

PASCHA BASKETS

Following the Resurrection Matins and Liturgy it is traditional in many Orthodox Churches to bring a Pascha Basket. As we did last year, please bring your own Pascha Basket filled with whatever you would like to eat. After the service, we will all gather at the Perez's, where the baskets have been placed before the service, and Fr. Dimitri will bless the baskets. (You may drop off your basket before the service at the Perez's or keep it in your car). After the blessing, we will all sit down together and eat what is in our baskets, breaking the fast together.

As a reminder, traditional items for your basket may include Pascha or Kulich, cheeses, various meats, eggs, chocolate milk, or even Pepperoni Pizza! It is nice also to share what you have in your baskets with others. Plates and silverware will be provided.

PREPARING FOR HOLY WEEK & PASCHA

As we all prepare for Holy Week and Pascha, if you have not already done so, try to make arrangements so that you can attend as many of the Passion Week and Paschal services as possible... Perhaps time will have to be taken off from work or schedules altered in other ways, and it is best to plan for this ahead. The services of Passion Week and Pascha are the most important in the Christian Year and every conscientious Orthodox should try his or her best to prepare for them, participate in them, to confess, and to receive the Holy Mysteries.

Breaking a fast

TRY to remember to keep Pascha holy. This might seem an odd and unnecessary tip, but it happens that at all the greater festivals, and particularly at Christmas and Pascha, one finds that after the fast, there is a temptation simply to let go. True, we can start eating non-lenten products again, but this does not mean that we should plunge into gluttony or drunkenness. The church services are shorter and the typicon less demanding, but very often one notices that there is a veritable apostasy after a major feast. If we have gained anything spiritually in the course of the fast, let us try to hold it fast and not to lose it heedlessly. In this way, step by small step, with each fast and each feast we shall be able to make some little progress spiritually, using each as the rungs of a ladder.

Changes for Pentecost & kneeling in Church

REMEMBER that during Pentecost—the fifty days between Pascha (Easter) and Pentecost or Trinity Sunday—we do not kneel in church at all, nor do we make prostrations. It is as if every day was a Sunday. This is a very ancient practice of the Church dating back at least to the second century, and a canon of the First Ecumenical Council (Nicea, 325 A.D) confirmed the practice. Our not kneeling indicates that we have risen with Christ and is a proclamation that we look forward to the future Resurrection and the life of the Age to come, when our bodies will be resurrected and stand in the Kingdom.