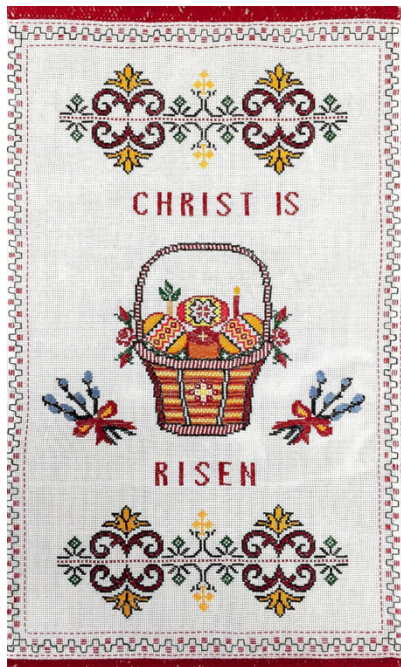


# How to Prepare a Traditional + Pascha Basket +

In many Orthodox countries, it is customary to bring food in a basket to be blessed at Pascha. The foods traditionally brought in the basket have special significance, but many people will also add the foods they've missed the most during the Fast. The basket can be covered with a special embroidered cloth like the one pictured below. It is also customary to have a blessed candle in it to light at the Blessing, which takes place at church following the Resurrection services.

**Parishioners can place their baskets on the stage in the Fellowship Hall in preparation for the Blessing and our Paschal Meal together following the services. If there are visitors or anyone who did not bring a basket, please invite them to join you!**



*A traditional embroidered cross to cover your Pascha Basket*

**SWEET BREAD**—Called Kulich or Paska by some, many “old country” traditions and recipes exist. This is a sweet yeast bread, rich in eggs, butter, milk, etc., sometimes with raisins, and perhaps baked with a red egg or decorated with Christian symbols. The Pascha bread is symbolic of Christ Himself, who is our Living Bread, and who has come down from heaven to give eternal life in the Eucharist.

**EGGS**—Hardboiled, dyed red, & decorated, eggs are always considered a symbol of the resurrection, the emergence of new life. At Pascha, our Savior came forth from the tomb as a chick breaks forth from its shell. Eggs will also be given out as a blessing at the end of the Paschal Liturgy.

**MEATS**—Lamb, Ham, Sausage, Beef, etc. A portion of any or all of these meats is put in the basket. The meats symbolize the sacrificial animals of the Old Testament, foreshadowing the true sacrifice of our Savior, who became for us the Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world. As we learn from the prayer of Blessing, the meat products also symbolize the fattened calf prepared for the Prodigal Son on his return to

his Father. Thus, at Pascha, we celebrate our return to God and our joyous participation in the blessings of our Savior, who promised to be our “true food.”

**SALT**—Salt is necessary for flavor, and reminds the Christian of his duty to others. As salt preserves food, we are to be as salt in the world.

**HORSERADISH**—In some traditions, horseradish is mixed with grated red beets, symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds, but sweetened with sugar because of the Resurrection.

**CHEESE**— There are so many kinds to choose from. Need we say more?

**SPECIAL ITEMS**—Chocolate, candy, wine, beer, and other special food items extend the joy of the Resurrection. The Church takes ordinary food and blesses it as an aid in making us holy. God’s blessing changes us from children of natural descent into sons and daughters of the Kingdom of God.

While these items listed are traditional and have beautiful symbolic meanings, please bring whatever foods you love!

