent. Beside it, each baptism is celebrated, each confirmation, even funerals, as a sign that eternal life has already begun for those redeemed in Christ.

Easter fire and missionary fire

The fire lit at the Vigil is not just decorative. It is new fire, blessed, **a fire of renewal**, purification, and resurrection. Not coincidentally, early Christians compared Christ to the **burning bush** (cf. Ex 3:2): a fire that burns without being consumed, a divine presence that transforms without destroying.

3. Why is the Paschal Candle extinguished?

The end of one stage, the beginning of a mission

The Paschal Candle is extinguished at the end of the Easter Season, that is, after the 50 days following Easter Sunday. In many churches, this happens during the celebration of **Pentecost**, the feast that commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Why is it extinguished? Because **Christ has ascended into heaven**, and now **His light lives in us through the grace of the Holy Spirit**. The Candle is extinguished, but **we are**



to light our own inner flames to continue the work of the Risen One in the world.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

— Matthew 5:14

It is as if the Church is saying to us: **Christ is risen, but now it is your turn to carry His light.** The Candle is extinguished, but your soul must keep burning.

4. Theological and pastoral guide: living what the Candle represents

A. Internalize Easter every day

Don't live the Resurrection as a past event. Easter is not just a feast; it is **a way of life**. When recalling the extinguishing of the Candle, ask yourself:

- Where does my life need light today?
- Am I bringing hope to those around me?
- Or do I allow the darkness of the world to extinguish my faith?

The Resurrection is an interior dynamism. It is Christ also rising in your personal story.

B. Embrace the mission of the Spirit

The Candle is extinguished **because the Spirit ignites the Church**. The Ascension and Pentecost send us into the world—not to be comfortable, but to **be witnesses**.

- Pray to the Holy Spirit every morning: “Come, enlighten my day.”
- Let the Word be your lamp (cf. Ps 119:105).
- Be a living Candle: practice patience, zeal, compassion.



C. Be light in the darkness of daily life

Today more than ever, the world needs lights. Not theories or empty speeches. It needs luminous, coherent, authentic people. Being light is not about showing off, but about **guiding others to Christ**.

- In your family: are you a source of unity or division?
 - At your work: do you reflect justice and service?
 - On your social media: do you spread darkness or the Gospel?
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5. A teaching for dark times

In a world shaken by war, division, nihilism, and spiritual emptiness, the extinguishing of the Candle may seem like a bitter metaphor: has Christ left? Are we alone?

And yet, **Christians do not live by empty symbols, but by eternal realities**. The Candle is extinguished, yes. But not because the light has gone, rather **because it is now called to live within you**.

“I no longer call you servants... I have called you friends.”
— John 15:15

Christ entrusts Himself to you. Like Mary Magdalene, like Peter, like Paul, **you are now the living Candle in the darkness of the 21st century**.

6. Practical applications: how to live the extinguishing of the Paschal Candle

✦ **Make a spiritual review of your Easter**

Ask yourself:



- What fruits has this Easter left in me?
- Where have I felt God's passing (Pascha)?
- What do I still need to surrender?

Do this in prayer, perhaps before the Tabernacle. Christ waits for you there to tell you: "My light is in you."

✦ **Renew your baptismal commitment**

During the Easter Vigil, we renew our baptismal promises. At the end of the Easter Season, it is a good time to return to them:

- To reject sin,
- To profess the Catholic faith,
- To live according to the Gospel.

You could even write them on a sheet of paper and place it somewhere visible.

✦ **Be a Paschal Candle in your surroundings**

With concrete actions:

- Visit a sick person,
- Listen without judging,
- Help someone in need,
- Pray with someone.

Remember: one candle can light many others without losing its own flame.

Conclusion: The Candle goes out, but you are called to burn

When the Paschal Candle goes out, Easter doesn't end... **its expansion begins**. A visible flame is extinguished to light thousands of invisible ones. Christ is no longer physically with us, but **He is in us**, and through us in the world.

Each year, this liturgical gesture asks you: **Are you ready to be light?**

Are you willing to burn a little, to give warmth, to shine, to be uncomfortable, to illuminate?



The Candle goes out... but you can burn.
Not out of pride, but out of love.
Not for vanity, but so that others may find God in you.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”
— *John 1:5*

Will you let that Light continue to shine in you? Because **even though the Paschal Candle goes out... Easter never ends in the heart of one who believes.**