

Easter Basket Contents and Symbolism



- **Eggs** – Decorated Ukrainian pysanky or various dyed or plain white eggs; symbolizing hope, new life and Christ’s Resurrection from the tomb
- **Butter** – Dairy products are included to celebrate the end of Lent and the richness of our salvation; reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things
- **Easter Bread** – A round loaf, sweetened yeast Paska or rye, topped with a cross, symbolic of Jesus, the Bread of Life
- **Horseradish** – Symbolic of the bitterness and harshness of the Passion of Christ; the vinegar it is mixed with symbolizing the sour wine given to Jesus on the cross but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. This may be white or pink with grated red beets
- **Pepper** – Also symbolic of the Passion of Christ and the bitter herbs
- **Kielbassa/Sausage** – The links are symbolic of the chains of death that were broken when Jesus rose from the dead, as well as God’s favour and generosity
- **Ham, Lamb or Veal** – Meats are symbolic of great joy and abundance in Christ’s Resurrection
- **Smoked Bacon** – With its great fattiness, it is a symbol of the overabundance of God’s mercy and generosity
- **Salt** – A necessary element in our physical life; symbolic of purification, prosperity and justice; preserves us from corruption. Jesus used its symbolism: “You are the salt of the earth”
- **Cheese** – Usually fresh, dry curd or farmer’s cheese shaped into a ball, it is the symbol of the moderation Christians should practice
- **Holy Water** – Used to bless the home, animals, fields and used in various rituals throughout the year
- **Sweets** – Fruits, candy, poppy seed and nut rolls, pastry items; promise of eternal life or good things to come

The food included within any basket can be easily personalized to meet family needs and desires. However, the three-part blessing specifically addresses special prayers for the meats, eggs, cakes and breads.