

**Homily Outline for the Easter Vigil  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception  
April 20, 2019**

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Bishop of Springfield in Illinois**

- I. Easter Vigil liturgy
  - A. Most complex liturgy of the year
    - 1. Lots of “moving parts”
    - 2. Blessing of fire, Proclamation of Easter Praise, 9 scripture readings (overview of salvation history from Genesis to Jesus), baptism, renewal of baptismal promises, reception into full communion, Confirmation, Eucharist
  - B. Most important liturgy of the year
    - 1. Unfortunately, that is not reflected in attendance.
    - 2. More people at 4:00 PM Christmas Eve – overflow crowd in the Atrium
      - a. The incarnation is a great mystery to be celebrated;
      - b. But without the resurrection, the birth of Jesus is just a historical footnote if the life of Jesus ends on Good Friday.
  - C. Longest liturgy of the year
  - D. Most important liturgy of the year
    - 1. Same length of time as most sporting events
    - 2. Noteworthy that people rarely complain that football games are too long!
    - 3. Perhaps that is because people see sporting events as something happening now, while Holy Week just recalls historical events from long ago.
- II. While Holy Week does recall historical events from long ago, it is much more than that; it is a live celebration of what is happening now in the Church
  - A. A real person – Jordan – will be baptized tonight
  - B. Real people – Daren, Janet and Kate – will be received into full communion with the Catholic Church tonight
  - C. Lent and Easter are about growing in our faith.
  - D. This is what makes the Church alive now!
- III. Burning of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris
  - A. I am confident that Notre Dame Cathedral will be rebuilt.
    - 1. Millions of dollars have already been pledged for the rebuilding.
    - 2. Protestors (9,000 “Yellowjackets”) in Paris complained that this money should be used for the working class.
    - 3. Apparently the spirit of the French Revolution has not yet been extinguished!
  - B. Silver lining is that rebuilding Notre Dame Cathedral may help rebuild the community of faith in France.

IV. Easter is the celebration of new life!

- A. We are all called to renew our lives of faith.
- B. Our Lord's resurrection opens the gates of heaven with the hope of eternal life for us as well.
- C. May God give us this grace. Amen.