Cakes

Her thoughts were always for Elias. She could already feel like seeing the young boy as a priest; she felt like receiving gifts of wheat, little urns of wine plugged with flowers, pies and gattos¹ that friends would give as presents to the new priest.

(from the novel *Elias Portolu*, 1903)

In Barbaricine society, where a son was a treasure because he could work in the country or look after the animals, the family where a son was consecrated to God, leaving therefore the family work, was compensated by the community that recognized their sacrifice in several ways.

On the other hand, a priest was necessary to take care of all the souls; therefore, it was as if the community of that village somehow had to get out of debt with that family, above all with the mother, who had offered her son as a present to the whole community.

This is this sense in which we should read the wait of Aunt Annedda – Elias Portolu’s mother – who well knows that, if her son is to become a priest, her house will be full of delicacy.

¹ Cake from Nuoro, made of almonds, sugar, and honey.