

# PASCHA SYMBOLS

Symbols are a shorthand method of evoking an idea or an object. There are all kinds of symbols: flags, maps, traffic signs, etc. Even colors have symbolic meanings: white for purity, black for mourning, purple for royalty, yellow for cowardice. The Rainbow is a symbol, too.

Symbols are visual reminders that call to mind concrete and abstract ideas. A symbol has only the meaning which people give it. They are powerful because of their associations. The symbols chosen here extend from Palm Sunday through Pentecost.

The definitions follow the symbol cards. Go to [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com) / Games / Feast Day Game Options - Spring '04 ([PDF](#)). These classroom activities and games can be adapted for use with the PASCHA SYMBOLS.

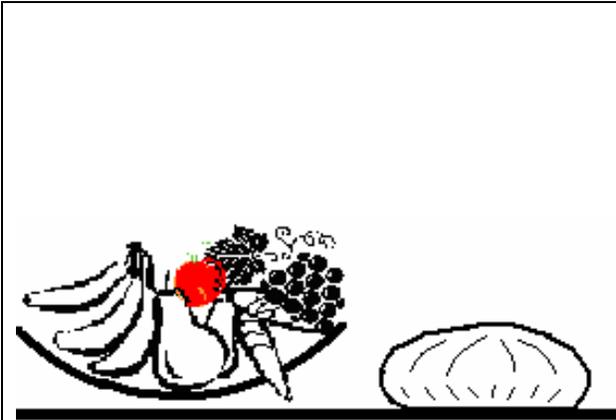
## MATERIALS - Suggestions

1. Bible for reading the verses.
2. SYMBOLS copied onto card stock. Laminating
3. Colored markers or pencils to color the pictures of the symbols.
4. Paper cutter or Scissors to cut the symbols cards.
5. A rubber band, zipper lunch bag, envelope or appropriate container to keep the cards together.
6. Place the SYMBOL DEFINITIONS in Sheet Protectors to keep them clean, easy to find, able to file in a notebook.

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Color the cards,
2. Cut the 24 cards into uniform size - 3"x5".
3. Laminate or place between 2 sheets of clear contact paper, or 3"-4" wide clear packaging tape. [Take care the tape is not creased.]
4. Read over the variety of Pascha Symbols Games and select what will work best for your students.

Joan J. Philosophos of Chicago, IL developed this project, providing all the original drawings and text as it appeared in *A Resource Handbook for Great Lent and Pascha* compiled by Phyllis Meshel Onest in 1989 for the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh. Pauline Shiolas Sarantopoulos, Religious Education Committee Chair. This version of the project has updated artwork and edited text by Phyllis Meshel Onest, Director of the Office of Religious Education, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 2009. Joan Philosophos' drawings: 2,4,5,6,7,10,11,12,13,14,19,22,23.



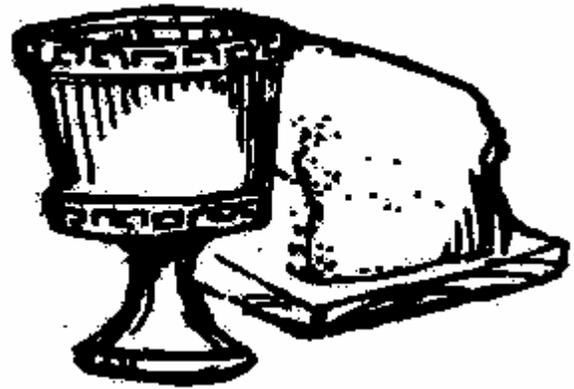
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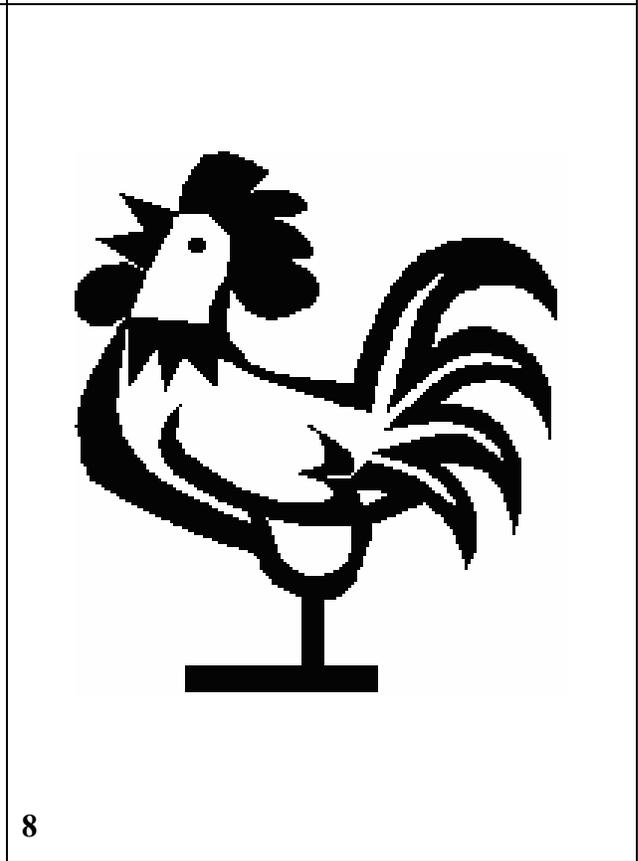
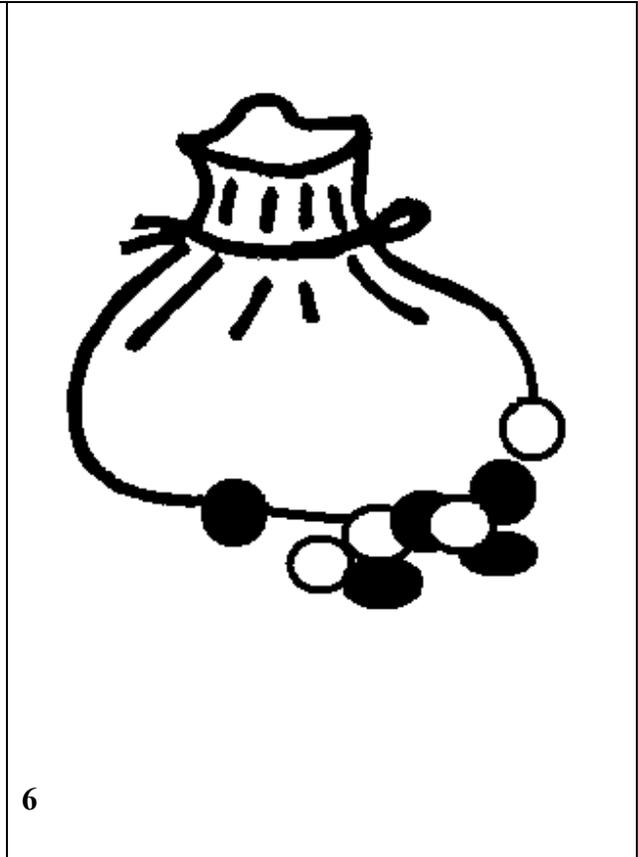
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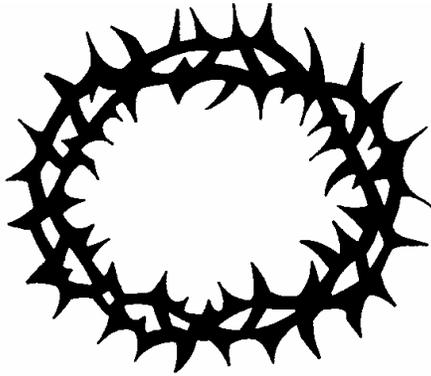


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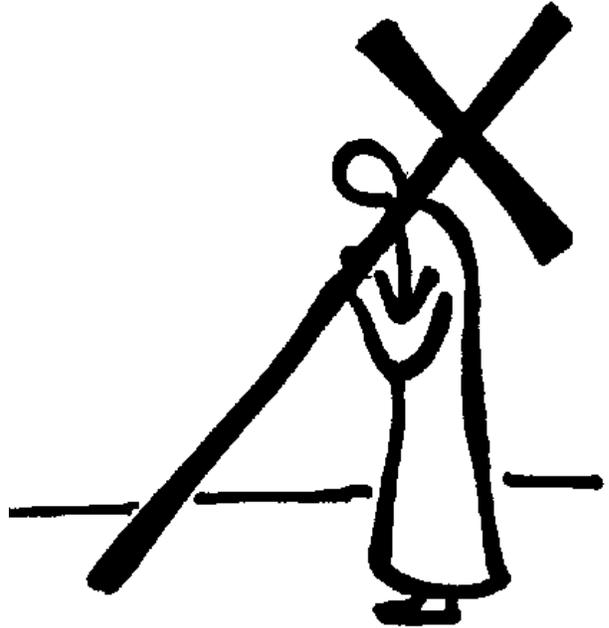


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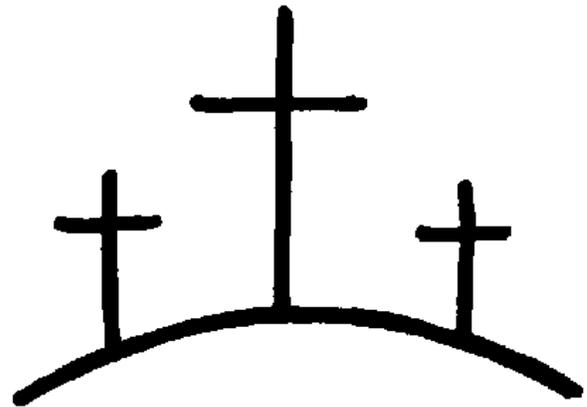
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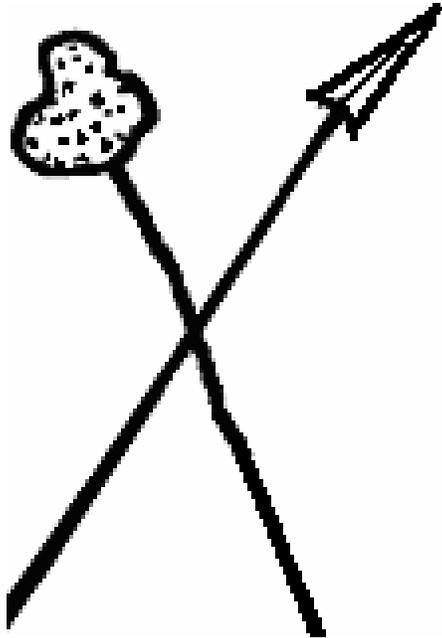


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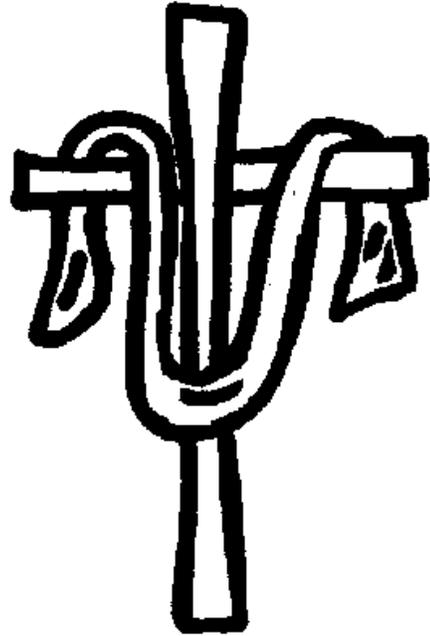
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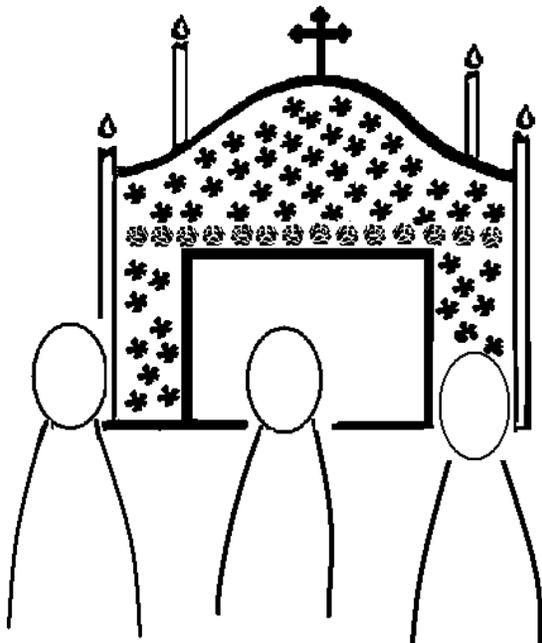
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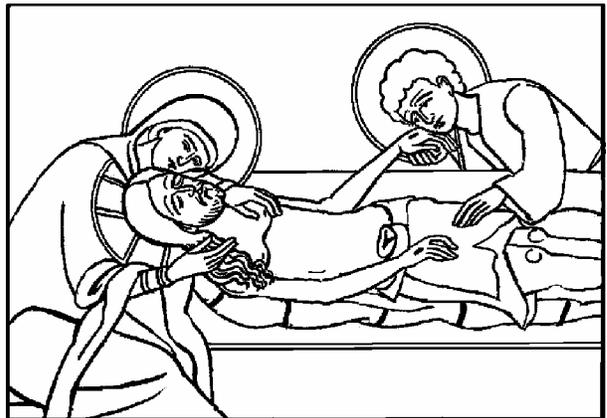
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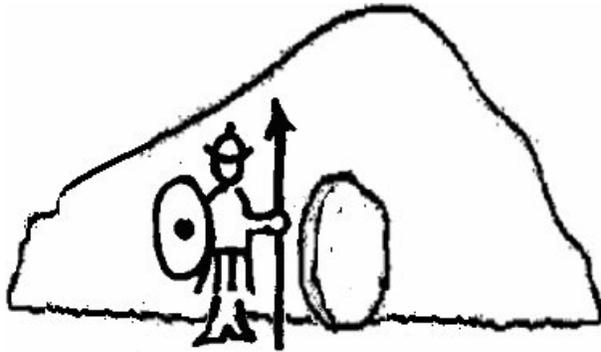
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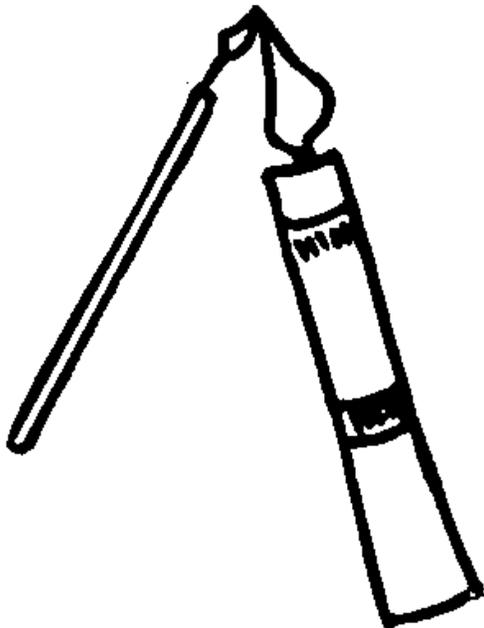
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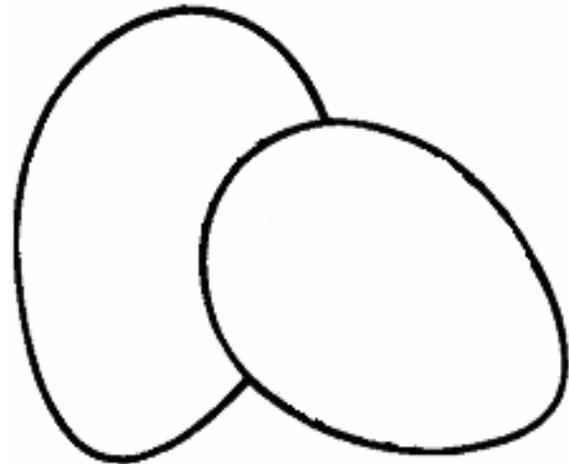
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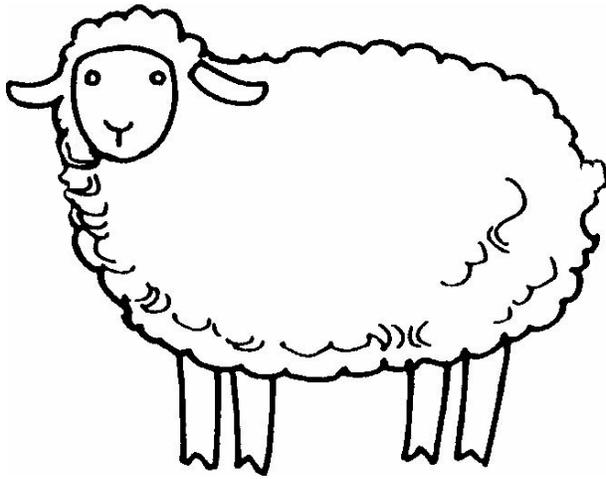
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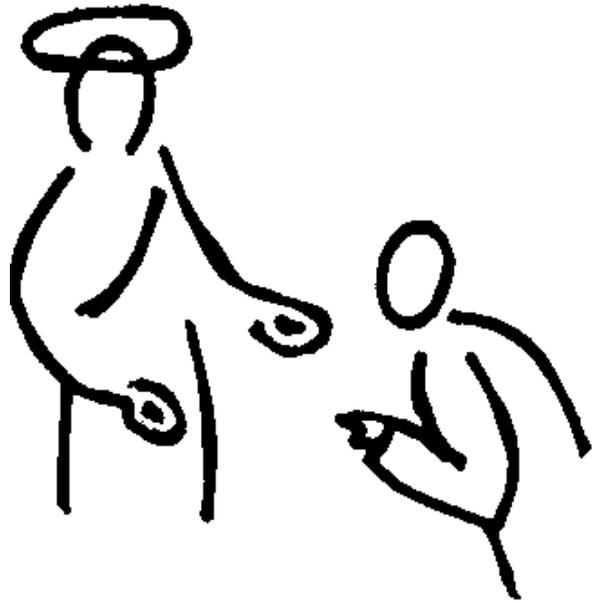
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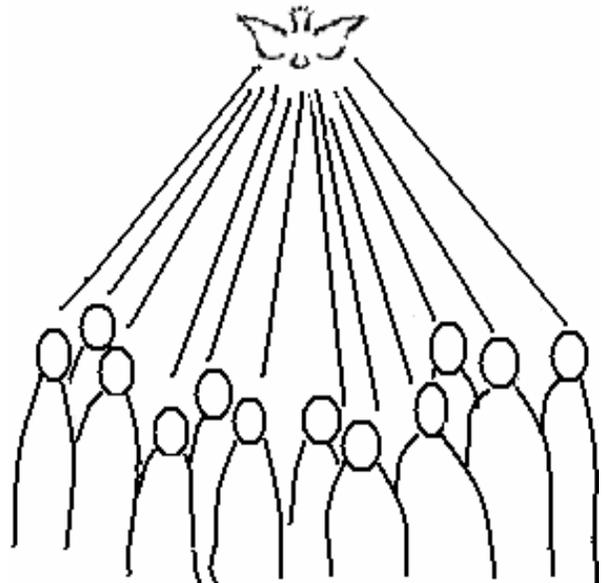
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# SYMBOLS OF THE SEASON

Text by Joan J. Philosophos

Edited by Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div.

## **PASCHA / Easter**

We know that Jesus entered Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish **Passover**, “Pesach” in Hebrew. This feast reminded the Israelites of the night before Moses led them out of Egypt (slavery) to freedom and “passed over” the homes with first-born sons. (See PASSOVER for more information.) When the Hebrew holy texts were translated into Greek, the Hebrew word for “Pesach” became “PASCHA.”

When we use the term “**PASCHA**” we acknowledge that our Christian Passover from death to life is a successor to the Jewish Passover. What Moses, the prefigure of Christ in the Old Testament, inaugurated for the people of Israel on the temporal level, Christ inaugurated for all people on the eternal level. Christ not only fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, but also became the “Passover” Himself.

Our method of calculating the date of **PASCHA / Easter** involves the date of Passover.

**EASTER** is another word used to identify the resurrection of Christ. According to the Venerable Bede (673-735 AD), a monk who wrote about Anglo-Saxon mythology, Pascha Sunday was called “Easter” in connection with the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre/Ostara, a Teutonic goddess of spring, or from the Teutonic festival of spring called “Eostur.” This festival came at the spring equinox. Eostre was nearly always accompanied in legend and art with a hare (rabbit). It was a magical hare that could lay eggs. (“the Cadbury bunny”)

## **EACH SYMBOL INCLUDES A DESCRIPTION OF THE MATCHING**

### **1. THE GREAT FAST / LENT**

#### **[Bread, Vegetables, Fruit]**

The Orthodox Church has four Lenten periods:

1. the Nativity Fast (November 15-December 25)
2. the Great Fast before Pascha (the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the Spring Equinox, after Passover)
3. the Fast for SS Peter & Paul (the Monday after All Saints – June 30)
4. the Dormition Fast for the Theotokos (August 1-15)

Since the Paschal Fast is the longest, has the strictest fast rules and specific services only done during that season of the year, it is referred to as **GREAT FAST**. The Great Fast is also referred to as Great Lent.

As a season, the **GREAT FAST/ Great Lent** was originally a period of preparation for the baptism of catechumens at Pascha / Easter. The catechumens fasted and prayed during this time of instruction. The climax of their preparation came at the all-night vigil of Pascha Eve when they were Baptized and Chrismated, followed by the celebration of Christ’s Resurrection.

As time passed, all church members joined the catechumens as a way of renewing their baptismal preparations, and preparing for Pascha. The Great Fast became a season of intense prayer, reflecting on one’s spiritual life, good works (alms) as well as fasting.

### **POINTS OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE GREAT FAST:**

- ✘ The liturgical color is purple.
- ✘ Adam and Eve disobeyed God by refusing to fast from the forbidden fruit and became slaves of their own desires. Now through fasting, through obedience to the guidelines of the Church regarding the use of spiritual and material goods, we may return to the life in Paradise, a life of communion with God.
- ✘ Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness following His baptism, during which time He was tempted. (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) When we fast during the Great Fast, we follow Jesus’ example of fasting 40 days.
- ✘ St. Basil tells us that fasting is not abstaining only from food; it is first, abstaining from sin.
- ✘ Fasting has a liberating effect on us because it detaches us from earthly goods and realities. Fasting is also abstinence from bad habits and sin.
- ✘ In the words of St. John Chrysostom, fasting means “abstinence not only from food but from sins. The fast should be kept not by the mouth alone but also by the eye, the ear, the feet, the hands and all the members of the body; the eye must abstain from impure sights, the ear from malicious gossip, the hands from acts of injustice.”
- ✘ The primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God.

- ✘ Fasting liberates our body from the burden of excessive weight and makes it a willing partner in the task of prayer, alert and responsive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
- ✘ The Church Fathers' guiding principle is never eat to fullness, but always rise from the table feeling we could have eaten more, so that now we are ready for prayer.
- ✘ The basic Rule for Fasting is abstinence from meat, dairy products and olive oil. We are each to do the best we can, given our age and health. Ask your Spiritual Father/Parish Priest what "Rule of Fasting" he believes is best for you this Lenten season.



## 2. PALMS (Major Feast Day)

### [Jesus Riding On A Donkey]

Branches of **Palm** trees - which in Jesus' time symbolized victory - are symbols of His Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem. John 12:12-14 [Note: (a) Victorious athletes at the Olympic games in ancient Greece were given crowns made of olive branches. (b) People laid olive or palm branches before the path of conquering heroes.]

- *"The next day a great crowd who had come to the (Passover) feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying, 'Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!'"* John 12:12-14
- ✘ The crowds were anxious to see Jesus because they heard He raised Lazarus from the dead the previous day. The Disciples brought Jesus a foal (young donkey) of a donkey and rode on it just as the prophet Zechariah foretold.
  - *"Do not be afraid, city of Zion! Here comes your king, riding on a young donkey. Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you! He comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey - on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*
- ✘ In Orthodox countries where palms do not grow, pussy willows or other branches are used.

## ✘ **PASSOVER**

### [Blood Painted on the Doorframes]

According to St. John's Gospel, Jesus came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festival of **Passover**. On the day of preparation, Jesus and the Disciples participated in the Mystical Supper / Last Supper. He was crucified the next morning (Friday). Because Jewish days begin at sundown, Christ's crucifixion and death occurred when the paschal lambs were sacrificed for **Passover**.

- ✘ The first three Gospels give the impression that the Mystical / Last Supper was a Passover meal. Had it been a Passover meal, our prosphora would be flat, unleavened as the bread prepared by the Jews in their haste to leave Egypt.
- ✘ Since it was not **Passover**, the bread contained yeast, was therefore raised and our Prosphora is also raised with yeast.
- ✘ **Passover** is a Pilgrimage Festival. If possible, Jews were to go to Jerusalem for Passover.
- ✘ All the Gospels mention there were great crowds in Jerusalem for the Passover.
- ✘ **Passover** is a memorial of the deliverance of the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt.
  - The blood of the lamb that was killed for the original **Passover** was painted on the doorposts and over the doors of the houses occupied by Israelites.
  - This was the sign for the Angel of Death to "pass over" these houses on his errand to slay the first-born of the Egyptians. (Exodus 12)
  - God told the Hebrews to celebrate the festival each year in a specific way, & they still do.

## 4. BREAD & WINE / BODY & BLOOD

### [Chalice & Loaf of Bread]

**Bread and wine** are symbols of the **Mystical / Last Supper** and the **Holy Eucharist**.

- ✘ At the **Mystical / Last Supper**, when Jesus gave His disciples the chalice of wine, He said, *"This is my blood."*
- ✘ He then took a loaf of bread, broke and said, *"This is my body."*
- ✘ These words are repeated at every Divine Liturgy. During the consecration, the priest asks the Holy Spirit to "come down upon us and upon these gifts" changing the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- ✘ It still looks and tastes like bread and wine, but it is not.

## 5. GETHSEMANE

### [Jesus Praying Upon Some Rocks]

The **Garden Of Gethsemane** was the scene of the "Agony in the Garden" and the "Betrayal." Peter, James and John were with Jesus, but

- "He came to the disciples and found them sleeping..." Matthew 26:40
- "Then He went off from them about the distance of a stone's throw and knelt down and prayed... In great anguish He prayed even more fervently; His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground." Luke 22:41,44
- Jesus praying in Gethsemane is also found in Mark 14:32-42 & Matthew 26:36-46.

## 6. COINS [Bag Of Coins]

Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ for **thirty Silver Coins**, making it a symbol of the Passion. Judas went to the chief priests and asked,

- "What will you give me if I deliver Him to you? And they paid him thirty pieces of silver." Matthew 26:15
- "When Judas, His betrayer, saw that He was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.'" Matthew 27:3-4

## 7. WASHING OF THE HANDS

### [Hands Over a Bowl, Drops of Water Falling from the Pitcher]

The **Washing of the Hands** symbolizes innocence. Pilate publicly washed his hands after Jesus' trial.

- "So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood.'" Matthew 27:24.

This event has become an idiom in our language meaning "a person does not have anything to do with what is happening."

## 8. COCK [Crowing Rooster]

The **Cock Crowing** is a symbol of Peter's three denials. After Peter asserted his loyalty to Jesus,

- "Jesus said to him, 'Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'" Matthew 26:34 (Mark 14:30, Luke 22:34, and John 13:38)

"Before the cock crows" became an expression meaning "early in the morning."

## 9. CROWN OF THORNS

### [Crown Of Thorns]

The **Crown of Thorns** placed on Jesus' head by the mocking soldiers symbolizes the Passion and Crucifixion. It stands for a royal crown; and the reed they gave Him, for a king's scepter. In icons, Christ usually wears the **Crown of Thorns** until taken down from the Cross.

- "And plaiting a **crown of thorns**, they put it on His head, and put a reed in His right hand. And kneeling down before Him they mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'" Matthew 27:29

## 10. CARRYING THE CROSS

### [A Man Carrying a Cross]

The Gospel of St. John tells of Jesus carrying His own cross to Golgotha. (John 19:17)

The other three Gospels say that someone else carried the Cross.

- "As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross." Matthew 27:32
- "And they compelled a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry His cross." Mark 15:21
- "And as they led Him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus." Luke 23:26

This scene is often recreated in Jerusalem on Holy Friday when many pilgrims walk the "Way of the Cross," some **carrying wooden crosses**.

## 11. I.N.R.I. | I.N.B.I.

These initial letters placed on a board at the top of the Cross stand for the initial letters of four Latin words

- "Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,' ... and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek." John 19:19-20
- ✘ This trilingual inscription signified for St. John the Evangelist the universal mission of Christ. Originally, if the inscription was used in art, at all, it was written out in full.
- ✘ Italian artists in the thirteenth century reduced the inscription to the familiar abbreviation. (Since each of these letters is an initial of a word, it is proper to put a period after each letter.)

## 12. GOLGOTHA or CALVARY

### [Three Crosses]

The name **Golgotha** is used in the Gospels for the place of crucifixion outside the walls of Jerusalem. This Hebrew word means "skull."

- ✘ **Calvary** refers to the same place, but it is taken from the Latin word for "skull." For this reason, some icons of the Crucifixion show a skull below the cross.
- ✘ Another reason for the skull is a tradition that Adam was buried there and it is his skull.
- ✘ Christ, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, redeems humanity who is handicapped by the "Fall" of the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam.
- ✘ The other two crosses represent the two criminals who were crucified at the same time.

## 13. SPONGE and SPEAR [Spear & Sponge on the End of a Long Rod]

In the account of the Crucifixion we read,

- "A bowl was there, full of vinegar (cheap wine); so a **sponge** was soaked in the vinegar, put on a stalk of hyssop, and lifted up to His lips." John 19:29 (Mark 15:36)
- "One of the soldiers, however, plunged his **spear** into Jesus side, and at once blood and water poured out." John 19:34

These symbols of the Passion of Christ are used in preparing the Gifts for the Divine Liturgy.

- ✘ The **spear** (lance) is used to cut the (Host/Lamb) from the seal on the Prosforo.
- ✘ As the priest recites "One of the soldiers plunged his **spear** into Jesus side," he pierces the square of bread from the center of the loaf referred to as the Host.
- ✘ As the priest recites the last part of the quotation, "and at once blood and water poured out," he pours water and wine into the **chalice**.
- ✘ The **sponge** is used to clean the particles of bread off the Paten and into the Chalice.

## 14. LINEN CLOTH [Cross with Cloth Draped Over It]

Before a Jew was laid in the tomb, the body was wrapped in a burial cloth or winding cloth. Those who were wealthy, like Joseph of Arimathea, would be wrapped in **Linen**. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus

- "Took Jesus' body and wrapped it in **linen cloths** with spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial." John 19:40 (Luke 23:53, Mark 15:46, Matt.27:59)
- ✘ The bodies were not embalmed in those days. The women who went to the tomb on Pascha

morning with spices and myrrh for anointing the body. (Thus, the "myrrh-bearing women.")

- ✘ At the vespers of the "Descent from the Cross" on Holy Friday afternoon, the priest takes Jesus' body down from the Cross and wraps it in **Linen**, and puts it in the altar, where it stays until Ascension. At that time the body is placed once again on the Cross that stands directly behind the altar table.
- ✘ On the altar table itself, there are three cloths. The middle one is made of **linen**, symbolic of the cloth in which Jesus body was wrapped.

## 15 & 16. EPITAPHIOS

### [Icon of Jesus Laid in the Tomb, Theotokos & John]

The Epitaphios (Shroud) is a tapestry-icon depicting Christ being laid in the tomb. With Him are His mother, the Theotokos, and John, the beloved Apostle.

- ✘ During the Vesper service on Holy Friday afternoon, the **Epitaphios** (Shroud) is placed in the sepulcher / kouvouklion decorated with flowers.
  - ✘ At the evening Lamentations service, the sepulcher / kouvouklion is carried in procession outside of the Church. (In some Orthodox traditions, only the **Epitaphios** (Shroud) is carried in procession.) As we enter the church, we go under the **Epitaphios** to symbolize our burial with Christ. Romans 6:3-6
    - "For surely you know that when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, we were baptized into union with His death. By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death. Thus, just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of the Father, we might live a new life. For since we have become one with Him in dying as He did, in the same way we shall be one with Him by being raised to life as He was. And we know that our old being has been put to death with Christ on His cross, in order that the power of the sinful self might be destroyed, so that we should no longer be slaves of sin."
  - ✘ In the Greek practice, at the end of the service, as the faithful come forward to venerate the **Epitaphios**, the priest distributes the flowers that decorate the tomb to the people.
  - ✘ At the beginning of the Resurrection service, the **Epitaphios** is placed on the altar until Ascension and every Liturgy is celebrated on it during that time.
- After Ascension, the **Epitaphios** is kept in the altar until the next Holy Friday.

**17. SEALED TOMB & GUARD**  
**[Roman Soldier by the Sealed**  
**Opening]**

Matthew 27: 62-66 gives an account of the chief priests and the Pharisees meeting with Pilate.

- ✘ The Pharisees asked that a **guard** be placed at the tomb so the Disciples could not steal Jesus' body and say He was raised from the dead.
- ✘ Therefore, they took a guard, put a **seal on the stone**, and left the guard to watch. (**The Seal**: hot wax poured where the rock touched the doorway. If anyone broke into the tomb, it would be known because the wax ring would be broken.)



**18. EMPTY TOMB [The Open Tomb, the Myrrhbearers, an Angel]**

The **tomb with the stone rolled away** is a symbol of Christ's Resurrection.

- Matthew 28:1-6 says that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb and saw an **angel** of the Lord.
- Luke 24:1-9 says the **women** went at dawn to the tomb and saw **two men in dazzling apparel**. The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other **women**.
- John 20:1-2 says that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and **saw two angels**.
- Mark 16:1-8 records that Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary the mother of James going to the **tomb** when the sun had risen and they saw **a young man sitting in a white robe**.
- The **angel** appeared to the **women at the tomb** and announced, "He is risen!"
- When we greet each other with this announcement, the response is "Truly He is risen!"
- ✘ The angel or angels are always described as dressed in white. The white garments are appropriate to the joy of Christ's Resurrection.
- ✘ True to their intended function, they are our messengers from God.
- ✘ Since the altar in Church is symbolic of the Tomb, the Royal Doors of the Iconostasis remain open from Pascha to Pentecost, symbolizing the **empty, open tomb** of our Risen Lord.

**18. RESURRECTION OR PASCHAL CANDLE**

Just before midnight at the Resurrection Liturgy, the Church is darkened. At midnight the priest comes out of the Sanctuary (altar area) carrying a lit **Paschal Candle**, and says, "*Come, receive the unwaning light and let us glorify Christ who is resurrected from the dead.*"

- ✘ This candle symbolizes Christ "the Light" who has overcome the darkness of the world.
- ✘ Everyone in the Church then lights his/her candle from this candle or others it has lit.
- ✘ The **Paschal Candle** burns at all services through Ascension, which terminates the Paschal season.

**19. DOUBTING THOMAS**

**[Jesus, hands out, Thomas]**

We remember **Doubting Thomas** on the Sunday after Pascha. Between the Resurrection and Ascension Jesus made eleven appearances to His followers. The first time that He appeared, Thomas was absent. When those saw Jesus told Thomas, he said to the others,

- "*Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe.*" John 20:25
- ✘ The account in John 20:24-29 continues with Jesus appearing for the second time, and letting Thomas touch His wounds. Jesus responded with,
  - "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.*" John 20:29
- ✘ A "**Doubting Thomas**" is an idiom in English language referring to a person who needs to see something before he/she will believe it is true.

**20. ASCENSION (Major Feast Day)**

**[Jesus above the Clouds]**

Jesus' **Ascension** to heaven occurred 40 days after His Resurrection. In Acts we read,

- "*And when He had said this, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.'*" Acts 1:9-11
- ✘ Brief accounts of the **Ascension** are recorded in Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-51.

**21. PENTECOST** (Major Feast Day)  
**[Dove Emitting Rays to the 12  
 Apostles Below]**

The word **Pentecost**, which means “fiftieth day,” is used for both the Jewish and Christian festivals / holy days.

- ✘ For the Jews, **Pentecost**, originally known as the “Feast of Weeks,” was the fiftieth day after their celebration of Passover and honored the beginning of the wheat harvest in Israel.
- ✘ Later it became a commemoration of God giving Moses the Torah at Mount Sinai. It is now called “Shavuot” and, like Passover, is one of the Pilgrimage Festivals.
- ✘ Counting the Sundays at each end of the seven weeks, **Pentecost** is the fiftieth day after Pascha. (Acts 1 & 2) The Holy Spirit manifested Himself to the Apostles at Pentecost as “*tongues of fire.*”
- ✘ Fire is an ancient symbol of divine appearance. God appeared to Moses in the “*burning bush*” (Exodus 3:2) and again in fire and smoke on Mount Sinai. (Exodus 19:18)
- ✘ The usual symbol of the Holy Spirit is the descending dove. In a more general sense, the dove indicates the power of God at work in men.
- ✘ Liturgical color: Red, which represents the flames, in the Greek tradition. Green, which represents life and the Holy Spirit is the “Giver of Life,” in the Slavic tradition.



**22. LAMB [Lamb]**

The **Lamb** is a symbol for Jesus, the “*Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world*” - the name given by John the Baptist. John 1:29-36

- ✘ The symbolism goes back to Isaiah 53:7 – “*like a lamb that is led to the slaughter*” - where the **lamb** is a type of explicit suffering.
- ✘ The **Paschal Lamb** eaten at Passover by the Jews symbolized God’s deliverance of His people. (Refer to PASSOVER.) The Jews sacrificed an **unblemished lamb** during their traditional Pass-over ceremony in the Temple of Jerusalem.
- ✘ Early Christians interpreted the sacrifice of the **Paschal Lamb** as a prototype of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross.
- ✘ For people from the Balkan countries, **Lamb** is the traditional food at Pascha.

**23. EGGS [Eggs]**

**Eggs** have been a Pascha/Easter symbol for a long time. The **red egg** goes back to St. Mary Magdalene. Traditions hold that after Christ’s ascension she traveled to Rome.

“When Mary visited the Emperor Tiberius Caesar in Rome, holding a plain egg in her hand, she greeted him with the words; ‘Christ is Risen!’ The Emperor exclaimed: ‘How can someone rise from the dead? It is just as likely that Christ rose from the dead as it is likely that the egg you are holding will turn red.’ Even as he spoke the egg’s color began turning into a brilliant red.” (TRIODION AND PENTECOSTARION edited by Fr. David Kidd & Mother Gabriella, HDM Press, Rives, Junction, MI, 1999, p. 186.)

- ✘ The custom of **exchanging eggs** began in ancient times.
- ✘ Eggs are dyed different colors
  - Early Christians of Mesopotamia were the first to use **colored eggs** for Pascha.
  - Some people **color eggs** in various colors, like the hues of sunrise.
  - In the Greek tradition, eggs are a dyed a deep **red**, symbolizing that the new life came through the shedding of Christ’s blood. Eggs are dyed on or before Holy Thursday.
  - Orthodox in Slavic countries intricately decorate their **eggs** - “**pysanki**”- with symbols.
- ✘ **Eggs represent**
  - the new life that returns to nature in the Spring, about the time of Pascha, or
  - a symbol of the Resurrection because the chick entombed in the shell breaks forth to life. The fertilized egg looks dead, but contains the promise of life.
- ✘ **Eggs** are distributed to the faithful at the end of the Resurrection Liturgy.
- ✘ When families gather for the Pascha meal, the custom of **egg-cracking** begins. As each person cracks the other’s egg, he/she says “Christ is Risen!” The second person responds with “Truly He is Risen!”

