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# 国際交流員 111

## CIR's Corner

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Hello everyone! "CIR's Corner" is my monthly article about international exchange and cultures around the world. I will introduce a variety of interesting international topics.

### This Month's Topic: Happy Easter!

Easter is a Christian holiday that takes place each spring. This year, Easter is on Sunday, April 9. The date of Easter changes every year, but is always on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox, which is between March 22 and April 25. In countries with many Christians, the Monday following Easter is often a public holiday. However, it is not a public holiday in the US.



*The Last Supper*, Leonardo da Vinci (1495-1498)  
The scene on the night before Jesus was crucified

I'll tell you the story of Easter. About 2000 years ago, there was a Jewish religious leader named Jesus. According to the teachings of Judaism, a *messiah*, or savior, would come forth to save the Jewish people. It was said that Jesus was able to cure illnesses, turn water into wine, walk on water, and perform other miracles. Therefore, as word of his miracles spread, more and more people started to believe that Jesus was the *messiah*.

One spring, Jesus visited the city of Jerusalem for Passover, a Jewish holiday. At that time, the Roman Empire ruled Jerusalem, but the Jews who resided there warmly welcomed Jesus. However,

when Jesus visited the Temple, he was shocked and angered to see many merchants there swindling poor people. He drove the merchants out and harshly criticized the Temple leaders by saying, "This is a house of prayer, but you have turned it into a den of thieves!"

Therefore, the Temple leaders hated Jesus. They told the Roman governor that Jesus was planning to overthrow the government to become king. In the end, Jesus was arrested, declared guilty of treason, and sentenced to crucifixion, or death on the cross. After he died, his body was moved to a tomb. However, on the third day, when women came to prepare his body for the funeral, Jesus was nowhere to be found. The Bible says that he appeared to

speaking before hundreds of his followers, before rising up to heaven. The story of Easter is the cornerstone of Christianity, and for devout Christians, it is a more holy day than Christmas.



*Resurrection of Christ*, Noël Coypel (c. 1700)



On Easter, people go to church, and eat a big meal with their family. In America, many people eat ham. Also, “Peeps” are a common Easter confection. The neon-colored, chick-shaped marshmallows are extremely sweet. Food that looks like a highlighter pen disturbs me, so I don’t eat them.



When speaking of Easter, perhaps the first thing to come to mind is Easter eggs. Eggs have represented new life and rebirth in many cultures for thousands of years. Traditionally, eggs dyed red represent the blood of Jesus, and the broken shells represent his empty tomb. Nowadays you’ll find Easter eggs in all colors. Chocolate eggs, and plastic eggs filled with candy are also popular. In addition, we use Easter eggs to play games. The first is an Easter egg hunt. Adults hide eggs in the house or yard for children to find. Another game is the Easter egg roll. The White House holds this event annually. Children use spoons to roll eggs across the lawn, and the fastest child wins the race.



President Biden watches the 2022 Easter Egg Roll

Although it has nothing to do with Christianity, the Easter Bunny has become the symbol of the holiday. A huge rabbit gives baskets filled with Easter eggs, chocolate, and toys to good children. Originally, the Easter Bunny was a German custom, but it has spread to Europe and North America. Like eggs, rabbits also symbolize new life and rebirth due to their rapid breeding.



The Easter Bunny and a basket of Easter eggs

Even though Easter is a Christian holiday, the non-religious enjoy the customs of Easter eggs and the Easter Bunny as well. From the 2010s, Easter has even started to gain some popularity in Japan, a secular country. April marks the start of the new fiscal year and school year here in Japan, so I think this matches well with the “new life” and “resurrection” theme of Easter. ★

### How to Make Easter Eggs

1. Hard-boil some eggs.  
\*Do not peel them.
2. In a cup, mix some food coloring with 1 teaspoon of vinegar and 100 ml of hot water.  
\*More food coloring makes eggs more vivid.
3. Add an egg to the cup. When you are satisfied with the color, remove it.  
\*Soak longer for more vivid colors.

This is how you make basic Easter eggs. However, if you wish to make more intricately designed eggs, try putting stickers on them, or drawing on them with crayons before putting them in the dye. Making Easter eggs is a lot of fun, especially for kids, so why don’t you try it this Easter?



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