

Easter Study 2: Resurrection

Trivia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter>

In Romance languages the name of the Easter festival is derived from the Greek name, *Pascha* which is itself derived from *Pesach*, the Hebrew festival of Passover.

"Eostur-month, which is now interpreted as the paschal month, was formerly named after the goddess Eostre, and has given its name to the festival." - *De temporum ratione* the Bede, an 8th Century English Christian monk

Date controversy due to Jewish lunar calendar with intercalary months at decision of Sanhedrin, then disagreement in early church, then adoption of Gregorian calendar by Western churches, and retention of Julian calendar by Eastern.

In the Western Church, Easter has not fallen on the earliest of the 35 possible dates, March 22, since 1818, and will not do so again until 2285. It will, however, fall on March 23 in 2008, but will not do so again until 2160. Easter last fell on the latest possible date, April 25, in 1943 and will next fall on that date in 2038. However, it will fall on April 24, just one day before this latest possible date, in 2011.

The cycle of Easter dates repeats after exactly 5,700,000 years, with April 19 being the most common date, happening 220,400 times, or 3.9% compared to a mean for all dates of 162,857 times, or 2.9%.

Does the date of Easter really matter?

Appearances

1 Corinthians 15:1-11, 9:1

Matthew 28

Mark 16

Luke 24

John 20-21

Acts 1:1-11; 9:1-9

Implications

God's response to the human mistake: put it right!

No conspiracy: the stories would have been made to match, and women would not have been the first to encounter Jesus in the Gospels (Yancey - *The Jesus I never knew* - 212)

But Jesus is different - he comes and goes, regardless of doors; he is difficult to recognise; only appears to believers (215)

Anyone who saw Jesus lost the ability to doubt, and was transformed from fear to remarkable courage (216)

p225: "In many respects I would find an unresurrected Jesus easier to accept. Easter makes him dangerous. Because of Easter I have to listen to his extravagant claims and can no longer pick and choose from his sayings. Moreover, Easter means he must be loose out there somewhere. Like the disciples, I never know where Jesus might turn up, how he might speak to me, what he might ask of me. As Frederick Buechner says, Easter means 'we can never nail him down, not even if the nails we use are real and the thing we nail him to is a cross.'"

Killing a dandelion by blowing on it. (226)

Jesus as the body of Christ crucified on earth - the church as the body of Christ crucified in time (236, O'Connor)