



News of Polonia

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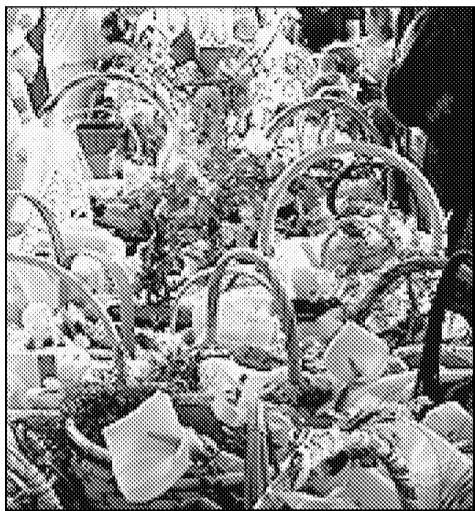
March 2009

Free or Home Delivery

Food-blessing – favorite Polish Easter custom

By: *Robert Strybel*

Our Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer



The blessing of Easter food has been practiced in Poland since the 15th century. At Easter time, the Polish soldiers fighting under Napoleon in Samosierra, Spain in the early 19th century, insisted that their holiday foods be blessed. Unfortunately, the Spanish priests back then lacked the proper prayers for the occasion. This is undoubtedly the most popular Polish Easter custom, practiced by some 95 percent of all families in Poland. That is roughly the same percentage that share opłatek on Christmas Eve. Both customs were also brought to American by our immigrant ancestors.

Each of the food items in the święconka (Easter basket) have a symbolic meaning. You can tell your youngsters about it when assembling the Easter basket they are helping you prepare:

– The white linen or lace napkin that lines the wicker basket may be perceived as the shroud the enclosed the lifeless body of Christ;

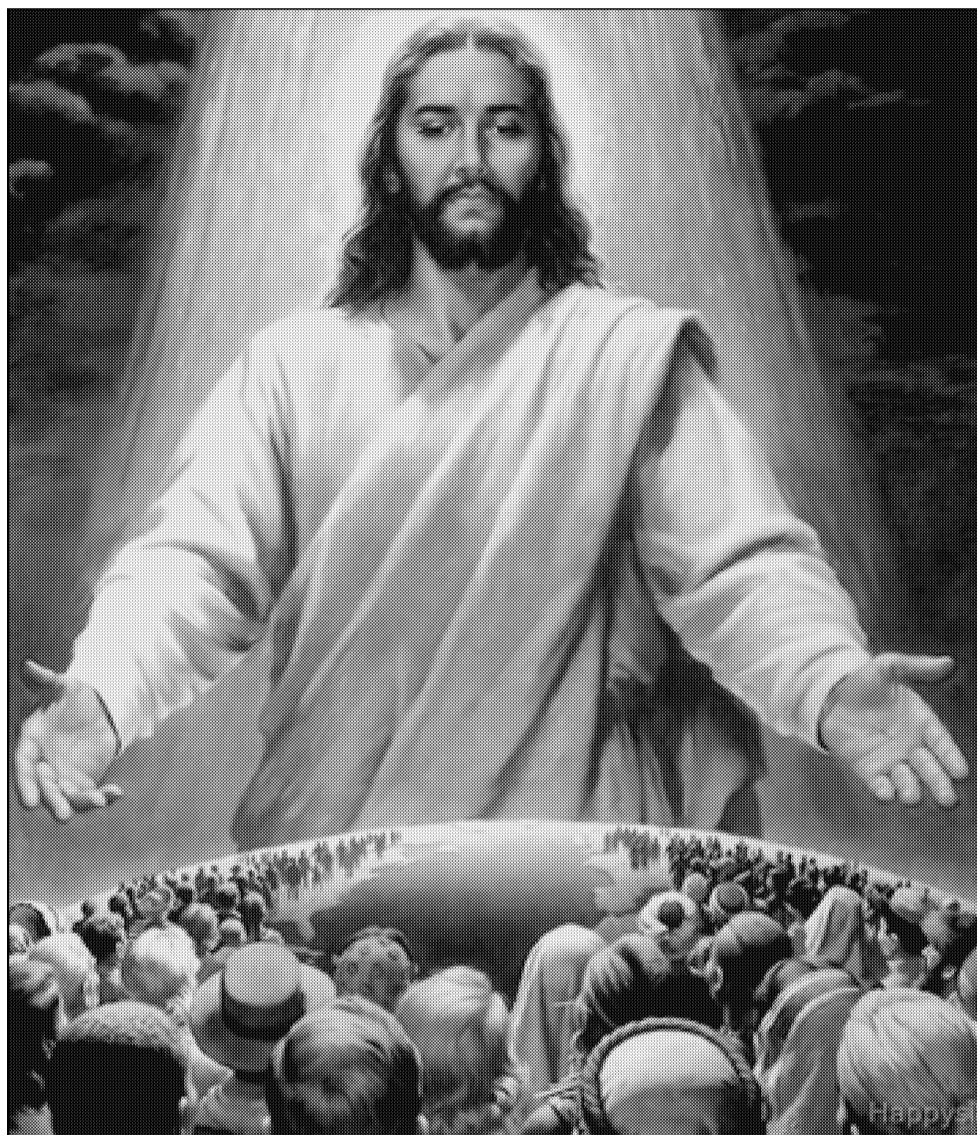
– The Baranek (Easter Lamb), made of butter or sugar (rock candy), but also of dough, wood, plaster, fleece or even

Food Blessing to page 16

Wiadomości Polonijne

Amerykańskie powody kryzysu	20
Balażak - General Rozwadowski	18
Bazar w Polskim Kościele - L.A.	18
Cybulski - 69 rocznica Katyń	18
Jackowski - Scenariusz Kriuczkowa	18
Ks. Kamiński - Dnia Kobiet	17
Moje Przemyslenia	20
Kersky - Utrzymać status rezydenta	19
Kosowicz - Atak na ZPB	19
Prof. Pogonowski - Polaków historii	17
Media w USA	19
Prof. Przystawa - Prosty plan	17
Pyz, Justyna - Wycinanki	19
Rudzińska - Dwudziestolecie szkoły	17
Sitkowski - Wspomnienia Sosiński	20
Ziemkiewicz - Zostaniesz Antysemity	17
Ball, Justyna - Wal-Mart and Polish	2
Bielski Brothers - Part 3 of 3	2
Calendar of SoCal	2
Divine Mercy Sunday	4 & 10
Ecumenical Ministries of L.A.	5
Investments - 401K Annual Physical	3
Janek's Corner - Youth Exchange	4
Legal - Maintain residence in the U.S.	3
Music News - An Extraordinary Life	3
Northern California News	12 & 13
Orange County news - Daniel Dolewski	8
PAC News - Holocaust Dishonesty	5
Polish Club of Laguna Woods Easter	7
Polish Film Festival	4
Strybel - Cheektowaga Easter	6
St. Joseph's Day	8
Sybirak - Walter Cizek	6
Taxes - Can you deduct and IRA Loss	3
Visa Waiver Program - Californians	5
UCLA Lecture - Communism	4

Jezus



Lent and Easter in Polonia?

By: *Robert Strybel*

Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

Most of you reading these words are probably familiar with some, many or all of the Polish Lenten and Easter traditions mentioned in this article. And you probably know family members, neighbors, friends and co-workers who practice or used to practice them. However, I am not familiar with any recent US-wide research on the holiday practices of Polish Americans.

The post-World War II decline of traditional tight-knit Polish neighborhoods has led to the scattering of Polish Americans across suburbia, where they usually no longer constitute a majority. In recent years, a process of dispersal has also been taking place on a country-wide basis. More and more, younger Polish Americans are moving to the West Coast or America's Southland beyond the East Coast/Great Lakes regions that had been Polonia's traditional stronghold for well over a century. Such moves to non-Polonian surroundings tend to dilute our traditional Easter heritage, even when both spouses are of Polish extraction.

But you don't have to move to Louisiana or Washington State to lose your Polish soul. At times, an administrative decision can destroy tradition. In some cases that has occurred when America's post-Vatican II Church did away with obligatory Christmas Eve abstinence, undermining the traditional meatless Wigilia custom. The most traditional-minded Pol-Ams have preserved the meatless family supper on December 24th, but other families no longer saw the point and started serving ham and kielbasa on that day. Since Polonia's inception, the old Polish tradition of setting up a "Grób Pański" (Lord's Tomb tableau) at church on Good Friday and visiting it all day Holy Saturday had been a "must" in every Polish parish. But somewhere round the turn of the 1970s, my home Archdiocese of Detroit declared that tradition to be "no longer relevant" and actually banned it. It was OK to sing "Kumbaya" and introduce "liturgical dances" and other "trendy" innovations, but a time-honored Polish custom? No way! Fortunately, this was not the case everywhere. If I'm not mistaken, Buffalo, a major Polonian stronghold, has continued the Lord's Tomb displays without interruption.

By contrast, rather than disappearing, the Polish Holy Saturday food-blessing custom has actually spread beyond the limits of traditional Polonian parishes. In many cases Pol-Ams moving to suburbia have succeeded in talking their pastors of various ethnic backgrounds into introducing it. Interestingly, there seems to be something warm, wholesome and people-friendly about this custom that makes it universally appealing. It is a family event that brings different generations together.

But all these are simply spot impressions, picked up by talking to Pol-Ams, reading their e-mails or scanning the Polonian press. One may assume that families that are more religious usually tend to attach more importance to tradition, but are there any fresh, reliable data showing to what extent Polish

Lent and Easter in Polonia to page 16

Kalendarz Świąteczny – Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej

3424 W. Adams Blvd. - Los Angeles - (323) 734-5249

- 9 kwietnia **Wielki Czwartek** - Pamiątka ustanowienia Eucharystii i Kapłaństwa. Msza św. o godz. 19:30. Adoracja - Najświętszego Sakramentu do 22:00
- 10 kwietnia **Wielki Piątek** - Dzień Męki i Śmierci Chrystusa na Krzyżu. Droga Krzyżowa o godz. 15:00 Liturgia wielkopiątkowa o godz. 19:30 Adoracja przy Grobie Pańskim do godz. 22:30
- 11 kwietnia **Wielka Sobota** - Pan Jezus złożony w grobie Adoracja Najświętszego Sakramentu od godz. 10:00 do 16:00. Spowiedź święta od godz 10:00 - 16:00. Poświęcenie pokarmów od godz. 10:00 do 16:00 co 30 minut. Oraz po Procesji rezurekcyjnej w Niedzielę.
- 12 kwietnia **Blessing of Easter Baskets 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - every 30 minutes** **Niedziela Zmartwychwstania Pańskiego** - Liturgia Wigilii Pascalnej z procesją Rezurekcyjną o godz. 5:00 rano. Pozostałe Msze św. o godz. 9:00 i 12:00.
- 13 kwietnia **Poniedziałek Wielkanocny** - Msze św. o g. 12:00 i 19:30.
- 20 kwietnia **Święcone Parafialne** - o godz. 13:15

Easter Schedule - Pope John Paul II Center

3999 Rose Drive - Yorba Linda (714) 996-8161

- April 9 **Holy Thursday** - Mass of the Lord's Supper (English and Polish) 7:30 pm
- April 10 **Good Friday** - 12:00 Noon Stations of the Cross in English 3:00 pm Liturgy of Good Friday in English 7:30 pm Good Friday Liturgy in Polish
- April 11 **Holy Saturday** - 10:00 am to 2:00 PM - Blessing of Easter Baskets 12:00 noon to 2:00 PM *Egg Hunt* 7:30 pm Easter Vigil (English)
- April 12 **Easter Sunday** - 7:00 am - Procession and Resurrection Mass in Polish 9:00 am Easter Mass in English 10:30 am Easter Mass in Polish 12:00 noon Latin Tridentine 1:30 pm Easter Mass in Czech
- April 19 3:00 pm Divine Mercy Celebration in English and Polish