

В КОПИЛКУ УЧИТЕЛЯ

Let's Celebrate

This section contains the material devoted to the holidays celebrated in England in February – April: St Valentine's Day*, April Fool's Day* and Easter**. Teachers may find it useful for organising school celebrations in English.



*Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's Day
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window
To be your Valentine.*

*William Shakespeare
from "Hamlet", Act IV, Scene V*

Valentine's Day falls on February 14, and is the traditional day on which lovers in certain cultures let each other know about their love, commonly by sending valentine's cards, which are often anonymous. The history of Valentine's Day can be traced back to an obscure Catholic Church feast day, said to be in honor of Saint Valentine. The day's associations with romantic love arrived after the High Middle Ages.

The day is now most closely associated with the mutual exchange of love notes in the form of "valentines". Modern Valentine symbols include the heart-shaped outline and the figure of the winged Cupid. Starting in the 19th century, the practice of hand writing notes has largely given way to the exchange of mass-produced greeting cards. The Greeting Card Association estimates that, world-wide, approximately one billion valentine cards are sent each year, making the day the second largest card-sending holiday of the year behind Christmas. The association also estimates that women purchase approximately 85 percent of all valentines.

History of Valentine's Day*February fertility festivals*

The association of the middle of February with love and fertility dates to ancient times. In the calendar of Ancient Athens, the period between mid January and mid February was the month of Gamelion, which was dedicated to the sacred marriage of Zeus and Hera.

In Ancient Rome, the day of February 15 was Lupercalia, the festival of Lupercus, the god of fertility, who was represented as half-naked and dressed in goat skins. As part of the purification ritual, the priests of Lupercus would sacrifice goats to the god, and after drinking wine, they would run through the streets of Rome holding pieces of the goat skin above their heads, touching anyone they met. Young women especially would come forth voluntarily for the occasion, in the belief that being so touched would render them fruitful and bring easy childbirth.

According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1908), at least three different Saints Valentine, all of them martyrs and all

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quite obscure, are mentioned in the early martyrologies under the date of February 14:

- a priest in Rome who suffered martyrdom in the second half of the 3rd century and was buried on the Via Flaminia;
- a bishop of Interamna (modern Terni) also suffered martyrdom in the second half of the 3rd century and was also buried on the Via Flaminia, but in a different location than the priest;
- a martyr in North Africa, about whom little else is known.

The connection between St Valentine and romantic love is not mentioned in any early histories and is regarded by historians as purely a matter of legend. The feast of St Valentine was first declared to be on February 14 by Pope Gelasius I in 496. There is a widespread legend that he created the day to counter the practice held on Lupercalia of young men and women pairing off as lovers by drawing their names out of an urn, but this practice is not attested in any sources from that era.

In the 19th century, relics of St Valentine were donated by Pope Gregory XVI to the Whitefriar Street Carmelite Church in Dublin, Ireland, which has become a popular place of pilgrimage on February 14.

In 1969, as part of a larger effort to pare down the number of saint days of purely legendary origin, the Church removed St Valentine's Day as an official holiday from its calendar.

Valentinius

The influential Gnostic teacher *Valentinius* was a candidate for Bishop of Rome in 143. In his teachings, the marriage bed assumed a central place in his version of Christian love, an emphasis sharply in contrast with the asceticism of mainstream Christianity. Stephan A. Hoeller assesses Valentinius on the subject: "In addition to baptism, anointing, eucharist, the initiation of priests and the rites of the dying, the Valentinian Gnosis mentions prominently two great and mysterious sacraments called *redemption (apolytrosis)* and *bridal chamber* respectively".

Medieval era

The first recorded association of St Valentine's Day with romantic love was in the 14th century in England and France, where February 14 was traditionally the day on which birds paired off to mate. This belief is mentioned in

Geoffrey Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* (1381) that

"...for this was on seynt Volantynys day

Whan euery bryd comyth there to chese his mate."

In the following century, one of John Lydgate's minor poems is "A balade made... in wyse of chesing loues at Saint Valentynes day" which indicates that the manner of choosing was drawing lots. By the 17th century a valentine was extended to the gift given, some pretty token.

It was common during that era for lovers to exchange notes on this day and to call each other their "Valentines". A 14th century valentine is said to be in the collection of the British Library. It is probable that many of the legends about St Valentine were invented during this period. Among the legends are ones that assert that:

- On the evening before St Valentine was to be martyred for being a Christian, he passed a love note to his jailer's daughter which read, "From Your Valentine".
- During a ban on marriages of Roman soldiers by the Emperor Claudius II, St Valentine secretly helped arrange marriages.

In most versions of these legends, February 14 is the date associated with his martyrdom.

Valentine's Day in the USA

Valentine's Day was probably imported into North America in the 19th century with settlers from Britain. In the United States, the first mass-produced valentines of embossed paper lace were produced and sold shortly after 1847 by Esther A. Howland (1828–1904) of Worcester, Massachusetts. Her father operated a large book and stationery store, and she took her inspiration from an English valentine she had received. (Since 2001, the Greeting Card Association has been giving an annual "Esther Howland Award for a Greeting Card Visionary".)

In the United States in the second half of the 20th century, the practice of exchanging cards was extended to include the giving of all manner of gifts, usually from the man to the woman. Such gifts typically include roses and chocolate. Starting in the 1980s, the diamond industry began to promote Valentine's Day as occasion for the giving of fine jewelry.

The day has come to be associated with a generic platonic greeting of "Happy Valentine's Day".

Those without a significant other often speak with sarcasm by referring to Valentine's Day as Single's Awareness Day.



The Rose is Red

About the author

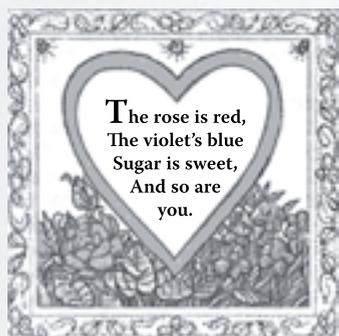
Carol Ryrle Brink was born in Moscow, Idaho, on December 28, 1895.

Carol loved living in Moscow, Idaho. She enjoyed the blue mountains, colourful wild flowers, and the great variety of birds. Since Moscow was a small town, everyone knew everyone else, and neighbours seemed more like family. Carol's father was so popular that he became the town's first mayor.

She had quite a few pets, including a pony. She loved to tell herself stories as she rode her pony in the hills of Moscow.

Carol went to college in Idaho and California. After she graduated, she married Raymond Brink.

Carol Ryrle Brink has written several books besides Caddie Woodlawn. However, Caddie Woodlawn is her favorite. In 1935, Carol won the John Newbery Medal for this book.



Caddie went back to school in February. She was glad to be back at school in time for Valentine's Day, because that was always fun. On that day most of the children exchanged comics, and the girls got pretty Valentine's greeting cards.

Tom had been thoughtful for several days before Valentine's Day.

"Caddie," he said, "I wish I had a silver dollar like you have! Why don't you spend it for Valentines?"

"A whole silver dollar for Valentines!" cried Caddie. She felt a little superior to Tom, because she knew that he could never save his money.

"Well, maybe not all of it," said Tom. "But you just ought to see the beauties they've got down at Dunnville store."

Caddie considered the matter. It did not occur to her that Tom was hinting at a loan. But she kept her dollar for so long that she had grown a little miserly. She had saved six pennies besides her silver dollar, and these she put in her pocket on February thirteenth. After school that day she started for the Dunnville store. Hetty and Warren went home across the fields. But where was Tom? He had been the first one out of the schoolhouse, and now he was nowhere to be seen. Caddie started running. As she came in sight of the Dunnville store, she saw a familiar figure disappearing into the back door. Tom! But why the back door? And why was Tom so mysterious these days?

Caddie went in and chose six penny comics. One for Tom, one for Warren, one for Hetty, and the rest for Maggie, Jane, and Lida. She was amazed at the sight of the most beautiful card that she had ever seen. It was all paper lace and roses and violets, and in the center of a pink heart was printed:

The rose is red,
The violet's blue,
Sugar is sweet,
And so are you.

Caddie was sorry that she had left her dollar at home. This was so beautiful! But she wouldn't know to whom to give it. She wasn't "sweet on" anybody.

"How much is it?" she asked the storekeeper just to satisfy her curiosity.

"Fifty cents," Mr Adams replied, "but I guess it's sold, Caddie. There's a young man in the back room here peeling potatoes to pay for it."

"Oh!" said Caddie. Now she knew. It was Tom! But was it for her, this lovely Valentine? It seemed impossible. Tom always gave her comics, and she thought them fun. Yet who was a better friend to Tom than she? No one, surely. She went home slowly, thinking. She knew that Tom wouldn't want anyone to know that he was peeling potatoes to earn a Valentine, so she locked his secret in her heart. It was the first secret she had ever known him to have from her.

The next day the schoolhouse was full of whispering. Miss Parker tried to keep what order she could. Valentine's Day only came once a year.

Mysterious envelopes kept appearing on desks; children were excited.

Caddie hastily scanned her Valentines. She hadn't expected the "rose is red" one, but she couldn't stop looking to make sure. But it wasn't there. The comic ones were very funny, though, and there was a little bag of candy hearts from Sam Flusher. Altogether it was a good day.

Still the "rose is red" Valentine did not appear, and Caddie began to think that Tom had got tired of peeling potatoes before he had paid for it. Then, when they came in from afternoon recess, she saw it lying on Katie Hyman's desk. Katie saw it, too, and blushed. It was the first Valentine that she had had that day, because she was so shy that no one gave her penny comics. Her little slim fingers trembled as she opened it. Everybody who had gathered around said: "Oh!" because they recognized it as the best Valentine in the Dunnville Store. Katie turned it around and looked all over it, but there was no name on it anywhere. She was smiling more than they had ever seen her smile. Her eyes sparkled, almost as if they had tears in them. Caddie looked at Tom, but he was standing by the stove finishing an apple and talking with some of the boys, as if he had never heard of Valentines in his life.

After school Hetty was all excited.

"Caddie, did you see that great, big Valentine Katie Hyman got? Who do you suppose sent it? There wasn't any name, but I'm sure that Tom sent it. Don't you think so? I'm going to tell everybody so."

Caddie's heart jumped. If Hetty told, they would make Tom's life miserable.

"Why, Hetty," she said gaily. "Who put that in your head? You know Tom can't save a cent. Then how do you suppose he could buy the finest Valentine in the store without any money?"

"That's so," said Hetty. "I know! Maybe she got it for herself, just to make us think she had a beau."



Busy with this happy thought, Hetty broke into a run. Caddie walked along more slowly. She was thinking: "I do everything with Tom. I'm much more fun than Katie. Why, she's afraid of horses and snakes and she wouldn't cross the river. I don't believe she's spoken three words to Tom in her life. But she's what you call a little lady, and I'm just a tomboy. Maybe there's something in this lady business after all."

But just then Warren caught up with her and said: "Hey, let's go coasting! All this silly Valentine, sugar-plum stuff!" And she raced away with him, laughing, and eager to be the first one on the hill with her sled.



Wordlist

at the sight – при виде	mysterious [mi'stiəriəs] – таинственный, загадочный
amaze [ə'meɪz] – удивлять	occur [ə'kʌ:] to somebody – приходить в голову
beau [bəu] – кавалер	peel [pi:l] – чистить
be sweet on smb – быть влюбленным в кого-либо	recess [ri'ses] – перерыв
blush [blʌʃ] – краснеть	recognize ['rekəgnaɪz] – узнавать
catch up [kætʃ] (caught, caught) – догонять	ride ['raɪd] (rode, ridden) a pony – кататься на пони
coast ['kəʊst] – кататься с гор	satisfy ['sætɪsfaɪ] – удовлетворять
come in sight ['saɪt] – зд. появляться	scan [skæn] – рассматривать
creature ['kri:tʃə] – существо	shy [ʃaɪ] – застенчивый
curiosity [ˌkjʊəri'ɒsɪti] – любопытство	sled [sled] – санки
disappear [ˌdɪsə'piə] – исчезать	slim [slɪm] – тонкий
eager ['i:gə] – сильно желающий	snake [sneɪk] – змея
excitedly]ik'saɪtɪdli] – возбужденно	sparkle ['spɑ:kəl] – блестеть
expect [ɪks'pekt] – ожидать	sugar-plum stuff [ˌʃʊɡə'plʌmstʌf] – "сладенькая" чепуха
fight [faɪt] (fought, fought) – сражаться, бороться	suppose [sə'pəʊz] – предполагать
hastily ['heɪstɪli] – поспешно	tomboy ['tɒmboɪ] – девочка-сорванец
hint [hɪnt] – намекать	tremble ['trembl] – дрожать, трепетать
include [ɪn'klʊd] – включать	unusual amount of giggling – чрезмерное хихиканье
label ['leɪbl] – наклеивать этикетки	violet ['vaɪələɪt] – фиалка
lace [leɪs] – кружево	whisper ['wɪspə] – шептать
loan [ləʊn] – заем	
miserable ['mɪzərəbəl] – несчастный	
miserly]'maɪzəli] – скупой	



APRIL FOOL'S DAY

April 1st: This is the day upon which we are reminded of what we are on the other three-hundred and sixty-four.
Mark Twain

April Fool's Day or All Fools' Day, though not a holiday in its own right, is a notable day celebrated in many countries on April 1. The day is marked by the commission of hoaxes and other practical jokes of varying sophistication, the aim of which is to embarrass the gullible.

Superstitions

Traditionally, pranks are supposed to be performed before noon. Those done afterwards are supposed to bring bad luck to the perpetrator. This limitation is not, however, universally adhered to since it is believed to have been contrived by annoyed parents and school teachers wanting a respite from the day of pranks, as well as since many of the hoaxes listed below first appeared after noon. Anyone who fails to respond in the proper spirit of tolerance and amusement to the tricks played on them is also said to be liable to suffer bad luck. It is (unreliably) said that being fooled by a pretty girl will be compensated by marriage to, or at least friendship with her.

Another superstition is that marriage on April Fool's Day is not a good idea for a man, for he will be permanently ruled by his wife. It is furthermore believed that children born on this day will experience good luck in most matters, but will only meet with disaster when it comes to gambling.

Origin

The origin of April Fool's day is not entirely clear, but it is generally accepted to have stemmed from the changes in the calendar system. The New Year celebrations used to begin on 25 March and last for a week, hence ending on 1 April. In 1582, King Charles IX of France brought in the new Gregorian calendar, in which the new year began on 1 January. Unfortunately, some people did not hear of the change, and others simply refused to break the tradition. These people became the object of so-called "fool's errands" and tests of gullibility.

Hoaxes

Many media organizations have either unwittingly or deliberately propagated hoaxes on April Fool's Day. Even

normally serious news media consider April Fool's Day hoaxes fair game, and spotting them has become an annual pastime. The advent of the Internet as a worldwide communications medium has also assisted the pranksters in their work.

Well-known hoaxes

- **Cleveland Dinosaur Attack:** a joke saying that dinosaurs attacked all over Cleveland, including the *Rock & Roll Hall of Fame* and the *Gund Arena*.
- **Smell-o-vision:** The *BBC* purported to conduct a trial of a new technology allowing the transmission of odor over the airwaves to all viewers. Despite the fact that no such capability existed, many viewers reportedly contacted the *BBC* to report the trial's success.
- **Spaghetti trees:** The *BBC* television program *Panorama* ran a famous hoax in 1957, showing the Swiss harvesting spaghetti from trees. A lot of people wanted spaghetti trees of their own.
- **Metric time:** Repeated several times in various countries over the years, this hoax claims that the time system will be changed to some system where one subdivision is some power of 10 smaller than the next. The idea to metricate time was suggested in France after the French Revolution.
- **Tower of Pisa:** The Dutch television news once reported that the famous Tower of Pisa had fallen over. Many shocked and even mourning people contacted the television studio.
- **Television licence:** In another year the Dutch television news reported that the government had introduced a new way to detect hidden televisions (in many countries in Europe, one must pay a television licence to fund public broadcasting) by simply driving through the streets with a new detector, and that the only way to keep your television from being detected was to wrap it in aluminum foil. Within a few hours all aluminum foil was sold out throughout the country.
- **Sidd Finch:** George Plimpton wrote an article in *Sports Illustrated* about a New York Mets prospect who could throw a fastball at 176 mph (283 km/h) (the fastest

pitchers in baseball barely reach 100 mph [161 km/h]). This kid was known as "Barefoot" Sidd Finch. He reportedly learned to throw a ball that fast in a Buddhist monastery, and also threw a javelin a quarter of a mile at the British Olympic tryouts. Plimpton said the boy refused to go to the Olympics for fear of hurting someone. Barefoot Sidd was later the subject of a moderately successful book.

- **Shuttle landing:** A Vancouver radio station successfully tricked many listeners in believing that a space shuttle had to do an emergency landing at the Vancouver International Airport.
- In 1995, the National Television Station TVM in Malta announced the discovery of a new underground prehistoric temple. The discovery of a mummy eventually led to the announcement that it was an April's Fool joke. This was done during a TV programme conducted by John Demanuele.
- Another famous April Fool's Joke was carried out by newscaster Anna Bonanno, which announced that Malta would follow the European continent in changing its motoring rules and motor vehicles would start driving on the right. At the end of the news, it was announced that this was nothing but an April Fool's Joke.
- In 2002, the Canadian news site *bourque.org* announced that Finance Minister Paul Martin had resigned "in order to breed prize Charolais cattle and handsome Fawn Runner ducks." The Canadian dollar dropped to its lowest level in a month before Martin's office denied the story.
- In 2003, there was a rumor in Hong Kong that Hong Kong had become an infected area and would be quarantined because of SARS, all immigration ports would also be closed. The same rumor also mentions Tung Chee Hwa, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong at that time, had resigned. This caused a panic that Hong Kong people rushed into supermarkets to buy food. The Hong Kong government had to hold a press conference that officially denied the rumor. Later it was revealed that the rumor was spread by a student, by imitating the design of Ming Pao newspaper website, which was intended to be an April Fool's Day hoax, and the student was arrested for spreading false news.
- BMW has published full page adverts every year in several countries, including:
 - its MINI cars being used in upcoming space missions to Mars,
 - special wipers for the BMW crest on the boot and bonnet coming as standard on all future models,
 - using GPS links to domestic ovens so that your meal is cooked to perfection as you walk in the door.

By radio stations

- **Radio Station "Power 106":** A Los Angeles radio station "announced" a change from pop to disco music at 7:00 am, April 1, (1993). After 12 hours they admitted it was a joke, and switched back to their standard playlist. Within minutes complaints rolled in of "where's the

disco?", and the station actually changed formats the next day (and kept disco for a year or two).

- **Radio Station KFOG (San Francisco, CA):** Pretended to have been the victim of a corporate radio buyout, with a switch to a new format: just the best 15 seconds of every song! The entire morning show was formatted this way, with taped interruptions of various perky listeners gushing over the new format. (This hoax can also be considered a parody of several radio buyouts during the late 1990s media consolidations.)
- **Australian Radio Station Triple J:** On 1999-04-01, breakfast show co-host Adam Spencer said he had a journalist on the line from overseas where there had just been a secret 9 hour IOC meeting and that Sydney had lost the 2000 Olympic Games. New South Wales Premier Bob Carr was also in on the joke. The story was picked up by mainstream media (including Channel 9's *Today Show*) before Adam revealed the truth.

Other prank days in the world

The French prank day is also April 1. The tradition of the *poisson d'avril* (literally "April fish") is for people to attempt to attach a paper fish to their chosen victim's back without them noticing.

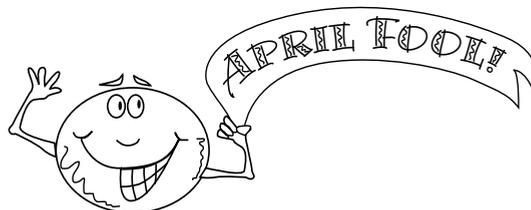
In the Spanish speaking world, similar pranks are practiced on December 28, the Day of the Holy Innocents. This custom also exists in certain areas of Belgium, including the province of Antwerp (which is situated in Flanders). The tradition is that children lock out their parents or teachers, only letting them in again if they promise to bring treats the same evening or the next day.

In Iran, people play jokes on each other on the 13th day of the new year (Norooz). This day is called "Sizdah bedar" (Out-door thirteen), and it is April 3 (13th of Farvardin in Persian calendar). It is believed that people should go out on this date in order to escape the bad luck of number 13.

In Judaism, the traditional day of pranks, hoaxes and mockery is Purim. However, modern Jews prefer to play pranks on April Fool's day.

Nuisance caused to third parties by April Fool's Day

- One type of April Fool's Day hoax is to leave a message telling someone to telephone Mr C.Lion or Mr L.E.Fant (or various others) at a number that turns out to be a zoo. That prank, repeated across many people, causes serious problems for zoos' telephone exchanges.
- There have been cases when a hoax in a newspaper caused many readers to send mail to a nonexistent address, causing problems to postal sorting offices.



Easter Celebrations in England

* <i>Shrove Tuesday</i>	* <i>Easter</i>	* <i>Holy Saturday</i>
* <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	* <i>Palm Sunday</i>	* <i>Easter Day</i>
* <i>Lent</i>	* <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	* <i>Easter Monday</i>
* <i>Mothering Sunday</i>	* <i>Good Friday</i>	* <i>Easter Quiz</i>

* *Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day)* *

Shrove Tuesday is one of the moveable feasts in the church calendar and is directly related to the date on which Easter falls.

Shrove Tuesday always falls 47 days before to *Easter Sunday*, so the date varies from year to year and falls between February 3 and March 9.

Shrove Tuesday is a day of celebration as well as penitence, because it's the last day before *Lent*.

Lent is a time of abstinence, of giving things up. So *Shrove Tuesday* is the last chance to indulge yourself, and to use up the foods that aren't allowed in *Lent*. Pancakes are eaten on this day because they contain fat, butter and eggs which were forbidden during *Lent*.

What happens on Shrove Tuesday in England?

Pancakes are eaten and pancake races are held in villages and towns. The object of the race is to get to the finishing line first, carrying a frying pan with a cooked pancake in it whilst flipping the pancake a pre-decided number of times. The skill lies not so much in the running of the race but in flipping and catching the pancake, which must be intact when the finishing line is reached.

Tossing Pancakes (Pancake Racing)

The most famous one takes place at Olney. According to tradition, in 1445 a woman of Olney heard the shriving bell while she was making pancakes and ran to the church in her apron, still clutching her frying pan.

The Olney pancake race is now world famous. Competitors have to be local housewives and they must wear an apron and a hat or scarf.

Each contestant has a frying pan containing a hot, cooking pancake. She must toss it three times during the

race that starts at the market square at 11:55 am. The first woman to complete the winding 375-metre course (the record is 63 seconds set in 1967) and arrive at the church, serve her pancake to the bellringer, and be kissed by him, is the winner. She also receives a prayer book from the vicar.

Annual Pancake Grease

At the famous Westminster School in London, the annual Pancake Grease is held. A verger from Westminster Abbey leads a procession of eager boys into the playground where the school cook tosses a huge pancake over a five-metre high bar. The boys then race to grab a portion of the pancake and the one who ends up with the largest piece receives a cash bonus from the Dean.

Skipping

In Scarborough, on Shrove Tuesday, everyone assembles on the promenade to skip. Long ropes are stretched across the road and there maybe be ten or more people skipping on one rope. The origins of this customs are not known but skipping was once a magical game, associated with the sowing and spouting of seeds, which may have been played on barrows (burial mounds) during the Middle Ages.

Interesting Fact

The world's biggest pancake was cooked in Rochdale in 1994, it was an amazing 15 metres in diameter, weighed three tonnes and had an estimated two million calories.



Ash Wednesday



Lent begins with *Ash Wednesday*. It's a day of penitence to clean the soul before the *Lent* fast. *Ash Wednesday* is six and a half weeks before *Easter Day*.

Why is it called Ash Wednesday?

Ashes were used in the past as a symbol of being sorry. Christians rubbed ashes on their foreheads. They wanted to show God that they were sorry for the wrong things they had done in the past year.

What happens on Ash Wednesday today?

Some Christians have a tiny smudge of ashes put on their foreheads as a sign of sorrow at not having been good over the last year.

What are the ashes made from?

In churches the priest first burns the palm crosses that have been kept from last year's *Palm Sunday* and then mixes the ashes of these crosses with holy water (which has been blessed) to make a greyish paste. When people go to church on *Ash Wednesday*, the priest dips his thumb in the paste and uses it to make the sign of the cross on each person's forehead.

What do the ashes symbolise?

Using ashes to mark the cross on the believer's forehead symbolises that through Christ's death and resurrection, all Christians can be free from sin.



Lent



Lent is a Christian Festival.

The forty days (not counting Sundays) before Easter is known as *Lent*. This is the time of year in England when the days begin to lengthen with the coming of Spring.

The weeks of Lent were once the time when new Christians, who were to be baptized on Easter Eve, were taught about the Christian faith and life. Those who had already been baptized thought again about the promises they had once made and promise to be true to them. Lent was a time for spring-cleaning lives, as well as homes.

When does Lent begin?

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, the day after Pancake Day and, six and a half weeks before Easter Day. The last week of Lent begins with Palm Sunday, which celebrates the day Jesus entered Jerusalem and the people lay down palms at His feet.

When does Lent end?

Lent lasts for 40 days and ends the day before Easter Sunday, on Holy Saturday.

Why does Lent last for 40 days?

The 40 days mark the 40 years of the Israelites going through the desert and the traditional 40 days of Jesus fasting in the desert.

What happens during Lent?

During Lent Christians used to fast (give up food) but nowadays people try to give up something like chocolate.

Lent is a time when Christians remember the 40 days and nights Jesus spent alone in the desert without food being tempted by the Devil. Jesus used this time to prepare for His work by fasting and praying.

Many churches hold special Lent services. In some towns the churches of different denominations join together in groups to discuss and share their Christian faith.

Lent is the time when Christians prepare for *Easter* by thinking of things they have done wrong.



Mothering Sunday



Mothering Sunday has been celebrated in Britain on the fourth Sunday in Lent since at least the 16th century. *Mothering Sunday* is the middle Sunday of the fasting period of Lent (which lasts from Ash Wednesday to Easter), so it was also known as "Refreshment Sunday" or "Mid-Lent Sunday".

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent.

In 2006, *Mothering Sunday* falls on March 26.

What happens on Mothering Sunday in England?

Mothering Sunday is a time when children pay respect to their mothers. Children often give their mothers a gift and a card.

Many churches give the children in the congregation a little bunch of spring flowers during the *Mothering Sunday* service, to give to their mothers as a thank you for all their care and love throughout the year.



Easter



Easter is the time for holidays, festivals and a time for giving chocolate Easter eggs. But *Easter* means much more. It is the oldest and the most important Christian Festival, the celebration of the death and coming to life again of Jesus Christ. For Christians, the dawn of *Easter Sunday* with its message of new life is the high point of the year.

The story

Easter is the story of Jesus' last days in Jerusalem before his death. The *Easter* story includes *Maundy Thursday* (the Last supper leading to the Eucharist), *Good Friday* (the day on which Jesus was crucified) and *Easter Sunday* (the day on which Jesus came back to life).

When is Easter?

Easter usually comes in the month of April. It is what is called a "moveable feast" because the date of it is fixed according to the moon. *Easter Sunday* has to be the first Sunday following the full moon, after the Spring equinox (March 21) – the Paschal Full Moon. This means that *Easter* can fall as early as March 22 or as late as April 25.

When does Easter fall in 2006?

In 2006, *Easter Sunday* is on April 16th.

Palm Sunday (Passion Sunday)

Palm Sunday is the beginning of *Holy Week*.

Holy Week is the week before Easter, commemorating events in the last days of Christ's life. It begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter Monday. Holy Week is the last week of Lent.

Special Days in Holy Week

- *Palm Sunday (Passion Sunday)*, the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem.
- *Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday)*, Last Supper and the betrayal by Judas.
- *Good Friday (Holy Friday)*, the arrest, trial, crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus Christ.
- *Holy Saturday*, the Sabbath on which Jesus rested in the grave.

Palm Sunday is a time of celebration as well as sadness because Jesus died on a cross less than a week after He had entered Jerusalem.

What is Palm Sunday?



The Sunday before Easter is known as Palm Sunday. It marks the end of Lent and celebrates Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem for the Jewish festival of Passover. Great

crowds of people lined the streets waving palm branches to welcome Him. The people were very excited. They spread branches on the road – and even laid down their clothes. They shouted "Hosanna!" which means "Save us Now!"

What happens on Palm Sunday in England?

On Palm Sunday, children are given crosses made from single palm leaves. Traditionally, many churches will have a procession in or around the church while people sing songs of praise and wave palm leaves. This is to help them imagine what Jesus' entry into Jerusalem might have been like.

What happens to any Palm crosses left over?

Any left over Palm Crosses are kept and burned to make ashes for next year's Ash Wednesday services (see *Ash Wednesday* above).

Maundy Thursday (Holy Thursday)

On this day, Christians remember the Last Supper. During the meal Jesus took bread and wine and shared them with His disciples. Christians continue to share bread and wine as part of their worship in church.

The night of *Maundy Thursday* is the night on which Jesus was betrayed by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane.

When is Maundy Thursday?

Maundy Thursday is the day before *Good Friday*. It is one of

the lesser known days of the Christian calendar and, were it not for the Maundy Ceremony, would probably have fallen into disuse altogether.

What is the origins of the name Maundy?

The name "Maundy" is derived from the Latin word *maundatum* (command) and recalls Christ's words at the Last Supper: "And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

The washing of feet

During the Last Supper, Jesus washed His disciples' feet. This act has sometimes been followed literally in history as a good way of reminding rulers that they are here to serve their subjects.

What happens in England on Maundy Thursday?

In England, the custom of washing feet by the Monarch was preserved until 1689. Up until then the King or Queen would wash the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday in Westminster Abbey. (You should, however note, that the feet were first washed by Yeoman of the Laundry before the monarch had to wash them and kiss them!) Food and clothing were also handed out to the poor.

What is Maundy Money?

Gradually over the years the foot washing and the gift of clothing has been replaced by specially minted Maundy money. (Maundy coins are specially minted for the occasion and are legal tender and, as they are produced in such limited numbers, they are much sought after by collectors.)

Maundy Thursday Ceremony

In England today, the Queen attends a service in one of the many cathedrals through out the country, to distribute the Maundy Money. The Queen is accompanied by a Yeoman of the Guard, who carries a golden tray of Maundy Money in white leather purses, and the "Maundy children" who are selected from local schools to attend her. Everyone carries posies ("nosegays") of flowers – a traditional protection at the time of the Great Plague. (King Charles 1 distributed his Maundy coins in 1639 during an outbreak of the plague.)

The number of purses handed out is equal to the age of the monarch. In 2005, to mark Queen Elizabeth's 79th year, 79 men and 79 women will each receive two purses containing special Maundy coins.

Good Friday (Holy Friday)

When is Good Friday?

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter Sunday. On this day, Christians remember the day when Jesus was crucified on a cross.

The date of Good Friday changes every year.

Why is it called Good Friday?

The name may be derived from "God's Friday" in the same way that good-bye is derived from "God be with ye".

It is "good" because the barrier of sin was broken.

What happened on Good Friday?

Jesus was arrested and was tried, in a mock trial. He was handed over to the Roman soldiers to be beaten and flogged with whips. A crown of long, sharp thorns was thrust upon His head.

Jesus was forced to carry His own cross outside the city to Skull Hill. He was so weak after the beating that a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was pulled from the crowd and forced to carry Jesus' cross the rest of the way.

Jesus was nailed to the cross. Two other criminals were crucified with Him, their crosses were on either side of Him. A sign above Jesus read "The King of the Jews."

Christians believe that Jesus stood in our place. His death paid the penalty not for His own wrong doings but for ours.

What happens on Good Friday today?

Good Friday is a public holiday in much of the UK.

Some Christians fast (go without food) on Good Friday. This helps them remember the sacrifice Jesus made for them on the day of crucifixion. Many churches hold a special service. This may be a communion service in the evening or a time of prayer during the day, especially around 3 o'clock as that is about the time of day when Jesus died.

Many Churches hold services lasting three hours. They may celebrate the Stations of the Cross, or take part in Passion plays and dramatic readings.

Some Christians take part in a procession of witness, carrying a cross through the streets and then into church.

Churches are not decorated on Good Friday. In some churches, pictures and statues are covered over. It is seen as a time of mourning.

Good Friday traditions

Traditionally Good Friday was the day when everything was cleaned and whitewashed in preparation for Easter Sunday.



Holy Saturday



What happened on the day before Easter Sunday?

This day was the Sabbath and the day which Jesus rested in the grave.

When is Holy Saturday?

It is the Saturday before Easter, the last day of Lent and is the day when Christ's body lay in His Tomb. In the early church Holy Saturday was a day of fasting and preparation for the Easter Vigil.

Easter Vigil

Easter Vigil, dating back to at least the Roman times, takes place on Holy Saturday. The Easter Vigil is a service held in many Christian churches as the official celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The service includes the first use of the word alleluia since the beginning of Lent as well as the first Eucharist of Easter.

The Easter Vigil is celebrated by the use of a wax candle which is inscribed with a cross. The letters alpha and omega are inscribed at the top and bottom and the four numbers representing the current year are inscribed above and below the cross arms. Five grains representing the wounds of Christ are sometimes pushed into the soft wax.

Traditional Holy Saturday event



The Bacup Nutters Dance traditionally takes place on this day in the small Pennine town of Bacup. Each year a team of folk-dancers with blackened faces dance through the town from boundary to boundary. A form of morris dancing, the blackened faces may either

reflect a need for the dancers to disguise their faces from evil spirits, or have a mining connection. The tradition of this dance is thought to date back to 1857.



Easter Sunday



Easter Day is the high point of the festival. A day of parties, gift-giving and above all a celebration that Jesus rose from the dead and lives forever.

The date of Easter

It changes every year. Easter Day in 2006 falls on Sunday, April 16, 2006.

What happened on Easter Sunday?

It was on Easter Sunday that Jesus rose from death. Jesus had told his disciples before he was arrested that he would be crucified and on the third day he would rise from the dead. Sunday was the third day from *Good Friday*.

What happens on Easter Sunday today?

Christians gather together on Easter Sunday for a Sunrise Service. This service takes place on a hill side so everyone can see the sun rise.

Some Christians take part in an Easter vigil, lighting a new fire outside the church early on Sunday morning. The Paschal candle, decorated with studs to celebrate Christ's wounds, may be lit from the fire and carried into the church where it is used to light the candles of the worshippers. The Easter Eucharist is a particularly joyful service. It is a popular time for baptisms and renewal of baptism vows.

Why do we give Easter eggs?

Eggs are a forbidden food during Lent, making them a welcome return to the menu on Easter Day. For Christians, Easter eggs symbolise new life. They believe that, through His resurrection, Jesus defeated death and sin and offers people the promise of eternal life if they follow His teachings. Eggs have been a symbol of continuing life and resurrection since pre-Christian spring celebrations.

Eggs had a religious significance in many ancient civilizations. Egyptians buried eggs in their tombs as did the Greeks. A Roman proverb states, "All life comes from an egg".

The traditional egg gift

The first eggs given at Easter were birds eggs. These eggs were painted in bright colours to give them further meaning as a gift. As chocolate was becoming more wide spread in the 20th Century, a chocolate version of the traditional egg was developed. The size of the chocolate egg has grown over the years and is now more likely to be the size of an ostrich egg rather than a small birds egg.

Easter presents

Chocolate eggs are given to children. The eggs are either hollow or have a filling, and are usually covered with brightly coloured silver paper.

Around 80 million chocolate eggs are eaten each year in Britain.

Easter Egg Hunt



Small chocolate eggs are hidden for the children to find on the traditional Easter Egg Hunt. In recent years this game has been linked to the Easter Bunny, which only arrived in Britain relatively recently.

Pace egging

Easter eggs are sometimes known as *pace eggs*, a name that is ultimately derived from Pesach (Passover). All kinds of

fun are had with the hard-boiled decorated pace eggs. The background colour of the eggs is provided by onion skins, with designs created by leaves and flowers placed next to the shell.

Origins of colouring eggs at Easter

Decorating and colouring eggs for Easter was a common custom in England in the middle ages. Eggs were brightly coloured to mimic the new, fresh colours of spring. The

practice of decorating eggs was made even more famous by *King Edward I* of England who ordered 450 eggs to be gold-leafed and coloured for Easter gifts in 1290.

Egg rolling

Egg rolling is very popular in England and is an Easter Monday sport. Hard-boiled eggs are rolled down a hill. Customs differ from place to place. The winner's egg may be the one that rolls the farthest, survives the most rolls, or is rolled between two pegs.

Egg jarping (egg tapping)

Another activity that takes place on Easter Day is the playing of a game with the eggs known as "jarping". It's a bit like playing *conkers*, with players tapping their opponents' eggs until one breaks. The victor goes through to the next round and it's a process of elimination until there's only one good egg, the winner's, left.



Easter Monday



Easter Monday is another public holiday in much of the UK, has little religious significance but is the occasion for numerous secular customs.

Biddenden Dole

At Biddenden in Kent, *the Biddenden Dole*, in the form of bread, cheese, tea (formerly beer) and cake is distributed. The cake bears an image of two women said to be the founders of this charity, a pair of Siamese twins who were born in 1100 and died within a few hours of each other at the age of 34.

Hare Pie Scramble and Bottle Kicking

At Hallaton in Leicestershire, *the Hare Pie Scramble and Bottle Kicking* begins with the blessing of a pie (usually made with beef rather than hare), which is subsequently broken up and thrown to the assembled crowd. This is followed by an unruly football game between the village of Hallaton and Medbourne. Small wooden barrels filled with ail are used as rugby balls in the no-holds barrel contest, the object of which is to get each of the three casks to a touchline in either village.

Events in London on Easter Monday

Easter Parade – Battersea Park, London

The first parade occurred in 1885 to encourage drivers to take a humane view of their horses. Today a huge variety of vehicles can be seen in action from rarely used horse drawn fire engines to the Harrods delivery "unicorn" which is used every day.

Harness Horse Parade – Regent's Park, London