

APRIL 4, 2026 THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

FIRST READING BY JANE FOSTER

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation.

Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth.

For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground."

And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.

The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons entered the ark, they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind--every bird, every winged creature.

They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life.

And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

The flood continued forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.

The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters.

At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth.

Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him.

He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.

Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

In the six hundred first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying.

In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

Then God said to Noah,

"Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh--birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth--so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."

So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.

I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:

I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13

Word of God Word of Life