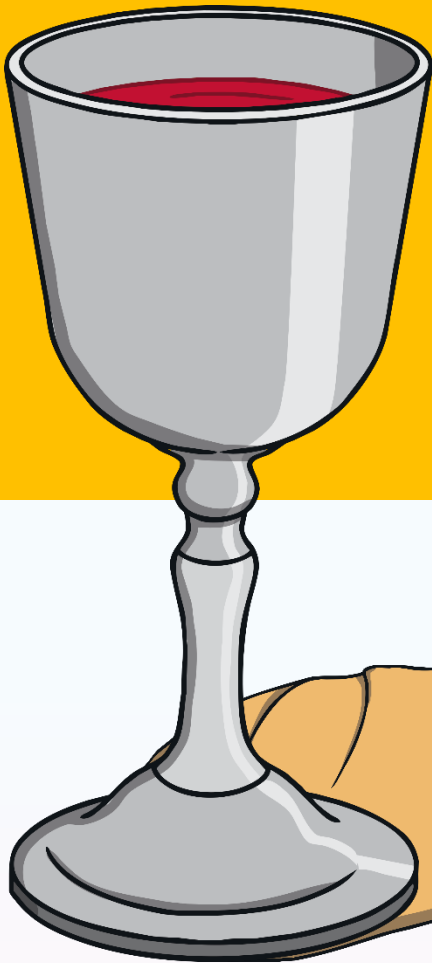


# Easter Symbols and Traditions Around the World

A Virtual Pause Day



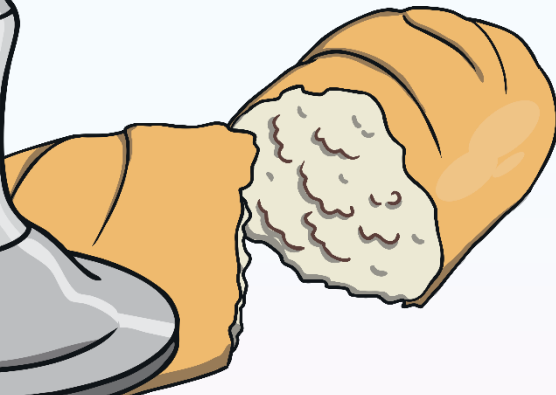
# Easter



We all know Easter to be an occasion of fun, happiness, lots of colourful Easter eggs, bunnies and lambs! But we must not forget that Easter is actually an important religious celebration of Jesus' suffering and rise from the dead.

Each Easter starts with Holy Week, which includes:

- Maundy Thursday (when The Last Supper happened)
- Good Friday (Jesus' Death)
- Easter Sunday , (Jesus' resurrection from death).



# Passover

In many languages the words for Easter and Passover are identical or very similar. It is thought that the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples took place on the Jewish feast of Passover. There are also links between the symbolism involved in both Easter and Passover.



# Palm Branches/Crosses



When Jesus entered Jerusalem the people were pleased to see him and waved palm branches to welcome him. Today, many churches make palm crosses out of palm leaves to remember this time.

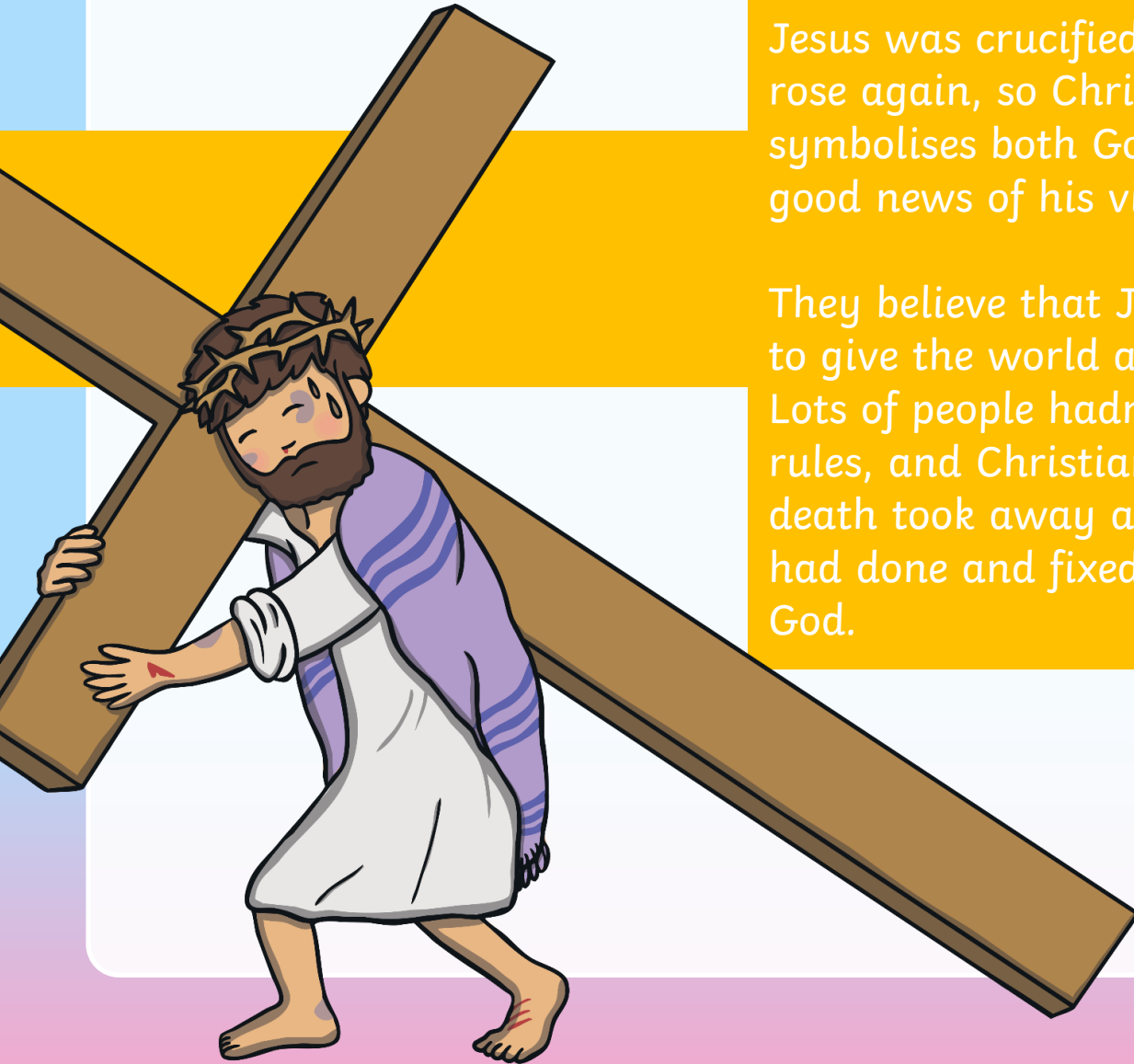


# The Cross

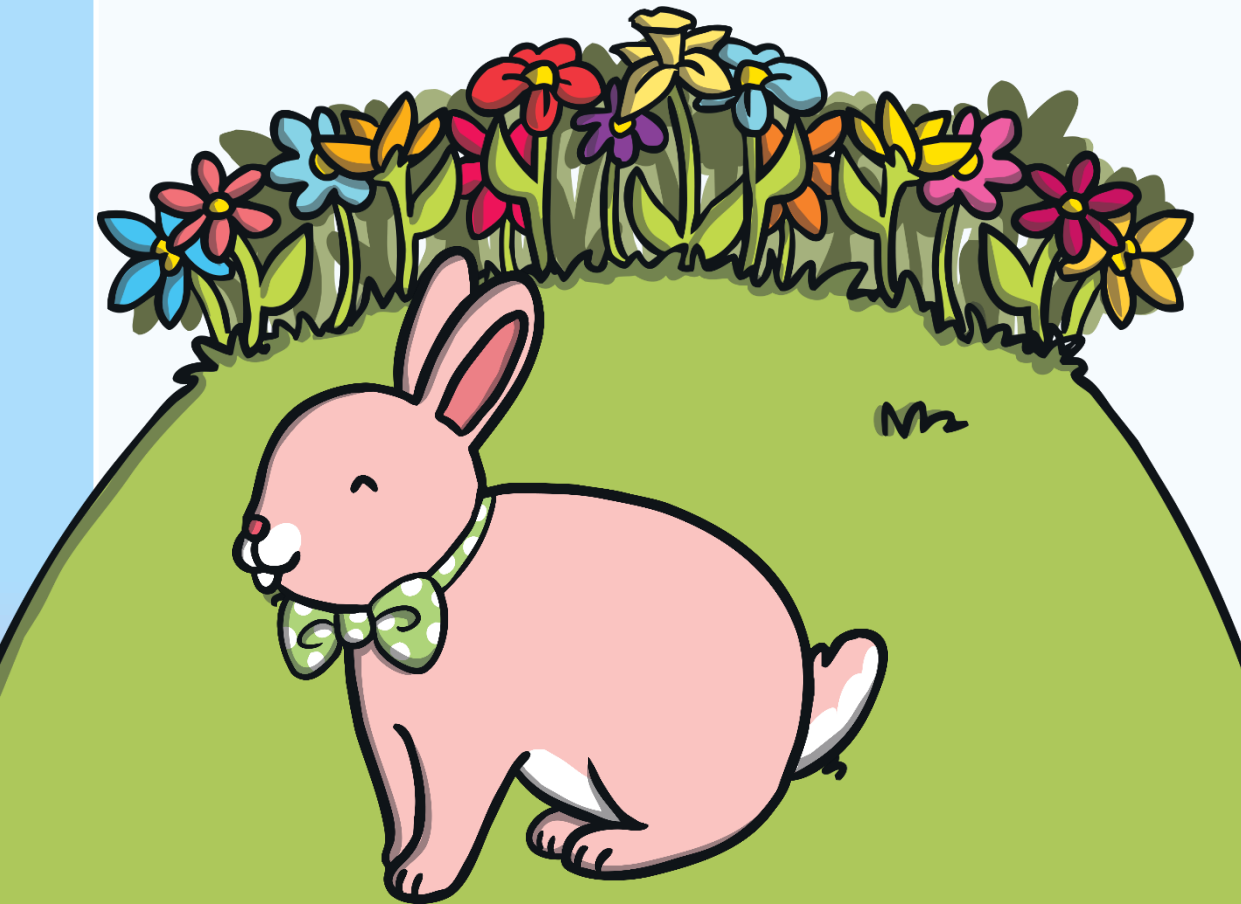
Jesus was crucified on the cross but he rose again, so Christians believe the cross symbolises both God's sacrifice and the good news of his victory over death.

They believe that Jesus died on the cross to give the world a fresh start.

Lots of people hadn't been living by God's rules, and Christians believe that Jesus' death took away all the bad things they had done and fixed their friendship with God.



# Bunnies



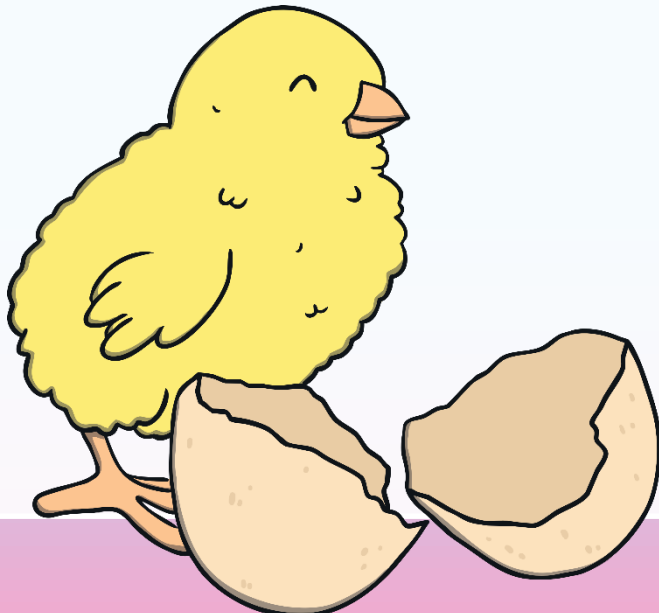
European pagan religions first incorporated rabbits and hares into the celebration of Easter as they are a symbol of fertility so they represent new life.

There is also a legend of a rabbit waiting for his friend Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (where Jesus' tomb was) until he was resurrected.



# Chicks

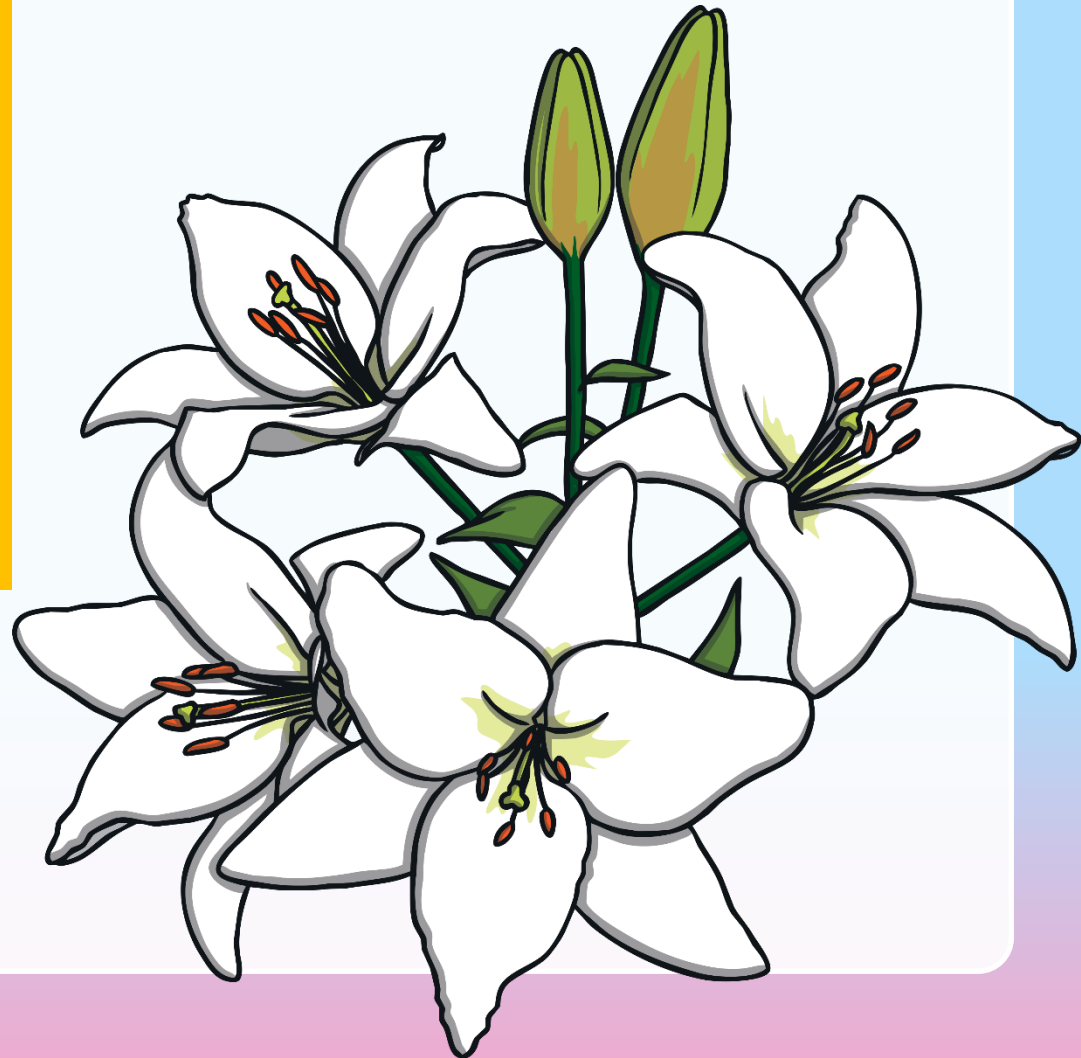
Similar to the Easter Bunny, chicks hatching out of an egg (similar to Jesus leaving the tomb) represent new life.



# Easter Flowers

Lilies have white blossoms, which represent the purity of Jesus.

Lilies, daffodils and tulips all push through the earth in the spring, showing new life, and are often used in flower arrangements in churches around Easter.





# Bonnets

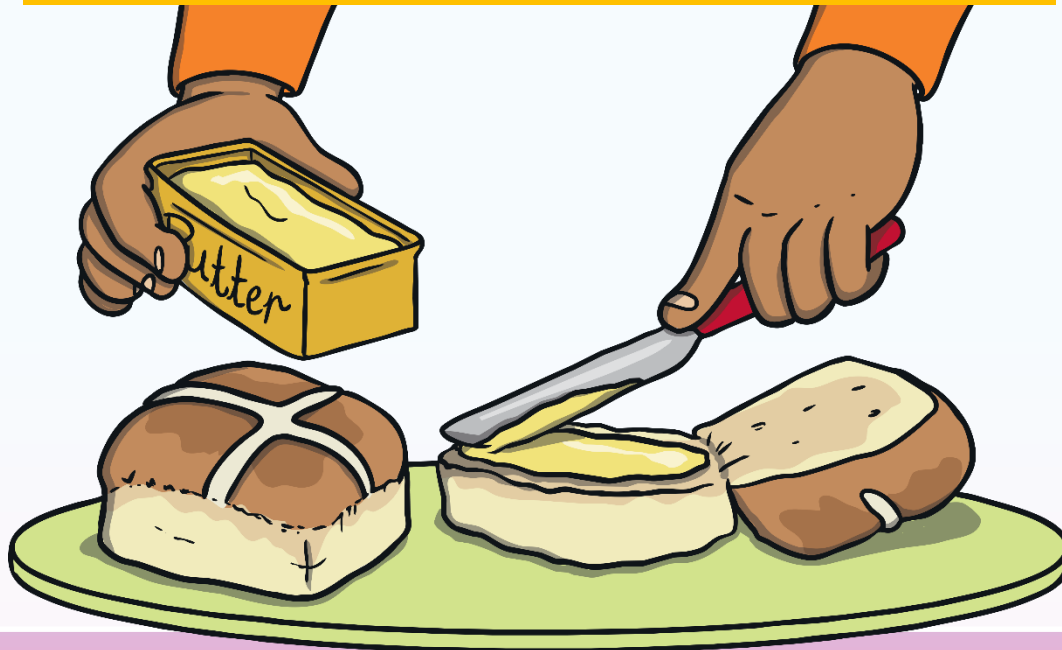
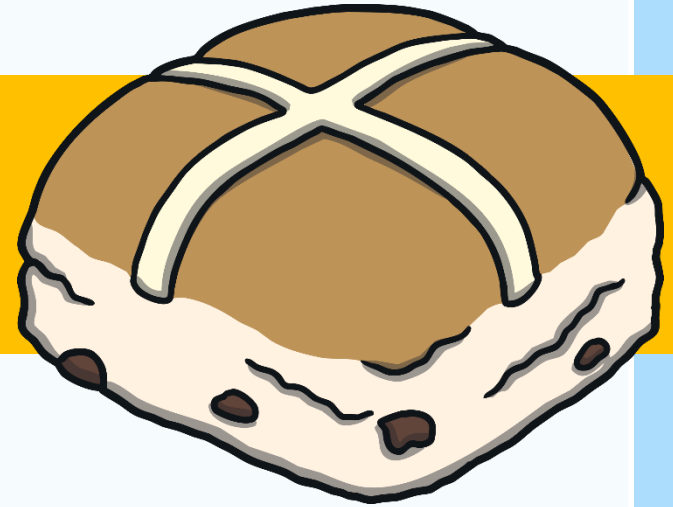
Bonnets are popular in Easter parades. You can often see lots of different examples of Easter symbols on them.



# Hot Cross Buns

Tasty buns baked with raisins and spices, these are usually eaten around and during Easter time.

They are marked with the cross to symbolise the crucifixion of Jesus.



# Easter Traditions Around The World

We are going to learn about Easter traditions from different countries.

- When you have learnt a bit about them, choose three that interest you the most and have a go at some of the activities that go with them.
- Don't forget to take pictures to share with us!



# Greece - Easter Eggs



In Greece, eggs are dyed red and on Easter Sunday families play a game called 'Tsougrisma' where they try to break each other's eggs.

People say the egg shell represents Jesus' tomb, and cracking it represents his resurrection.

The first player (usually the oldest) says, "Christos anesti", which means Christ is risen, and the second player replies, "Alithos anesti", which means truly risen. The person whose egg remains uncracked is the winner.





# Greece – Other Traditions

On the island of Corfu, pots are smashed at 11am on the Saturday before Easter. This is to get ready for the resurrection. Lots of people believe that by doing this they are throwing away the old or bad things in their lives and getting ready for a fresh start. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOgn1\\_zOKZ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOgn1_zOKZ0)

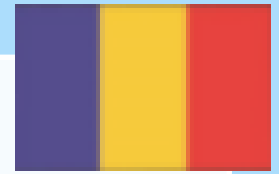
On Saturday night, people go to church. In Corfu Town, the service is outside because so many people go that they can't fit inside a church!

There are fireworks at midnight and people light their candles from the holy candle (a light brought from Jerusalem and taken to churches). They share this with the people near them so everyone can take the resurrection light back to their houses.





# Romania - Easter Eggs



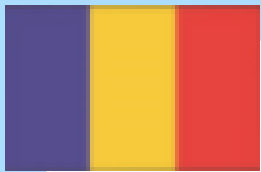
Easter eggs are traditionally painted chicken eggs. This practice of painting eggs is thought to have originated in Mesopotamia, where eggs were stained red in memory of the blood of Jesus.

Eggs also symbolise the empty tomb, from which Jesus emerged when he came back to life, or new life.

Easter eggs today are often made of chocolate, but many countries still have finely painted eggs like these. In Romania, these decorated eggs are traditional at Easter. They are usually painted on Maundy Thursday, but never on Good Friday when no chores are done.





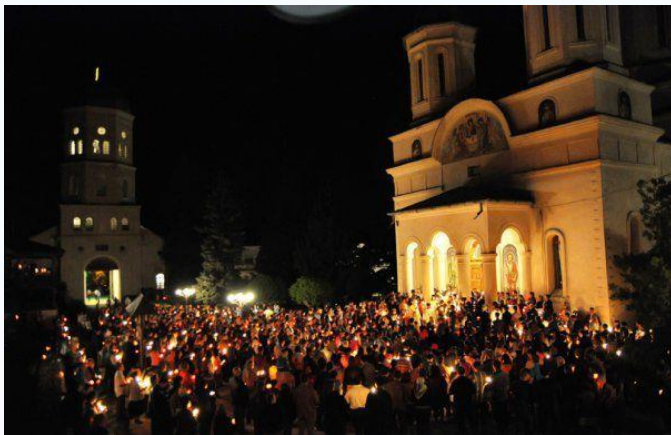


# Romania - Easter Traditions

People make sure their houses are clean and ready for Easter, and they prepare special foods.

They start the preparations from Maundy Thursday. Romanians also go to church on Saturday night and take the resurrection light back to burn in their homes. This is because, like Greeks, most people in Romania are Orthodox Christians and share this tradition. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X6tYDWL9PSY>

On Easter Sunday people wear their best clothes to celebrate.



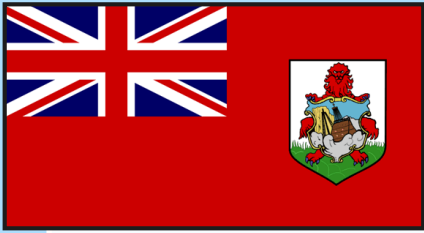


# Scotland – Egg Rolling

In Scotland, they have egg rolling competitions. Eggs are boiled and then painted. Children then roll eggs down grassy hills. Whoever's egg rolls the farthest wins. The rolling of the egg symbolises the rolling away of the stone from Jesus' tomb.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G99PHBJOv50>





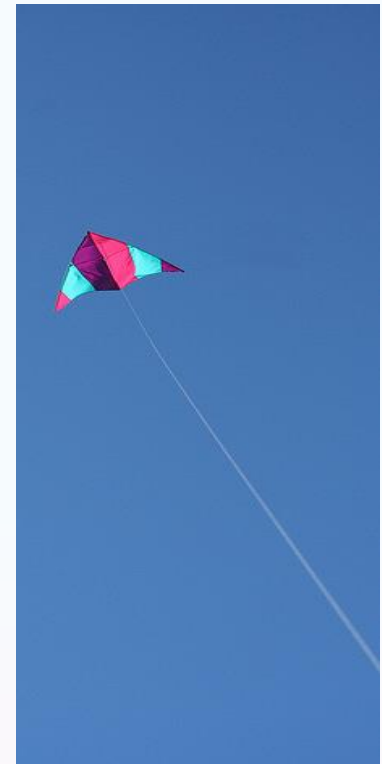
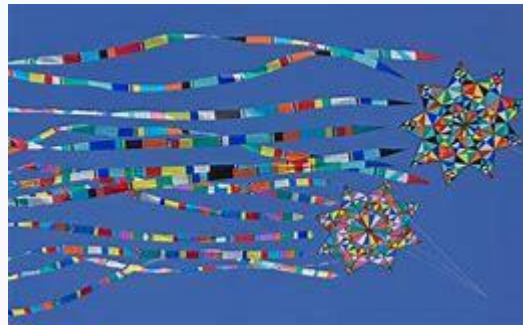
# Bermuda - Kites

In Bermuda, people fly kites to symbolise the rising of Christ.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EevzPtAUpuo>

The kites are brightly coloured and 'hum' in the sky. Codfish cakes and hot cross buns are eaten, as people believed that eating hot cross buns at Easter was lucky.

On Easter Sunday, people go to sunrise church services, sometimes outside on the beach, before having brunch with family and friends.





# Spain – Easter Traditions



On Ash Wednesday, a cross of ash is put onto people's foreheads to say sorry to God for the bad things they have done.

Children bring palm leaves to church on Palm Sunday. People decorate their branches with flowers.

In some places, on Maundy Thursday, men dress as skeletons to perform a dance of death to symbolise Jesus' death.

In Spain, boys and girls bang drums during church processions.



# Spain – Easter Traditions



Spain also has parades with pasos or thrones illustrating the Easter story and marching bands.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rw461L3N2b0>

The parades are followed by cloaked people seeking forgiveness from God.





# Mexico – Easter Traditions

The Easter season in Mexico begins with the carnival in Mazatlan. This carnival is the third largest carnival celebration in the world, after Rio de Janeiro and New Orleans.

In some parts of Mexico, there are silent processions during Holy Week. This is to help the people in the procession to think about Jesus' suffering and the sacrifice He made, as they prepare to celebrate his resurrection.

Some Christians try to visit 12 churches in 12 days to honour Jesus' 12 disciples.







# Mexico – Easter Traditions

On Saturday, firecrackers are let off and a large figure representing Judas is burnt.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TE6pYp-97Q>

Families get together to celebrate after church on Easter Sunday. After a special Easter service, there are festive parties that include a variety of Mexican dishes, as well as fun activities and games.

In some places there are fireworks and processions with music and dancing.





# El Salvador – Easter Traditions

In El Salvador, people go to church and take part in processions to remember Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. Candles are carried as a sign of light.

On Good Friday, there are two major processions. Early in the morning there is the "passion," which is to remember Jesus carrying the cross. It is finished around noon.

Then people start making rugs on the streets with coloured sawdust, ready for Jesus' funeral procession later in the day. This happens in Guatemala too.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuLOWikfjAY>

People go to see the rugs and enjoy the artwork.



# Choose your activities...



## Greece

- Dye or paint eggs red and play Tsougrisma with your family. They could be paper mache eggs if you don't want to use real ones.
- Make or draw a red pot. If you make it out of paper, you could write things you want to 'wash away' and tear it up.
- Try this recipe for Tsoureki – traditional Easter bread:  
<https://akispetretzikis.com/en/categories/glyka/zykolo-tsoureki>



## Romania

- Decorate your own egg with careful patterns. You might want to add some symbols of Easter to your egg. They could be paper mache eggs if you don't want to use real ones.
- Use LED tea lights or make paper flames for candles to act out sharing the holy resurrection light with your family.

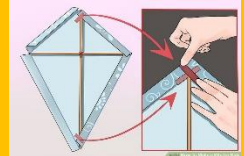


# Choose your activities...



## Scotland

- Have an egg rolling competition with your family. Decorate your egg carefully and then see who can roll their egg furthest. You could make a 'hill' with a piece of cardboard or other materials if you don't have a hill to use.



## Bermuda

- Make a kite out of junk modelling materials or things you can find at home. Make it as colourful as you can, then have a go at flying it. <https://artsycraftsymom.com/10-kite-crafting-ideas-for-kids/>
- Try this recipe for codfish cakes and hot cross buns: <https://bermudatraderaditionalrecipes.blogspot.com/2013/03/codfish-cakes-and-hot-cross-buns.html>



## Spain

- Make your own palm cross. You could use bits of paper for this. Decorate it with flowers. You can make these from paper too.
- Make your own drum and decorate it with Easter symbols. <http://krokotak.com/2013/09/lets-make-a-real-kids-drum/>
- Try one of these Spanish Easter recipes: <https://www.spanishmarks.com/blog/5-spanish-easter-recipes-1/>





# Choose your activities...



## Mexico

- Make up your own dance to celebrate Easter. Make it colourful. You could dress up in clothes you have at home or design a colourful outfit on paper.
- Make some musical instruments and create your own music for a parade or procession.



## El Salvador

- Make a 'sawdust carpet'. You could use coloured paper, Lego, chalk, glitter – anything that could make colourful patterns. You could draw your carpet or make a collage one. It could be indoors or outdoors and as big or as small as you like. Think about the Easter symbols you could include.



Did any countries have similar traditions?

Why do you think this could be?

If you had to make up an Easter tradition, what would it be?

# Your Family Easter Traditions

We want to know all about Easter traditions in your family.

How do you celebrate Easter?

Send us some photos, write or draw about your family's traditions so we can learn about the different ways you celebrate Easter.

