



effort to win millions of the unchurched to Christian belief and service, to membership and activity in the Church. This is because of the period that historically follows Easter.

The New Testament tells us that, after the Resurrection, Jesus remained on earth for 40 days, during which time He made several visible appearances to His disciples and spoke to them. Then came the Ascension.

Ten days later, the Scripture records, God in the form of the Holy Spirit appeared to the waiting disciples gathered somewhere in Jerusalem, endowed them with vision and extraordinary powers, and sent them forth over the civilized world to preach the Gospel. That day was the birthday of the Christian Church!

What is more consistent, or more historically accurate or psychologically sound, than to capitalize on the 50 days from Easter to Pentecost in triumphant religious services, rising to a grand climax in observance of the natal day of the Church?

More and more churches are doing it. Many congregations dramatize the post-Easter period with a series of Sunday worship services called "The Seven Candles of the Lord," in which each taper symbolizes such a Sabbath service.

In our church, seven unlighted candles were placed

in a row upon the altar or communion table at the front of the sanctuary. A candle was lighted each Sunday to represent that day, until the seven burning candles on Pentecost Sunday (June 9 this year) proclaimed the fulfillment of the entire period's devotion.

"Let there be light!" was the over-all theme of the seven-Sunday observance, the lighted candles visibly signifying the invisible light of the spirit, which comes through faith—faith in Christ.

The seven candles were lighted one by one as sermons on these subjects were delivered on successive Sundays: 1. "The Light of Promise"; 2. "The Light of Devotion"; 3. "The Light of Peace"; 4. "The Light of Knowledge"; 5. "The Light of Fruitfulness"; 6. "The Light of His Glory"; 7. "The Light of Pentecost." All were taken from discourses by Jesus to His disciples after the Resurrection and before the Ascension.

When the seventh, or Pentecost, Sunday arrived, the importance of the meaning of the birthday of the Church was well ingrained in people's minds and hearts. The ultimate purpose is to make the day one of triumph and glory in the Christian calendar. It is the fitting recognition of Easter as the noble beginning of the goal of the Christian faith to make a new world out of the old.

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