

# POLISH SPRING AND EASTER CUSTOMS



# Easter Customs

1 **Painting eggs** – Each region of our country has its own characteristic way of decorating eggs. They are a symbol of prosperity and emerging life. They are a very important element of Easter.

2 **Holy Week** – The Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday. Formerly known as "Kwietna" or "Wierzbowa", it is a very important day in the Christian religion. It symbolizes the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. On Palm Sunday, one should go to the church to sacrifice the so-called palemki. They are made of willow twigs, decorated with boxwood and flowers. Once, each household member was lightly struck by the palate. Then it was placed behind the image or above the door. This was to protect against storm and fire.

# Eastern Customs

## Paschal Triduum

On Holy Thursday, the Paschal Triduum begins. All objects disappear from the altar, and the bells fall silent until the resurrection. Then on Good Friday the Way of the Cross takes place, during which the body of Christ is made into the grave. On this day, strict posting is in force. One of the old traditions was to bury the rye and herring, which were typical fast dishes. There was also the habit of nailing the herring to the tree. In the old days, on Holy Saturday, the house was sprayed with water as a sign of prosperity. The hazel was burned, and its ashes were scattered at the first plowing, as a sign of prosperity. Currently, Holy Saturday is celebrated not only with festive foods but also with water, fire and thorn. Boxes decorated with boxwood should contain:

- eggs - a symbol of a newborn life
- bread - the symbol of Christ's body and prosperity
- horseradish - a symbol of the Passion of the Lord
- salt - the essence of truth
- cheese - symbol of man's reconciliation with nature
- lamb – the symbol of the resurrected Jesus



# Eastern Customs

## Easter Sunday

On Holy Sunday, you can not miss the table covered with a white tablecloth. The breakfast usually consists of: sour soup, white sausage, pâtés, baking and hams. Easter cakes, such as mazurkas and „babki” are also necessary. In some regions after the holiday breakfast follows the so-called Easter hunt - looking for a small gifts hidden somewhere in the house.

## Wet Monday

Śmingus-dyngus, or Easter Monday, consists of mutual flooding with water. Formerly, it was also used to hit willow twigs (so-called Śmingus). To avoid sleeping, you could buy eggs, sweets or money. This is what is called dyngus.

# What is changing in nature?

- Animals get up from winter sleep.
- Birds come from warm countries.
- The first leaves appear on the trees.
- The first spring flowers bloom.
- Colds ceases and the days are getting warmer.
- Nights get shorter and days - longer.
- The grass begins to grow green.
- You can smell the coming spring in the air.



# Spring customs

## Melancholy melting

Marzanna as a doll is a symbol of the outgoing winter, and the custom of melting or burning it is known for a long time. Even in pagan times, the melancholy melting took place during the Holy Christmas season, to summon spring. The drowning of Marzanna was also supposed to bring good yields in a given year.



# The End

Sources: The Internet