

Have you ever seen the Easter Bunny?

As a child I always wanted to meet the Easter Bunny. So can you imagine my excitement when one spring I learned that the Easter Bunny would be at the local garden centre. I had only seen cuddly white rabbits that seemed so warm and innocent. Yet when the big day came.....I was shocked and confused. Before me stood a human-sized hare with big eyes and large, floppy ears. The creature walked on two legs like a human. He talked! The more I saw him the more confused I became. I did not want to go near him even though there was an Easter gift to collect.

Much as I was confused about the Easter Bunny, many people are confused about the meaning of Easter itself. For some, it means Easter Bank Holiday, new clothes, a party and delicious food. Others focus on eggs, chocolate and hot cross buns. And yet Easter is a time of renewal and resurrection. It may be relatively easy to renew things outwardly — new clothes, a hairstyle, a fancy party. Renewal on the inside can be more difficult. Problems from the past can haunt us - broken relationships, guilt, rejection, loneliness and anger can affect our lives. Where does one find inner renewal? Some look to friends or family. But maybe a look at the first Easter could also offer some clues.

Over two millennia ago, a young Jewish leader, Jesus Christ was crucified, died and placed in a tomb. A large stone was rolled against the tomb's entrance and Roman soldiers guarded this against grave robbers. Two days later, the stone was rolled away and the tomb was empty, but the grave clothes were still in place. Jesus' closest followers, most of whom had abandoned him during his trials, reported seeing him alive again. And yet this resurrection transformed them from the inside. This affected their lives, giving them inner strength, freedom from guilt, love for their enemies, and boldness to stand for what they believed was right.

Sometimes life's challenges can seem as scary as that huge hare seemed to me when I was a child. We don't want to get near them. Yet that first Easter morning still offers hope, joy and resurrection in our lives.

As we enjoy eggs and rabbits this spring, might that be a message worth pondering?

Alleluia, Christ is risen, Alleluia

Blessings for Easter

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