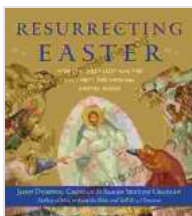


# How The West Lost And The East Kept The Original Easter Vision

Easter, a sacred celebration observed by Christians worldwide, commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This central event in the Christian faith holds profound significance, symbolizing triumph over death, hope for eternal life, and the renewal of the human spirit. However, over time, the celebration of Easter has evolved differently in the Western and Eastern branches of Christianity. While the West has largely embraced commercialized and secularized aspects, the East has remained steadfast in preserving the original vision of Easter as a spiritual and theological festival.

## Historical Divergence: The Great Schism of 1054

The divide between the Western and Eastern Christian traditions can be traced back to the Great Schism of 1054. This ecclesiastical schism separated the Roman Catholic Church from the Eastern Orthodox Church, leading to significant theological and liturgical differences. One of the most notable differences is the calculation of the date of Easter. The Western Church adopted the Gregorian calendar, while the Eastern Church continues to use the Julian calendar. This difference in calendars resulted in Easter being celebrated on different dates in the West and East.



## Resurrecting Easter: How the West Lost and the East Kept the Original Easter Vision by John Dominic Crossan

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 89645 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
X-Ray : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 224 pages



## **Theological Differences: Focus on Salvation vs. Transformation**

Theological differences between the Western and Eastern churches have also contributed to the divergence in Easter celebrations. In the West, the emphasis has shifted towards individual salvation through faith in Christ. This focus has led to a more personal and introspective understanding of Easter. In the East, however, the emphasis is on the transformation of the entire cosmos through Christ's resurrection. This holistic approach views Easter as a cosmic event that brings about the renewal of all creation.

## **Liturgical Differences: Symbolism and Ritual**

Liturgical practices also reflect the different perspectives on Easter. In the Western tradition, Easter is celebrated with a focus on elaborate rituals, such as the Easter Vigil and the blessing of the Easter fire. These rituals symbolize the resurrection of Christ and the victory over darkness. In the Eastern tradition, Easter is characterized by a more contemplative and inward-looking approach. The focus is on prayer, fasting, and the reading of Scripture, leading to a deeper spiritual experience.

## **Cultural Influences: Commercialization and Secularization**

Cultural factors have also played a role in shaping the Easter traditions in the West and East. In the West, Easter has become increasingly

commercialized, with a focus on gift-giving, chocolate eggs, and other secular activities. This commercialization has distanced the celebration from its religious roots. In the East, Easter remains a primarily religious festival, with cultural traditions centered around family gatherings, traditional foods, and the sharing of Easter bread.

### **Preserving the Original Vision: The East's Commitment to Tradition**

Despite the challenges of modernization, the Eastern Orthodox Church has remained committed to preserving the original vision of Easter. The church has resisted the influence of Western commercialization and maintained its focus on the spiritual and theological aspects of the holiday. This commitment to tradition has ensured that the Eastern churches continue to celebrate Easter in a way that is faithful to its historical and theological roots.

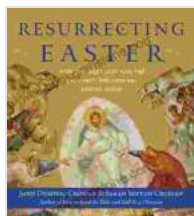
### **Rediscovering the Authentic Easter: A Call for Return**

In light of the divergence between the Western and Eastern traditions, there is a growing call for a rediscovery of the authentic Easter vision. This call is not simply about reinstating old rituals or practices but about embracing the true spirit of Easter as a celebration of hope, renewal, and the triumph of life over death. It is a call to go beyond the commercial and secular distractions and reconnect with the profound theological and spiritual significance of this sacred festival.

### **: Unity in Diversity**

The divergent Easter traditions in the West and East offer a fascinating study in the evolution of Christian practice. While the Western churches have embraced new cultural influences and liturgical practices, the Eastern

churches have remained steadfast in preserving the original vision of Easter. This diversity reflects the multifaceted nature of Christianity, with different cultural expressions and theological interpretations enriching the overall faith experience. Ultimately, the true spirit of Easter transcends these differences and unites Christians of all traditions in the celebration of Christ's resurrection and the hope it brings to the world.

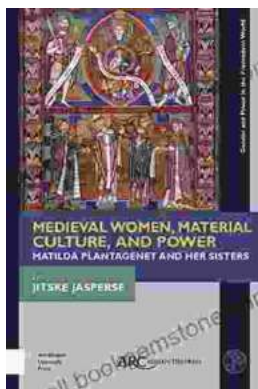


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