

How
blessed
is this
night,

When
EARTH
AND
HEAVEN
ARE JOINED,

AND
MAN IS
RECONCILED
TO GOD.

OPEN, EASTER 1974
Associated Parishes



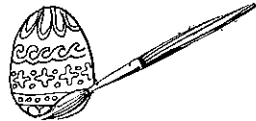
Prime Time

EASTERTIDE

&

"COLORED

EGGS"



by the Rev. Samuel E. West, D. D.
Trinity Parish, Marshall, Michigan

"Some human beings are fortunate enough to be able to color eggs on Easter. If you have a pair of hands to hold the eggs, or if you are fortunate enough to be able to see the brilliant colors, then you are twice blessed.

"This Easter some of us cannot hold the eggs, others of us cannot see the colors, many of us are unable to move at all - and so it will be necessary to color eggs in our hearts.

"This Easter there is a hydrocephalic child lying very still in a hospital bed nearby with a head the size of his pillow and vacant, unmoving eyes, and he will not be able to color Easter eggs, and he will not be able to color Easter eggs in his heart, and so God will have to color eggs for him.

"And God will color eggs for him. You can bet your life and the life of the created universe on that.

"At the cross of Calvary God reconsecrated and sanctified wood and nails and absurdity and helplessness to be continuing vehicles of his love. And then he simply raised Jesus from the dead. Any they both went home and colored eggs."

*("Way of the Wolf - by Martin Bell)
Seabury Press*

"The technical term for Easter in the ancient Church was Pascha, a Greek word derived from the Hebrew pesakh or 'Passover.' Our English name for the feast is borrowed from pagan festivals of Anglo-Saxons in honor of their goddess of spring, Eostre. Although the Jewish Passover celebration lasted but one week, the early Christians extended their observance over the whole 50-day period to and including Pentecost. The season was considered a commemoration not only of the Resurrection, but also of all 'those mighty acts' by which our Lord brought redemption to men -- the new Passover from the bondage of sin and our assurance of new life and eternal victory in the Kingdom of God.

"Only in the 4th century did the 50-day Eastertide begin to be viewed as a series of historical commemorations, in chronological sequence, and the events of the Resurrection, Ascension, and Gift of the Spirit become more definitely distinguished.

"The Christian calendar stems directly from that of Judaism. The oldest Jewish festivals were related to the movements of the heavenly planets and the seasons of nature, but after the Babylonian exile Jewish leaders reinterpreted their Calendar as a series of historical commemorations of significant events in the life of the people of God. Past experiences of God's mighty acts, of His extraordinary redemptive activity among His people were annually relived and renewed, so that their benefits might be continually made effective in the present." (In other words, part of the profound meaning of anamnesis.)

"Three Jewish observances were adopted by the Church from the very earliest days, and transformed and charged with new meaning. Passover and Pentecost were the two poles of one continuous 50-day period celebrating God's ultimate redemptive activity through the death and resurrection of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

"The weekly observance of the Sabbath (Saturday) was also continued by the

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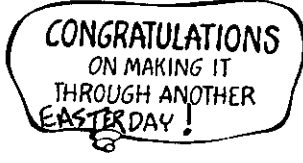


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EDITOR'S COMMENT:

The event of Easter, its message within our lives, the power of the Easter Vigil ---- this is the content of this issue of OPEN. The service from Celebrations of Life now on sale by Seabury Press brings to all of us suggestions from the life of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Parish, Washington, D.C. The parish working-edition is also available to all new members of Associated Parishes, and to old members as well --- see the offer. Our next edition of OPEN will have an article on the Initiation Rites by Daniel Stevick as well as a paper on non-stipendiary clergy. Be sure and read carefully the Prime Time article supplied by Sam West and of course the Punch cartoon is a delight, and a definite reminder that a previous age, for all of its up and down-stairs antics, did not spare the humor or the insight that allows us today the same freedom of commentary regarding church, society and ourselves.

PAGE 2.

NOVEMBER 9, 1878.]

PUNCH,



A FELLOW-FEELING.

Old Lady (to young Curate who has obtained preferment, and is about to leave). "WE'RE MAIN SORRY TO LOSE YOU, SIR. YOU'VE BEEN VERY GOOD TO US OLD PEOPLE. YOU MIGHT 'A' BEEN A OLD WOMAN YOURSELF, SIR!!"

What we need in the United States... is love and wisdom and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice toward those who still suffer within our own country. RFK

Easter Week & "Baked Eggs"

Church; but already in apostolic times it had begun to be supplanted, in the Gentile mission churches, by the liturgical assemblies on 'the first day of the week' -- Sunday (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:2, Colossians 2:16, Acts 20:7). And whereas the Sabbath in Judaism was essentially a day of rest from labor as well as a time for corporate worship, in the Church Sunday was not a holiday from work -- a thing impossible for Gentiles living in a pagan society -- but the day par excellence for the celebration of the Eucharist.

"The assembly would last throughout the evening (cf. Acts 20:7ff), towards day-break; before dispersing to their several labors, they would break bread together in the Eucharist. After the synagogue assemblies were closed to Christian participation...the Saturday evening 'vigil' followed by early Sunday morning Eucharist naturally continued as a fixed custom. The Church soon found a justification for its 'Sunday' observance as a memorial (*anamnesis*) of the resurrection on the first day of the week, every Sunday becoming a 'little Easter,' and called by the Christians 'The Lord's Day' (cf. Revelation 1:10)." (*The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary*, 1950)

Three reasons for citing the above are: 1) the growth in some Episcopal churches, and in other Communion, of Saturday night celebrations of Eucharist as befitting "The Lord's Day," some of them found to be more convenient and effective than Sunday mornings; 2) the restoration of the Easter Vigil, beginning Easter Eve as an annual festival, stemming from the priority of Saturday-Sunday; 3) the Church has historically maintained the daily and weekly rhythm of day-night, after the Jewish-biblical view, that the new day begins the night before with sunset. Hence the long tradition of the "First Vespers" of Sunday. Those distressed a bit by Saturday night and Easter Eve celebrations should find the proposed rites as restoratives or renewals, not novelties, to re-capture more of the strength of the great Tradition.

In the rationale for proposed rites, "The restoration of the concept of the 'great 50 days' is one of the principal features

of the revision. The season begins with the dramatic ceremonies of the Lighting of the Paschal Candle and the Vigil (not provided for in the 1928 revision). The privileged character of all the days of Easter Week is marked by an individual proper for each day of the week. But the octave has been eliminated by dating the Sundays according to the season and not 'after' Easter Day itself. Hence, what was formerly the First Sunday after Easter is now the Second Sunday of Easter, and so on. The principle resurrection narratives have been spread over the first three Sundays, and the traditional "Good Shepherd Sunday" is now the Fourth of the season. The rest of the Sundays take up the Gospels from the Johannine discourse, with the 'high-priestly' prayer of our Lord on the Seventh Sunday. The Day of Pentecost is now included within the season as its proper (and ancient climax)." (*The Church Year, Prayer Book Studies* 19)

Many parishes have found it increasingly difficult to provide a truly effective long Lent. As an alternative, concentration, after Ash Wednesday, is made upon the events of Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, with special emphasis upon Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Eve, and Easter Day. In addition, it may now be possible to provide, as a partner to *Holy Week*, a "*Resurrection Week*." This adjusted planning also signifies a healthy balance between the suffering-discipline side of Holy Week and the celebrating-triumphant side of Easter Week.

Too often Easter has ended with Easter Day, obvious testimonies being the common let-down symbolized in "Low Sunday" and the post-Easter Day "break" often taken by clergy (however much needed.) The planning of post-Easter Day celebrative events in a parish, simple but joyful and illuminative might help certify the seasonal aspect and restore a better conviction that, by Jesus' "cross and passion and his mighty resurrection" our redemption has been achieved and we may, as the People of God, make visible our appropriation of it by responsive faith

Continue →

and liturgy. While it is hard to fight the culture that maintains only a Christmastide holiday syndrome, the Christian Community might give its witness by liturgical and extra-liturgical parties and celebrative events.

Easter tide + "Colored Eggs" cont.

The observance of Easter "sunrise" outdoor services and meals are certainly not out of line -- in climates that provide a tolerable environment -- when one considers the historic relationship with nature. Redemption and salvation by God includes his whole cosmic order so all that is in order. However, as ecumenical or inter-denominational celebrations are engaged in, the historic Church should not be ashamed to confess its faith of Christ crucified and risen, and our risen life in Christ, by the Eucharistic celebration and witness.

Some Episcopalians seem timid about offering the Eucharist at moments when non-Eucharistic Christians might be present. This is true of other liturgical events such as Burial and Marriage events, as if it were wrong to celebrate Eucharist in the Crucifixion-Resurrection sense. "They might not understand." However, this writer, as a parish priest, has found that "they" have an intuitive respect for the historic liturgical mode of Eucharist, many coming to ask questions as a result.

"Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast" is an Easter Day Canticle in the 1928 Prayer Book (p. 162); it is an every-Sunday proclamation in services for Trial Use, 1st and 2nd Services, re-emphasizing The Easter Character of the Lord's Day each week.

#3.

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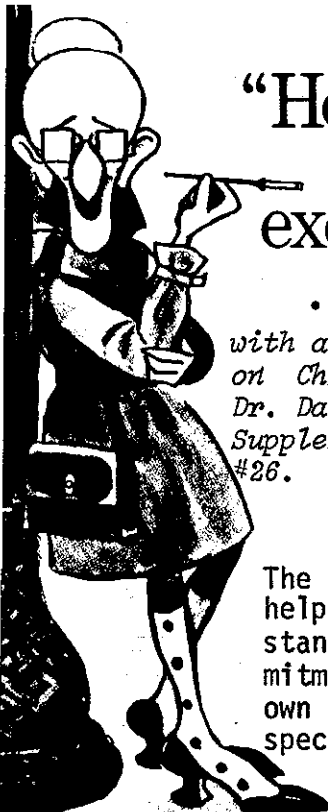
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#2.

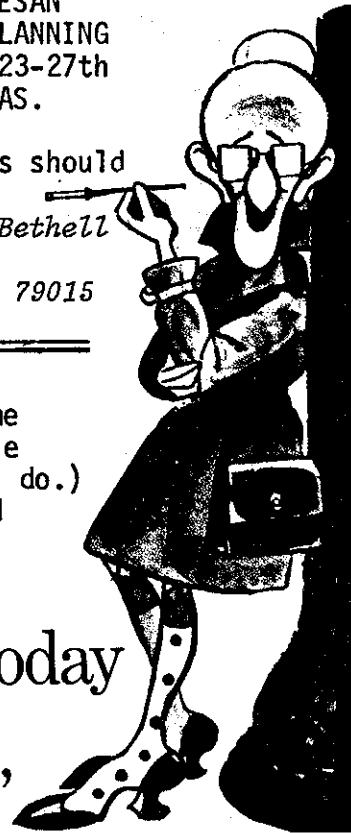
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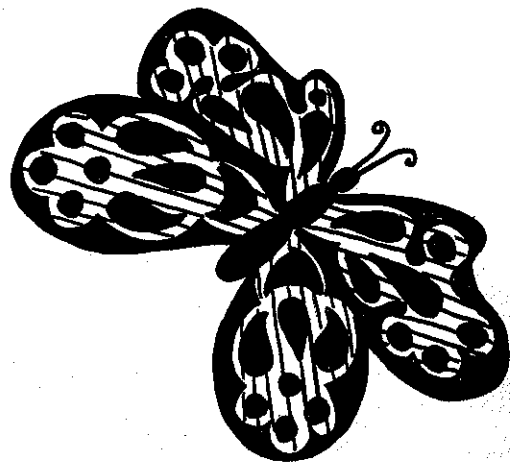


the pages that follow are
taken from Celebrations of
Life, Seabury Press, 1974.

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parish working/edition is
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Easter



Eve



Alleluia!

The Lord
is risen!

He
is risen
indeed!

Alleluia!



ritual

The Easter Even service, parts of which come to us from the days of the apostles, is a great historical pageant, rich in symbolism, destined to capture the whole sweep of God's saving acts in history, and to involve the people in the total experience of Christ's resurrection. That one event of resurrection overpowered the rest of Jesus' ministry and made real the life and teachings of Jesus the Son of God. Christ was the new paschal lamb, leading not only Israel but all people into the freedom of being the children of God.

heritage

resurrection

Through the celebration of this Easter vigil, the Church is able to use its most ancient and sacred ritual, to dramatize and bring alive the experience of coming out of the darkness of sin and death into the newness of life with God. The Church identifies with its own historical roots and allows its heritage to be in dialogue with the contemporary experience.

roots

In a culture where so many people are looking for their roots, looking for a place to belong, the Easter vigil service captures a sense of wonder about the past, where present realities can blend with 2000 years of the building up of Christ's Church.

**Christ... the new paschal lamb,
leading all people into freedom.**

a solemn and
sacred moment —
a live with excitement
... past, present, and
future, uniquely
united...

We followed very closely the traditional order of this service as it was set down in the Holy Week manual. However, through the choice of readers and songs we tried to lift up some aspects of our own parish history and put them in the context of this great historic ritual.

We also planned carefully the movement of the service, so that activities took place in various parts of the sanctuary. There were pre-Easter workshops to prepare decorations, and Holy Saturday was used to complete them, as well as to clean the church. Everyone was invited to wear bright festal clothes, and to bring bells for ringing and champagne for celebrating.

It is a solemn and sacred moment. But it is also a moment alive with excitement -- the excitement of participating with those who are dear to you in a ritual that has been passed down by Christians throughout centuries, the excitement of feeling uniquely united with those who have gone before, with those who are present now, with those who in the future will celebrate the feast of the resurrection. Easter Even is the beginning of a new life, of a new spirit that is kindled and nourished by the flame of an ancient and sacred ritual.

What
we
did:

We came in late evening to the church that had been polished and cleaned and decorated during the day and that now lay in darkness awaiting the good news of the resurrection.



friends greeted each other in the dark

The service itself was divided into four parts: the service of light, the liturgy of the word, baptism and baptismal renewal, and the Eucharistic celebration of the resurrection.

with

We gathered outside the church, and it was here that we first felt the tension between the solemnity of the moment and the undercurrent of excitement that was beginning to build. As friends greeted each other in the dark with a whispered "Happy Easter!", a feeling of warmth and expectancy drew us together.

a whispered:



"Happy Easter"

Happy Easter!

"Happy Easter"

* * ORDER OF THE CELEBRATION * *


The people and the priest

* gather in the Lord's name *

We began the _____ the Church.
_____ continuing life of
with the lighting _____ renewal and
of the new fire _____ symbolizing the
from a flint -



Paschal Candle - symbol of the resurrected Christ.


From this fire
the Paschal
Candle was
lit - symbol
of the
resurrected
Christ.
With
the candle
leading the

procession

as the pillar of fire once led
the Israelites,

we moved into
the darkened church. *

darkness into

During the procession, the
candles of those gathered were
lit from the Paschal candle,
creating a dramatic sense of
the people of God passing from
darkness to light with Christ.

light

Also through this action of
lighting our candles, we were
reminded that we are entrusted
with Christ's light and
commissioned to share it and
pass it on to others.

When the procession reached the altar, the Paschal candle was placed on its stand and the deacon sang the Exultet - that most ancient of Christian hymns that praises and celebrates the glory of Easter night. At the end of the Exultet, all but the Paschal candle were extinguished and put aside.

the deacon
sang
the Exultet

✠ proclaim & respond to the word of God ✠

The liturgy of the word began with prophecies read in darkness from various places in the sanctuary to continue the sense of movement and activities emerging from the shadows. The first was from Genesis 1:1 - 2:2 which brought to our minds once again the wonderful work of God in creation. We responded to the reading with the song, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands".

prophecies
were read
in
darkness

The second reading, Exodus 14:15 - 15:1, proclaimed safe passage

the air
was alive
with
anticipation and
immediacy

through the Red Sea - symbolizing both baptism and liberation. We responded with "Go Down, Moses", a liberation song of special meaning to our community. Throughout the readings and songs a sense of urgency had been building, so that the air was alive with anticipation and immediacy.

With the reading Ezekiel 36: 24--28, and God's promise to create a new heart and spirit, it seemed as if the excitement could no longer be contained. At this point, all the lights in the church blazed on, and there was a moment of wonder at the splendor of decorations and at the beauty of persons seen for the first time in full light. The organ began to thunder "Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia!"

Bells were ringing, we sang, we danced,

we hugged each other, we were confronted with the impact of our

risen Lord — the overwhelming Good News.

* Baptism & baptismal renewal *

re-affirming Christian

The service continued building on the intensity of the moment. The Epistle, the Gospel: "He is not here. He is risen...Go and tell..." The sermon focussed our thinking on the meaning of the resurrection, and prepared us for the feast of

V
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water, baptism. If possible, we try to have an adult baptized, so that everyone can identify with the newly-baptized in re-affirming their Christian vows. This was a time of great celebration as we rejoiced with those being baptized and as we renewed our own commitments.

At the peace, all were invited to come forward and have the sign of the cross placed on their foreheads as a special blessing. We moved around the altar and made eucharist, the first Easter feast. We celebrated with champagne and bread the victory of our risen Lord. To the sound of popping corks, the celebration went on and on and on....

We celebrated
with champagne
and bread
the victory
of our risen Lord.

What
it
meant
to us :

Easter Even is unquestionably the most dynamic service of our year. Of course, it comes at the end of Holy Week during which we have physically and spiritually lived through the passion and death of our Lord. On Good Friday we are emptied out, spent, and at the same time relieved that the agony is over. But Easter Even moves us from the moment of "It is finished" to the triumphant Alleluia! It is the time when we are filled to overflowing by the Spirit. When we come to life again, filled with the life and love of the risen Christ, we are lifted up - exultantly.

We seem to live more intensely in this moment than in all others. By focussing in on the meaning of our existence and faith, we renew our lives at their very depths. We are allowed to use words, songs, actions, in a service that is rich in its tradition and symbolism.

Fire, light, water, bread,
wine, allow us to deepen
our lives and our faith; to
understand our
commitments to God and to
each other.

Helpful hints:

3. Most importantly, let the sense of wonder and awe at this most ancient of services do the talking. This service naturally draws people closer together.

1. The Easter Even service may be found in several places. Any good Holy Week manual will contain one;

Missal is very good. Roman

— see also Masses, Shepherd's book on Holy Week.

2. The Exultet is very long; many felt it would have had more impact had it been shortened.

4. If a night-time service is a problem for you, refer to our Pentecost service in this book for a brief discussion of that subject.

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