

Generations

Grandparents' Easter traditions still popular

In this electronic, fast-paced world that we live in today, thank goodness for generational holiday traditions that bring most families back to their roots. There's no better time for childhood memories to run rampant than on Easter Sunday.

I caught an article on www.countryliving.com that summarized some of the past practices of our grandparents that can never be replaced or adequately replicated, no matter how millennial we think we are. Here are some that I could personally identify with.

No. 1 one has to be families going to church together, including Easter sunrise services. These early morning masses date back to 1773, and symbolize Mary Magdalene visiting Jesus' empty tomb at dawn after his resurrection. And Easter Sunday church is one holiday when the whole family enjoys wearing their Sunday best. The article suggested wearing an Easter bonnet and gloves for the ladies, but I'm not sure that is still practiced widely today. However, if you've got a bonnet, this is the perfect day to wear it with pride. Show it off!

In past generations, women were also recipients of an Easter corsage typically given to them by their children or husbands. Nothing brightens a lady's spirit than a corsage or a bouquet of pretty flowers.

For those special people in your life who are too far away to visit, send an Easter lily, symbolic of the Easter season. For local folks, local stores, including your favorite grocer, usually have an array of lilies and other beautiful arrangements and it's a sweet gesture to bring the hostess a bouquet if you are invited to someone's house for Easter dinner.

Once you get home from church, it's time for the Easter egg hunt, which was always a favorite activity in our house. Mom was in charge of cooking a couple of dozen eggs until they were hard boiled and then she would whip out the food coloring and watch us carefully dip the cooled eggs into each cup filled with vibrant colors.

We'd also write someone's name on each egg before it got dunked using a crayon. Even the dog had his own special egg. Some families use glitter and other ornate decorations, but we kept ours simple.

The fun came later when it was time to hunt for the eggs that the Easter Bunny, alias Mom and Dad, hid the night before. This tradition has been around since the early 1900s.

Next, it was time to dig into the Easter baskets that the Easter Bunny had left each one of us, again alias Mom and Dad, and this was a day when chocolate was allowed even before lunch. How-

ever, the rule was that Dad claimed the black jelly beans, his favorite, and we



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all handed them over to him without incident. We still had all the other colors and the red jelly beans were always my favorite

anyway.

Another tradition was to bake a cake, especially one that was loaded with carrots in honor of the Easter Bunny. There's nothing sweeter than the cream cheese frosting on top of the bunny carrot cake.

The article also suggested making hot cross buns, adorned with crosses as a religious reminder. They're a traditional Easter treat that has been made and enjoyed on Good Friday or Easter Sunday for decades.

Easter dinner is usually a delicious turkey or ham with all the trimmings. Remind the hungry children to wait until after the blessing before they reach for their forks.

After dinner, it's time for the traditional movies that have been around for decades such as "Easter Parade" with Fred Astaire and Judy Garland.

And for the fathers and sons who don't want to sit through ladies parading down Fifth Avenue in bonnets, they might want to try something different that might also serve as a good bonding experience. Fly a kite. This Good Friday tradition initially gained traction in Bermuda, where it's believed that a local schoolteacher used a kite to demonstrate Jesus's ascension into heaven for his students. Since then, Bermudians have flocked to Horseshoe Bay Beach for the annual Good Friday Kite Festival and many families have kept the practice going here in the U.S.

And after kite flying and the movie has ended, it might be a good time for a member of the family to read passages from the Bible to everyone as they reflect on the wonderful day of enjoyment and the true meaning behind it.

It's also a time to visit the graves of those who have passed. Jesus is said to have risen on Easter Sunday, so it's fitting that many make time to visit cemeteries on the special holiday.

And, finally, the most important tradition that our grandparents, parents and all the past generations instilled in us was to hold their loved ones close. Appreciate each other and savor the blessing of family and friends who enrich our lives.

That truly makes a perfect ending for the Easter holiday.

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