



What do eggs and bunnies have to do with the Resurrection?

April 2019 'Faithful Questions' Seminar
Deacon Ken Crawford



YES!

(More accurately: More than you might think.)

Session overview

- Lenten confusions
- Obviously Christian
- Name of “Easter”
- Eggs/baby chicks
- Bunnies
- Lilies/flowers
- Date of Easter



Lenten confusions

- Researching all of the symbols of Easter, I found a lot of Lenten symbols mixed in.
- Remember: Many Protestants don't use our Liturgical Year
- Here are some examples
 - Ashes
 - Palm branch
 - Cross
 - Although this can be proper if specifically “Empty Cross”
 - Hot Cross Buns
 - Pretzels



Obviously Christian symbols

- Lamb -> Jesus is the Lamb of God
- Empty Cross -> Christ's victory over death
- Candles -> The light of Christ
- Empty Tomb -> Resurrection



The name “Easter”

- Nobody really knows where it comes from
- Eostre – Pagan Goddess of the Spring
 - Anglo-Saxon
- Ostara – Norse Goddess of the Spring
- Word for Easter is different in non Germanic languages
 - Spanish/Italian: Pascua
 - French: Pâques
 - Filipino: Pasko ng Pagkabuhay
 - Russian: Paskha
 - Swedish: Påsk
 - Turkish: Paskalya
- “Pasca” is related to the word Passover



Easter Eggs

- In times past, fasting and abstinence was an all-Lent-long activity
- In times past “No meat” meant
 - No Meat
 - No Dairy
 - No Oil
 - No Wine
- Eggs are Dairy
- Think about how many eggs a chicken would lay during 40 days that go uneaten
- Baby Chicks: Think about what time of year you might decide to let some eggs germinate for your future chickens



Easter Bunny

- Rabbits have been associated with Mary since early Christianity
 - Many Greeks believe hares could reproduce without losing virginity
- ‘Three Hares’ icon dates to middle ages
 - Adopted as Trinitarian image



Easter Lilies

- Been a symbol of purity since Temple of Solomon (1000 BC)
- Bible references
 - “King Solomon brought Hiram from Tyre. He was a bronze worker ... He came to King Solomon and did all his metal work. He fashioned two bronze columns, ... The capitals on top of the columns (in the porch) were made like lilies, four cubits high.” (1 Kings 7:13-19)
 - I will be like the dew for Israel: he will blossom like the lily; He will strike root like the Lebanon cedar, and his shoots will go forth. (Hosea 14:6-7)
 - Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the (lilies) grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. (Mt. 6:28-29 – See also Luke 12:27)
- Christian mythology
 - They grew in the Garden of Gethsemane after Jesus sweat blood there
 - Originated in the Garden of Eden where teardrops of Eve fell as she was expelled from the garden



Date of Easter

- Tied to date of Passover
 - 15th day of the month of Nisan in Jewish Calendar
 - Jewish Calendar is Lunar not Solar
- After switch to solar/Julian calendar, date for Easter was “simplified”
- Modified again after switch to Gregorian Calendar
 - First Sunday after...
 - First full moon after...
 - Spring Equinox (Really March 21th)
- Date range:
 - March 22st when March 21st is a full moon the following day is a Sunday (next time: 2285)
 - April 25th when March 20th and April 18th are full moons and April 18th is a Sunday, so the following Sunday is Easter (next time: 2038)



Next month

- Back to 3rd Tuesday – May 21st
- 7:30 PM in the Morris Hall
 - As always
- Topic
 - Pre-submitted Q&A topics (hopefully 10ish questions, 5 minutes each)
- Future
 - Next year
 - 2nd Tuesdays
 - Starts September 10th, 2019
 - Always looking for suggestions for more topics
 - Interested in changes in style, format, etc. for next year
 - Considering more advice based sessions (as opposed to theological topics)



Materials

- <http://deaconken.org>
- Slides available on blog
- Check <http://deaconken.org/blog>
- Audio/Video may be available at a later date.

