

Easter Celebrations

Written by admin
Monday, 08 August 2011 07:11 -

The celebration of Easter is the celebration of the triumph of life over death.

It is dedicated to the honour of Christ who gave his life for the sins of men, so that they can have eternal life. Christians commemorate Good Friday as the day that Jesus Christ died and Easter Sunday as the day that He was resurrected.

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Many Christian festivals including Easter, Christmas day have a pagan origin. The word Easter may come from *Eostre*, the Anglo-Saxon name of a Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility.

Easter is celebrated in many different ways in the world. For many Christians, Easter is preceded by the period of Lent, which is fixed from 40 days before. Lent is a period of preparation for Easter and a time to strengthen one's faith through repentance and prayer. Lent has been observed with periods of fasting, abstinence from meat, dairy products, wine, etc.; and other penitential activities. It is a modern custom for Christians to "give up something for Lent" such as a favorite food, pleasure, or activity. Traditionally Catholics do not take meat on Good Friday.

One week before Easter is Palm Sunday which commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem where he was covered with palms by the multitudes. The Tuesday before is Shrove Tuesday which is a time for confession and absolution, Ash Wednesday derives its name from the custom of marking the foreheads of penitents with ashes on that day, and Maudy Thursday (or Holy Thursday) developed from *maunde*, Christ's injunction to love one another and the day celebrates the Last Supper and the ceremony of the washing of the feet.

Good Friday illustrates good in the sense of a holy day. It may be the oldest Christian celebration, with its name possibly a corruption of "God's Friday."

Easter celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus. That morning, according to the Gospel of Luke, Mary Magdalene and some companions visited the cave where He was buried, but they found the tomb empty. An Angel of the Lord appeared and told them that Jesus had risen. In the following days, Jesus appeared to His disciples and explained the meaning of His death (for the sins of mankind) and His victory over death, which offered the promise of rebirth for those who

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believe in Him

Many western countries have the tradition where children are told that the Easter bunny left them baskets of candy. People also decorate and hide Easter eggs in various places and family members can have fun going out for Easter "egg hunts". The custom of an Easter egg hunt began because children believed that hares laid eggs in the grass. The Romans believed that "All life comes from an egg." Many people consider eggs to be "the seed of life" and so they are symbolic of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Kenya Easter is usually marked by feasting and family gatherings. Many who have close relatives in the rural areas arrange to visit, while some visit hotels and other fun places for a good time.

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