

Easter in the Southern Hemisphere

We in southern Brazil use the same symbols as used in northern hemisphere, i.e., Easter bunny, eggs, sun, light, since it is not a matter of nature timing anymore, like Spring or Falls, but a matter of gift of God. We teach to children (as well for adults) that at the beginning, Easter was a farmers feast, at the beginning of a new harvest. Well, Rio Grande do Sul is the coolest state in Brazil, but is still a tropical country, Fall doesn't happen like in USA. Even in the coolest winter (two years ago there was some snow, it melted right away) the nature keeps its greens. So it is quite difficult to explain Easter looking to it. Maybe that is why our theology looks more to people. I'll explain.

There is no resurrection without the cross. The other way around is also true, there is no meaning in the cross without the resurrection. But if we take the cross as the departure point we can find a God that cares about the people and the people's suffering. God cares so much that He died for us. The death and the suffering could not overcome God's power.

If we take the symbols of Spring and Fall, there is no way to get to the Spring without passing through the Fall and the Winter. For the people it means that we have to fight the Suffering. Thinking on Easter, we are in the beginning of Fall (in the southern hemisphere) (Suffering and death) but the signs of Spring (flowers, bunny, eggs -- Ressurrection) are always between us, you have just to look careful to see how God cares.

Another Easter Symbol that is used only in Brazil, is the Macela Flower. It is a used as an Easter Symbol because its flower blossoms only in Lent and is done for Holy Friday. It is though as a miraculous plant that can cure anything by the people, but it has to be harvest on Holy Friday, before the sun rises. Since the plant blossoms only at this time of the year it is common to find them at the altar for service. On Palm Sunday people bring it to the service to be blessed by the pastor

or to the priest in order to use it as medicine.

God bless you and happy easter.

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