

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. For clergy, a red stole is appropriate if this service follows Good Friday's liturgy but precedes the introduction of white vestments at the Vigil.

Leader: May the grace and peace of Jesus Christ be with you.
ALL: And with your spirit.
Leader: He loves us and freed us from our sins by his own blood.
ALL: To him be glory and power for ever and ever.

A reading from the Book of Exodus.

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:

This month will stand at the head of your calendar; you will reckon it the first month of the year.

Tell the whole community of Israel: On the tenth of this month every family must procure for itself a lamb, one apiece for each household.

If a household is too small for a lamb, it along with its nearest neighbor will procure one, and apportion the lamb's cost* in proportion to the number of persons, according to what each household consumes.

Your lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish. You may take it from either the sheep or the goats.

You will keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then, with the whole community of Israel assembled, it will be slaughtered during the evening twilight.

They will take some of its blood and apply it to the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

They will consume its meat that same night, eating it roasted with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

"This is how you are to eat it: with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in hand, you will eat it in a hurry. It is the LORD's Passover.

For on this same night I will go through Egypt, striking down every firstborn in the land, human being and beast alike, and executing judgment on all the gods of Egypt—I, the LORD!

But for you the blood will mark the houses where you are. Seeing the blood, I will pass over you; thereby, when I strike the land of Egypt, no destructive blow will come upon you.

“This day will be a day of remembrance for you, which your future generations will celebrate with pilgrimage to the LORD; you will celebrate it as a statute forever.”

The word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Our help is from the Lord.

ALL: Who made heaven and earth.

Leader: Let us pray.

[Note: Choose the appropriate prayers from the following.]

Blessing of Paschal Lamb

Father 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.

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 forever and ever. AMEN.

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.

Blessing of Dairy Foods

O God, creator and author of all being, bless these cheeses and butter and other dairy foods. Keep us in our 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.

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 for ever and ever.

AMEN.

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 our body and soul. We ask this of you, our risen Lord, who live and reign for ever and ever.

AMEN.

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 name. We ask this through Christ our risen Lord.

AMEN.

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

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

Table Blessing

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 Christ our risen Lord.

AMEN.

[The leader may sprinkle the foods and people with holy water or omit the sprinkling.]

Leader: At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

ALL: Our Father,
Who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil.

Concluding Rites

Leader: This is the day the Lord has made
ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad.
Leader: By faith we rose with Jesus in baptism.
ALL: May we remain united with him for ever.
Leader: Go in peace, and may he bless you always.
ALL: AMEN

