

The DICTIONARY dot COM definition of the word IMMERSE tells us:

## IMMERSE

–verb (used with object), -mersed, -mers·ing.

1. to plunge into or place under a liquid; dip; sink.
2. to involve deeply; absorb:  
*She is totally immersed in her law practice.*
3. to baptize by immersion.
4. to embed; bury.

And ETYMOLOGY ONLINE dot COM tells us that it comes from the Latin *immersus*, which is the past participle of *immergere* meaning “to plunge in, dip into”.

This evening we are IMMERSED in two very vivid symbols.

The first being fire. We lit the new fire in front of the parish, and lit the Easter candle - a symbol of the Risen Christ and the light of His LOVE, and MERCY, and GRACE shining on all of us.

We then spread that light throughout the NAVE of the church, and listened to the Easter Proclamation - known as the EXSULTET which dates from the end of the fourth century.

We then listened to the Word of God - beginning with Genesis, then Exodus - because we as Christians trace our spiritual pedigree to Abraham and the Israelites.

Then we heard the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel.

Abraham trusted God without reservation - offering his only son when asked by God - yet God in His mercy wouldn't let Abraham finish the deed. Abraham's sacrifice of his son is an image of God the Father's sacrifice of His Only Son on the wood of the cross.

The second symbol is water. Water is life-giving. Forget to water your plants and you've got a pot of dirt. End up in the desert without water, and you only have a few days to find it if you want to survive.

The Israelites trusted God and left the familiar slavery of Egypt to follow Him through the desert - a period of purification as they cast off the old ways of sin and took on the new ways of the covenant with God. The

parting of the Red Sea is an image of our own passage from sin into new life through the waters of baptism.

In the prophecy of Isaiah, we hear the call to COME TO THE WATER - without payment or cost. The only thing we have to surrender is our attachment to sin, and recognize that God is calling us beyond our own imagination to a new life.

And then prophet Ezekiel calls us to take on a new heart - given to us by God - so that we can truly be His holy people.

After the singing of the GLORY TO GOD, we heard Saint Paul exhort us to unite ourselves with Jesus Christ and put away our old ways and embrace new life in Christ.

And finally, we hear the Gospel account of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ - prefaced by the ALLELUIA - which we haven't heard for 40-some days.

So - we have made it. We have made it through the FORTY DAYS OF LENT. Let us immerse ourselves in not only the symbols of this night. But let us also immerse ourselves in the GRACE and MERCY poured out on us in JESUS CHRIST.

HE IS RISEN! JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD!  
ALLELUIA!

And we too are re-born in Jesus Christ.

Very soon to be reborn with us will be Roy, Elizabeth, Melissa, Bobbie, Erin, and Mikayla - who will pass through the waters of Baptism into new life in Jesus Christ. They will receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. And will for the first time join us at the altar - to receive Jesus Christ in the Eucharist - Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

Let us all be open to receiving the infinite graces of God the Father, which shine upon us through the LIGHT OF JESUS CHRIST, and immerse ourselves in the abundance of GRACE poured out through the Holy Spirit.