

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

*A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
When the tongues of flame are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.*

T.S. Eliot, **Little Gidding**, V

Welcome to our Continuous Holiday Party! Ceremony and traditions are an essential part of relationships: with children, family, significant others and friends. Here are a variety of ideas for establishing or enhancing *holy* day celebrations. Here you can celebrate many of the Celtic, Christian, Germanic and American feast days of the year.



Joyeux Noël, Feliz Navidad, Fröhliche Weihnachten, Merry Christmas



Happy Valentine's Day



Patrick, Patron Saint of Ireland



Easter Eggs, Easter Bunnies, Easter Lilies



Dance Round the May Pole, Crown the May Queen



A Midsummer Night's Dream



Revolution or Evolution?



Michaelmas



All Hallows Eve



Give Thanks

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Joyeux Noël, Feliz Navidad, Fröhliche Weihnachten, Merry Christmas

Welcome to our Christmas Party! Celebrate an old-fashioned season, even if you live in a land without snow. Don't forget to celebrate all the feast days of Christmas:

- St. Nicholas Day, December 6th, is the day St. Nicholas leaves small gifts in the shoes of good little children.
- Christmas Day, December 25th, is the day of Christ's birth.
- Holy Innocents' Day, January 1st, is the day all of the little boys in Judea were slain.
- Epiphany (or Twelfth Night), January 5th, is the day the three kings finally reached Bethlehem.



Christmas Carols from Around the World



A Holiday Dessert Sampler

Christmas Carols from Around the World

Here's a carol for each day of Christmas, both known and little known, in languages other than modern English. Eight are from Germany, although two of these contain Latin phrases, making them macaronic. Two are from France, one from colonial America and one from England, in a combination of old English and Latin.

These carols are as old as the 14th century and as young as the 19th. The younger ones come first, the older last.

Stille Nacht - Germany

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht; Alles Schläft, Einsam Wacht.
Nur das Traute, Hochheilige Paar; Holder Knabe im Lochigen Haar.
Schlaf in Himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in Himmlischer Ruh.

O Tannenbaum - Germany

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, wie treu sind deine Blätter!
Du grünst nicht nur zur Sommerzeit,
nein, auch im Winter, wenn es schneit.
O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, wie treu sind deine Blätter!

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, du kannst mir sehr gefallen.
Wie oft hat nicht zur Weihnachtszeit
ein Baum von dir mich hoch erfreut.
O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, Du kannst mir sehr gefallen.

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O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, dein Kleid will mich was lehren:
Die Hoffnung und Beständigkeit
gibt Trost und Kraft zu jeder Zeit.
O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, dein Kleid will mich was lehren.

Il est Ne, Le Divin Enfant - France

Il est né, le divin enfant, Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes,
Il est né, le divin enfant Chantons tous son avènement.

Depuis plus de quatre mille ans
Nous le promettaient les prophètes,
Depuis plus de quatre mille ans
Nous attendions cet heureux temps.

Il est né, le divin enfant, Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes,
Il est né, le divin enfant Chantons tous son avènement.

Ah! qu'il est beau, qu'il est charmant,
Ah! que ses grâces sont parfaites!
Ah! qu'il est beau, qu'il est charmant,
Qu'il est doux ce divin enfant!

Il est né, le divin enfant, Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes,
Il est né, le divin enfant Chantons tous son avènement.

Une étable est son logement,
Un peu de paille est sa couchette;
Une étable est son logement,
Pour un Dieu quel abaissement!

Il est né, le divin enfant, Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes,
Il est né, le divin enfant Chantons tous son avènement.

O Jésus, roi tout puissant,
Si petit enfant que vous êtes;
O Jésus, roi tout puissant,
Régnez sur nous entièrement.

Il est né, le divin enfant, Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes,
Il est né, le divin enfant Chantons tous son avènement.

Noël Nouvelet - France

Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.
Dévotes gens, criens à Dieu merci!

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Chantons Noël pour le roi nouvelet.
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.

L'ange disait: 'Pasteurs, partez d'ici
L'âme en repos et le coeur réjouit;
En Bethléem trouverez l'agnelet.'
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.

En Bethléem, étant tous réunis,
Trouvent l'enfant, Joseph, Marie aussi.
La crèche était as lieu d'un bercelet,
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.

Bientôt les rois, par l'étoile éclaircis
De l'orient dont ils étaient sortis
A Bethléem vinrent un matin.
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.

Voici mon Dieu, mon Sauveur Jésus Christ,
Par qui sera le prodige accompli
De nous sauver par son sang vermeillet!
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.

The Apple Tree Carol - United States

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green.
The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green.
The trees of nature fruitless be, compared to Christ the Apple Tree.

His beauty doth all things excel, by faith I know, but ne'er can tell.
His beauty doth all things excel, by faith I know, but ne'er can tell.
The glory which I know can see, in Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought.
For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought.
I missed of all, but now I see, 'tis found in Christ the Apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile.
I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile.
Under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive.
Which makes my soul in haste to be, with Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

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Still, Still, Still - Germany

Still, still, still, weil's Kindlein schlafen will.
Maria tut es niedersingen, ihre ganze Lieb darbringen.
Still, still, still, weil's Kindlein schlafen will!

Schlaf, schlaf, schlaf, mein liebes Kindlein, schlaf!
Die Engel tun schön musizieren, bei dem Kindlein jubilieren.
Schlaf, schlaf, schlaf, mein liebes Kindlein, schlaf!

O du Fröhliche - Germany

O du fröhliche, o du selige,
gnadenbringende Weihnachtszeit.
Welt ging verloren, Christ ist geboren:
Freue, freue dich o Christenheit!

O du fröhliche, o du selige,
gnadenbringende Weihnachtszeit.
Christ ist erschienen, uns zu versöhnen,
freue, freue dich o Christenheit!

O du fröhliche, o du selige,
gnadenbringende Weihnachtszeit.
Himmlische Heere jauchzen dir Ehre,
freue, freue dich o Christenheit!

Maria durch ein Dornwald Ging - Germany

Maria durch ein Dornwald ging, Kyrieleison,
Maria durch ein Dornwald ging,
der hat in sieben Jahr'n kein Laub getragen.
Jesus und Maria.

Was trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen? Kyrieleison.
Ein kleines Kindlein ohne Schmerzen,
das trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen.
Jesus und Maria.

Da haben die Dornen Rosen getragen, Kyrieleison.
Als das Kindlein durch den Wald getragen,
da haben die Dornen Rosen getragen.
Jesus und Maria.

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Es ist ein Ros Entsprungen - Germany

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen, aus einer Würzel zart.
Wie uns die Alten sungen, von Jesse kam die Art,
Und hat ein Blümlein bracht
Mitten im Kalten Winter, voll zu der halben Nacht.

Das Röslein, das ich meine, davon Jesaia sagt,
Hat uns gebracht alleine Marie, die reine Magd.
Aus Gottes ew'gem Rat
Hat sie ein Kind geboren, wohl zu der halben Nacht.

In Dulci Jubilo - Germany

In dulci jubilo, nun singet und seit froh!
Unsres Herzen's Wonne leit in praesipio
und leuchtet als die Sonne matris in gremio.
Alpha es et O; Alpha es et O.

O Jesu parvule, nach Dir ist mir so weh.
Tröst mir mein Gemüte, o puer optime,
durch alle Deine Güte, o princeps gloriae.
Trahe me post te; trahe me post te.

Ubi sunt gaudia? Nirgends mehr denn da,
da die Engel singen nova cantica
und die Schellen klingen in regis curia.
Eia wär'n wir da; eia wär'n wir da.

Personent Hodie - Germany

Personent hodie Voces puerulae, Laudantes jucunde
Qui nobis est natus, Summo Deo datus,
Et de vir-vir-vir, Et de vir-vir-vir,
Et de virgineo ventre procreatus.

In mundo nascitur, Panis involvitur, Preasepi ponitur
Stabulo brutorum, Rector supernorum.
Per-di-dit-dit-dit, Perdidit-dit-dit,
Perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.

Magi tre venerunt, Parvulum inquirunt, Bethlehem adeunt,
Stellulam sequendo, Ipsum adorando,
Aurum, thus, thus, thus, Aurum, thus, thus, thus,
Aurum, thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.

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Omnes clericuli, Pariter pueri, Content ut angeli:
Advenisti mundo, Laudes tibi fundo,
Ideo-o-o, Ideo-o-o, Ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!

There is no Rose - England

There is no rose of sych vertu As is the rose that bare Jesu,
Alleluia.
For in this rose contained was Heaven and earth in lytle space,
Res miranda.
By that rose we may well see That He is God in persons three,
Pares forma.
The aungels sungen the shepherds to: Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gaudeamus.
Leave we all this wearldly mirth, And follow we this joyful birth,
Transeamus.
Alleluia, Res miranda, Pares forma, Gaudeamus, Transeamus.

A Holiday Dessert Sampler

Baking is an essential ingredient of a festive holiday. Here are a baker's dozen of our favorite recipes. Enjoy!

Rum Balls

Ingredients:

2 cups sugar cookie crumbs (LU biscuits, or vanilla wafers will do)	
1/2 cup ground almonds	3 tablespoons Dutch processed cocoa
1/2 cup ground hazelnuts	1 1/2 tablespoons creamed honey
1 cup confectioners sugar	1/4 cup dark rum

Procedure:

Use food processor to grind cookies and nuts. Mix together cookie crumbs, ground nuts, confectioners sugar and cocoa. In a separate bowl mix together honey and rum. Add wet ingredients to dry and mix thoroughly. You will probably have to use your hands. You may need to add more rum, but the consistency should be firm enough that you can easily form balls.

Using a teaspoon to keep the size uniform, roll the dough into balls. Roll the balls in confectioners sugar. Store in a tightly sealed container. Makes about 4 dozen.

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The flavor increases as these cookies age. They should be prepared a week in advance of eating, and will last for about 2 months. As they age, they absorb the confectioners sugar coating, so you may want to coat them again just prior to serving.

Surprise Kisses

Ingredients:

1 cup lightly salted butter	unwrapped Hershey's Kisses
2 to 2 1/2 cups all purpose flour	1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup sugar	1 pound confectioner's sugar

Procedure:

Let the butter soften. Cream the butter and sugar together until very fluffy. Add vanilla and mix well. Start with 2 cups of sifted flour and stir in. Gradually add more flour until the dough has the right consistency to flatten and mold. The dough should be pliable, not sticky or crumbly. Form dough in a ball around a hershey's kiss. Make sure the chocolate is completely covered and there are no cracks in the cookie.

Place cookies on an ungreased cookie sheet. These cookies will not spread out much, so you can place them close together. Bake in a 350 degree oven for approximately 10 minutes. The cookies should be firm to the touch but not brown on the top. If they get brown they will be too crisp. Remove tray from oven and let it sit and cool for several minutes until the cookies are set enough to remove from the sheet. Let them cool for several more minutes.

Roll the cookies carefully in confectioner's sugar. They break easily. Store them in a tightly sealed container with extra confectioner's sugar sprinkled between the layers and on top. Because these cookies have so much butter, they will absorb the sugar rapidly. If they look sticky and yellowish, roll them in more confectioner's sugar. If you're careful, you can also shake them in a large ziploc bag full of sugar.

If stored in a tightly closed container, the cookies will stay fresh for several weeks. They can be refrigerated, but freezing is not recommended. This recipe makes 4 to 5 dozen cookies.

Florentine Meltaways

Ingredients:

1 cup lightly salted butter	1/2 cup ground hazelnuts
1 cup all purpose flour	1/2 cup ground almonds
1/4 cup sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla
1 12 oz. package Guittard Milk Chocolate Chips	1 pound confectioner's sugar

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1 tablespoon cinnamon
6 tablespoons cocoa

Procedure:

Let the butter soften. Cream the butter and sugar together until very fluffy. Add vanilla and mix well. Stir in ground nuts and flour. Add the chocolate chips. If necessary, gradually add extra flour until the dough has the right consistency to form into balls.

Place cookies on an ungreased cookie sheet. These cookies will flatten out, so don't place them too close together. Bake in a 350 degree oven for approximately 12 minutes. The cookies should be firm to the touch but not brown on the top. If they get brown they will be too crisp. Remove tray from oven and let it sit and cool for several minutes until the cookies are set enough to remove from the sheet. Let them cool for several more minutes.

Mix together confectioner's sugar, cinnamon and cocoa in a large ziplock plastic bag.

Shake the cookies carefully in the sugar mixture. They break easily. Store them in a tightly sealed container with extra sugar mixture sprinkled between the layers and on top. Because these cookies have so much butter, they will absorb the sugar rapidly.

If stored in a tightly closed container, the cookies will stay fresh for several weeks. They can be refrigerated, but freezing is not recommended. This recipe makes 4 to 5 dozen cookies.

Angel Slices

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter	1 1/4 cups plus 2 tablespoons flour
1/4 cup sugar	1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
3 eggs	1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 1/2 cups brown sugar	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup freshly grated coconut	1 1/2 cups confectioner's sugar
1 cup chopped pecans	1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

Procedure:

Cream 1/2 cup butter and 1/4 cup sugar until well blended. Beat in 1 egg and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla. Combine 1 1/4 cups flour and 1/8 teaspoon salt. Add dry ingredients in three parts and blend in. Pat the dough evenly into a greased 9 by 12-inch pan. Bake about 15 minutes at 350 degrees.

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Beat remaining eggs. Add brown sugar, coconut, pecans, 2 tablespoons flour, baking powder, remaining salt and vanilla. Spread this mixture over the crust and bake for 25 minutes.

Slowly add lemon juice to confectioner's sugar until the frosting is of spreadable consistency. When the cookies are cool, frost and cut into bars.

Cinnamon Stars

Ingredients:

2 cups confectioner's sugar	2 teaspoons cinnamon
5 egg whites	1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1/8 teaspoon salt	1 pound ground unblanched almonds

Procedure:

Whip egg whites and salt until stiff, but not dry. Add the sugar gradually, continuing to whip. Add the cinnamon and lemon rind and keep whipping. Reserve one third of the meringue. Fold ground almonds into the remainder.

Dust a board with confectioner's sugar. Pat the dough to 1/3-inch thickness. Do not use a rolling pin as the dough is too fragile. Cut the cookies with a star cookie cutter. Spread the meringue on top. Garnish with colored sugar and sliced almonds. Bake at 300 degrees for about 20 minutes.

Apricot Balish

Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups flour	1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup butter	apricot pastry filling
1/2 cup sour cream	confectioners' sugar
2 beaten egg yolks	

Procedure:

Work butter into flour as for pie crust, using a food processor or pastry cutter. Mix together sour cream, egg yolks and vanilla. Mix into the butter and flour dough, using a wooden spoon. Shape the dough into 3 balls, put each inside a ziplock bag and flatten. Chill overnight.

This dough can be made in advance and frozen for up to a month. Thaw in the refrigerator prior to using.

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Using confectioners' sugar, roll out the dough and cut into squares, 1 1/2 inches per side. Place a teaspoon full of thick apricot pastry filling (you can buy this from a bakery) in the center of each square. Draw two opposite corners of the dough to the center and close over the filling.

Bake on a greased cookie sheet at 300 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes, until the bottoms are a light golden brown. Sift confectioners' sugar over top just before serving.

Pineapple Kolatcky

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cup sifted all purpose flour or 2 cups cake flour	1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder	1 tablespoon milk
1 cup butter, softened	1 beaten egg yolk
8 ounces cream cheese, softened	1 12-ounce can Solo pineapple filling
	Confectioners' sugar

Procedure:

Mix together flour and baking powder. Cream butter and cream cheese until fluffy. Mix in sugar and milk and beat again. Add the beaten egg yolk. Mix in the sifted dry ingredients. Chill for several hours.

Using confectioners' sugar, roll dough to 1/4 inch thick and cut it into 2 inch rounds. Place dough on an ungreased cookie sheet and depress the center of each cookie with a melon baller or your thumb. Place a teaspoon of pineapple filling in the depression.

Bake at 400 degrees 12 to 15 minutes, until the cookie bottoms are slightly brown. Dust with confectioners' sugar just prior to serving.

Egg Nog

Ingredients:

12 eggs, separated	1 cup peach or apricot brandy
1 pound confectioners sugar	2 quarts whipping cream
3 cups dark rum	freshly grated nutmeg
3 cups brandy	

Procedure:

Beat egg yolks until fluffy and light in color. Beat confectioner's sugar in gradually. The mixture should be very thick and pale yellow. Add 1 cup rum and 1 cup brandy very slowly, beating constantly. Cover and let stand for 1 hour to dispel the "eggy" taste.

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Add slowly, beating constantly, 2 cups rum, 2 cups brandy, 1 cup flavored brandy and whipping cream. Refrigerate, covered, for 3 hours.

Beat egg whites until still, but not dry. Fold them gently into the egg nog mixture. Sprinkle with nutmeg before serving.

Fruit Cake

Ingredients:

4 cups flour	1 teaspoon baking powder
1 1/2 cups chopped blanched almonds	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup dried (not candied) cherries	1 cup butter
1/2 cup chopped dried apricots	2 cups sugar
1/2 cup chopped dried pineapple	5 eggs
1/2 cup freshly grated coconut	1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup currants	dark rum

Procedure:

Soak dried fruits in 1/4 cup rum overnight.

Cream butter until light. Add sugar and beat well. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Add vanilla and continue to beat until very light.

Mix flour, salt and baking powder together. Stir into the butter mixture until thoroughly combined. Fold in fruit, coconut and nuts. Pour into 2 loaf pans, lined with waxed paper. Bake about 1 hour at 350 degrees.

Before cake is completely cool, poke holes in the top surface with a toothpick. Sprinkle rum over the top of the cake. Wrap the cakes tightly and store in an airtight container. Sprinkle the tops with rum every few days.

Pumpkin Cheesecake

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons softened unsalted butter	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/3 cup gingersnap crumbs	1 teaspoon allspice
4 8 ounce packages softened cream cheese	1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1 1/2 cups firmly packed dark brown sugar	1/4 teaspoon salt
5 eggs	2 cups pumpkin puree
1/4 cup all-purpose flour	Maple syrup and pecan halves for garnish
	Unsweetened whipped cream

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Procedure:

Generously butter a 9-inch springform pan with the softened butter. Sprinkle the gingersnap crumbs into the pan and shake to coat the bottom and sides evenly.

Beat the cream cheese until fluffy. Gradually beat in the brown sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating thoroughly after each one. Sift in the flour, cinnamon, ginger, allspice and salt. Blend well. Add the pumpkin puree. Pour the batter into the pan.

Bake at 325 degrees for 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours, until the cake pulls away from the sides of the pan. Remove from the oven and cool on a rack for 1 hour. Remove the pan and allow the cake to cool completely before brushing maple syrup on the top and arranging pecan halves and whipped cream garnishes. Refrigerate.

Mocha Cheesecake

Ingredients:

2 9-inch oreo cookie pie shells	2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 12 ounce package cream cheese	1 12 ounce package milk chocolate chips
1 8 ounce container coffee yogurt	1 12 ounce container sour cream
1 cup sugar	1 tablespoon sugar
4 eggs	cinnamon

Procedure:

Cream together cream cheese and sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs, yogurt and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract and mix thoroughly. Stir in half of the chocolate chips.

Pour into pie shells and bake at 350 degrees until set (usually about 45 minutes). Remove pies from oven.

Sprinkle remaining chocolate chips on top of the pies and allow to melt. Mix together the sour cream, 1 tablespoon of sugar and one teaspoon of vanilla. When the chocolate chips have softened and are spreadable, gently spread them across the top of the pies.

Pour the sour cream mixture over top and spread it to the edges of the crust. Return the pies to the oven and bake for 5 minutes, or until the sour cream topping is set.

Refrigerate, but allow the cheesecake to warm up for 10 to 15 minutes before serving.

Cranberry-Nut Bread

Ingredients:

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1 3/4 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup butter
3/4 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon grated orange rind

2 eggs
1/4 cup orange juice
1 cup sun-dried cranberries
1 cup vanilla yogurt
1 cup chopped pecans

Procedure:

Soak cranberries in orange juice overnight.

Cream butter and brown sugar together. Beat in eggs, until light and fluffy. Add yogurt and orange rind. Combine flour, salt and baking soda and mix in. Fold in cranberries and nuts.

Pour batter into a greased loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees for 1 to 1 1/4 hours. Let cool in pan. Slice thinly and serve while still warm.

Amish Friendship Cake

Ingredients:

1 cup starter
1 cup oil
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup milk
3 eggs
2 cups flour

1 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 box instant vanilla pudding

Procedure:

For this recipe you need a starter, which is made of 1 cup milk, 1 cup flour and 1 cup sugar. The starter is left in a cool place outside the refrigerator and works on a 10 day cycle. Any dried fruit, chopped or ground nuts can be added to this recipe. Stewed fruit, such as apricots, apples, pumpkin, etc. can also be added if the mixture contains minimal liquid.

On the third day stir the starter with a wooden spoon.

On the sixth day add one cup each of milk, sugar and flour to the starter.

On the eighth day stir the starter with a wooden spoon.

On the tenth day add one cup each of milk, sugar and flour to the starter. Split the starter into three cups.

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Mix into 1 cup of the starter: 1 cup oil, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 1/2 cup milk and 3 eggs. Mix the dry ingredients together in a separate bowl: 2 cups flour, 1 cup sugar, 1/2 teaspoon baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda, 2 teaspoons cinnamon and 1 box instant vanilla pudding.

Combine all ingredients. Pour the batter into two buttered loaf pans and bake at 325 degrees for one hour. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Give one cake and a jar of starter to a friend.

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Happy Valentine's Day



The Real Saint Valentine

St. Valentine was an Italian bishop who lived during the rule of the Roman Emperor Claudius II, also known as Claudius the Cruel. During this period, the Emperor initiated a series of bloody and unpopular military campaigns. Eventually he was unable to draft enough men for his legions, and, due to his skewed perceptions of reality, he convinced himself that they were too attached to their families. His solution was to outlaw all marriages and engagements in Rome.

Valentine secretly began to marry Roman couples. Claudius, on discovering this defiance of his edict, imprisoned Valentine. He was beaten and burned at the stake on February 14 in AD 270.

Valentine was canonized in honor of his defense of the Christian principles of love and marriage.



Poetry for St. Valentine's Day

The sonnet is traditionally considered the form for a poem about love. There are three types of sonnets: the Petrarchan, the Spenserian and the Shakespearean. All three contain 14 rhymed lines, usually in iambic pentameter.

The Shakespearean Sonnet, also known as the English Sonnet, is composed of 3 quatrains (each with its own rhyme words, usually in the scheme ABAB CDCD EFEF) and a closing couplet (rhymed GG). Each of the quatrains presents a different argument concerning love, and the couplet contains a summary, following the traditional rules of rhetoric.

The Petrarchan Sonnet, also known as the Italian Sonnet, is composed of an octave (containing 2 rhyme words) and a sestet (containing either 2 or 3 rhyme words). The rhyme words can be shared among the octave and the sestet, but there must never be more than 5 rhyme words in the entire sonnet. It's traditional for the poet to create a contrast, or a twist, in the sestet. The rhyme scheme for the octave is usually

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ABBAABBA, but the sestet has more freedom, and may be CDECDE, CDCCDC, or CDEDCE.

The Spenserian Sonnet is a combination of the Italian and English Sonnets. It contains three quatrains and a couplet, but has linking rhymes among the quatrains. The usual scheme is ABAB BCBC CDCD EE.

Enjoy a collection of some of the finest love poetry in the English language. Most, but not all, were written to another human being. Most, but not all, are sonnets.



Sonnet 116, by William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:

O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.



The Windhover To Christ, Our Lord, by Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J.

I CAUGHT this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird,--the achieve of; the mastery of the thing!

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Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!
No wonder of it: shéer plód makes plough down sillion
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.



Confined Love, by John Donne

Some man unworthy to be possessor
Of old or new love, himself being false or weak,
Thought his pain and shame would be lesser,
If on womankind he might his anger wreak,
And thence a law did grow,
One should but one man know;
But are other creatures so?

Are sun, moon, or stars by law forbidden,
To smile where they list, or lend away their light?
Are birds divorced, or are they chidden
If they leave their mate, or lie abroad a-night?
Beasts do no jointures lose
Though they new lovers choose,
But we are made worse than those.

Who e'er rigged fair ship to lie in harbors
And not to seek new lands, or not to deal withal?
Or built fair houses, set trees, and arbours,
Only to lock up, or lese to let them fall?
Good is not good, unless
A thousand it possess,
But doth waste with greediness.



La Figlia Che Piange, by Thomas Stearns Eliot

O quam te memorem virgo...

Stand on the highest pavement of the stair--
Lean on a garden urn--
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair--
Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise--

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Fling them to the ground and turn
With a fugitive resentment in your eyes:
But weave, weave the sunlight in your hair.

So I would have had him leave,
So I would have had her stand and grieve,
So he would have left
As the soul leaves the body torn and bruised,
As the mind deserts the body it has used.
I should find
Some way incomparably light and deft,
Some way we both should understand,
Simple and faithless as a smile and shake of the hand.

She turned away, but with the autumn weather
Compelled my imagination many days,
Many days and many hours:
Her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers.
And I wonder how they should have been together!
I should have lost a gesture and a pose.
Sometimes these cogitations still amaze
The troubled midnight and the noon's repose.



Batter My Heart, by John Donne

Batter my heart, three personed God; for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine and seek to mend
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn and make me new.
I, like an usurped town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but oh, to no end;
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captived and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you and would be loved fain,
But am betrothed unto your enemy:
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.



A Virtual Holiday Celebration

On Shakespear, by John Milton

What needs my Shakespear for his honour'd Bones,
The labour of an age in piled Stones,
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a Star-ypointing Pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of Fame,
What need'st thou such weak witnes of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thy self a live-long Monument.
For whilst to th' shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalu'd Book,
Those Delphick lines with deep impression took,
Then thou our fancy of it self bereaving,
Dost make us Marble with too much conceaving;
And so Sepulcher'd in such pomp dost lie,
That Kings for such a Tomb would wish to die.



The Forsaken, by William Wordsworth

The peace which others seek they find;
The heaviest storms not longest last;
Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind
An amnesty for what is past;
When will my sentence be reversed?
I only pray to know the worst;
And wish as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle! silent year
Tell seemingly no doubtful tale;
And yet they leave it short, and fear
And hopes are strong and will prevail.
My calmest faith escapes not pain;
And, feeling that the hope is vain,
I think that he will come again.



A Virtual Holiday Celebration

To G.A.W., by John Keats

Nymph of the downward smile, and sidelong glance,
In what diviner moments of the day
Art thou most lovely? When gone far astray
Into the labyrinths of sweet utterance?
Or when serenely wand'ring in a trance
Of sober thought? Or when starting away,
With careless robe, to meet the morning ray,
Thou spar'st the flowers in thy mazy dance?
Haply 'tis when thy ruby lips part sweetly,
And so remain, because thou listenest:
But thou to please wert nurtured so completely
That I can never tell what mood is best.
I shall as soon pronounce which grace more neatly
Trips it before Apollo than the rest.



Sonnet III: Lovesight, by Danté Gabriel Rossetti

When do I see thee most, beloved one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee made known?
Or when in the dusk hours, we two alone,
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?

O love, my love! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,--
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?



L'Envoi, by Edward Arlington Robinson

Now in a thought, now in a shadowed word,
Now in a voice that thrills eternity,
Ever there comes an onward phrase to me

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Of some transcendent music I have heard;
No piteous thing by soft hands dulcimered,
No trumpet crash of blood-sick victory,
But a glad strain of some still symphony
That no proud mortal touch has ever stirred.

There is no music in the world like this,
No character wherewith to set it down,
No kind of instrument to make it sing.
No kind of instrument? Ah, yes, there is!
And after time and place are overthrown,
God's touch will keep its one chord quivering.



Sonnets from the Portuguese XLIII, by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,--I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!--and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.



The Secret Agent, by Wystan Hugh Auden

Control of the passes was, he saw, the key
To this new district, but who would get it?
He, the trained spy, had walked into the trap
For a bogus guide, seduced by the old tricks.

At Greenhearth was a fine site for a dam
And easy power, had they pushed the rail

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Some stations nearer. They ignored his wires:
The bridges were unbuilt and trouble coming.

The street music seemed gracious now to one
For weeks up in the desert. Woken by water
Running away in the dark, he often had
Reproached the night for a companion
Dreamed of already. They would shoot, of course,
Parting easily two that were never joined.



To an Isle in the Water, by William Butler Yeats

Shy one, Shy one,
Shy one of my heart,
She moves in the firelight
pensively apart.
She carries in the dishes,
And lays them in a row.
To an isle in the water
With her would I go.
She carries in the candles,
And lights the curtained room,
Shy in the doorway
And shy in the gloom;
And shy as a rabbit,
Helpful and shy.
To an isle in the water
With her would I fly.



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A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Patrick, Patron Saint of Ireland

Welcome to a celebration of Ireland in history, religion, music, poetry and food.

Patrick's Story

Patrick was actually born an Englishman to an educated and prosperous family, about 360 A.D. At the age of 16 he was kidnapped by Irish pirates from his home on the west coast of England, and sold as a slave into the service of a local Irish king. During his slavery, while he worked as a shepherd, he became a Christian. Eventually he escaped from slavery and returned to England. However, he heard God calling him to return to Ireland as a missionary.

At that time, Ireland practiced the ancient druidic religion, which is similar to animist religions still found in some areas today. Patrick challenged the druidic priests. Like many other early Christians, he was frequently imprisoned for months at a time. Yet slowly, tiny pockets of the countryside turned to his powerful voice. He baptized tens of thousands of people and helped erect hundreds of chapels throughout Ireland. He died in 420 A.D.

The Magic of Celtic Music

Irish music is heavily indebted to the melodies of folk song and the rhythms of folk dance. The traditional instruments (pipes, celtic harp, drum and fiddles) give it a mournful, mysterious air. A common form is the ballad, which typically tells a story of lost love and death. A very beautiful Irish ballad from the 17th century is *Shule Agra*, sung by a woman about her lover who has gone off to war on behalf of the English.

Shule Agra

His hair was black, his eye was blue
His arm was stout, his word was true
I wish in my heart, I was with you,
Go thee, thu Mavourneen slaun.

Shule, shule, shule agra
Only death can cease my woe,
Since the lad of my heart from me did go
Go thee thu Mavourneen slaun!

I sold my rock, I sold my reel
When my flax was spun, I sold my wheel

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

To buy my love a sword of steel.
Go thee, thu Mavourneen slaun.

Shule, shule, shule agra
Only death can cease my woe,
Since the lad of my heart from me did go
Go thee thu Mavourneen slaun!

I'll dye my petticoat, I'll dye it red,
And round the world I'll beg my bread,
Till I find my love alive or dead,
Go thee, thu Mavourneen slaun.

Shule, shule, shule agra
Only death can cease my woe,
Since the lad of my heart from me did go
Go thee thu Mavourneen slaun!

King James was routed in the fray;
The wild-geese went with him away,
My boy went too, that dreary day,
Go thee, thu Mavourneen slaun.

Shule, shule, shule agra
Only death can cease my woe,
Since the lad of my heart from me did go
Go thee thu Mavourneen slaun!

In the past hundred years, traditional Irish ballads have been re-worded to tell the tales of modern politics and revolution. This one, *The Foggy Dew*, describes the events of the Easter 1916 Uprising.

The Foggy Dew

As down the glen one Easter morn
To a city fair rode I,
Three armed lines of marching men
In squadrons passed me by.
No pipe did hum, no battle drum
Did sound its last tattoo,
But the angelus bell o'er the Liffey swell
Rang out in the foggy dew.

Right proudly high in Dublin town
They hang out a flag of war;
T'was better to die 'neath an Irish sky

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Than at Suvla or Suddel Bar.
And from the plains of Royal Meath
Strong men came hurrying through,
While Britannia's sons, with their long-range guns,
Sailed in through the foggy dew.

T'was England bade our Wild Geese fly
That small nations might be free;
But their bones are laid by Suvla's shade
On the fringe of the great North Sea.
Oh how they died, by Pearse's side,
Or fought with Cathal Brugha;
Their names we would keep, where the Fenians sleep,
'Neath the shroud of the foggy dew.

But the bravest fell and the requiem bell
Tolled mournfully and clear,
For those who died that Eastertide
In the springtime of the year.
And the world did gaze, in deep amaze,
At those gallant men but few,
Who led the fight that freedom's light
Might shine through the foggy dew.

Here is William Butler Yeats', the most famous of the Irish poets, version of these events.

Easter 1916

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth-century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
Or have lingered awhile and said
Polite meaningless words,
And thought before I had done
Of a mocking tale or a gibe
To please a companion
Around the fire at the club,
Being certain that they and I
But lived where motley is worn:
All changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

That woman's days were spent
In ignorant good-will,
Her nights in argument
Until her voice grew shrill.
What voice more sweet than hers
When, young and beautiful,
She rode to harriers?
This man had kept a school
And rode our winged horse;
This other his helper and friend
Was coming into his force;
He might have won fame in the end,
So sensitive his nature seemed,
So daring and sweet his thought.
This other man I had dreamed
A drunken, vainglorious lout.
He had done most bitter wrong
To some who are near my heart,
Yet I number him in the song;
He, too, has resigned his part
In the casual comedy;
He, too, has been changed in his turn,
Transformed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

Hearts with one purpose alone
Through summer and winter seem
Enchanted to a stone
To trouble the living stream.
The horse that comes from the road.
The rider, the birds that range
From cloud to tumbling cloud,
Minute by minute they change;
A shadow of cloud on the stream
Changes minute by minute;
A horse-hoof slides on the brim,
And a horse plashes within it;
The long-legged moor-hens dive,
And hens to moor-cocks call;
Minute by minute they live:
The stone's in the midst of all.

Too long a sacrifice
Can make a stone of the heart.
O when may it suffice?
That is Heaven's part, our part

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

To murmur name upon name,
As a mother names her child
When sleep at last has come
On limbs that had run wild.
What is it but nightfall?
No, no, not night but death;
Was it needless death after all?
For England may keep faith
For all that is done and said.
We know their dream; enough
To know they dreamed and are dead;
And what if excess of love
Bewildered them till they died?

I write it out in a verse --
MacDonagh and MacBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,
Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

Many religious hymns were created from texts and Celtic folk melodies. *Be Thou My Vision*, set to the tune *Slane*, dates from 700 A.D. The text originates in the Irish monastic tradition and is an example of a *lorica* or breastplate, which is an incantation recited for protection while arming oneself for spiritual or physical battle.

The tune is named for a hill about ten miles from Tara Hill in County Meath. According to an account in his *Confessions*, St. Patrick defied the command of the pagan king Loigaire by lighting the Pascal candle on Easter Eve. The king's edict was that no fire could be ignited before the royal fire was lit by the king's hand on Tara Hill, celebrating the pagan vernal equinox and symbolizing the return of light and the change of seasons following the winter darkness.

The melody has several characteristics usually associated with Irish folk tune: a relatively wide range, a four phrase structure with no repetition, and a singability that gives the melody a broad popular appeal.

Be Thou My Vision

Be Thou my vision, oh Lord of my heart;
Nought be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Be Thou my wisdom, be Thou my true word,
I ever with Thee and Thou with me Lord.
Thou my great Father and I Thy true son,
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my breasplate for the true fight;
Be Thou my armour and be Thou my might.
Thou my sole shelter, and Thou my high tower,
Raise Thou me heavenwards, oh power of my power.

Riches I need not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance through all of my days;
Thou and Thou only the first in my heart
High king of heaven my treasure Thou art.

Oh high king of heaven, when battle is done
Grant heaven's joy to me, bright heaven sun;
Christ of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, Thou ruler of all.

Click on the *play* button to hear a version of *Slane*.

The Meaning of Celtic Knots

The Celtic Knot, which resembles a continuous, interwoven strand, has many meanings. Celtic knots are symbols of longevity, eternity and continuity. They also represent the complexity of the self, as well as the binding of relationships. St. Patrick is strongly associated with the binding of relationships to God. Another *lorica*, known as *St. Patrick's Breastplate*, expresses the many ways in which one can bind oneself to God. Although the hymn itself wasn't written by St. Patrick, the ideas originated from his *Confessions*.

Saint Patrick's Breastplate

I bind myself today to a strong virtue, an invocation of the Trinity. I believe in a Threeness, with confession of an Oneness in the Creator of the Universe.

I bind myself today to the virtue of Christ's birth with his baptism, to the virtue of his crucifixion with his burial, to the virtue of his resurrection with his ascension, to the virtue of his coming to the Judgment of Doom.

I bind myself today to the virtue of ranks of Cherubim, in obedience of Angels, [in service of Archangels] in hope of resurrection for reward, in prayers of Patriarchs, in preaching of Apostles, in faiths of Confessors, in innocence of Holy Virgins, in deeds of righteous men.

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I bind myself today to the virtue of Heaven, In light of Sun, In brightness of Snow In splendour of Fire, In speed of Lightning, In swiftness of Wind, In depth of Sea, In stability of Earth, In compactness of Rock.

I bind myself today to God's Virtue to pilot me, God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me, God's Word to speak to me, God's hand to guard me, God's way to lie before me, God's shield to protect me, God's host to secure me, Against snares of demons, Against seductions of vices, Against lusts of nature, Against every one who wishes ill to me, Afar and anear, Alone and in a multitude.

So have I invoked all these virtues between me, [and these] against every cruel, merciless power which may come against my body and my soul against incantations of false prophets, against black laws of heathenry, against false laws of heretics, against craft of idolatry, against spells of women and smiths and druids, against every knowledge that defiles men's souls.

Christ to protect me today, Against poison, against burning, against drowning, against death-wound, Until a multitude of rewards come to me!

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me! Christ below me, Christ above me. Christ at my right, Christ at my left! Christ in breadth, Christ in length, Christ in height!

Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me!

I bind myself today to a strng virtue, an invocation of the Trinity. I believe in a Threeness with confession of a Oneness, in the Creator of [the Universe.] Salvation is the Lord's, salvation is the Lord's, salvation is Christ's. May Thy salvation, O Lord, be always with us.

The Real Gold at the End of the Rainbow

Have a nice Irish “Tea” at four o'clock of the afternoon.

Irish Soda Bread

Ingredients:

2 cups flour	1 cup currants (don't substitute raisins)
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder	1 tablespoon caraway seeds
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1 beaten egg
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 cup vanilla yogurt, or 2/3 cup
1 tablespoon sugar	buttermilk
1/2 cup chilled butter	

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Procedure:

Mix together flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and sugar. Cut butter into the flour mixture with a pastry cutter, until all particles of flour are thoroughly coated with butter. The dough will be pale yellow in color. Stir in currants and caraway seeds. Mix egg and yogurt together. Stir into dough. The dough will be slightly sticky.

Knead the dough briefly (about 20 turns) on a floured pastry board. Form the dough into a ball and place it in a greased 8 inch round pan. Flatten the top of the loaf, so that it fills the entire pan.

Cut a large cross on the top of the loaf. The cross should extend the full width and length of the loaf, so that it won't crack as it rises while baking. Brush the top of the loaf with milk or melted butter.

Bake at 375 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes, until the bread is golden brown. When cool, cut the loaf into quarters, along the lines of the cross, and slice each quarter before serving.

Irish Coffee

Ingredients:

Strong hot coffee, such as espresso
Irish Whiskey: Jamesons or Bushmills

heavy whipping cream
vanilla sugar

Procedure:

In a long-stemmed glass, add 1 part Irish whiskey to 3 parts coffee. Whip cream until stiff, adding 2 tablespoons vanilla sugar to every pint of cream. Cover the top of the drink with whipped cream.

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

Easter Eggs, Easter Bunnies, Easter Lilies

Although our English word Easter derives from the name of the Teutonic goddess of spring or the dawn, in many other languages, it comes from the Hebrew word for Passover, or *pesach*. The events leading up to Easter began with the festival of Passover, which also falls in the spring. There was no fixed date for the celebration of Easter until 325 A.D., when the Council of Nicaea set the date as the first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21, the vernal equinox.

Easter, like the Chinese New Year and the Jewish & Islamic holidays, is based on the lunar calendar, rather than on the Gregorian calendar. Easter always occurs in the spring, but never before March 22nd or after April 25th. The council probably set the date of Easter to fall near the time of a full moon so that pilgrims would have the benefit of moonlight to help them find their way.

The vernal equinox has always symbolized earth's rebirth. The early church incorporated pagan fertility rituals into the Easter ceremony. This is why some symbols commonly associated with Easter, such as rabbits and eggs, seemingly have nothing to do with the story of Easter. They do, however, represent fertility or new life.

Easter lilies do have a closer connection to the Easter story. A part of many Easter ceremonies is the creation of a *cross of flowers*. Everyone brings a flower from their garden and places it in a large, free-standing wooden cross covered by mesh. Since the lily is one of the first flowers to bloom in the spring, many of the flowers in the cross are lilies. Daffodils, narcissus, lilacs, tulips, iris and roses also commonly appear. The cross, which had been a symbol of Christ's death during the previous three days, now represents Christ's resurrection.

The Story of the Resurrection

from The Gospel According to St. Matthew, Chapter 28

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.

His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

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So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.

When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble."

So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed.

Easter Traditions

In Russia, edible easter eggs are given to beggars in memory of Christ's resurrection. Russia and other eastern European countries also have a long tradition of painting and decorating non-edible, or *blown* eggs. The raw eggs are blown out through a pin-hole in the shell, and the fragile shells are painted and lacquered.

In Bulgaria, boiled eggs are part of a family food fight. The person who ends up with an unbroken egg is the winner and is blessed with success in the coming year.

In Poland families prepare a *blessing basket* the Saturday morning before Easter. They put colored eggs, bread, cake, salt, paper, white sausages, cheese cake and marzipan in the basket and take it to church for a blessing. The *Great Lent*, or the forty-day fast before Easter, is over only after the blessing of the basket. The red colored eggs symbolize the risen Christ. The bread and salt are wishes for good health and a successful life. The sausages represent hope for enough food and fertility during the coming year.

In parts of Germany, boiled eggs are pickled in vinegar along with beets. The white of the egg quickly absorbs the reddish-purple beet juice, and eggs and beets are eaten cold. Another German tradition involves hiding the eggs throughout the house or, in warmer years, throughout the yard, for children to hunt for. Although technically these eggs are edible, the parents often hide them repeatedly, as the children have more fun searching for them than eating them. The Germans also bake an Easter cake in a lamb mold, frost it and decorate it with grated coconut and easter candies.

Hard-boiled eggs are also baked into Easter pastry and meat loaves throughout Europe.

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In England, hot cross buns are traditionally eaten on Good Friday and again on Easter Day. These sweet and spicy rolls probably originated from the sacramental cakes offered to the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eastore, and were blessed by the Christian priests by the addition of a cross cut into their tops. You may have heard the nursery rhyme:

Hot cross buns, hot cross buns,
One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns.
If you have no daughters, give them to your sons.
One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns.

For most Europeans, Easter marks the end of the fast, which began on *Ash Wednesday* and lasted throughout the forty days of Lent. Traditionally, on *Mardi Gras*, or *Fat Tuesday*, all of the sugar and butter is used up in a feast. For the next forty days, people give up some type of food or habit that they're addicted to in memory of Christ's stay in the desert.

In the United States, the Easter Rabbit delivers baskets of colored eggs, and candy, to children.

Easter Recipes

Easter Bread

Ingredients:

1 cup confectioner's sugar	1 cup milk
1 cup butter	1 cup dried (not candied) fruit, such as: currants, cherries, chopped apricots, chopped pineapple
4 egg yolks	1 cup blanched, slivered almonds
4 cups flour	one egg for glazing
four teaspoons dry yeast	
1/2 teaspoon salt	

Procedure:

Mix butter, egg yolks and sugar, add salt, flour, dry yeast and milk together. Make a stiff dough and let it rise. Separate the risen dough into two equal portions. Add in the fruits and almonds.

Put the dough into 8 or 9 inch round pans and let it rise again. Glaze the tops of the loaves with beaten egg before baking at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

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Hot Cross Buns

Ingredients:

4 1/2 to 5 cups flour, divided	2 eggs, beaten
2 packages active dry yeast	3/4 cup currants
1/2 cup sugar	1/4 cup candied orange peel
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon cinnamon	2 tablespoons water
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom	1 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg	1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 1/4 cups milk	milk
1/2 cup butter	

Procedure:

Combine 2 cups flour, yeast, sugar, salt and spices. Heat milk and butter to very warm, but not boiling. Add to flour mixture. Mix thoroughly. Add eggs. Mix thoroughly. Stir in currants, orange peel and enough remaining flour to make the dough easy to handle.

Knead dough until smooth and elastic, adding more flour as necessary, for about 5 minutes. Place dough in a buttered bowl, turning it over so that the top is buttered. Cover the dough with a damp towel and let it rise in a warm place until it's doubled in size (about 1 hour).

Punch the dough down and divide in half. Divide each half into 9 pieces and form the pieces into smooth round balls. Place the balls of dough into buttered cupcake tins. Cover and let the buns rise in a warm place until they are doubled in size (45 minutes to 1 hour).

Beat together egg yolk and water. Lightly brush over tops of buns. Bake in 375 degree oven until golden brown for 20 to 25 minutes.

Beat the softened cream cheese and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Add up to 1 teaspoon milk until the frosting is of spreading consistency. Make the shape of a cross on the top of each bun.

Pickled Beets and Eggs

Ingredients:

hard boiled eggs, shelled	2 cans small whole red beets
1 cup cider vinegar	1/4 cup sugar
1 cup water	1/4 teaspoon salt

Procedure:

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Drain the beets and reserve the beet juice. Place the beets in the bottom of a glass jar, along with the peeled, hard-boiled eggs. Heat vinegar, water, sugar, salt and beet juice in a stainless steel or ceramic pan. Do not use aluminum. When the mixture just reaches the boiling point, remove from heat and pour the liquid into the jar, making sure that the eggs are submerged in the liquid. Refrigerate overnight.

As eggs and beets are removed and eaten, more eggs and beets can be added to the jar. The eggs absorb the liquid, turning the whites a deep reddish-purple. They taste best after about three days in the solution. The liquid solution will last about two weeks, but the eggs and beets should be eaten within a week of being put into the jar.

Dance Round the May Pole, Crown the May Queen

The History and Traditions of May Day



May Day is an ancient Druidic holiday, and is mainly practiced by the Celts in the British Isles. It involves dancing around a May Pole, creating garlands and bowers of flowers, the playing of bagpipes and drums to traditional Morris dances, and general celebration of the beginning of summer.

Beltaine or *La Baal Tinne*, as the Irish call it, starts at sundown on April 28 and lasts for three days. At sundown Druid priests light fires on the top of the nearest beacon hill to mark the beginning of the celebrations. Revelers jump naked through the fires, which confer healing properties and protection. Herds of cattle are often driven between two of these fires before the journey to their summer pastures.

May Day also signifies the rite of passage into adulthood. Young men and women stay out in the forest to greet the May sunrise, making flower garlands to carry back and decorate the village. Because many young women returned home pregnant, this custom was outlawed in 1644 by the Puritans.

Another May Day custom involving young love is one where young men leave evergreen boughs on the windows and doors of their friends' houses. Since there was a language of leaves as well as of flowers, a thorn branch meant scorn and mountain-ash signified love.

May Day is sacred to Robin Hood and Maid Marian, as Robin Hood was said to have died on that day. Archery contests, perhaps in his memory, are often a part of May Day celebrations.

Willow, either pussy willow, or weeping willow, is a tree sacred to May Day and the elements of water and the moon. It's also associated with the Goddess of the hunt (Arianrhod, Diana or Artemis). Willow is the natural source of aspirin and has many healing qualities. Willow is also associated with death, femininity, and love. Willow wood is good for making magical harps.



May Pole Dances

May Pole dancing is a form of country garden folk dancing done with a pole up to 9 feet tall that has colored ribbons attached in multiples of 4. The ribbons must be a length of one-and-a-half times the height of the pole. Half of the dancers dance in an

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inner circle, nearer the pole, and the other half dance in an outer circle. The dance is ballet-like in structure, and results in the ribbons forming a plait, or braid, around the pole.

There are basically two kinds of dances: the closed plait, where the pattern of ribbons is wound around the pole, and the open plait, where the pattern is made by the outer ribbons winding over top of the inner ones.

Here are several possible resulting patterns.

- The *Barber's Pole* forms a striped pattern, spiralling down the pole like the traditional barber's sign.
- The *Single Trace* is an open plait, so the inner ribbons are held vertically against the pole while the outer ribbons weave a pattern over them.
- In the *Double Trace*, the inner and outer dancers work as pairs, creating a basket-weave pattern down the pole.
- The *Outside Trace* is a basket-weave pattern using both inner and outer ribbons.
- The *Spider's Web* is a conical open plait.
- The *Gypsy's Tent* is a complicated open plait.
- In *Plait the Rope* the dancers work in groups of four. The two outer dancers plait the pattern down the two inner dancers to form a rope.



Morris Dances

Morris dancing is found throughout Europe and is associated with mummers and mystery plays of the Middle Ages. Different dances are appropriate to the various religious festivals. A mime of the Eucharist is part of May Day Morris Dances. A dancer called the Cake and Sword Bearer walks among the audience offering pieces of cake borne upon a sword. The cake brings good luck and makes the theme of sacrifice a shared ritual.

The dancers in the Morris Dance dress alike, wear hats to take attention away from their faces and use other disguises or props to hide their personal identities and emphasize their function as religious intermediaries. Dancers always wear bells and ribbons on their boots, which contribute to the effect of the dance.

Some of the traditional dances have religious origins. The *Green Garters* which is often performed around a Maypole, the *Hey* (a serpentine movement in which the dancers pass each other in a prescribed way until they all reach their places after first having passed all the other dancers in the set), and *Rounds*, or circles, have characteristics of religious rituals.

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Maying in Literature and Music

May Day celebrations were so common a part of English life that they've left their mark in English literature, music and art. One of the earliest mentions of maying is from the Thirteenth Century. In the legend of King Arthur, Queen Guinever rides out maying with her court. This is Aubrey Beardsley's version of that scene.

Maying was clearly quite a popular pastime, even among the adults, as late as the Seventeenth Century, as evidenced by the poem **Corinna's Going A-Maying**, by the metaphysical poet Robert Herrick. Thomas Morley, a Seventeenth Century writer of madrigals composed both the text and music to **Now is the Month of Maying**.

Corinna's Going A-Maying

Get up, get up for shame! The blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.
See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colors through the air.
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree!
Each flower has wept and bowed toward the east
Above an hour since, yet you not drest;
Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins said
And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in,
Whenas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.

Rise and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the springtime, fresh and green,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair.
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you.
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept.
Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night;
And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still

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Till you come forth! Wash, dress, be brief in praying;
Few beads are best when once we go a-Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come; and coming, mark
How each field turns a street, each street a park,
Made green and trimmed with trees! see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch! each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of whitethorn neatly interwove,
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation made for May,
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

There's not a budding boy or girl this day
But is got up and gone to bring in May.
A deal of youth ere this is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have dispatched their cakes and cream,
Before that we have left to dream;
And some have wept and wooed, and plighted troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth.
Many a green-gown has been given,
Many a kiss, both odd and even;
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out of the eye, love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks picked; yet we're not a-Maying!

Come, let us go, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time!
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun.
And, as a vapor or a drop of rain,
Once lost, can ne'er be found again,
So when you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drowned with us in endless night.

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Then, while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.



If you live near the San Francisco Bay Area you can attend a May Faire on the first weekend of May, complete with May Pole Dancing, Morris Dancing, crowning of the May Queen, crafts and sports events at the *East Bay Waldorf School*, in El Sobrante. There are a number of other Waldorf schools in the area, including San Francisco, Santa Rosa, San Rafael, Los Altos, Fair Oaks and Santa Cruz, which may also celebrate May Day.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

The Summer Solstice

The word solstice derives from the French (via Latin) words for the sun and stand. The solstices occur at the time of year when the sun is farthest away from the celestial equator. The summer solstice occurs on June 21st. Ancient civilizations marked this important astrological event with special traditions.

Most world religions have astrological influences, including the old Testament, Egyptian, Native American, Greek and Roman mythologies. Ancient calendars were based on the equinoxes (vernal and autumnal) and solstices (summer and winter). Because the sun appeared to be supreme among all the celestial bodies, astronomers associated it with the god of all gods, or with the creator of the universe.

Ancient cultures had several different methods for identifying the solstices and equinoxes. Newgrange, in Ireland, is an example of spot lighting. This technique involves carving or painting symbols on the walls of passages, chambers or caves where they would be struck by a beam of light at sunrise or sunset on one of the solstices or equinoxes.

Another method, used by the Babylonians, Ionian Greeks, Chinese and Peruvians, involved measuring the shadow of an upright pillar, usually at noon, when the sun was directly overhead. In temperate zones, the shadow is shortest at the summer solstice, and longest in midwinter.

A third method, which was used by central American tribes, involved a specially prepared ceremonial structure. Only at noon on the longest day of the year would the sun directly shine through a hole or tube in the ceiling and onto a particular spot on the floor. There's a room in the Incan ruins at Machuu Pichuu, in Peru, that uses this technique.

The final technique, predominant in Europe, Asia and America, was to watch, from a fixed position, where on the horizon the sun rose and set over a period of years. Stonehenge, in England, marks the summer solstice sunrise. Of all the megalithic monuments in Europe, Stonehenge is unique because of the precision of its architecture and its extended use throughout history. The temple at Karnak, in Egypt, also incorporates solstice alignments.



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Celebrations of the Summer Solstice

In China, the summer solstice ceremony was the complement to the the winter festival, which was held in December to honor and energize the celestial male, or yang, forces. The summer festival was earthy, feminine, and yin in character, taking place on the altar of the Earth. While the winter solstice's sacrifice was burned so that smoke could rise to heaven, in summer the sacrifice was buried.

For centuries Europeans celebrated springtime by lighting fires on the highest hills on May Day. The Celts in the British Isles extended their fire rituals to Midsummer Eve. Swedes decorated and danced around a Midsummer Tree (similar to the May Pole). It was also customary for women and girls to bathe in a river on Midsummer Day, symbolizing the desire for life-giving rain. In a river the water is always moving and always renewed.

Native American tribes also created special ceremonies for the solstice. The Natchez Indians held a first fruits ceremony before any crops could be harvested. The Hopi Indians dressed in bright paint and feathers, representing the dancing spirits of rain and fertility called Kachinas. These Kachinas were the messengers between man and the gods. At Midsummer the Kachinas returned to their homes in the mountains, to visit the dead.

The Catholic Church chose Midsummer for celebrating the birth of Saint John the Baptist and called it Saint John's Day, perhaps because Jesus had once called John "a burning and shining light."

In Medieval Europe most of the healers were women herbalists. In the twelfth century, the German mystic Hildegard of Bingen wrote a book about natural healing and herbal methods, which became the basis of modern western herbalism and medicine. It also contributed to the execution of nine million women for witchcraft during the Holy Inquisition.

The summer solstice is the time of year when the feminine earth energies are at their height, so this is the optimal day for gathering herbs, such as St. John's wort, chamomile, geranium, thyme, and penny royal, and for healing. When burned, these herbs exude a wonderful aroma. During midsummer festivals they were thrown on bonfires to prevent sickness in livestock and to bring good luck.

Midsummer festival also included symbolic marriage ceremonies. In Sardenis, solstice couples were known as sweethearts of St. John. Their ritual featured pots of sprouting grain, for sexuality and fertility. Starting in March, a young man would request that a girl be his sweetheart. If she accepted, she would make a pot out of cork and plant barley and wheat seeds in it. By midsummer the plants would be mature. The couple would come to the church and place the pot of grain against the door. They would sit in a circle with their friends, picnicking on eggs, herbs and wine. Afterward they would sing

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and dance in circles until evening, in a magical rite designed to make woods grow green and flowers bloom.

At the Summer Solstice the earth's energy reaches its peak, flooding the surface of the planet. Afterwards it returns to the center of the planet to cleanse and renew it for a new cycle. The summer solstice is full of both external sunlight and the internal light of consciousness, so it's also a time for reflection on the thoughts and activities of the past year.



The Summer Solstice in Literature

T.S. Eliot wrote about a midsummer festival in his poem **East Coker**, the second poem in his series called **Four Quartets**. The English village of East Coker is the place Eliot's ancestors emigrated to America from. On a visit to the village, he imagined centuries of people celebrating the ancient rituals of the earth. This is an excerpt from Section I of **East Coker**.

If you do not come too close, if you do not come too close,
On a summer midnight, you can hear the music
Of the weak pipe and the little drum
And see them dancing around the bonfire
The association of man and woman
In daunsinge, signifying matrimonie-
A dignified and commodious sacrament,
Two and two, necessarye coniunction,
Holding eche other by the hand or the arm
Whiche betokeneth concorde. Round and round the fire
Leaping through the flames, or joined in circles,
Rustically solemn or in rustic laughter
Lifting heavy feet in clumsy shoes,
Earth feet, loam feet, lifted in country mirth,
Mirth of those long since under earth
Nourishing the corn. Keeping time,
Keeping the rhythm in their dancing
As in their living in the living seasons
The time of the seasons and the constellations
The time of milking and the time of harvest
The time of coupling of man and woman
And that of beasts.

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A Midsummer Night's Dream, by William Shakespeare

Shakespeare's personal summer solstice celebration is one of his most popular comedies. **A Midsummer Night's Dream** takes place in Athens, and incorporates several seasonal themes: love, fertility, revels, folk dance, a night out in the forest, music and magic. Mixed in, as in all of his comedies, is an unusual form of mistaken identity. Another Shakespearean trademark found here is the play within the play. The [hypertext](#) version of the play is available online. Following is a plot summary.

Theseus, the Duke of Athens, is engaged to Hippolyta, the Queen of the Amazons, with whom he'd once been at war. Although he loves her, she's not too keen on him. He sets up a Midsummer Revel to try to win her heart.

Egeus, one of Theseus' subjects, has a daughter, Hermia, who's in love with Lysander. Lysander seems to love Hermia in return, but Egeus prefers her other suitor, Demetrius. Hermia's friend Helena, in the meantime, is in unrequited love with Demetrius, who, it's rumored, led her on and won more than her heart, only to shun her. Egeus tries to force his daughter Hermia to conform to the law of Athens: either she marries the man he chose for her, she becomes a nun or she dies. Naturally, Hermia and Lysander decide to elope, and foolishly reveal their plans to Helena. Naturally, Helena tells Demetrius all about it.

The play within the play is the love story of Pyramus and Thisbe, acted by members various guilds: carpenter, weaver, tinker, tailor, etc. The actors engage in a series of comic one-up-manship while rehearsing.

The magic involves the fairies who control the seasons: King Oberon and Queen Titania and their subjects. The king is jealous of a lovely boy slave of the Queen's and plots to steal him from her by magic. Titania accuses Oberon of being attracted to the mortal, Hippolyta. Oberon, in turn, accuses her of being in love with Theseus. The natural order can be restored only through the correct disposition of the boy.

Puck, Oberon's fairy servant, uses the juice of the flower *love-in-idleness* to alter the natural love of various mortals. Naturally, he uses it on the wrong mortals, with (temporarily) disastrous consequences. The flower works its magic by causing the sleeper to fall in love with the first living creature they see upon waking. Oberon plans to use it on Titania, to get the Indian boy, and on Demetrius, to help Helena.

Puck, unfortunately, mistakes Lysander for Demetrius (all mortal men must look alike to fairies), who immediately falls in love with Helena, in the midst of his elopement with Hermia. Demetrius, seeing that Lysander loves Helena, decides she's worth his love. Poor Helena thinks she's being mocked. Lysander and Demetrius end up fighting over Helena, and Helena and Hermia have a cat fight.

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Puck, coming across the actors rehearsing their play, plays a trick on the lead male, who's rather full of himself. Puck gives him the head of an ass. The ensuing noise awakes Titania, who immediately falls in love with him.

Oberon is not as amused with the mixup as Puck had hoped he'd be. Puck works his magic to put them all back to sleep, and uses the antidote to settle the score among Lysander, Hermia, Demetrius and Helena. Oberon takes the boy slave and Puck releases Titania from her spell.

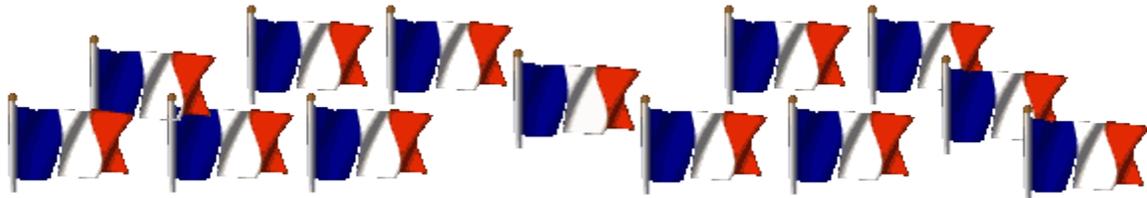
All the fairies leave, and as day breaks, Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and their hunting party enter and see the lovers asleep on the ground. Egeus is furious, but the two couples convince Theseus that their loves are true. They conduct a triple wedding ceremony and gather at the Palace to watch the play of the tragic lovers, *Pyramus and Thisbe*. When the play is over, everyone heads off to bed. Oberon and Titania enter with their fairies to bless the marriage beds and Puck explains the play away in heroic couplets:

If we shadows have offended,
think but this, and all is mended:
that you have but slumbered here
while these visions did appear;
and this weak and idle theme,
no more yielding but a dream!

Revolution or Evolution?

July was a hot month in the late 18th Century. On the Fourth of July in 1776, the American colonies declared their independence from the British Empire. On the Fourteenth of July 1789, the French working (*bourgeoisie*) and peasant classes stormed the **Bastille**, a notorious prison used to torture and subdue political and religious dissenters. This began a long process of overturning the monarchy of their *Ancien Regime* and establishing a Republic in France. These two countries were the first true democracies in the world.

Victor Hugo, in his novel **Les Miserables**, documented the French Revolution from the point of view of his main character, Jean Valjean. The story opens when Valjean, a peasant, steals a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. He's captured and imprisoned for years at hard labor. Stories like this were commonplace in 18th Century France. The movie **Jefferson in Paris** presents another view of the French Revolution, and its relationship to the earlier American War for Independence.



Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité

The storming of the Bastille held great symbolic value for the French. The Bastille represented the disconnect with and the oppression of the poor of both church and state. The French nobility of the 18th century still enjoyed medieval privileges and pastimes, while the working classes suffered and starved.

At the same time, students were being educated in the theories developed by the 18th century *Philosophes*, which held that power was in the hands of the people, not in the church or the state. As if to prove those theories, the masses armed themselves on July 14th and experimented on the Bastille. On July 16th, King Louis XVI recognized the tricolor cockade: the Revolution had succeeded. Once the Bastille had fallen, the French people attacked other institutions that symbolized the distinction between the aristocracy and the general populace.

For example, feudal *Game Laws* gave the nobility the exclusive right to raise animals and to hunt in the forests. Forests were closed to the working classes. Their wild deer and boar were protected, while the nobility farmed flocks of squab in giant dovecots and litters of rabbits in vast warrens which they hunted for sport and to grace the tables of the aristocracy. Much to everyone else's discomfort, these guarded birds and animals also roamed outside the forests at will, devouring the gardens and orchards of the farmers, and

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then finding refuge on the nobles' private estates and in the forests of the nobility and king. To kill game was a capital crime. No one outside the nobility even thought to eat it.

After the fall of the Bastille, *citoyens* all over France rebelled against the hated Game Laws. They scaled estate walls and raided the nobles' *chateaux*, emptying their wine cellars, destroying their dovecotes, burning fields to expose the rabbit warrens, and in the forbidden forests, capturing the deer, boar and pheasant. For the first time in their lives, they feasted on food and wine once reserved exclusively for the aristocracy.

Today Bastille Day is celebrated in Paris with a solemn military parade up the *Champs Elysées*, (Elysian Fields), in the presence of the head of state. Each city also holds a dance and sets off fireworks to celebrate their membership in a republican nation. To this day the storming of the Bastille symbolizes, for all citizens of France: liberty, democracy and the struggle against all forms of oppression.

Background

Eighteenth Century French society was divided into three classes:

- the Clergy, also known as the First Estate
- the Nobility, also known as the Second Estate, and
- the Bourgeoisie, also known as the Third Estate.

The Clergy were sub-divided into two groups: Higher Clergy and Lower Clergy. Higher Clergy came from wealthy families and Lower Clergy were Parish Priests. While the Parish Priests were in sympathy with France's poor, the Higher Clergy, who were also in control of the Church hierarchy, had the aristocratic point of view.

The Nobility were not only wealthy, but they were also highly privileged. They owned large estates and almost a quarter of the land of France, but paid practically no taxes. The Nobles were very jealous of the King's power, making it politically incorrect for him to raise their taxes.

The Bourgeoisie consisted of middle class workers, such as merchants and bankers, and professionals, such as lawyers, doctors and academics. The largest group in the Third Estate was the peasants. The peasants were the most heavily taxed and quite naturally wanted a fairer tax system. Unlike the peasants, the Bourgeoisie had money and education; however, they didn't have the prestige or influence that came with noble birth.

Louis XVI was Louis XV's grandson. He was considered a well-intentioned but weak king. His wife, Marie Antoinette, was lonely and bored. Her lavish lifestyle and other court extravagances led to even heavier tax burdens on the peasants. Paying no attention to her country's financial crisis, she refused to make any concessions to the hungry mobs who marched on their palace in Versailles, begging for bread. Louis loved his wife and was strongly influenced by her. Instead of negotiating, they called out troops to quell the mobs.

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Evolution of a Revolution

The French Revolution lasted ten years: from 1789 to 1799.

On 5 May 1789, in an unprecedented move, King Louis XVI convened the *Estates-General* to hear the peasants' complaints and because the nobles continued to refuse to be taxed. The Estates-General was an assembly of delegates from each of the Three Estates, proportionally representing the population of the country. It had not met since 1614. Louis wanted the assembly to approve his plan to tax the the First and Second Estates.

The usual method of voting was to separate each Estate. The delegates would vote as a group and each Estate would have one final vote. A majority necessitated that two of the three Estates agreed. In practice, the Clergy and Nobility generally agreed with each other and the Bourgeoisie's voice was never heard, even though the Third Estate made up nearly half of the total delegates. This time the Bourgeoisie proposed that all of the Estates vote as one body with each delegate having one vote.

In a move to force the hand of the other two Estates, the assembly of the Third Estate broke away and formed the Constituent National Assembly on 17 June. They invited the other two assemblies to join them as one body. The nobles, however, advised Louis XVI to enforce the custom of meeting separately, and he locked the Third Estate out of their meeting place.

The delegates of the Third Estate then moved to the palace's indoor tennis court and many of the Clergy and some of the Nobles joined them in their protest. On 20 June, they swore not to leave the tennis court until they'd achieved a constitution for France. The oath they took came to be called the Oath of the *Jeu de Paume*, or the Tennis Court Oath.

After a week, Louis gave in. He ordered all Nobility and Clergy to join the Third Estate in the National Assembly. This was the first victory for the Bourgeoisie. Unfortunately, soon after that accomplishment, Louis sent out 18,000 soldiers to Versailles because he didn't want to seem weak to the public or to the monarchies in the rest of Europe.

At this point, the peasants took matters into their own hands. Angry because of food shortages, unemployment, and high prices, they gathered outside of the Bastille on 14 July. The prison guards opened fire and nearly 100 people were killed. The crowd got so upset that they then killed the commander, stuck his head on a pike and paraded through the streets. Frightened, Louis called back his troops from Versailles and the National Assembly was saved.

Rumors spread that the Nobles were organizing armed bands to kill the peasants, and great fear set in. The peasants, full to the brim of hatred for the Nobility, burned the great manors and destroyed payment records.

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On 4 August, the National Assembly announced the end of feudalism in France. The churches could no longer collect taxes, or demand fees or labor from the peasants.

On 27 August, the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* was formed, which stated that the government belonged to the people as a whole.

Many women in the revolution wanted to share the promise of equality. They wanted a better education for young girls, fairer laws dealing with marriage and the right to be jurors. On 5 October, the *Women's March* on Versailles began. The Parisian women, protesting lack of bread and rising food prices, armed themselves with sticks and farm tools and marched 12 miles in the rain. They stormed the palace and forced the royal family to return to Paris at knifepoint. Louis then had no choice but to cooperate with the National Assembly, which was being controlled by the Bourgeoise.

Over the next two years Louis and the National Assembly made several changes.

- The government administration decided to divide the country into departments, which would be governed by elected officials.
- In 1790 the Church passed the Civil Constitution of Clergy. This law stated that the bishops and priests were to be elected by popular vote and were to be paid by the government.
- The most important act of the National Assembly was the adoption of the constitution in 1791, limiting the power of the king.

In the meantime, Marie Antoinette and a member of the Hapsburg family planned an escape route for the royal family to flee to the Austrian Netherlands, so that Louis XVI could work with the European monarchs on plans to crush the revolution. On the night of the escape, 20 June 1791, the royal family was reconized, arrested by the guards and forced to return to Paris. Louis lost all of the support that he had gained before.

A group of Bourgeoisie called *Radicals* didn't want a king, not even one with limited power. Instead they wanted France to become a republic. These Radicals also wanted more of a voice in the government, higher wages, lower food prices, and an end to the food shortages. Because of the Radicals, the revolution took an amazing turn. They took France into wars with other nations.

The Nobles were in a Counter Revolution, a movement to restore the old way of government to France. On 20 April 1792, France declared war on Austria. Prussia sided with Austria and invaded France. On 10 August, a radical government seized power, imprisoned the King, and ordered elections to choose representatives for a new assembly, to be called the National Convention. This was the first time that all adult males were granted the right to vote.

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The new national convention met for the first time in September 1792. Their first act was to end monarchy and declare France a Republic. Louis, thought to be a threat to the Republic, was sentenced Louis to death and was beheaded on 21 January 1793. Marie Antoinette died later that year.

European monarchs, fearing the strength of the French armies, sided with the aristocrats. Britain and Spain became allies of Austria and Prussia. The French Revolutionaries were now at war with all of Europe. Feeding the hungry in Paris became a pressing problem. The government fixed the price of certain foods and rationed bread.

In August of 1793 the committee appealed to the whole nation to help in the war effort. For the first time in European history, a national draft called all able-bodied men for army service. A new French army, one million strong, included citizens of all Estates. This was the largest army in the history of the world.

In an attempt to preserve the Republic, Robespierre began what he referred to as *The Reign of Terror*, a brutal program to silence critics of the government. He ordered executions of Clergy, Aristocrats, and even common people. Huge crowds came to see these executions. Eventually the guillotine went too far. Robespierre was arrested himself on 17 July 1794 and guillotined the next day.

The Revolution dragged on for five more years, with increasing bloodshed and disruption, leaving France ripe for the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Legacy of the French Revolution

The French Revolution dramatically changed French society and inspired countries as far away as Latin America. It also promoted the spirit of nationalism, which spread throughout Europe and Asia in the 19th Century.

Today the *Opéra de la Bastille*, the larger of Paris' two opera houses, stands on the site of the old prison. The Bastille's remains, consisting of the foundation of the tower called *La Tour de la Liberté*, are the recipients of graffiti.

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Michaelmas



A Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits, who prowl the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

The Origins of St. Michael and the Dragon

The theme of a god, saint or hero fighting a dragon in the sky is a cultural archetype, appearing in the mythologies of people all around the world.

In the Christian tradition, “there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon.” St. Michael the Archangel, also called the Prince of the Heavenly Host, the Standard-Bearer of God’s Army, First Champion of the Kingship of Christ, was Christ’s guardian angel during His stay on earth. So, just as Christ is present in every place of worship, so St. Michael is also present.

As the prince of all the angels, St. Michael held a very important place in the church. Until Vatican II Catholic priests were required to say the prayer to St. Michael either before or after each mass they celebrated.

St. Michael, the angel most often referenced in scripture, appears in the books of Daniel, The Letter of Jude, and in Revelations, where in the final battle between Satan and God St. Michael defeats Satan and casts him into Hell.

In a variation of the story of St. Michael, St. George, who is the patron saint of many countries, is believed by the English to be the one who fought with a dragon in the heavens.

The Chinese celestial dragon was always depicted on early pottery and paintings as attacking a pearl, probably the planet Venus, in the sky.

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According to Aztec legend, Quetzacoatl was called the Feathered Serpent and was associated with the planet Venus.

Venus is variously characterized as a fallen angel, a planet or both.

The name Lucifer means both the planet Venus (or the evening star) and Satan, the leader of the fallen angels that the Archangel Michael fought against.

St. Michael in the Christian Tradition

According to Christian tradition, St. Michael has four offices:

- to fight against Satan;
- to rescue the souls of the faithful from the power of the enemy (especially at the hour of their death);
- to be the champion of God's people;

(this includes both the Jews and the Christians, making St. Michael the patron of the Church and of the orders of knights during the Middle Ages)

- to call men away from earth and bring their souls to judgment.

There are nine orders, or choirs, of angels, beginning with the seraphim and ending with the angels. Some historians believe that St. Michael is the prince of all nine choirs, others believe he's prince of only the seraphim or of only the angels. The early Christians gave the care of their sick to St. Michael, and his veneration as a healer outshaded his military conquests. One of his feast days, September 6th, commemorates the day he created a healing spring. St. Michael is also the patron saint of mariners.

Various churches celebrate his feast on various days: May 8th, June 9th, June 18th, September 29th, September 30th, October 16th, October 27th, November 8th, November 12th and December 10th, each representing the time of a special miracle of healing or military conquest attributed to St. Michael.

St. Michael is represented in western art as an angelic warrior, fully armed with helmet, sword, and shield, and standing over the dragon, who he sometimes pierces with a lance. He also holds a pair of scales to weigh the souls of the departed, or the book of life, to show that he takes part in the last judgment.

During the Middle Ages his feast (September 29th) was celebrated as a holy day of obligation, but this was abolished in the eighteenth century. Michaelmas Day, in England and Germany, is still one of the regular quarter-days for settling rents and accounts. Most families made a feast of goose and cake, called St. Michael's bannock. Some parishes also celebrated the day with a procession.

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Bannock Cakes

Ingredients:

2 cups quick cooking oatmeal	blueberries
1/2 teaspoon salt	1/2 cup melted butter
2 tablespoons sugar	1/4 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1 beaten egg
1/2 cup currants, dried cherries or dried	

Procedure:

Mix dry ingredients together. Make a depression in the center. Mix together beaten egg, milk and melted butter and pour it into center. Stir until a stiff dough forms.

Knead thoroughly on a floured board. Divide into two halves. Roll each half into 8" rounds, 1/4 " thick. Cut each round into quarters.

Cook on a griddle over medium heat for a few minutes on each side, just until the edges begin to curl and the bottom turns golden brown. They can also be baked at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. The cakes can be iced with a confectioner's sugar glaze if desired.

The Litany of St. Michael, Archangel

Versicle: O God, come to my assistance

Response: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

1. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim, may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

2. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim, may the Lord vouchsafe to grant us grace to leave the ways of wickedness to run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

3. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones, may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.

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Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

4. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominions, may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and subdue our unruly passions. Amen

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

5. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers, may the Lord vouchsafe to protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the devil. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

6. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues, may the Lord preserve us from evil and suffer us not to fall into temptation. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

7. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Principalities, may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

8. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels, may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works, in order that we gain the glory of Paradise. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

9. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels, may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted hereafter to eternal glory. Amen.

Say 1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

Say 1 Our Father In honor of St. Michael

Say 1 Our Father In honor of St. Gabriel

Say 1 Our Father In honor of St. Raphael

Say 1 Our Father In honor of your Guardian Angel

O glorious Prince St. Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King, and our admirable conductor, thou who dost shine with excellence and superhuman virtue, vouchsafe to deliver us from all evil, who turn to thee with confidence, and enable us by thy gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day.

Versicle: Pray for us, O glorious St. Michael, Prince of the Church of Jesus Christ
Response. That we may be made worthy of His promises.

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Almighty and Everlasting God, who by a prodigy of goodness and a merciful desire for the salvation of all men, hast appointed the most glorious Archangel, St. Michael, Prince of Thy Church, make us worthy, we beseech Thee, to be delivered from all our enemies that none of them may harass us at the hour of death, but that we may be conducted by him into the august presence of Thy Divine Majesty. This we beg through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Another St. Michael Ceremony

O Glorious Archangel St. Michael, Prince of the heavenly hosts, be our defense in the terrible warfare which we carry on against principalities and Powers, against the rulers of this world of darkness, spirits of evil. Come to the aid of man, whom God created immortal, made in His own image and likeness, and redeemed at a great price from the tyranny of the devil. Fight this day the battle of the Lord, together with the holy angels, as already thou hast fought the leader of the proud angels, Lucifer, and his apostate host, who were powerless to resist Thee, nor was there place for them any longer in heaven. That cruel, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil or Satan, who seduces the whole world, was cast into the abyss with his angels. Behold, this primeval enemy and slayer of men has taken courage. Transformed into an angel of light, he wanders about with all the multitude of wicked spirits, invading the earth in order to blot out the name of God and of His Christ, to seize upon, slay and cast into eternal perdition souls destined for the crown of eternal glory. This wicked dragon pours out, as a most impure flood, the venom of his malice on men, of his depraved mind, corrupt heart, spirit of lying, impiety, blasphemy, his pestilent breath of impurity, and of every vice and iniquity. These most crafty enemies have filled and inebriated with gall and bitterness the Church, the Spouse of the Immaculate Lamb, and have laid impious hands on her most sacred possessions. In the Holy Place itself, where has been set up the See of the most holy Peter and the Chair of Truth for the light of the world, they have raised the throne of their abominable impiety, with the iniquitous design that when the Pastor has been struck, the sheep may be scattered. Arise then, O invincible Prince, bring help against the attacks of the lost spirits to the people of God, and give them the victory. They venerate Thee as their protector and patron; in Thee Holy Church glories as her defense against the malicious power of hell; to Thee has God entrusted the souls of men to be established in heavenly beatitude. Oh, pray to the God of peace that He may put Satan under our feet, so far conquered that he may no longer be able to hold men in captivity and harm the Church. Offer our prayers in the sight of the Most High, so that they may quickly conciliate the mercies of the Lord; and beating down the dragon, the ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, do Thou again make him captive in the abyss, that he may no longer seduce the nations. Amen

Versicle: Behold the Cross of the Lord; be scattered hostile powers.

Response: The Lion of the tribe of Juda has conquered, the root of David.

Versicle: Let Thy mercies be upon us, O Lord.

Response: As we have hoped in Thee.

Versicle: O Lord, hear my prayer.

Response: And let my cry come unto Thee.

Let us pray.

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O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we call upon Thy holy name, and we suppliantly implore Thy clemency, that by the intercession of Mary, ever Virgin Immaculate and our Mother, and of the glorious Archangel St. Michael, Thou wouldst deign to help us against Satan and all other unclean spirits, who wander about the world for the injury of the human race and ruin of souls. Amen.

August Queen of Heaven, sovereign Mistress of the Angels, who didst receive from the beginning the mission and power to crush the serpent's head, we beseech thee to send thy holy angels, that under thy command and by thy power they may pursue the evil spirits, encounter them on every side, resist their bold attacks, and drive them hence into the abyss of woe.

Most holy Mother, send thy angels to defend us and to drive the cruel enemy from us.

All ye holy angels and archangels, help and defend us. Amen.

O good and tender Mother! Thou shalt ever be our Love and our Hope.

Conqueror of the rebel angels, guardian of the souls of men, prince of the Church of Jesus Christ, most blessed Michael pray for us.

Michaelmas Ceremonies Today

If you live near the San Francisco Bay Area you can attend a Michaelmas dragon ceremony on September 29th at the East Bay Waldorf School, in El Sobrante. There are a number of other Waldorf schools in the area, including San Francisco, Santa Rosa, San Rafael, Los Altos, Fair Oaks and Santa Cruz, which may also celebrate Michaelmas.

A Virtual Holiday Celebration

All Hallows Eve



Der Totentanz, or La Danse Macabre

The Dance of Death is a medieval allegorical concept reflected in poetry, drama, art and music. The Dance of Death began appearing in poetry of the late 13th century. Paintings from the 14th century show processions of the living and the dead. The dance song *Ad mortem festinus*, from a 14th century manuscript, is an early musical example. Although the ceremony itself originated in France as *La Danse Macabre*, it was also practiced throughout Spain (*Danza de la Muerte*) and Germany (*Der Totentanz*). Its popularity spread along with the *Black Death* in the mid 14th century. A modern recreation is found in Ingmar Bergman's film *The Seventh Seal*.

Characteristic of representations of the Dance of Death are the *memento mori*, or the reminder of death, with its inevitability and impartiality. Typically all manner of beings join the Dance of Death: rich, poor, Popes, Emperors, children, hermits, craftsmen. All form a stately dance, the living alternating with the skeletons or corpses who are escorting them to their graves. The Dance of Death is both a stern reminder of the inevitability of death and a summons to repentance and amendment of life. The theme of ultimate equality had great satirical potential as well.

The woodcut called *Death and the Miser*, from a series of 41 called *The Dance of Death*, is by Hans Holbein the Younger, a 16th Century German artist. Along with the following poem, this series was the inspiration for Camille Saint-Saens' *Danse Macabre*.

Der Totentanz

Der Türmer, der schaut zumitten der Nacht
Hinab auf die Gräber in Lage:
Der Mond, der hat alles ins Helle gebracht,
Der Kirchhof, er liegt wie am Tage.
Da regt sich ein Grab und ein anderes dann:
Sie kommen hervor, ein Weib da, ein Mann,
In weißen und schleppenden Hemden.

Das reckt nun, es will sich ergötzen sogleich,
Die Knöchel zur Runde, zum Kranze,
So arm und so jung, und so alt und so reich;
Doch hindern die Schleppen am Tanze.

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Und weil hier die Scham nun nicht weiter gebeut,
Sie schütteln sich alle, da liegen zerstreut
Die Hemdelein über den Hügeln.

Nun hebt sich der Schenkel, nun wackelt das Bein,
Gebärden da gibt es vertrackte;
Dann klipperts und klapperts mitunter hinein,
Als schlug man die Hölzlein zum Takte.
Das kommt nun dem Türmer so lächerlich vor;
Da raunt ihm der Schalk, der Versucher, ins Ohr:
Geh! hole dir einen der Laken.

Getan wie gedacht! und er flüchtet sich schnell
Nun hinter geheiligte Türen.
Der Mond, und noch immer er scheint so hell
Zum Tanz, den sie schauderlich führen.
Doch endlich verlieret sich dieser und der,
Schleicht eins nach dem andern gekleidet einher,
Und husch ist es unter dem Rasen.

Nur einer, der trippelt und stolpert zuletzt
Und tappet und grapst an den Gräften;
Doch hat kein Geselle so schwer ihn verletzt;
Er wittert das Tuch in den Lüften.
Er rüttelt die Turmtür, sie schlägt ihn zurück,
Geziert und gesegnet, dem Türmer zum Glück,
Sie blinkt von metallenen Kreuzen.

Das Hemd muß er haben, da rastet er nicht,
Da gilt auch kein langes Besinnen,
Den gotischen Zierat ergreift nun der Wicht
Und klettert von Zinne zu Zinnen.
Nun ists um den armen, den Türmer getan!
Es ruckt sich von Schnörkel zu Schnörkel hinan,
Langbeinigen Spinnen vergleichbar.

Der Türmer erbleichet, der Türmer erbebt,
Gern gäb er ihn wieder, den Laken.
Da häkelt - jetzt hat er am längsten gelebt -
Den Zipfel ein eiserner Zacken.
Schon trübet der Mond sich verschwindenden Scheins,
Die Glocke, sie donnert ein mächtiges Eins,
Und unten zerschellt das Gerippe.

by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 1813

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Mexican Day of the Dead Celebrations

Día de los Muertos is an ancient festival that combines elements of the Aztec and Catholic traditions of commemorating the dead and recognizing the cycle of life and death. The original Aztec ritual was celebrated in late July and early August. Presided over by a priestess called the *Lady of the Dead*, it was dedicated to children as well as to the dead. The Spanish priests moved it to coincide with the Christian holiday of *All Saints Day*, or *Día de Todos Santos*, on November 1st.

The festival is characterized by a blend of aboriginal and Christian features. Families visit the graves of their close relatives, decorating the gravesites with large, bright flowers, religious tokens, candles and sometimes food sacrifices. They have a picnic at the cemetery and tell stories about the dead. The special elaborate meal includes spicy meats, an egg-batter *bread of the dead*, or *pan de muerto*, cookies, chocolate, and sugary confections in a variety of animal or skull shapes. It's good luck to find the plastic toy skeleton baked into your piece of bread. It's also good luck to receive a sugar skull from your friends specially decorated with your own name.

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Give Thanks

