

St. Mary's Newsletter

St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Parish
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April 2025 Issue 28

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Divine Liturgies

Sundays: 8:30am English (spoken)
10:30am Ukrainian (sung)

Mon-Sat: 7:30am (Chapel)

Holy Days: 10:00am

Fr Joseph Pidskalny OSBM (Admin)

Easter Reflections

Easter is a season of joy, renewal, and reflection for Catholics. It celebrates Christ's victory over death, offering hope and the promise of eternal life. This triumph reminds us to embrace renewal and rise above life's challenges, living with compassion, love, and faith.

The Resurrection also highlights the power of forgiveness. Easter invites us to seek reconciliation, offering and accepting forgiveness as a path to spiritual growth. It's a time to express gratitude for God's unending love, as shown through the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus.

This season calls for a deeper relationship with God through prayer, reflection, and service. It encourages us to share the joy of the Resurrection by bringing hope and light to others, especially those facing hardships.

Easter reminds us of the importance of spiritual transformation and the beauty of living a resurrection-focused life. Let it inspire gratitude, joy, and a renewed commitment to faith, while celebrating with the community and supporting one another on our shared spiritual journey. Through these reflections, we affirm the hope and love that Easter brings into our lives.

Whether you focus on prayer, service, or simply embracing the hope and love that Easter represents, this is a time to celebrate the gift of salvation and the promise of new beginnings. What resonates most with you this Easter season?



Faith and Generosity

In a small village, a kind-hearted baker named Anna faced hard times before Easter, with only one bag of flour left. Remembering Christ's sacrifice, she chose faith over fear and baked her last supplies into bread and pastries for her neighbors. She prayed, "Lord, let this small act reflect Your love."

At dawn, she left the treats on doorsteps with notes that read: "Christ rose to give us eternal hope. Share His love with others."

The villagers, inspired by her selflessness, brought ingredients—flour, eggs, and honey—to her bakery in gratitude. They saw Anna's act as a reflection of Christ's love and generosity. By Easter morning, her bakery, "Hope's Hearth," overflowed with supplies, allowing her to continue serving her community.

During the church's Easter service, the priest shared Anna's story, highlighting the Scripture: "Give, and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38).

Her simple act of faith became a symbol of Christ's Resurrection—renewing hope, love, and unity among the villagers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ukrainian TV Network

Ukrainian Kontakt on OMNI TV:
SUN 7:00 AM (new) SUN 9:00 pm
TUE 9:00 am THUR 2:00 pm
KONTAKT NEXT GEN – youth show
SUN 6:30 pm (new)
WED 8:30 am, 2:00 pm, 3:30 pm

Ukrainian Easter Market (food/crafts)
Saturday April 12, 12-5pm
Holy Eucharist Cathedral New West

Pysanka Ukrainian egg Design
Saturday April 12 1:30pm
181 Roundhouse Mews Vancouver

Ukrainian Supper Night
Friday April 18 4- 6:30pm
Ivan Franko Society Richmond BC

Ukrainian Crafts, Art, Food, Music
Saturday April 26, 11- 5pm
Arts Club Theatre Company Vancouver

Hopes Dreams Gala-Ukrainian Children
Saturday April 26 7pm
Arts Club Theatre Company Vancouver

Kyivska Perepichka (Ukrainian Play)
Tuesday April 29 7-9pm
Rio Theatre Vancouver

BC Ukrainian Cultural Festival
Saturday May 3, 2025
Mission BC

Flea Market
Saturday June 7, 2025 10am-3pm
Ukrainian Catholic Centre
3150 Ash Street Vancouver BC

Check with the venue for details or updates

Decorating Ukrainian Easter eggs

Typically made in preparation for Easter, pysanky eggs are a sign of hope and resurrection. Jesus comes forth from the tomb as the chick breaks the shell at birth. Pysanky are the eggs, beautifully decorated with symbols which were derived from nature in pre-Christian times. These symbols were eventually adapted to Christian meanings. Krashanky are the eggs dyed one colour. In ancient times Krashanky were dyed only red symbolizing Christ's blood.

A common tradition for Ukrainian Catholics is to prepare a basket for Easter. The Easter Basket is meant to serve as a reminder and teaching on the Feast of all Feasts; Pascha (Easter). Our celebration becomes much richer when we keep these teachings foremost in our minds. Spend time each year with your family talking about what is in your basket, reminding yourselves of the depth of God's love and the significance of this day that we are celebrating. The Easter Basket is more than simply delicious food. It is meant to serve as a reminder and teaching on the Feast of all Feasts; Pascha (Easter). Our celebration becomes much richer when we keep these teachings foremost in our minds. Spend time each year with your family talking about what is in your basket, reminding yourselves of the depth of God's love and the significance of this day that we are celebrating.

Easter Basket Content

Paska: is a large, round, elaborately decorated loaf of bread. It symbolizes our Lord Jesus Christ, the "living Bread" Jn. 6:51 who "came down from heaven to give life (eternal) to the world" (cf. Prayer for the Blessing of the Bread).

Babka: is a tall, sweet, delicate bread, in honor of Mary, the Mother of God (Theotokos – literally means God bearer), who was intimately connected with her Son's birth, suffering and death.

Eggs: are a sign of hope and resurrection. Jesus comes forth from the tomb as the chick breaks the shell at birth.

Pysanky are the eggs, beautifully decorated with symbols which were derived from nature in pre-Christian times. These symbols were eventually adapted to Christian meanings.

Krashanky are the eggs dyed one colour. In ancient times Krashanky were dyed only red symbolizing Christ's blood.

Grated Beets: remind us of Christ's passion and suffering. They too remind us of His blood shed for us. They are often mixed with horseradish.

Horseradish: symbolizes the bitterness of sin for which Christ died and rose. It also reminds us of the bitterness of Jesus' passion through which He entered into glory.

Dairy Products: remind us of the "prosperity and peace" of the Messianic times which had been foretold by the Prophets Isaiah 7:22; Joel 3:18. Metaphorically, the milk and honey in the Bible signify wealth, especially the spiritual wealth of God's kingdom.

Butter is symbolic of burial ointment. It is often shaped into a lamb (Christ is the Lamb of God John 1:29) or decorated with whole cloves or peppercorns in the form of a cross.

Cottage cheese, bland in taste, reminds us of the need for self-control and moderation which we should cultivate in our daily lives.

Salt: is a reminder of the commitment to follow Christ: in His words "You are the salt of the earth" Mt. 5:13

Meat products: symbolize the sacrificial animals of the Old Testament, foreshadowing the true sacrifice of our Savior, who became "a Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world" Jn. 1:29. It is also symbolic of the great joy and abundance of Easter (Pascha). **Kobassa and Ham** are generally the meats that are included.

Beeswax candle: is placed in the basket and lit during the blessing celebration. It is symbolic of Christ, "the Light of the World," who brought us the glorious good news of the New Life.

Rushnyk: (cover) This embroidered cloth reminds us of Christ's shroud and of our baptismal robe 'kryzhma'. Being cleansed with the baptismal waters, we celebrate the joy of New Life as we put on the 'kryzhma'. The basket should be lined with an embroidered rushnyk, or a white napkin. It can also be adorned with green periwinkle, pussy willows and spring flowers which also symbolize new life.

The basket should contain only a sampling of the foods you are going to eat for Easter breakfast. It is important to remove all cellophane, foil and paper from the basket prior to having it blessed. Any items such as eggshells, leftover food that will not be eaten, flowers, cellophane, foil or paper napkins that have been blessed or may have come in contact with the blessed water must either be burned or buried and not disposed of in the garbage.

Compiled and Created by the Religious Education department of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton. for personal or classroom use.

