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# St. Vladimir's Seminary Prospora Recipe (Large Lamb Loaves)

Note: This recipe was originally developed by the late Fr. Steven Kozler and modified by seminarian Jeff Gadreau (Class of '00, now Fr. Lawrence Gadreau of the OCA-DOW) for use in the seminary chapel. Because of the large number of people receiving communion in the chapel, the loaf from which the Lamb is cut is quite large (6"-7" high and 9"-10" wide). It is marked with a seal roughly 4 1/2" square (6 1/2" total surface area). Obviously, a loaf of this size requires a reliable recipe.

While you might not need to make a loaf this big, understanding the principles behind this recipe might enhance your baking. This recipe can be modified to whatever size you need or your equipment allows. The boiling water method creates a dense dough that does not create a lot of crumbs. It is naturally sweet, does not have sizeable air bubbles and bakes quickly for its size because the dough is so dry there is not as much water to bake out of it.

During the past year since I began baking this style, I have made a few modifications. I have slightly reduced the size of the loaves from the original recipe due to damp centers and impenetrable crusts that resulted from the baking of such a large loaf.

**This recipe makes 8 loaves.**

## Ingredients

- Unbleached white flour - ~25 pounds
- Boiling water in a large stock pot
- Active Dry Yeast - 2 Tbsp.

## Tools

- Seal
- Skewer
- Large coffee can with one end cut out and holes punched through the other end
- Large food service tub (like the kind you get a gallon of potato salad in, which should be wider than the coffee can by at least 1 1/2") with holes punched through the end
- Rolling pin
- Baking pans lined with baker's parchment
- Small bowl of water

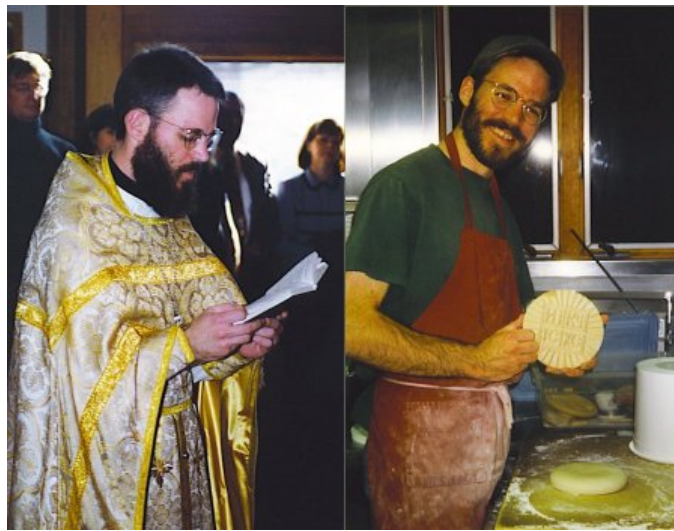
## Instructions

1. Place 1/4 of your flour in a bowl (the bowl of a mixer if you have one).
2. Pour enough boiling water into the bowl turn the flour into a batter the consistency of mashed potatoes (this is not an exact science, as you can tell).
3. Mix until the lumps are broken up. We leave the mixer on the entire time until the batter cools.
4. Let cool (~20-30 minutes) so that your hand can remain in the dough without burns (be careful! don't try this until you can handle the outside of the bowl comfortably).
5. As the dough is cooling, mix two tablespoons of active dry yeast in a cup or two of warm water.
6. When the dough has cooled, add the yeast mixture with a couple cups of flour.
7. This is where the mixing process begins, either by hand or using a mixer with a dough hook. Gradually add flour to the dough. Using a mixer, this can take 45 minutes to an hour.
8. The consistency you are trying to achieve is a dough so dry it does not stick to itself easily. If you are mixing it in a bowl, the dough ball should fall out of the bowl effortlessly if tipped. Handling should not make it tacky, and only with pressure should the dough heal, and not all that well either.
9. Once the dough has reached the proper consistency, dump it onto the counter and divide it into manageable pieces (for us, it is four balls from 25 lbs. of flour).
10. Work each ball so that any air bubbles from the mixing process are squeezed out. Put in a large bowl, cover and place in a cool oven.
11. Let the dough rise for 1 1/2 hours.
12. One hour into the rising, warm up your ovens to 325° (take the doughballs out first!!!). At this point, you should decide if you will use the [Steam Baking method](#), at which point you should prepare your water containers and place them in the oven to warm up.
13. When rising has finished, dump a doughball out onto a floured worktable and press out the air bubbles.
14. Divide it in half, and return one half to the bowl and cover it.
15. Cut a third off the remaining piece and cover it.
16. With the remaining 2/3, carefully work it into a ball. This is done by pulling the from the sides of the piece and tucking it up through the bottom, working in a circle. Because the dough is not sticky, the object here is to work it as little as possible to prevent a large number of folds from developing inside the doughball.
17. Once an even ball has been formed, set it on the counter and roll the top flat to about 1/2" thickness.
18. Check it against the diameter of the food service tub which will be your "cookie cutter." Once the ball is perfectly flat on top and just a little wider than the tub, take the tub and push it down to the tabletop.
19. Pull off the trim and lift the tub to reveal a perfectly formed bottom to your loaf.
20. Transfer this bottom piece to your baking tray, then pierce it multiple times through the top with the skewer.
21. Wet the top.

22. Now, do the same thing from Steps 16-19 with the remaining 1/3 you set aside up, using the coffee can this time to cut out the ball. Now you have a top portion.
23. Once you have cut out the top, get your seal and push it into the top of the piece. Push hard!
24. For a nicer finish, we actually stamp the dough first, then use the cutter.
25. Now, check the edge of the piece. If you see tears or holes in the side where your "cookie cutter" has sliced through a fold in the dough (or an air bubble), you will want to wet your finger and gradually try to seal the hole. This goes for the bottom as well.
26. Now, wet the bottom of the piece you just made and set it on top of the bottom piece in the pan. Run your damp finger along the seam between the two pieces, and double-check your seals if there were and holes you tried to patch (BTW, if those holes don't get sealed, the loaf will explode through them. Bad news!).
27. Take the skewer and pierce the seal on the four corners and the center of the square.
28. Allow the loaf to set for 20-30 minutes before baking. This helps the two pieces to glue together and allow the loaves to sufficiently proof.
29. Bake for 1 hour at 325°. The crust color should be close to that of a paper bag (slightly lighter if you are using the [Steam Baking method](#)). Depending on how dry your dough is, it may have to go slightly longer to keep the center from being moist and undercooked. This will take practice and "getting to know" the recipe.
30. Continue the process with all the rest of the dough.

## Memory Eternal!

### Reverend Father Steven Kozler



**March 25, 1966 + September 2, 1999**

Matushka Linda Kozler:

I have a hard time knowing what to say-- except that Steven simply loved to bake prospora. When at SVS he always baked late at night (it was when the refectory was available) and these late nights ended up being a good, quiet time for fellow students to wander down and talk with Steven late into the night about the deeper questions in life. Steven dearly loved to delve into the depths whenever the possibility presented itself, so he grew to love these late prospora nights. After graduation, when we moved to Connecticut and Steven had the parish, he continued to bake the prospora late at night, not because he needed to do so, but because he had grown fond of having the quiet in which to work. Silence was home to Steven. He loved to pray as he worked the dough, as he prepared the bread of sacrifice. He was baking prospora the night he died, a thought which comforts me greatly, because it was something he so loved to do.

But as for an actual tribute to HIM, I feel that the truest (and most exquisite) words ever spoken of my beloved husband were delivered by his friend, Fr. Timothy Blumentritt, in his funeral homily:

#### **Homily at the Funeral of Fr. Steven J. Kozler St. Nicholas Church, Norwich, CT September 6, 1999**

Every man ordained a priest in God's church is called to preach the Word of God, to proclaim the Gospel in season and out of season. But, no matter how different or varied the circumstances in which he preaches, someone has said that--in the end--every priest really only has one sermon to preach--one theme song--one word that God speaks to us through him.

In Fr. Steven's words and in the example of his life, he HAS spoken to us a concise word from God--that word is "love." Love was the constant theme in Fr. Steven's preaching, in his conversation, and in his actions. I sometimes asked him "How are you going to preach about love (because I knew he was going to!) from this or that text (the story of Jesus sending the demons into the pigs, for example, which comes up a couple of times a year)." But, he would do it and in this case when he shared with me the text of his homily, he wrote, *"As you might expect, I dwell here upon love...namely Christ's."*

Fr. Steven took love seriously. And it was not just any old garden-variety love either, for, of course, it's painfully true that today we can't get away with speaking about love simply and without qualification. Even words about the highest love, the love of God the creator and sustainer of heaven and earth, are words that some people feel free to slap onto the bumpers of their cars or worse. Speaking about love can be simply cheap talk or self-indulgence. To some people, love means affirming whatever I want to do without any thought of sin or repentance. But, in truth we can say

that Fr. Steven knew what genuine love was. Several times he described to me the almost palpable awareness of God's embracing love that-even as a child-he would experience when leaving the church after Mass and in particular on the day of his confirmation. Fr. Steven insistently believed that God loved him personally even when he couldn't-and even when he stopped trying-to "feel" it. He doggedly maintained his conviction-sometimes against all external evidence-that "everything is about love and...salvation through it." Furthermore, he really believed that God's love was not his own possession to stockpile but that having received it as a gift he also received with it the mandate-not the suggestion, but the mandate-that that love be made present to everyone and everything within the scope of his life. Some people imagine that if love is to be genuine it should be mostly spontaneous and effortless, but Fr. Steven knew that true love in this world is born of struggle. And he did struggle passionately-even violently-to be faithful to the bonds of God's love as it has been revealed to us (and in the only way a true Christian can choose to understand it)-in the cross of Jesus Christ. Recently, Fr. Steven concluded a note with these words: "Our life is not in poetics or nice theology but in the brutal necessity of our surrender to the cross...what else matters? It was signed, "Your struggling co-worker Steven." That our co-worker Fr. Steven was a genuine shepherd of God's flock is revealed in the following words in which he reflects on his short but intense pastoral experience:

Being a priest is about being in the business of love. I do not have to worry about saving my parishioners (God will save them). I do not have to worry about them coming to services (those may not save [anyone] at all). I do, however, have to be concerned about loving the people God has given me. I do have to be concerned about showing them the love of God-the face of Christ. And, therefore, I do have to be concerned about prayer and reading the Scripture. For if I do not pray, I know that I will be less inclined to act out of love and more inclined to act out of self-will. If I do not pray and read, I know I will be more susceptible to despair and less willing to rejoice in the cross. If I do not turn to God in prayer and in Scripture my life will ultimately become hollow and barren even though I am his priest.

He continued:

Some of this may seem self-evident, and it is, but it's difficult to remember [it] when we are working in our parishes and feeling disregarded or even hurt by our parishioners. We are promised a cross in the Christian life, and as a priest I am pretty certain that means I am to be crucified by those whom I am called to love. But I do not have it in myself, I do not have the power, to flee from judgment, resentment, and anger when I am being crucified, if I am being crucified alone. And I know [that] I will feel alone if I have not made the effort to find myself in God, to pray to him, to read his word, to love his cross and find his peace.

These are the words of a true pastor, a man willing to take up his cross for the sake of love. Fr. Steven often shared good quotes that he found and he sent this one recently: "Fortunate is the man who is broken and offered to others, who is poured out and given to others to drink. When his time of trial comes, he will not be afraid. He will have nothing to fear. He will have understood that in the celebration of love, by grace, man is broken and not divided, eaten yet never consumed." Fr. Steven is that fortunate man today. His time of trial has come, he is no longer afraid. His life has been offered to God. When Fr. Steven was ordained only a short time ago, he stood in the middle of the church covered-as are our gifts of bread and wine-by the aer. He lived out that sacrificial image in the all-too-brief lifetime that followed, and he lies here before us today with his face-his own personality, so to speak-shrouded with that same aer, yet holding in his hands the Holy Gospel and the cross by which God's own face is revealed to the world. We pray that God in his love will find Fr. Steven's life to be an acceptable offering inasmuch as it truly reflected the one and only offering that can be acceptable to God-the broken body and shed blood of his beloved son, Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, as the routines and details of our earthly relationship with Fr. Steven gradually recede from our day-to-day reality, let us continue to hold him in our hearts and in our minds. May God's word to us through him abide in our hearts and make him present there. Let us never think of Fr Steven without thinking of the way he was determined to both rejoice in and to manifest God's love. Better still, let us follow Fr. Steven's example. Let us struggle-even violently- to be receptive to the life-giving love of God, let us accept the mandate to love one another and extend that love to the poor and needy, to the outcast and the downtrodden, and even to our enemies. Let us each willingly embrace the "brutal necessity of our surrender to the cross." And if we take up this struggle more fervently today, tomorrow, and the next day, one day at a time, until the day on which we each lie where he lies now (as we inevitably will), then, by our struggle-even unto death-we will have said our resounding "Amen." to the word that God has spoken to us through the life and death of HIS servant, the Priest Steven. May his memory be eternal!

Updated: 21 September 2003