

Blessing of Foods at Easter

This unofficial paraliturgical celebration occurs at a time of day when it is convenient for most to attend, so that they may share in its simple but beautiful teaching about the resurrection. A red stole is appropriate if this service follows Good Friday's liturgy but precedes the introduction of white vestments at the Vigil. This blessing might follow all Easter Masses.

GREETING

Celebrant: May the grace and peace of Jesus Christ be with you. *Rv. 1/4-6*
And also with you.

Celebrant: He loves us and freed us from our sins by his own blood.
To him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Exodus 12/1-8, 11-14 (Holy Week missalette, page 41, or Lectionary, no. 40) will help us to understand the blessing in the context of the Passover. Other appropriate readings are Deuteronomy 26/1-4, 10b-11 and Mark 6/34-44 (Lectionary, no. 865-2). A brief homily or explanatory remarks may precede the following dialogue and blessings. Further remarks appear on page 21, reminder 5. The prayers are adapted from the Roman Ritual unless otherwise indicated. Be selective; not all the prayers have to be used.

Celebrant: ☩ Our help is from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth. *Ps. 121/2*

Celebrant: Let us pray. —

1. BLESSING OF PASCHAL LAMB

Byzantine Ukrainian Ritual, adap.

Father, giver of all good things, you commanded our ancestors in faith to partake of lamb on Passover night. ☩ Bless this lamb prepared for our celebration in honor of your Son's Passover from death to life, for he is truly the Paschal Lamb by whose blood we are saved. As we enjoy the food which you sanctify for our nourishment, may we also obtain your ☩ blessing through the cross and resurrection of your Son. Yours is the power, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

2. BLESSING OF OTHER MEATS

O God, through Moses you commanded your people in their deliverance from Egypt to kill a lamb and mark their doorposts with its blood. We understand this to prefigure our deliverance by Jesus' shedding of his blood. May it please you to ☩ bless and sanctify this meat which we desire to eat in praise of him, our Paschal Lamb, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

3. BLESSING OF BREAD

Almighty, everlasting God, be pleased to ☩ bless this bread. May it be a healthful food for body and soul, a safeguard against every disease, and a defense against all harm. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, the bread of life, who came down from heaven and gives life and salvation to all the world, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

4. BLESSING OF DAIRY FOODS

Byzantine Ukrainian Ritual, adap.

O God, creator and author of all being, ☩ bless these cheeses and butter and other dairy foods. Keep us in your love, so that as we partake of them, we may be filled with your bountiful gifts on account of our Lord's glorious resurrection from the dead. We give glory to you, our Father without beginning, to your Son who is our true Food, and to your good and life-giving Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

5. BLESSING OF EGGS

Father in heaven, let your ☩ blessing come upon these eggs. When we break them, we see a sign of your Son rising to new life from the tomb. May we eat them in joyful celebration of his resurrection, for he lives and reigns with you for ever and ever. Amen.

6. BLESSING OF CAKES AND PASTRIES

Lord Jesus Christ, living bread of everlasting life, ☩ bless these cakes and pastries as you once blessed the five loaves in the wilderness. As we eat them may we receive the health we desire for body and soul. We ask this of you, our risen Lord, who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

7. BLESSING OF OTHER FOODS

O God, through Moses you directed the Israelites to carry their sheaves to the priests for a blessing. Hear our prayers and shower abundant ☩ blessings on us and these assorted foods which we gratefully present to you in honor of your Son's resurrection. Grant that we may find them a remedy against sickness, a source of strength for our bodies, and a protection of soul, by calling on your holy name. We ask this through Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

8. BLESSING OF WINE

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, in Cana of Galilee you changed water into wine. Be pleased to ☩ bless this wine which you have given us as refreshment. Grant that whenever it is taken as drink, it may be accompanied by an outpouring of your life-giving grace, for ever and ever. Amen.

9. BLESSING OF CHILDREN AND THEIR EASTER BASKETS

Loving Father, long ago you told your people to bring the good things for eating and celebrating to your altar in thanksgiving. They obeyed and brought you their baskets of food and grain before they ate and celebrated. Today these boys and girls do the same as they come here with their Easter baskets. We ask you to ☩ bless them and their parents and friends. Grant that they and their families may appreciate all that you give them. ☩ Bless their Easter eggs and candy and all that the baskets contain, with which they will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, your Son and our brother. As they eat these foods and candies may their Easter joy increase. We ask this through Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

10. TABLE BLESSING

Ritual of Synod of Piotrkow, 15th cent., adap.

Father, you graciously give us nourishment and strength for life's needs. We call your ☩ blessing on our meal and our companionship. Let us not eat to excess to displease you, and let not the sparkling wine tempt us to misdeeds. While we enjoy our feast, in charity let us also remember those who suffer hunger and want. Let not the pleasures of this life stifle the inspirations of your Holy Spirit. We ask this through our risen Lord. Amen.

The celebrant may sprinkle the foods and people with holy water or omit the sprinkling. A prayer of the faithful may follow the blessings.

CONCLUDING RITES

Celebrant: This is the day the Lord has made. *Ps. 118/24*
Let us rejoice and be glad.

Celebrant: By faith we rose with Jesus in baptism. *Rom. 6/4-5*
May we remain united with him for ever.

Celebrant: Now go in peace, and may he bless you always.
Amen.

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