

Order for the Blessing of Food for the First Meal of Easter

The custom of blessing food for Easter arose from the discipline of fasting throughout Lent and the special Easter fast during the Easter Triduum. Easter was the first day when meat, eggs, and other foods could again be eaten. Although not of obligation, the special fast during the Triduum may still be observed as well as the tradition of blessing food for the first meal of Easter

This blessing takes place after the end of the Holy Triduum, it means after the Easter Vigil.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Minister: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

M: Christ is risen. Alleluia.

All: He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

M: Throughout Lent we have been preparing for the resurrection of the Lord by prayer, almsgiving, and fasting. Our Lenten fasting is a reminder of our hunger and thirst for holiness which is satisfied only by Christ who feeds and nourishes us by his word and sacraments. When we gather at our first meal of Easter may this food be a sign for us of that heavenly banquet to which the Lord calls us.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

One of those present, or the minister, then reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the book of Deuteronomy:

Observe the month of Abib by keeping the Passover of the LORD, your God, since it was in the month of Abib that he brought you by night out of Egypt. You shall offer the Passover sacrifice from your flock or your herd to the LORD, your God, in the place which he chooses as the dwelling place of his name. You shall not eat leavened bread with it. For seven days you shall eat with it only unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, that you may remember as long as you live the day of your departure from the land of Egypt; for in frightened haste you left the land of Egypt. Nothing leavened may be found in all your territory for seven days, and none of the meat which you sacrificed on the evening of the first day shall be kept overnight for the next day.

You may not sacrifice the Passover in any of the communities which the LORD, your God, gives you; only at the place which he chooses as the dwelling place of his name, and in the evening at sunset, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt, shall you sacrifice the Passover. You shall cook and eat it at the place the LORD, your God, chooses; then in the morning you may return to your tents. For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh there shall be a solemn meeting in honor of the LORD, your God; on that day you shall not do any sort of work.

Or: Isaiah 55:1-11--Come all you who are thirsty. Luke 24:13-35--They knew Christ in the breaking of the bread. John 6:1-14--Multiplication of the loaves.

R. My soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Athirst is my soul for God, the living God. When shall I go and behold the face of God? **R. My soul is thirsting for God, the living God.**

Those times I recall, now that I pour out my soul within me, When I went with the throng and led them in procession to the house of God, Amid loud cries of joy and thanksgiving, with the multitude keeping festival.

R. My soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Send forth your light and your fidelity; they shall lead me on and bring me to your holy mountain, to your dwelling-place.

R. My soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Then will I go in to the altar of God, the God of my gladness and joy; Then will I give you thanks upon the harp, O God, my God!

R. My soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

INTERCESSIONS

Minister: The Son of God who invites us to the Paschal feast stands ready to help. Let us call upon him in our need.

R. Lord, prepare us for the feast of life.

Lector: That Easter may find us cleansed of sin and ready to live anew our Christian faith, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Lector: That the bread we share may be a reminder of the bread of life we share in the eucharist, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Lector: That we may be ready to give from our table to those who hunger and thirst, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Lector: That we may one day enjoy the banquet of the Lord in the heavenly kingdom, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Minister invites all present say the Lord's Prayer. Christ taught us to pray for our daily bread and so we dare to say:

All: Our Father . . .

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A minister who is a priest or deacon says the prayer of blessing with hands outstretched; a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

Minister: God of glory, the eyes of all turn to you as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death. Bless us and this food of our first Easter meal. May we who gather at the Lord's table continue to celebrate the joy of his resurrection and be admitted finally to his heavenly banquet. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

A lay minister concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

Minister: May Christ nourish us and strengthen us in faith and love now and forever.

All: Amen.