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*Then the other disciple  
also went in, the one who  
had arrived at the tomb  
first, and he saw  
and believed.*

JOHN 20:8

## With Mouths Wide Open

**W**e normally speak of “eyes wide open,” an experience of seeing and understanding. However, Easter is a time of total astonishment, of standing before mystery with our mouths wide open and not understanding. Even the closest followers of Jesus were dumbfounded. Mary Magdalene didn’t expect to find an empty tomb. Upon seeing it, she presumed that the body had been stolen. The Gospel says that “they did not yet understand” (John 20:9). How could they? The magnitude of the mystery was overwhelming.

When did they finally understand? Actually, it’s more a question of believing than understanding. The Gospel tells us that they came to believe. They came to believe in him—not that he would conquer death by not

dying, but that he would conquer it by dying and then being transformed into a new kind of life, a kind of living that isn’t subject to death. They came to believe this through an experience of him.

We might envy the early followers who had Easter experiences of Jesus. But if we look carefully we will see that they experienced him in their everyday lives—in community gatherings, in the breaking of the bread. These are the very places where we can experience him in our own lives. The good news of Jesus’ resurrection isn’t just that we shall die and go home with him, but that he is risen and comes home with us.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

### FOR Reflection

- \* Be astonished today at how much God loves you. Think of the ways this is evident in your life.
- \* He is not dead. He is with us. Where in your life are you touched by this mystery?

# Dear Padre,

## What's the origin of the word *Easter*? It's not mentioned in the Bible. Wouldn't a better name be Resurrection Sunday?

**E**xperts trace Easter back to Old-English meanings associated with *Eostre*, the goddess of spring and fertility. Others point to the German word for east, which is derived from the Latin word for dawn. Regardless, Christianity found new meaning in the ancient celebration of nature's rebirth during the spring equinox. This resurrection of new life over the dead of winter also pointed to Christ's resurrection from the dead at dawn.

Likewise, early Christians gave new meaning to ancient symbols of fertility, such as rabbits and eggs. For example, a hatching chick represented the risen Christ emerging from the shell of a tomb, and the Roman proverb *Omne vivum ex ovo* ("All life comes from an egg") symbolized the resurrection. Eggs, prohibited during the Lenten fast, were reintroduced at the Easter meal and shared as decorated gifts. In 1610, a prayer by Pope Paul V blessed the egg, "that it may become a wholesome sustenance to thy faithful servants, eating it in thankfulness to thee, on account of the resurrection of the Lord."

"Each week, on the day called the Lord's Day, [the Church] commemorates the Resurrection of the Lord, which she also celebrates once a year in the great Paschal Solemnity" (*The Roman Missal*, "Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar," 1). Thus, every Sunday—even those in Lent—is a Resurrection Sunday in celebration of Christ's triumph over death, which will include our own!



PAUL HASTON/SHUTTERSTOCK

—Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR  
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### WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

*Today however we see that our journey is not in vain. ... Why do you think that everything is hopeless, that no one can take away your own tombstones? Why do you give in to resignation and failure? Easter is the feast of tombstones taken away, rocks rolled aside.*

—EASTER VIGIL HOMILY, APRIL 20, 2019

## Calendar

### Monday

APRIL 13

Octave of Easter

Acts 2:14, 22–33

Mt 28:8–15

### Tuesday

APRIL 14

Octave of Easter

Acts 2:36–41

Jn 20:11–18

### Wednesday

APRIL 15

Octave of Easter

Acts 3:1–10

Lk 24:13–35

### Thursday

APRIL 16

Octave of Easter

Acts 3:11–26

Lk 24:35–48

### Friday

APRIL 17

Octave of Easter

Acts 4:1–12

Jn 21:1–14

### Saturday

APRIL 18

Octave of Easter

Acts 4:13–21

Mk 16:9–15

### Sunday

APRIL 19

Second Sunday

of Easter

(Sunday of Divine Mercy)

Acts 2:42–47

1 Pt 1:3–9

Jn 20:19–31

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