

# MY NOT-SO-TRADITIONAL EASTER TRADITION

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*As I sat in the cemetery that Easter morning, the Resurrection took on a whole new meaning.*

I grew up celebrating Easter with colored eggs, Easter baskets, and candy. But when I moved away from home, I wasn't sure how to celebrate Easter on my own.

One day, as I was reading the account of Mary Magdalene and the “other Mary” going to the Savior's tomb on that first Easter morning (see Matthew 28:1), I had an idea: What if I put myself in the shoes of those women by going to the cemetery near my house just before sunrise on Easter morning?

It seemed like the perfect way to commemorate Easter.

And so, on Easter morning I meandered through the gravestones until I found a quiet spot on the grass to sit and read the account of the Resurrection.

As I read the words of the angel to the women, “He is not here: for he is risen” (Matthew 28:6), a sweet spirit settled over me, and I saw what a truly remarkable and wonderful gift His sacrifice was. I looked at all the gravestones and realized the immense

magnitude of His gift. Each gravestone represented a person for whom Christ had suffered—and who, because of His suffering, would rise again.

I thought of my deceased grandfather, who had been paralyzed for most of his life, and the joy I would feel not only to see him again but also to see him standing and running and to feel his arms around me. I thought of all the tears that had been shed here for loved ones lost and of the joy that would come with future tender reunions. I thought of Mary Magdalene seeing her resurrected Lord (see John 20:15–17)—of the wonder, the joy, the hope of His glorious gift.

Now each Easter morning, before I eat my bunny-shaped chocolates and boiled Easter eggs, I walk to the cemetery and sit and read the story of His Resurrection. And with a new appreciation for it all, I find myself exclaiming, in the words of Paul, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15). ■



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