



The Blessing of Easter Baskets: A Cherished Catholic Easter Tradition

The blessing of the Easter Basket has been a cherished Catholic ritual for centuries among families of Eastern European origin and adopted by people of all ethnic backgrounds who enjoy this richly symbolic custom. On Holy Saturday, families would prepare their Easter Baskets to be later blessed at church. After Easter Sunday's Resurrection Mass, the family would share this blessed food and exchange good wishes.

The Christian significance of Easter is symbolized in the foods used for the Holiday feast. Baskets are lined with a white cloth and decorated with ribbons and greenery to symbolize spring, renewal, and the Resurrection. Traditionally, the baskets would include: decorated hardboiled eggs (representing Christ's Resurrection), lamb-shaped butter or sugar (representing Christ as the "Lamb of God"), bread (symbolic of Jesus as the "Bread of Life"), ham (symbolic of great joy and abundance), sausage (symbolic of God's favor and generosity), smoked bacon (symbolic of the over abundance of God's mercy), some prefer lamb (representing Christ as the "Lamb of God"), salt (symbolic of prosperity and justice and to remind us "You are the salt of the earth"), cheese (symbolizes the moderation Christians should have at all times), horseradish & pepper (symbolic of the Passion of Christ and the bitter herbs of the Passover). A white candle is often inserted into the basket to represent Christ as the "Light of the World." Lastly, the basket is cover with linen symbolizing the covering of Christ's shroud.

Children are excited to participate in this heart-warming tradition by helping to prepare and decorate the family basket and later, proudly carry it into church on Holy Saturday for the blessing. Some families with small children have their "little-ones" carry their very own decorated basket filled with fruits, a chocolate bunny or some other treat to be blessed. The foods included within any basket can be easily personalized.

Please join us with your baskets for a brief 20 minute blessing on Holy Saturday, March 31st at 3:00 P.M. to share in this beloved tradition with our Christ the King Parish family.