

GOD IS KING - EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A BURNING FLAME OF GRACE

For the past seven weeks the Easter Candle has remained in our worship area being lit every time we celebrated Mass. The living flame of the Easter Candle reminded us that Jesus is alive, that he rose from the dead just as the sun rises each morning to put an end to the darkness of the night. The tall, white candle with a burning flame on top reminded us of God's faithfulness throughout all of history. It symbolized the two miraculous pillars - smoke by day and fire by night – which had guided the ancient Israelites out of Egypt, through the desert, and into the Promised Land. Now it is Jesus, our Risen Lord, who is our pillar of smoke and pillar of fire, our sure guide out of slavery to sin, through this world of trials and temptations, and into the Promised Land of Heaven. This Sunday however we remove the Easter Candle from our sanctuary. Until next Easter, we will only use it during funeral and baptism ceremonies, where it reminds us of the eternal life of Jesus. However, the removal of the Easter Candle does not mean Jesus is no longer among us. The sanctuary lamp beside the Tabernacle reminds us that Jesus is still with us and has not gone on vacation. This Sunday is Pentecost, the day when our risen Jesus was entrusted to the Church by the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, who descended like tongues of fire on the Apostles nine days after Jesus has ascended into heaven. This new season in the life of the Church is paralleled by our new liturgical season of Ordinary Time. We remove the Easter Candle from our worship area, because we ourselves become living Easter Candles, burning flames of wisdom, pillars of Christian love and faith spreading the hope of Jesus in our church and in our world. Interesting Trivia: In 1620, when the Mayflower left Europe and crossed the Atlantic Ocean, there were no dandelions in North America. But immigrants, who had long used them for their valuable medicinal properties, and in salads, soups, and teas, brought them along to the New World, together with other imported plants. By 1671, according to eyewitnesses, dandelions were everywhere. On Pentecost, God sent a handful of dandelions from heaven to earth and planted them in the hearts of Christians. Ever since then, the flames of the grace of Jesus keep blossoming everywhere, tirelessly announcing the springtime of redemption that is gradually thawing the long, dark winter brought on by original sin. Spreading dandelions is trivia! Spreading the gospel is not!

God bless,
Deacon John