

Year 2 - R.E. - Easter

What is Easter celebrating?

The festival of Easter celebrates the resurrection from the dead of Jesus, three days after he was executed. The Easter story is at the heart of Christianity.

Who do Christians believe Jesus was?

Christians believe that Jesus was the chosen one, the saviour, who through his death on the cross and resurrection, restored the relationship between God and humans and allowed people to get forgiveness for their sins.

Palm Sunday	It is the first day of Holy Week and celebrates Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Crowds of people came out of the city to greet him, throwing down palm branches on the road.	In most countries this day is celebrated with religious processions with crosses made with palm leaves or other plants to remind of how Jesus was greeted when he arrived in Jerusalem and what came after.
Maundy Thursday	On Maundy Thursday Christians remember when Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples, breaking bread and drinking wine, which is now known as the Last Supper. The word 'maundy' comes from the command (mandate) given by Jesus at the Last Supper, that we should love one another. He demonstrated this by washing the feet of the disciples - something a servant would normally do. You can read this story in the Bible in John Ch.13v1-15	Many Christians remember this by sharing bread and wine together in a service called Holy Communion, Eucharist or Mass. It is a reminder that Jesus sacrificed his life for mankind. Roman Catholic church services include a ceremony in which the priest washes the feet of 12 people to commemorate Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples.
Good Friday	Good Friday is the Friday before Easter Sunday. It commemorates the execution of Jesus by crucifixion.	Good Friday is a day of mourning in church. During special Good Friday services Christians remember Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, and what this means for their faith. In some countries, there are special Good Friday processions, or re-enactments of the Crucifixion.
Easter Sunday	Easter Sunday marks Jesus' resurrection. After Jesus was crucified on the Friday (now known as Good Friday), his body was taken down from the cross, and buried in a cave tomb. On the Sunday, Mary Magdalene, followed later by some of Jesus' disciples visited the tomb and found that the stone had been moved, and that Jesus' body had gone. Jesus showed himself to Mary and the disciples that day, and for forty days afterwards by many people.	Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the most important Christian festival, and the one celebrated with the greatest joy. The date of Easter changes each year, and several other Christian festivals fix their dates by reference to Easter. Churches are filled with flowers, and there are special hymns and songs.

Key Vocabulary

The Messiah/Christ - the Hebrew and Greek word for 'the chosen one'.

Mass - is the most important act of worship for Christians, a special mass is held at Easter.

Passover - is a Jewish festival to remember how the children of Israel left slavery behind them when they were led out of Egypt by Moses over 3000 years ago.

Crucifixion - a way of executing someone by nailing them to the cross and leaving them to die.

Resurrection - when someone comes back to life after their death.

Easter Eggs - Easter eggs are special chocolate eggs that people give to celebrate Easter. They represent new life.

