



# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

April 14<sup>th</sup>, MMXIX

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

*Month of the Holy Eucharist*

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### Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus! Praised be Jesus Christ!

We come now to THE holiest time of year. The whole week that lies ahead of us is considered holy and the last three days of that week are the most important and holiest of them all! The sacred season of Lent is now coming to its end and for most of us, one of two possibilities is taking place.

The first possibility is that we are experiencing the satisfaction and even the joy that comes from having worked hard and done our best to live a good Lent. For those who have entered into this spirit of Lent, now is the time to begin to think about reaping the harvest of our labors and of recognizing how much we have truly grown closer to the Lord over these last 40 days. Of course the growing is not to stop now that Easter has almost arrived!

Then of course there is the second possibility for us. We have just now become aware that Lent is almost over and we never really got around to doing much of anything productive or beneficial for our soul during this holy time of year. How quickly the time does pass and I expect there are some who find themselves just exactly in this predicament. I must confess that there have been years in my life when this was my own situation. Palm Sunday and Holy Week can have the effect of jolting us into realizing our efforts have been poor or not at all.

Nevertheless, there is still time! Do you recall Charles Dicken's great Christmas Carol, the story of the conversion of Ebenezer Scrooge? Scrooge went to bed on Christmas Eve not at all prepared to celebrate the Feast of Christmas. He was supposed to be visited by three ghosts in three nights to bring about his change of heart. That would have made him ready to observe Christmas on the morning of December 27th. But the spirits did all their work in one night and his heart was really moved with compassion and love in this short time. He had a complete and authentic conversion experience in just one short night! And he rose in the morning a totally different person!

We all have one full week ahead of us! It IS enough time to turn completely to the Lord and become a totally different and better person! All that is necessary is to open one's heart completely to the saving drama that will unfold before us all in this week's sacred liturgy. The great mysteries of our salvation will be commemorated and relived in a special way this holy week. Do you have enough time in your busy life to be part of these saving actions of our Lord?

On this day, Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, you have heard the whole story of Christ's redeeming love manifested in His Sacred Passion. If that cannot touch the heart of even the hardest sinner then I don't know what will. But if it does touch your heart, if you will let it touch you, then I encourage you to be present at the liturgies of this Holy Week. God Bless!



## *Grób Pański* + The Lord's Tomb + *Boży Grób*

*On Holy Saturday, the Church waits at the Lord's Tomb, meditating on His sufferings and death.*

The Sacramentary; Holy Saturday

The practice of erecting a tomb, or depiction of Christ's grave, on Good Friday and Holy Saturday is one that goes back 1000 years. The popularity of the tomb grew when the medieval mystery plays were performed in church in order to instruct the faithful. The life of Bishop Ulrich of Augsburg (973) relates the practice of placing in the tomb the consecrated host and later covering the tomb with a stone until Easter morning. Around the 11th century similar tombs could be found in Western Europe, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

In the early 1500's in Poland, a special procession to the grave was held on Good Friday. Along with a cross, shroud (white cloth), candles, holy water, incense, and a figure of Christ, the host was carried in procession. The custom of erecting such tombs, flourished throughout Europe in the 1600's. Today this custom has disappeared from a great number of Churches in Europe, but it has been cultivated and developed in Poland and in the churches of the American Polonia.

The *Lord's Tombs* have a specific character in the Polish style. The cross that is carried, or even laid in the tomb elsewhere, is placed standing near the grave. Sometimes it is draped with a white cloth, to stand for the fact that Jesus has accomplished His mission. The presence of flowers: lilies, hyacinths, daffodils, pussy willows, and even miniature *lawns* planted from oats or watercress, is peculiar to the Polish version of the *Lord's Tomb*. These flowers leave us with the joyful hope and expectation of Christ's Resurrection. This custom which is treasured by the parishes of the American Polonia, enables us to keep vigil, or watch, at the *Lord's Tomb* in joyful expectation, with the whole Church, of His glorious Resurrection.

## ***Niedziela Palmowa*** **Sunday of the Palms!**

The special ten foot palms that are being used today in the procession were prepared according to the oldest of Polish Traditions! Since real palms are typically grown only in the tropics and not in Poland, the *Wilno* Palms were developed. This palm is traced back to the Old Polish-Lithuanian city of *Wilno* and is made of greenery and colorful flowers both real and artificial. The palms are also adorned with flowering branches of trees and pussy willows. Frequently there are competitions in smaller villages as to who can create the tallest and most elaborate. The palms we are using add a colorful and festive atmosphere to our solemn ceremonies today.

## **The Devil's Beatitudes**

*If the Devil were to write his Beatitudes, they would probably look like this:*

Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend an hour once a week with their fellow Christians in Church .... They are my best workers.

Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked .... I can use them.

Blessed are the touchy; with a bit of luck, they may stop going to church .... They are my missionaries.

Blessed are those who are very religious, but get on everyone's nerves .... They are mine forever.

Blessed are the troublemakers .... They shall be called my children.

Blessed are those who have no time to pray .... They are easy prey for me.

Blessed are the gossipers .... For they are my secret agents.

Blessed are those who are critical of Church leadership....For they shall inherit a place with me in my fate.

Blessed are the complainers .... I'm ALL ears for them.

Blessed are you when you read this and think it is about other people and not yourself .... I've got you!

## ***What is Tenebrae?***

The Latin word Tenebrae means "darkness." Tenebrae is a very ancient service of prayers in the Church which takes place during the darkness of night. The service begins with the nave of the church in darkness, except for a candelabrum on a stand in the sanctuary containing thirteen candles arranged in an inverted 'v'. It is called a 'Tenebrae Hearse.' As each prayer of the service is completed one of the candles is extinguished, leaving the church in darkness. These twelve candles represent the apostles abandoning Christ one by one. When all but one of the candles are extinguished the celebrant leaves the sanctuary taking the candle with him and a loud noise like a thunderclap (representing the earthquake during the Crucifixion) is heard; after which the single candle representing Christ and His light is brought back in to the sanctuary.

This service in our church is adapted to complement our Polish Tradition. The candle is taken to the tomb of Christ where the well-known hymn *Dobranoc Głowo Święta (Good Night Sacred Head of Christ)* is sung in its entirety concluding the service. Our Tenebrae Service is at 6:30 PM on Good Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>.

# Pesach - Pascha - Passover

Passover, in Hebrew, Pesach, is also called the festival of unleavened bread. It is the great freedom festival of the Jewish People. It begins on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month Nisan, at the full moon after the vernal equinox, and continues for either seven days in Israel, or eight days in the diaspora outside of Israel. It is the springtime remembrance and celebration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery over 3,300 years ago and their covenant with God. This is the story of the very foundation of the Jewish people. This year the first full day of Passover is Holy Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. Passover begins on Good Friday night at nightfall. It will be observed by our Jewish brothers and sisters until its last day which will be Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.

The name Passover calls to mind that the firstborn children of the Egyptians, even firstborn pets and farm animals, were destroyed by the tenth plague, the angel of death (Exodus 12:1-14). But the angel passed by the Jewish families, who were kept as slaves by the Egyptians. The angel could recognize the Jewish homes because the blood of a lamb marked their doors. When Pharaoh saw the dead, he let the Jews leave Egypt. They passed over into freedom.

On the first night of Passover Jewish families gather for a special meal called a Seder. The name Seder is derived from the Hebrew word for order and the meal is served in a strict ritualistic order. At the Seder meal of Passover, the great story of the Exodus is retold as part of the Jewish liturgy. Special foods and customs bring the story to life. The most important food is matzah, which is unleavened bread. The Jews left Egypt in such great haste that they did not have time to wait for their bread dough to rise before they made it. During the days before Passover is to be celebrated, Jewish homes are thoroughly cleaned and scrubbed to remove any possible leaven or yeast that might be present. Some households go so far as to have special separate dishes set aside for use only at Passover that have never had contact with leaven of any sort.

There are other ritual foods of Passover. Bitter herbs, such as horseradish root, are eaten to recall bitter slavery. Fresh spring greens, such as lettuce and parsley, are dipped in salt water, representing the tears of the people. Haroset, a mixture of chopped fruits, nuts, spices and wine, reminds each family of the bricks and mortar used by the slaves in their forced labor. The shank bone of a lamb is put on the table as a sign of the blood that protected the firstborn on the terrible last night of their enslavement. A roasted egg serves as a symbol of rebirth.

At the Seder meal, the youngest child asks, "Why is this night different from all other nights?" The answer to this question is the story of Passover. A special cup of wine is set aside for the prophet Elijah, who will someday return to prepare the world for the Messiah. The front door is opened to welcome Elijah. Perhaps the prophet is there, standing in the spring moonlight.

Celebrating Passover is not just a history lesson. Rather, it is a living event, a mystery to be entered into, an experience here and now of God's gift of freedom. The Jewish approach to the celebration of Passover and the Seder meal is the very same understanding that we Catholics are to have toward the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. When we take part in the Mass we are to visualize ourselves among those who were with our Lord in the upper room at the Last Supper, on the hill of Calvary at the Crucifixion and at the empty tomb at the Resurrection. We see what our dear Lord is doing for us at that very moment! When we enter into these moments of our salvation history in this way, we are strengthened by them and by our ancestors in the faith whom we encounter there. By becoming part of these events and reliving them all the strength necessary to endure the burdens of this life is found. And the glory and majesty of our God and His Christ is revealed to us in a marvelous and deeply inspiring way! The Passover meal ends with the call, "Next year in Jerusalem!" Next year may all people be free!

## ***Good Friday is a day of Fast and Abstinence.***

***Everyone over 14 years of age must abstain from eating meat.***

***Everyone between the ages of 18 and 59 must fast on Good Friday.***

***Only one full meal may be eaten and nothing between meals.***

# The Easter Blessing of Food

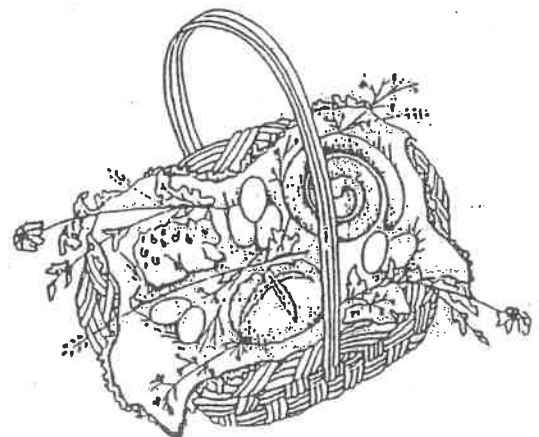
## An Eastern European (Slavic) Custom "Święconka"

The origin of the Easter blessings of food is the strict Lenten fast and abstinence from meat and dairy products including eggs that was practiced in the Middle Ages. The great feast of Easter brought an end to rigorous fast and these foods were again allowed at the table. People showed their joy and gratitude by first taking the food to church for a blessing. They prayed that the Church's blessing on such edibles would prove a remedy for whatever harmful effects the body might have suffered from the long period of self-denial. Today the Easter blessing of food in church is still faithfully and lovingly practiced on Holy Saturday afternoon wherever people of Slavic descent dwell.

### *What should we put in our Traditional Polish Easter Basket?*

According to long-standing tradition, the Polish Easter basket should include: *kielbasa* (sausage) indicative of God's favor and generosity, *szynka* (ham) symbolic of great joy and abundance, *jajka* (eggs), symbols of new life and Christ's Resurrection, *chrzan* (horseradish), sometimes with beets (*cwikła*), symbolic of the bitter Passion of Christ, *babka* (sweetbread) symbolic of Jesus, our true bread of life, *baranek* (lamb made of butter) reminder of the goodness of Christ, our Lamb of God, *ser* (cheese) reminder of the moderation Christians should have at all times, *sól* (salt) so necessary an element of our physical life. Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth." Sometimes wine (*wino*) or beer (*piwo*) is also brought for blessing along with a candle recalling that Christ is the Light of our world. Baskets are also often decorated with soaring flowers, greenery, ribbons and pussy willows and are covered with a white linen cloth, often intricately embroidered. Bring your basket of Easter foods to church on Holy Saturday for blessing and then save the contents to be eaten as the first meal of the day on Easter morning and wish each other:

*Smacznego jajka!*  
"Delicious Eggs!"



# Holy Week Schedule

**April 18<sup>th</sup>**, *Wielki Czwartek* – **Holy Thursday** at 7:00 o'clock PM – Mass of the Lord's Last Supper with washing of feet and procession to the repository. Adoration of the Most Holy Eucharist until 11:00 o'clock PM.

**April 19<sup>th</sup>**, *Wielki Piątek* – **Good Friday** at 12:00 o'clock noon – *Gorzkie Żale* (*the Polish Bitter Lamentations*), Stations of the Cross (*Mary's Way*), Good Friday Liturgy with veneration of the cross and Holy Communion, at 6:30 PM – Tenebrae (*Night Prayers of the Church, see article What is Tenebrae?*) with adoration at the Tomb of Christ.

**April 20<sup>th</sup>**, *Wielka Sobota* – **Holy Saturday** – Blessing of Easter Foods at 1:00 (in Polish), 2:00 & 3:00 o'clock (in English) PM – Easter Vigil Mass – 7:00 PM

**April 21<sup>st</sup>**, *Wielkanoc* – **Easter Sunday** at 7:30 AM – Solemn Easter Mass with Eucharistic Procession (*Rezurekcja*) at 10:00 o'clock AM – Solemn Easter Sunday Mass in Polish, 12:15 PM – Solemn Easter Sunday Mass in English.

## Solemn Novena to the Divine Mercy

April 19<sup>th</sup> to April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Day One** – Good Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> – the Novena to the Divine Mercy begins today at 3:00 PM after the Sacred Liturgy.

**Day Two** – Holy Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered after the blessing of Easter foods at 3:00 PM

**Day Three** – Easter Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered before the 12 noon Mass.

**Day Four** – Easter Monday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered today after the 7 PM Mass.

**Day Five** – Easter Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered after the 7:00 PM Mass.

**Day Six** – Easter Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered after the 7:00 PM Mass.

**Day Seven** – Easter Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered after the 7:00 PM Mass.

**Day Eight** – Easter Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered after the 7:00 PM Mass.

**Day Nine** – Easter Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> – Novena prayers will be offered after the 8:00 AM Mass.

**Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup> – the Feast of Divine Mercy**

12:00 noon Mass followed by Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 2:45 PM  
Benediction. 1:00 PM – 2:45 PM Confessions. 3:00 PM Mass