

Chi-Rho (key-roe), the first two Greek letters of the word Christ. Eggs were stained brilliant red for the Passion, or gilded and signed Alleluia. Today's pale eggs with nonsensical symbols are a crying shame to Christians. To help families restore to the Easter egg its original symbolism we have included liturgical designs which are easy for children to copy. We leave some eggs white or brown. To decorate, we use pure vegetable food coloring, full strength, available in food stores, and apply the colors with fine paint brushes or pens....

The Ukrainian eggs, jewel-like masterpieces of exquisite workmanship, are for sale for those who wish to begin a collection. Designs used in the early Church, such as the fish (symbol of Christ) or the rose (symbol of love), mark the eggs. Directions, dyes, beeswax, and the wax-writing instrument, called a *kiska*, used to decorate *Pysanky* or Easter eggs, may be procured.... Families of Slavic extraction, art classes, and Scout groups will enjoy the work.

There is a charming Ukrainian folktale that tells how Mary, carrying in her apron a gift of fresh eggs, appeared before Pilate to plead for her Son's life. When she heard Pilate's refusal of mercy, she fell to her knees in anguish. Her gift of eggs, spilling from her apron, rolled across the palace floor and out to the remotest corners of the world, as heralds of the coming Resurrection, bidding men to live by Christ's teachings of peace and love. Mary's tears, which had fallen upon the eggs, formed the brilliant dots of color and pattern.

—*Helen McLoughlin*, Family Customs, Easter to Pentecost

Benedictus, March 2024

LIVING TRADITION



EASTER IN THE HOME

MOTHER needs the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit and of Our Lady of Good Counsel to make her home Christian and to bring the liturgy into it. In one instance her cooking will lead her and her family to God.... Another will find that artwork or similar projects on the liturgy will help her to understand the mysteries of faith. And still another mother will sing her way to her family's heart and to God's, knowing that the songs of the liturgy will remain graven in her children's memory for ready recall longer than the most eloquent sermons.

Parents of young children will find it easy to prepare an environment suitable for home liturgy.... By beginning with one custom or two, and adding as the years go by, a family acquires religious practices which suit them ideally.

For parents of older children, the task of living the liturgical year in the home, while not so easy, is not by any means impossible. Parents who do scouting will find the making of symbols for the liturgical season lends itself to Scout activities. The boy or girl who has made a triptych for the dining room buffet or an altar covering with liturgical symbols will be sure to encourage his or her family to say grace at meals or prayers particular to the season. Similarly, older children who design Easter egg symbols or who decorate a Ukrainian Easter egg will have learned many truths of the Faith.

Children who make their own baptismal candles to set around the family *Lumen Christi* will learn what to "put on Christ" (Gal 3:27) means as they add layer after layer of wax to the wick of the candle. It is from such work as this that the world will receive the imprint of Christ, restoring all things to Him....