

The Paschal Candle

The Paschal Candle stands either next to the font or in the Nave Sanctuary, next to the pulpit, depending on the time of year.

During Eastertide it stands at the side of the pulpit; it holds the Paschal Candle which is consecrated at the ceremonies of the Easter Vigil, when the Church begins its celebration of Christ's Resurrection from the Dead. It represents the Light of Christ coming into a world darkened by sin and death.

As such it stands here throughout Eastertide, and then is moved to the font. Here Christians are baptised into the faith of the Risen Lord, and share all the benefits of his resurrection life – here they begin their Christian pilgrimage. Each baptismal candidate receives their own candle, lit from the Paschal candle, again representing the Light of Christ coming into their lives, but also representing the Christian faith which we, through baptism, are passing on to them.

The Paschal Candle also burns next to the coffin of those whose funerals take place here, again being a reminder of the resurrection life Christ gives to those who seek to follow him.

It is marked with the sign of the cross, with the letters Alpha and Omega (because Christ is both the beginning and end of all things), with the numbers of the year, and with five 'incense grains', symbolising the five wounds of Christ on the Cross, in his hands, feet and side.

'We are buried with Christ in baptism, that we may live with him in eternity.'

