

# Easter Around the World

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*Easter shines forth from lilies  
in Hollywood Bowl, from children  
on White House lawn, from  
thongs before St. Peter's in  
Rome, from Indian tribal rites.*

**F**OR MANY PEOPLE Easter is the greatest feast day of the Christian year. This is because Easter sets forth the promise of man's immortality.

When all is said and done, people do care whether or not they will live again. The burdens and the racking pains of this life may overwhelm them at times, but most people want another chance. No one wants to believe his personality will be snuffed out like a candle flame. He hopes to be able to go on living with all the interesting and wonderful people he has known upon earth.

That is why multitudes of people joyfully crowd into churches on Easter. They know that on this day the resurrection of the human spirit will be celebrated and explained. They want to hear once more the assurance that God will match man's desire for life after death.

Easter dawns first in the Fiji Islands, which lie on the international date line. The simple celebration of the islanders opens a world-wide observance of the feast for nearly a billion people.

From the South Pacific, Easter moves to Japan and the Philippine Islands, then crosses Asia to glorify each mission station and native church. Soon Easter comes to Bethlehem and Jerusalem, crosses Europe to the British Isles, then to New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, and the Pacific Coast. At length it reaches the Hawaiian Islands to bring the major festival of the Christian world to a close.

In this journey around the world, Easter is celebrated in wonderful variety. There are processions and pilgrimages in Jerusalem, cathedral services in France, roast lamb dinners in England, fashion parades in New York, egg-rolling contests on the White House lawn, and sunrise services all over the United States and Canada. In a multitude of ways, the Christian world sets forth the joy of its faith in the resurrection story.

During the solemn hours of Holy Week, pilgrims from all parts of the world travel to Israel to spend the Easter week end in Jerusalem. It was here that

Jesus was arrested, tried, put to death, and here His resurrection took place.

A deeply moving satisfaction comes to the worshiper who visits those historic sites. He makes the pilgrimage through the narrow streets that led to Calvary, and at some of the shrines along the way he pauses for devotions. He drops on his knees in the Garden of Gethsemane before visiting the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, where sanctuary lamps are kept burning by Coptic, Greek, and Roman churches. When Easter comes, the pilgrim makes his way to one of the churches to hear the Easter scriptures and to sing the alleluias.

**T**HROUGH CENTURIES of celebration, European countries have adorned the feast of the Resurrection with many interesting customs. Before the great day actually comes to Austria and Central Europe there are many preparations for family parties. Special pastries are baked, as well as the Easter cake in the form of a lamb. This is covered with frosting and liberally sprinkled with coconut to give the appearance of wool. A red ribbon is tied around its neck and the cake is served as dessert following a baked ham or roast lamb dinner.

Family preparations in Central Europe include the traditional Easter eggs. Some eggs are blown out of their shells, and long hours are spent painting intricate designs on these shells. The results are miniature works of art. Other eggs are hard-boiled and dyed in such vegetable colorings as onion water or beet juice. When Easter comes, these eggs are presented as gifts.

The custom of dyeing eggs for Easter is universal, though Central Europeans give it more attention than other people. No one knows when the egg was first associated with Easter, but the egg symbol goes back to the dawn of civilization. Some ancient mythologies picture the earth itself emerging from a gigantic egg formed by the gods. This symbol of the chick breaking forth from the egg and the emergence of life from the sepulchre has persisted through the ages. It was