

# **Blessing of Food**

## **Holy Saturday at Noon**

### **St. Theresa Parish Center**

## **Easter Basket Traditions**

### **History**

The tradition of food blessing at Easter is said to date from the 7th century in its basic form, the more modern form containing bread and eggs (symbol of the resurrection and Christ) are said to date from the 12th Century. The custom of Blessing the Easter foods arose from the strict Lenten fasting. Easter was thus greeted with great joy as the day when Christ arose and when fasts were ended. The Church's joy and thanksgiving were expressed in this custom of blessing the foods for the first meal of Easter.

### **The Basket**

Baskets containing a sampling of Easter foods are brought to church to be blessed on Holy Saturday. Make sure you have enough so each family member can have a taste of the blessed food on Easter. The basket is traditionally lined with a white cloth or lace napkin and decorated with springs of boxwood, the typical Easter green (fresh flowers can be used). Families take special pride in preparing a decorative and tasteful basket, crisp white linens with boxwood and ribbon woven through the handle. Observing the creativity of other parishioners is one of the special joys of the event.

### **Symbolism**

- **Butter**  
Often shaped in a lamb symbolic of the Paschal Lamb OR decorated with the Easter banner of white with a red cross or with cloves in the shape of a cross, reminding us the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things
- **Easter Bread**  
A loaf of braided bread or a loaf topped with a cross, represents Christ's gift of "daily bread" also, Jesus is the Bread of Life.
- **Colored Eggs**  
Indicate hope, new life, and Christ rising from his tomb.

- Ham/Meats  
Symbolic of great joy and abundance & God's mercy and generosity.
- Horseradish  
A reminder of the bitterness and harshness of the Passion of Jesus.
- Vinegar  
Symbolizes the sour wine given to Jesus on the Cross
- Salt  
A necessary element of our physical life, a preservative, and a flavoring. Jesus reminds us:  
"You are the salt of the earth"
- Candle  
Often marked like the Paschal Candle & lit during the Easter Vigil, is inserted into the basket to represent Christ, Light of the World. (Some use their baptismal candle)

ALSO COMMON (the foods and other items contained in the family basket can easily be personalized)

- Sweets  
Easter Candy, cookies, small cake (sometimes a birds nest cake is made from left over batter with candy birds eggs place in them), suggest the promise of eternal life or good things to come
- Wine  
symbolic of the Blood of the Lord
- Cheese  
Symbolizing the moderation Christians should always have.
- Holy Water  
To be used to bless the home, animals, fields and used in religious rituals throughout the year.
- A Linen cover is drawn over the top and is ready for the trek to the blessing.