

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA



Christ IS Risen!

2018/2019

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

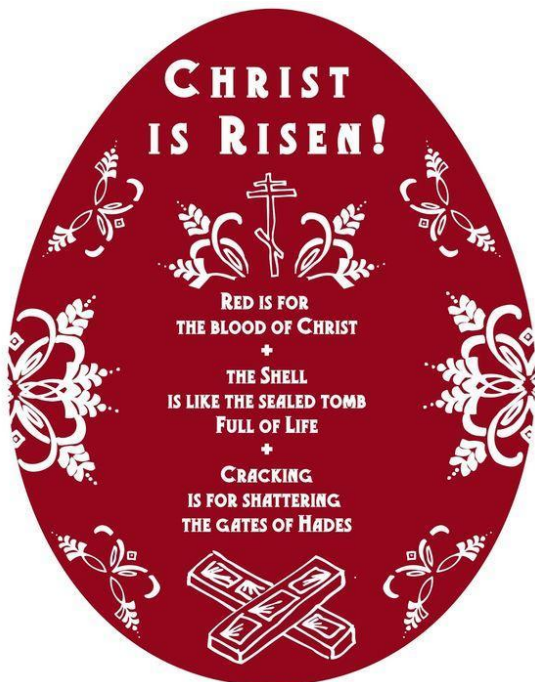
Participant Workbook Ages 8 -12

Session Eight: Symbols and Traditions for Pascha

In addition to the services that walk us through the Resurrection, over time, Orthodox Christians have included many symbols and traditions to remember this holiest of all days. Let's take a look at a few, and you will have a chance to share your own!

The Easter Candle

Instead of blowing out your candle after the procession or after the services, many people try to keep the light from the candle going as long as possible. During the Paschal Matins we sing, "Now all things are filled with light..." Some families bring a small lantern so that they can protect the flame (and get it home safely in their car!). Once it is safely at home, some families make the sign of the cross on the ceiling in front each doorway, asking God to protect everyone and everything that comes into their home. Another nice tradition is keeping the candle lit or relighting it each evening and singing, "Christ is Risen!" as the family sits down to dinner together.



Eggs!

There are many traditions and symbols connected to eggs. First, if a person has been keeping a strict fast, they won't have had eggs in many weeks. So they "break" the fast with something delicious! Eggs are also a symbol of new life because baby chicks are born out of them.

At the end of the Pascha services, the priest usually passes out eggs that have been dyed red. One story behind the red egg takes place soon after the Resurrection. Mary Magdelene was visiting the head of the Roman Empire- Emperor Tiberius Caesar. As she was telling the Emperor and the other guests about Jesus's Resurrection, he laughed at her and said there's no way that that could have happened. He joked that it was just as likely that the egg she was holding in her hands could turn red, and immediately it did!

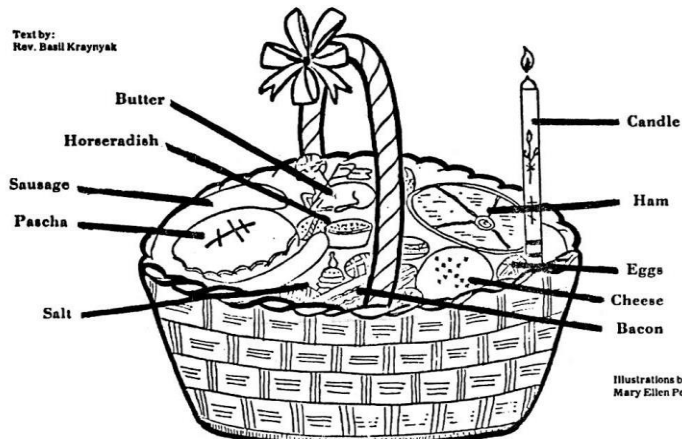
Another tradition connected to eggs are the beautiful hand decorated pysanky that are a Ukrainian cultural tradition. For centuries, farmers buried an egg in their field, hoping to have good crops in the coming year. People also buried the eggs in the grave with their loved ones who had passed away, hoping that just like baby chicks break through their egg, that the soul of their loved one would be freed after their death. Christ's resurrection means that we can all break from our shells and our souls can go to heaven.

Easter Baskets

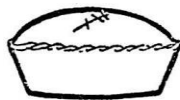
Every family includes a unique combinations of items in their basket, but many include at least some of these traditional foods. Take a look at the diagram on the next page to learn more about what each food symbolizes (note some families may also have different names for different foods).

How to Put Together a Traditional Easter Basket

Text by:
Rev. Basil Kravnyak

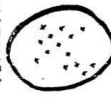


Illustrations by:
Mary Ellen Petro

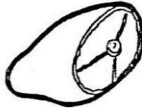


PASCHA - The Easter Bread (pron. pá-ska.) A sweet, yeast bread rich in eggs, butter, etc. Symbolic of Christ Himself who is our True Bread. Usually a round loaf baked with a golden crust decorated with a symbol indicative of Christ. Sometimes a cross (+) of dough is placed on top encircled by a plait giving it a crowned effect or Greek abbreviations for the name of Christ. The letters XB indicate the Slavonic for Christ is Risen.

CHEESE (Slav. Hrudka or Sirets pron. brood-ka or si-rets) A curd-type cheese shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. Also, creamed cheese is placed in a small dish and both are decorated with symbols (see Pascha) out of cloves or popper balls.



HAM (Slav. Šunka - pron. shoon-ka.) The flesh meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish because of its richness and symbolic of the great joy and abundance of Easter. Some may prefer Lamb or Veal. This is usually well roasted or cooked as well as other meats so that the festivity of the day will not be burdened with preparation and all may enjoy the Feast.



BUTTER (Slav. Maslo pron. má-slo) This favorite dairy product is shaped into a figure of a Lamb or small cross and decorated as the cheese. This reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things.

BACON (Slav. Slanina pron. sla-ńi-na) A piece of uncooked bacon cured with spices. Symbolic of the overabundance of God's mercy to us.



SAUSAGE (SLAV. Kolbasi - pron. kol-bu-si) A spicy, garlicky sausage of pork products, indicative of God's favor and generosity.

EGGS (Slav. Pisanki pron. pi-ńńi-ńi) Hard-boiled eggs brightly decorated with symbols and markings made with beeswax. Indicative of new life and resurrection.



SALT (Slav. Sol' pron. sol') A condiment necessary for flavor reminding the Christian of his duty to others.



HORSERADISH (Slav. Chrin pron. khrin) Horseradish mixed with grated red beets. Symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. A bitter-sweet red colored mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.

These articles are placed in a wicker basket and a ribbon or bow is tied to the handle. A decorated candle is placed in the basket and is lit at the time of blessing. A linen cover usually embroidered with a picture of the risen Christ or symbol with the words "Christ is Risen" is placed over the food when brought to the Church. In some places a large Easter Bread (Pascha) is made and brought separately in a large linen cloth. If the origin of the people was from a wine growing area, a sweet wine may be brought.

