

The Blessing of Easter Baskets

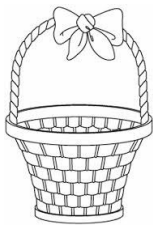
A Cherished Catholic Easter Tradition

Holy Saturday Noon Holy Trinity Church

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 and guests would share this blessed fare and exchange good wishes.

The Christian significance of Easter is symbolized in the foods used for the Holiday Feast.

Traditionally, the baskets are assembled with the items listed below.



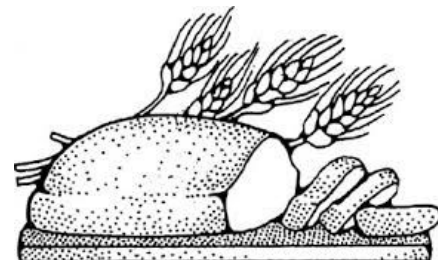
Basket	Lined with a white cloth and decorated with ribbons and greenery to symbolize Spring, Renewal and the Resurrection.
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Decorated Hard Boiled Eggs	Represents Christ's Resurrection
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Lamb Shaped Butter or Sugar	Represents Christ as the "Lamb of God"
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Bread	Symbolic of Jesus as the "Bread of Life"
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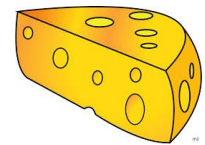


Ham	symbolic of great joy and abundance
Sausage	symbolic of God's favor and generosity
Smoked Bacon	symbolic of the overabundance of God's mercy
Lamb	represents Christ as the "Lamb of God"



Salt	symbolic of prosperity and justice to remind us "You are the salt of the earth."
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Cheese	symbolizes the moderation Christians should have at all times
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Horseradish and Pepper	symbolic of the Passion of Christ and the bitter herbs of the Passover
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White Candle	represents Christ as the "Light of the World"
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Lastly, the basket is covered with linen symbolizing the covering of Christ's shroud.

This deeply rooted tradition is as richly symbolic as it is heart warming. Children are eager to help 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.