

their palms and feet by people dressed as Roman centurions and nailed to a cross. They are only taken down from the cross once they feel atoned of their sins. The practice, which is believed to date to the 1950s, also sees other penitents flagellate themselves using bamboo sticks tied to a rope. As you might expect from a tropical island, for example Bermuda, Easter is much more relaxed and a whole lot warmer than it is for us in Europe. Fittingly then, Bermudians of all ages like to celebrate Good Friday on the beach, where they fly both special homemade and store-bought kites. The kites represent Christ's resurrection, and come in all manner of shapes, colours and sizes. Some are so big they require several people to get them airborne. Along with kite-flying, Bermudians also enjoy eating fish cakes and hot cross buns at this time of year.

-Bernard Kellett

Entrance Antiphon: The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.

First Reading: Acts 4: 8-12

Responsorial Psalm: 117 Response: The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

Second Reading: 1 John 3: 1-2

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me. Alleluia!

Gospel: John 10:11-18

Memorial Acclamation: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.



Communion Antiphon: The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.



Fourth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B, 2024 Weekly Reflection: Easter Around the World (3)

Across central and Eastern Europe an ancient tradition exists which sees people try to drench each other with

buckets of water, usually men soaking the women on Easter Monday. Known as Smigus-dyngus (Wet Monday) in Poland, Watering Monday in Ukraine, Watering in the Czech Republic and Slovakia and Sprinkling in Hungary, the ritual is supposedly based around women's fertility, with the water having a cleansing effect in an effort to make them healthy for the upcoming spring. In Hungary participants will often dress up in folk costumes and the men will douse the women with buckets of water or perfume. In Poland, traditionally the women get soaked, but today it has become more of a country-wide water fight. After the soaking, usually the women then provide the men with food and alcohol. Another Easter tradition exists in these countries in which men whip women with a special handmade whip made from willow and decorated with ribbons. Not intended to be painful, it supposedly helps women keep their youth, health and fertility throughout the year.

In a centuries-old folk ritual that looks remarkably similar to Halloween, children in both Finland and Sweden dress up as Easter witches (påskkärring) and go door-to-door in their neighbourhoods in the hope of receiving chocolate. The youngsters wear decorated headscarves, paint their faces and carry bunches of decorated willow twigs, paintings and drawings which they exchange for sweet treats. Devout Catholics in the Philippines will volunteer to be "crucified" on Good Friday to reenact Jesus' suffering, in a particularly gruesome practice that has been condemned by the church. Thousands watch the reenactment, known as the San Pedro Cutud Lenten Rites, in the province of Pampanga, in which believers are nailed to crosses to atone for their sins or pray for others.

Penitents volunteer to have nails measuring two inches long hammered into