



Oplatki (Christmas Wafer)

One of the many happy childhood memories I have of Christmas Eve is the passing of “oplatki” (Christmas wafer) before our family dinner. Each person would be given a piece of the wafer and then wish everyone else present a blessed Christmas offering them a piece of their wafer and taking a piece of the other person’s wafer. Sometimes the wafer would get so small it was difficult to break another piece off, but the symbolism (and message) was clearly understood by everyone. This was a time to recognize our unity and love for each other as we celebrated Christ’s coming into our world.

This custom originated in Eastern Europe and has spread to many places in the world. Being of Polish descent, it was and continues to be an important part of my own family’s “Wigilia” (Christmas Eve dinner.) We are pleased to offer “Oplatki” to you for use at your own Christmas dinner. You don’t have to be of Polish or Eastern European background to partake of this beautiful custom. The symbolism here transcends all cultures. You may wish to designate a family member to begin with a prayer before distributing the wafers. One example of a prayer is the following: “Dear Father, we ask our blessing upon these wafers which will be shared. We thank you for the love which you have bestowed upon us, and we are grateful today for the love that exists in our family. May we always nurture and appreciate all that we have. May we rejoice always in knowing that your Son Jesus has come among us. May we be faithful followers of your Son Jesus, in whose name we make this prayer. Amen.”

You may pick up the Christmas wafers in the narthex before or after Mass or stop by the Ministry Center during the week. We ask for a \$2.00 donation. May God continue to bless you in these final days of Advent.

Father David