



Easter

Lesson 1

**uLC - Can I explain the
period known as Easter?**

What is Easter?

Easter is the time of the Christian year when Christians remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They believe that Jesus, believed to be the son of God, died for everyone's wrong-doings and then came back to life three days later to defeat death and evil.

The Christian date for Easter also follows the moon, so it also changes every year.

How long is Easter?

u For Christians, the full Easter period lasted for a long time. Easter officially starts with Lent on [Ash Wednesday](#), 46 days before Easter Day. (Lent lasts for 40 days but you don't count the Sundays!)

u So Easter is a very busy time for Christians!

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The events during the Easter period

Lent

Lent is the period of 40 days before Easter. It starts on [Ash Wednesday](#) and ends on the Saturday before Easter Sunday. But if you look in a calendar and count the days they come to more than 40!

This is because you don't count the Sundays in Lent!

Lent (continued)

- uLent is a time to prepare for Easter and to think about the relationship with God. It represents the 40 days when Jesus was tempted by the Devil in the desert. During this time he didn't eat or drink anything.
- uBecause of this, some Christians give up some food or 'fast' for Lent. For some people this is giving up all food and just drinking, but for others, they just give up luxury food like chocolate or cream cakes!

Shrove Tuesday / Pancake Day

- u Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent.

- u Another name for this is Pancake Day, and comes from the old English custom of using up all the fattening ingredients in the house before Lent, so that people were ready to fast during Lent. The fattening ingredients that most people had in their houses in those days were eggs and milk. A very simple recipe to use up these ingredients was to combine them with some flour and make pancakes!

Ash Wednesday

- uSo, Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent.
- uThe name comes from the tradition of putting a small cross of ash on peoples forehead at Ash Wednesday church services. This is a sign of confession and helps people to remember that they rely on God for forgiveness from their sins. It is still done in some churches on today.
- uAsh is used because it is a symbol of death, because all bodies turn to ash or dust in the end. It helps Christians to remember that Lent is about preparing to remember that Jesus died.

Holy Week

u Holy Week is the last week of Lent, and is the week before Easter Sunday (also known as Easter Day). It starts on Palm Sunday and finishes with the celebration of Easter Sunday.

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u Holy Week is a special time for Christians.

Holy Week - Palm Sunday

- uPalm Sunday is the first Day of Holy Week. It is when Christians remember how Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. It is called Palm Sunday because the people were so happy to see Jesus and knew that he was very important, so they took branches from the Palm and Olive Trees that lined the road.
- uThey waved them in the air and put some of them on the road to make it easier for the donkey to walk on the rocky road.
- uToday, to remember that day, Christians all over the world go to special Palm Sunday Church Services. They receive small crosses made from Palm leaves.

Holy Week - Maundy Thursday

It represents the day that the Jewish Passover was celebrated in the Bible Story of Easter.

On that day, Jesus had his last meal with his friends and followers before he was killed. This meal is now known as 'The Last Supper'. At the meal, Jesus and his friends would have followed the Jewish Passover custom of eating roast lamb and unleavened bread (matzah) and drinking red wine.

Today, in some countries, priests wash the feet of Church go-ers to the Maundy Thursday services to remember what Jesus had done.

In the U.K. the Queen gives out special coins called Maundy Money instead of washing people feet! This is a tradition that goes back to Medieval times.

Holy Week - Good Friday

u Good Friday is a very important day for all Christians.

u On Good Friday, Christians remember that Jesus died for everyone. He was crucified by the Romans on a hill outside Jerusalem although he had not done anything wrong.

u When a person was crucified, they were tied and nailed by the wrists and feet to a large wooden cross or scaffold and left to die.

u This is why a cross is often used as a symbol of the Christian faith.

u One of my favourite Good Friday customs is Hot Cross buns!

u These are yeast dough buns with currants and raisins in them and they have a cross on the top. You can eat them cold. I prefer to cut them in half, toasted with butter and jam on!

Holy Week - Easter Sunday

u Easter Day is the most important day of the year for Christians. It is when they celebrate that three days after being killed, Jesus rose from the dead, sometimes called 'the Resurrection'

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u Churches are filled with flowers on Easter Day

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u Easter Day is the end of Lent

