



# WHICH CAME FIRST?



## A Look at Easter's Holy and Worldly Symbols

The original Easter color was red, representing the **COLORS** blood of Christ. Today's Church Easter color is white. Hello pastels! Our wardrobes and our M&Ms take on a lighter, less saturated hue at this time of year.

Rabbits are a symbol of fertility and new life. Although not mentioned in the Gospel, it is likely these were borrowed from springtime pagan celebrations as symbols for Easter in the early days of Christianity.

The Easter Bunny spreads joy (and candy) to children by delivering decorated eggs and other gifts. If you bite into a chocolate bunny this year you won't be alone -- 90 million are produced each year.

At Easter, eggs represent Jesus' resurrection. In the 1200s, eggs were forbidden during Lent, so people would decorate them to mark the end of fasting and eat them at Easter.

Eggs have long been linked to pagan celebrations of spring (much like the rabbit). Today, the most popular Easter egg traditions include egg hunts and egg rolls.

Lilies were growing in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus went to pray in his final days.

Daffodils, tulips, and lilies bloom around Easter marking the coming of spring (and allergies!).

Jesus' death is likened to the sacrificial lamb of Passover. Jesus is often called the "Lamb of God."

Lamb is a traditional Easter dish, served as a main course or as a lamb-shaped cake for dessert.

The Paschal candle is lit to remind us Jesus is the light of the world.

Candles are lit to remember loved ones or those who are suffering.

The life cycle of the butterfly is a symbol of the Pascal Mystery: symbolizing Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Butterflies have long symbolized renewal or rebirth. There are about 15,000 to 20,000 species of butterflies worldwide.

The cross is the most well-known symbol of Christianity, although not originally understood by others. Some mocked it and said it was silly, but for Christians it represents the power of Jesus' triumph and resurrection.

The cross was used as a device of torture and painful public execution in ancient Roman times. Crucifixion was intended to not only kill its victim, but to terrorize those who were a witness to the brutal and inhumane act.

