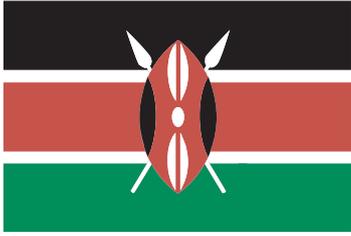




Kenya



The Kenyan flag

Most people in Kenya are Christian.

On Good Friday there are processions in lots of towns. These processions end at churches, which hold services. The services help people to remember why the story of Jesus dying is so important.

On Easter Sunday people often eat a special Easter meal with their family. They may have Kenyan-style chicken or beef stew. *Nyama choma* is also a favourite food.

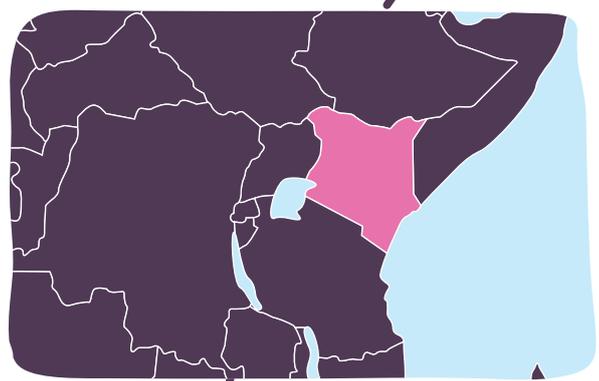


A late Saturday vigil Mass.

When Easter Sunday arrives, you can hear lots of people saying the Easter greeting '*Heri kwa sikukuu ya pasaka!*' This means 'Blessed be the Passover feast.'



After church on Easter Sunday is family time. In some families, the husband washes his wife's feet. This is to remember how Jesus washed his friends' feet in the Bible.



On Easter Sunday is a church service where people hear about how Jesus was resurrected. They sing songs about it too. The church service can last for three hours.



Italy



The Italian flag

Language:
In Italian, Easter is **Pasqua**.
'Buona Pasqua' means 'Happy Easter'.

Before Lent there is a period called **Carnevale**. During this time there are street parades, parties and dressing up. Lots of foods that people would not usually have during Lent are eaten. The final day of *Carnevale* is *Martedì Grasso*, which means 'Fat Tuesday' – a lot of food is eaten on this day, just like these frittelle!



Frittelle are fried fritters made from milk, sugar, flour, eggs and baking powder.

For food on Easter Sunday lots of people eat eggs to symbolise new life, lamb to represent Jesus' sacrifice and *una colomba* (sweet bread shaped like a dove) to remind them of peace.



REUTERS/Tony Gentile

The Pope's procession with a torchlit cross on Good Friday.

Lent in Italy is called *La Quaresima*. It begins on the Wednesday after *Martedì Grasso* and is named *Mercoledì delle ceneri* (Ash Wednesday). On Ash Wednesday, many people visit their church, where the priest makes the shape of the cross on their foreheads with ash. Just like in the UK, Lent in Italy is a time to remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, and to prepare for Easter.

From the afternoon of Maundy Thursday to the morning of Easter Sunday church bells are silent in remembrance of Jesus' death. On the morning of Easter Sunday they ring loudly to remember his resurrection.

In Rome on Good Friday the Pope leads a torchlit procession to remember the 14 Stations of the Cross. Most Christians in Italy are Catholics. The Pope is the leader of the Catholic Church.

During Holy Week there are processions to remember the events of the Easter story. Lots of churches have statues of Jesus and Mary that are part of the processions.



On Easter Sunday the Pope leads a service inside St Peter's Basilica, which is a church in Vatican City. Although many people will be inside the building, there is also a crowd outside. After the service, the Pope steps onto the balcony of the church, where he can speak to and bless the crowd. Most other churches in Italy also have services on the morning of Easter Sunday.

Passion Plays are performed in some parts of Italy, often on Good Friday. These are plays showing the Easter story. A Catholic ritual of singing the gospel in different parts on Good Friday has grown into the modern-day custom of performing Passion Plays.





Greece



The Greek flag

Dates: Most Christians in Greece are Orthodox Christians. As the Greek Orthodox Church follows the Julian calendar, Easter in Greece often falls on slightly different dates to Easter in the UK.

Language: Many Greeks call Easter **Pascha**. This comes from the Hebrew word 'Pesach', which means 'Passover'.

From Palm Sunday onwards there are church services every day to remember the last week of Jesus' life.

Red dyed eggs have lots of symbolism – the eggs themselves represent the sealed tomb of Jesus while the red is the colour of life and Christ's blood. On Easter Sunday (*Pascha*) people tap their eggs together to try and crack each other's open, showing Jesus' resurrection. The person with the last uncracked egg is said to have good luck the following year.

Lent fasting ends on Easter Sunday. Many people eat roasted lamb in honour of Jesus, who was sacrificed and rose again at Easter.



leniscalieja.photography / Shutterstock.com

A Holy Friday procession.

On the Thursday of Holy Week the church service focuses on the Last Supper and how Jesus was betrayed. This is also the day that the Easter bread (*tsoureki*) is baked and eggs are dyed red.



At midnight on Holy Saturday, priests in churches say, 'Christ has risen from the dead and in so doing has trampled on death and to those in the tombs he has given life.' People greet each other with the phrase '**Christos Anasti**' (Christ has arisen) and reply with '**Alithos Anesti**' (Truly he has arisen). Church bells ring and fireworks light the sky. Holy Saturday is over and the resurrection is remembered.



On Holy Friday, the death of Jesus is remembered by having symbolic funeral processions. The *epitaphios* (an icon showing Jesus after being taken down from the cross – see picture above) is put into a symbolic decorated coffin. Church bells toll, flags are at half-mast and funeral psalms are said. People scatter perfume and flowers on the *epitaphios* during the procession.

Friday of Holy Week is a day of mourning – a time for Christians to show they are sorry for Jesus' death. Some Greek Christians will not eat or cook at all on Holy Friday; many others will only have simple foods.

The Holy Fire is brought to Greece from the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday. This fire is believed to have appeared from Jesus' tomb. Priests take the fire to their local churches so that everyone in the church can use it to light their candles just before midnight.

