

Father's Notes

April 20, 2025

Easter is the greatest of our Christian feast days. Our whole faith rests upon it. More than anything else Jesus ever did or said, his being raised from the dead was the event that changed human history. That event produced a shockwave that brought the Good News about his Resurrection all the way here to our spot here on the globe (6779 miles distance...I checked online!).

So, if it's all about Jesus' Resurrection, how did bunnies, eggs and such come to be part of our Easter experience? If it's about the empty tomb that once held a lifeless body of our savior, why is there a giant, creepy bunny-thing at the mall to whom parents take their children to be photographed? For one thing, the bunnies and eggs point to this time of year, spring. Spring, eggs, flowers and bunnies all speak to the notion of new life. And new life, well that's what Easter is about.

In Spanish we call it "la Pascua", which resembles the word Passover (Hebrew, Pesach; Greek, Pascha; Latin, Paschæ), and of course we make a strong association between Easter and the Passover event described in the Book of Exodus.

But what about the English word "Easter"? Our English language has two principal parent-languages: Latin-based (Romance) languages and Germanic-languages. The word Easter has proto-Germanic origins. We learn from the 8th century monk, St. Bede, that the month Eostrumonath, celebrated in parts of northern Europe, and named after a pagan goddess, Ēostre, came to be 'Christianized' and associated with the celebration of Jesus' Resurrection (see *De temporum ratione*). For Christians, Easter is entirely about Jesus' Resurrection, but the old name remains. I suspect one might have to go to someplace like the Fremont neighborhood to celebrate Eostrumonath the pre-Christian way!

Let not the messiness of history and the amalgamations born from it fool us: the candy, the Easter-egg hunts, etc. Ultimately, it's all about Jesus who was raised from the dead. Everything that has any meaning points to that.

It's no secret that Easter brings a good number of visitors and those who are only occasional church-goers. Welcome. We're so glad you're here. Know that this is your home and all we do is made more beautiful because you are. I ask you to prayerfully give attention to that gentle nudging within you, perhaps calling you to consider if this is the time to begin to re-engage. Maybe it starts by simply joining us on Sundays for a couple months or to get involved otherwise. Regardless, you are welcome here. You may have deep questions to sort through. Let us help. We'll do our best. Happy Easter!



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