

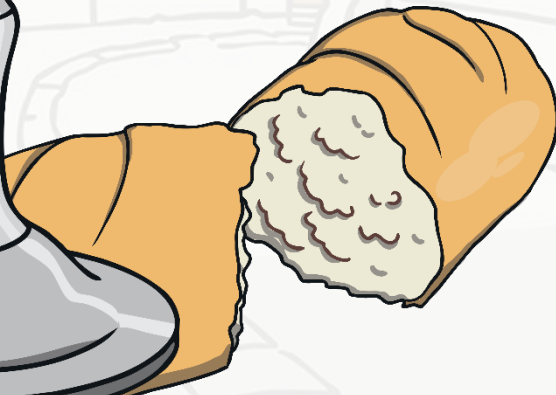
History of Easter Symbols



Easter



We all know Easter to be an occasion of fun, happiness, lots of colourful Easter eggs, bunnies and lambs! But we must not forget that Easter is actually an important religious celebration of Jesus' suffering and rise from the dead. Each Easter starts with Holy Week, which includes: Maundy Thursday (when The Last Supper happened), Good Friday (Jesus' Death) and then Easter Sunday, (Jesus' resurrection from death).

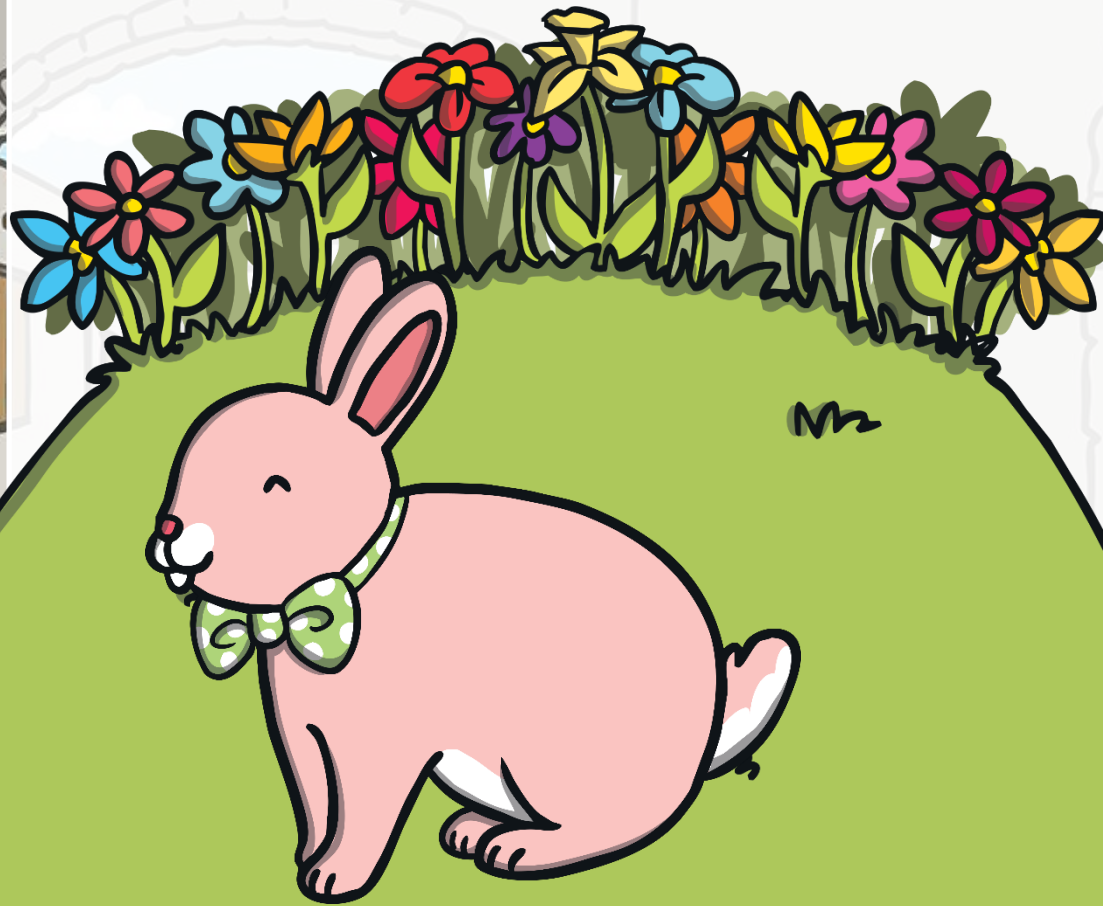


Passover

In many languages the words for Easter and Passover are identical or very similar. It is thought that the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples took place on the Jewish feast of Passover. There are also links between the symbolism involved in both Easter and Passover.



Bunnies



European pagan religions first incorporated rabbits and hares into the celebration of Easter as they are a symbol of fertility so they represent new life.

There is also a legend of a rabbit waiting for his friend Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (where Jesus' tomb was) until he was resurrected.

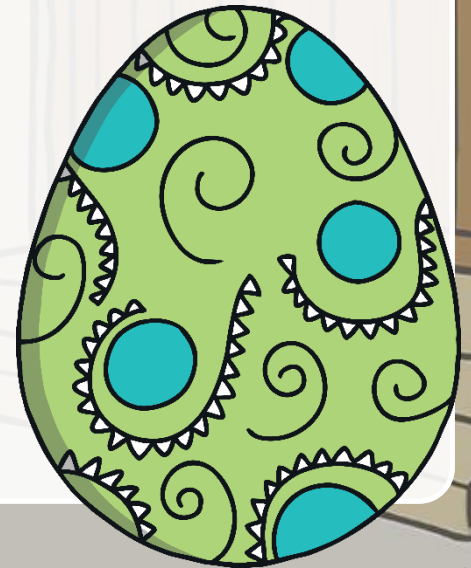
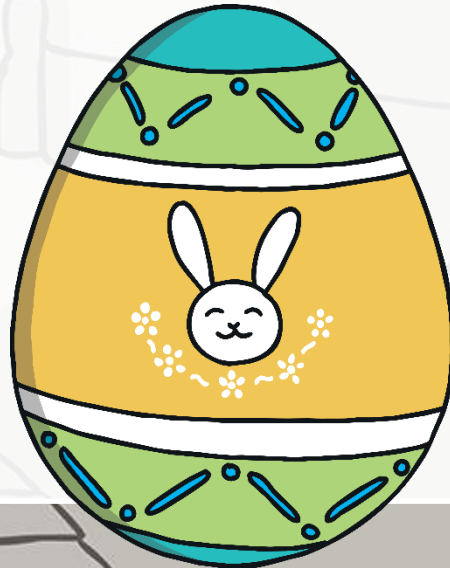
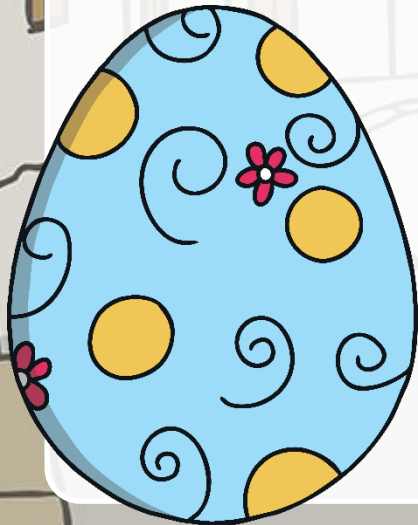
Hot Cross Buns

Tasty buns baked with raisins and spices, these are usually eaten around and during Easter time. They are marked with the cross to symbolise the crucifixion of Jesus.



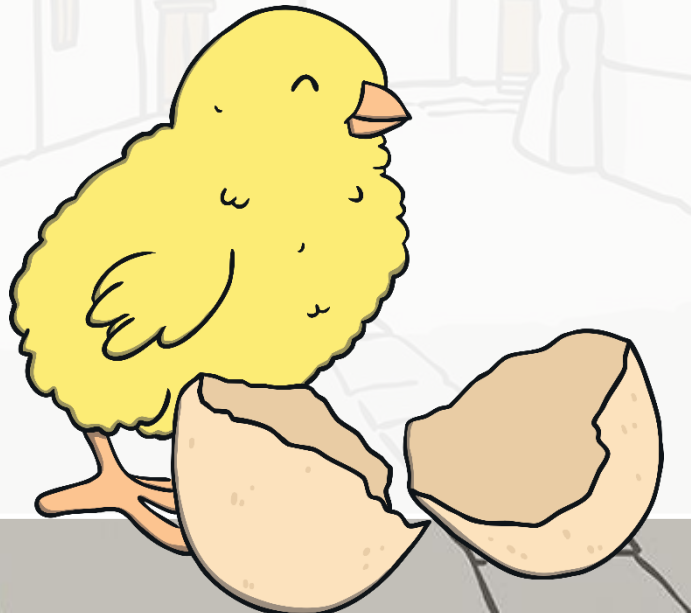
Easter Eggs

Easter eggs are traditionally painted chicken eggs. This practice of painting eggs is thought to have originated in Mesopotamia, where eggs were stained red in memory of the blood of Jesus. Eggs also symbolise the empty tomb, from which Jesus emerged when he came back to life., or new life. Easter eggs today are often made of chocolate. Many countries still have finely painted eggs like these in Austria.



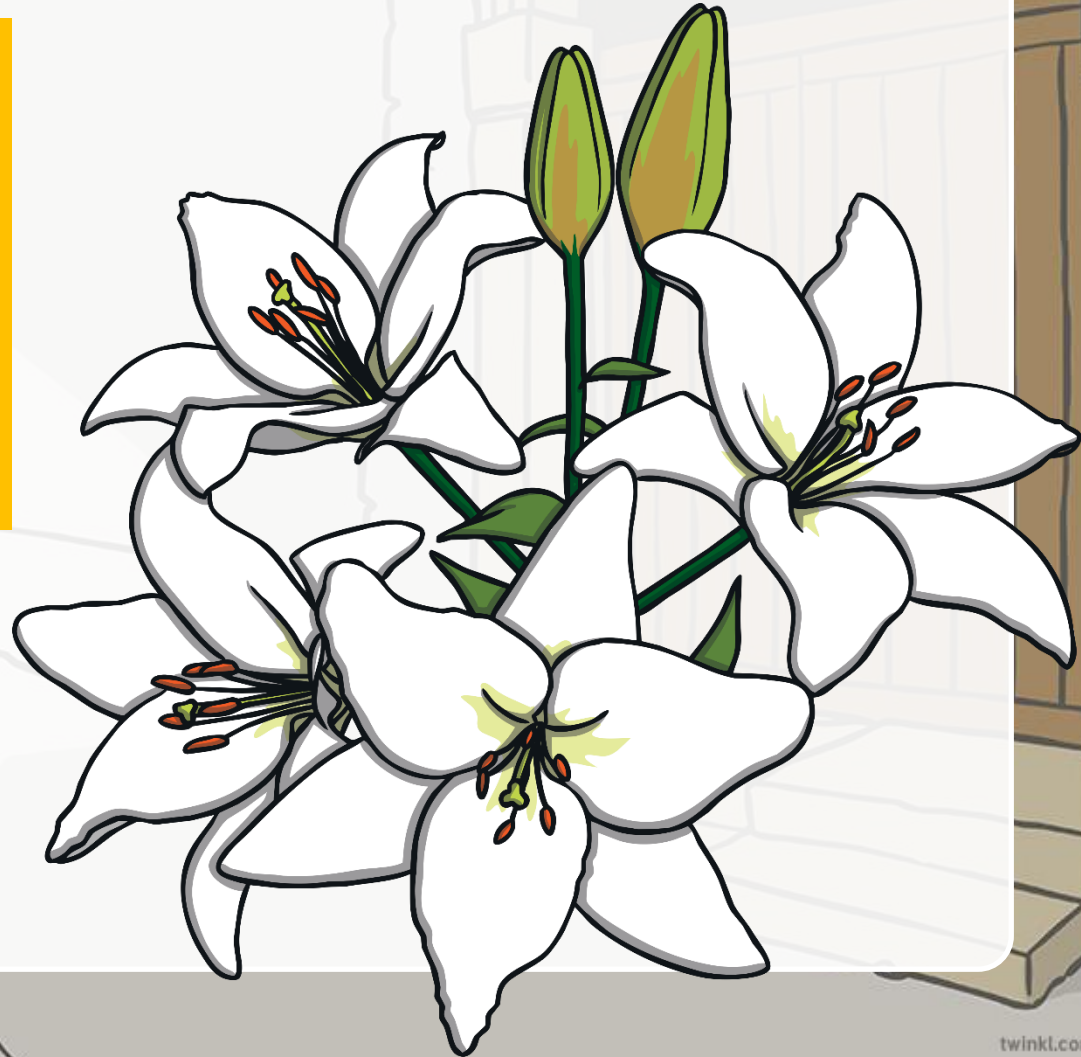
Chicks

Similar to the Easter Bunny, chicks hatching out of an egg (similar to Jesus leaving the tomb) represent new life.



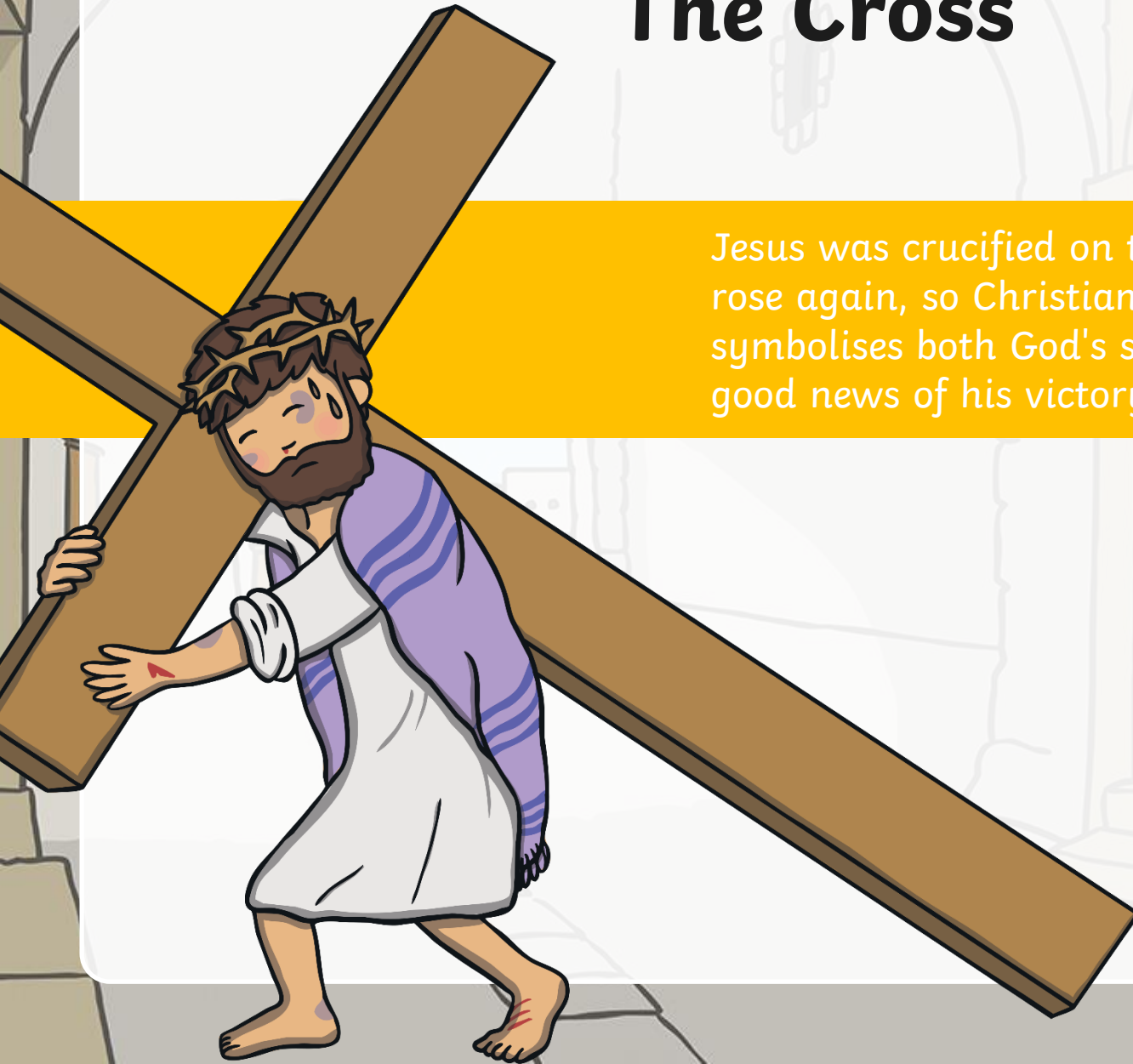
Easter Flowers

Lilies have white blossoms, which represent the purity of Jesus. Lilies, daffodils and tulips all push through the earth in the spring, showing new life, and are often used in flower arrangements in churches around Easter.



The Cross

Jesus was crucified on the cross but he rose again, so Christians believe the cross symbolises both God's sacrifice and the good news of his victory over death.



Palm Branches/Crosses



When Jesus entered Jerusalem the people were pleased to see him and waved palm branches to welcome him. Today, many churches make palm crosses out of palm leaves to remember this time.

Bonnets

Bonnets are popular in Easter parades. You can often see lots of different examples of Easter symbols on them.

