

Known in Spain as Semana Santa, or Holy Week, Easter is observed for an entire seven days on the Iberian Peninsula. Celebrations begin during the last week of Lent, and it is marked by huge and elaborate religious processions in nearly every single town and village across the country. People parade through the streets in costumes or in hooded robes, carrying intricate religious floats depicting difference scenes from the bible, while often accompanied by live music. Some of the most well-known take place in Zamora, Valladolid, Seville and Granada. Treats such as torrija (similar to French toast), pestiños and cakes are all popular around this time as well. *(Continued next week....)*

-Bernard Kellett

Entrance Antiphon: Like newborn infants, you must long for the pure, spiritual milk, that in him you may grow to salvation, alleluia.

First Reading: Acts 4: 32-35

Responsorial Psalm: 117 Response: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.

Second Reading: 1John 5: 1-6

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe'. Alleluia!



Gospel: John 20: 19-31

Memorial Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: Bring you hand and feel the place of the nails, and do not be unbelieving but believing, alleluia.



Second Sunday of Easter, Cycle B, 2024 Weekly Reflection: Easter Around the World (1)

Easter is celebrated on the Sunday after the first full moon following the first day of spring. This means that the Easter festival can

occur on any Sunday between March 22 and April 25. The expression Easter derives from the Old English word Eastre or Eostre. Eostre refers to the Anglo-Saxon goddess of dawn and spring. Many Britons will inevitably be celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ by eating large quantities of egg-shaped chocolates. Easter was celebrated in Britain before the arrival of Christianity with the mission of Augustine in 597 AD. The eggs themselves are a very old tradition dating to a time before Christianity. In pagan times, eggs were a traditional symbol of fertility and rebirth and were most likely to have been chicken or duck eggs, hard-boiled and painted in various colours and patterns.

However, this tradition may not have been unique to the British Isles. In Persia, eggs have been painted for thousands of years as part of the spring celebration of No Ruz, the Zoroastrian New Year. In Iran, coloured eggs are placed on the dinner table at No Ruz, and a mother eats one cooked egg for each child she has. The festival of No Ruz predates the reign of Cyrus the Great, whose rule (580-529 BC) marks the beginning of Persian history. Easter eggs in the UK are normally accompanied by or even delivered to children by Easter bunnies. In folklore, the Easter Bunny carried coloured eggs, sweets and sometimes toys to the homes of children during the Easter season. So, in this way, the Easter bunny has many similarities with Father Christmas. It might seem strange that a rabbit is associated with Easter, however, the connection to Christianity is less tenuous than you might think. The idea that a hare could reproduce without the loss of virginity led to a Christian association with the Virgin Mary, with hares sometimes occurring in illuminated manuscripts and Northern European paintings of the Virgin Mary and Christ as a child.