

# Blessing of Easter Food Baskets

WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER THE 3:30PM MASS ON EASTER SUNDAY

## What to include in your basket:

**Bread**

**Meat**, e.g. ham, sausage, lamb, bacon

**Horseradish with grated beet**

**White cloth** (may have nice embroidery or lace)

**Butter and cheese**

**Hard-boiled eggs**

**Salt**

**Candle**

## This is a blessing for your Easter food. Please no candy and plastic eggs.

Blessing of the **Easter food basket** is a tradition among Central and Eastern European Christians, with each of the contents of the basket carrying meaningful symbolism. There are slight variations as to what goes in the basket, depending on regions, but common to all are the main items which are bread, butter, meat, and eggs. It is customary for families to enjoy some of the newly blessed food items as part of the Easter meal. Our Easter food basket blessing will take place immediately after Mass on Easter Sunday.

*\*\* The **Easter food basket** blessing is a blessing for your Easter meal. It is not intended for the blessing of candies.*

Here is a list of what you may put in your own family Easter basket—in any combination that you prefer—for the blessing and the symbolism of each.

### + Easter basket linen and decoration

The basket is decorated with a clean, white linen (or other fine cloth) that may have pretty embroidery or lace, symbolizing the burial cloth of Christ. The cloth is normally used to cover the contents as the basket is carried into the church. The basket may also be decorated with greenery, flowers, and ribbons as a sign of the joy of the Resurrection. Ukrainian and Polish people traditionally use pussy willow as their Easter decoration as it is the first twigs to bloom in spring.

### + Bread

Symbolizing Christ the Bread of life, this bread is usually a round, yeast loaf that may be cake-like flavored with raisins and orange/lemon peel, and have some braided (for the crown of thorns) or cross decoration. Sweet or dinner rolls may also be included.

### + Butter

The richness of butter speaks of the goodness of Christ. Some families mold the butter into the shape of a lamb, or simply stud it with cloves in the form of a cross on top.

### + Ham/lamb/sausage/bacon

Some families choose lamb to signify the Lamb of God. But whatever meat is placed in the basket (often more than 1 kind are included), it points to the abundance and generosity that only the Lord can provide.

### + Hard-cooked eggs

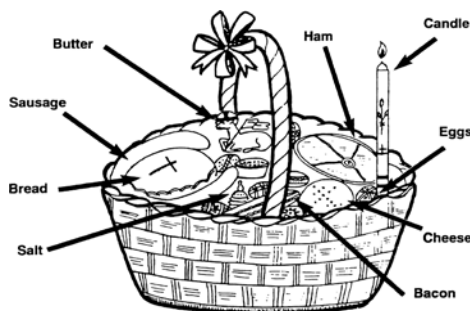
Eggs symbolize hope, new life, and the Resurrection. They may be included in the basket already dyed/decorated or plain.

### + Horseradish mixed with grated beets.

This condiment symbolizes the harsh suffering that Christ endured in His Passion, and the vinegar for what He was given when on the cross. When mixed with beets, it speaks of the Blood that He shed for us.

### + Salt

A necessary element in our lives, salt is used by the Lord in the analogy "You are the salt of the earth."



### + Cheese

Some regions include custard-cheese, particularly the *hrudka* or *sirets*, which has a bland, sweet taste. It represents the moderation that Christians need to practice. Farmer or cottage cheese may be used.

### + Candle

A single candle is normally placed in the basket to represent Christ, the Light of the world.

# EASTER BASKET BLESSING

