

Easter Flowers



The Easter Cactus

(*Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri*), popular spring-flowering cactus of the family *Castaceae*, with flattened stems, grown for its bright-red blossoms that appear about Easter time in the Northern Hemisphere. The related *R. rosea* is the so-called dwarf Easter cactus, a diminutive plant with fragrant rose-pink flowers in abundance.



The Easter Lily

Many Easter customs come from the Old World. The white lily, the symbol of the resurrection, is the special Easter flower. The large, pure white blossoms of the Easter Lilies remind Christians of the pure new life that comes to them through the Resurrection of Jesus. The new plant life that appears in spring symbolizes new life. The lily was also called Pash-flower, Pasque flower, and Passion flower. Christians understood this last to refer to the passion of Christ. In some churches today on Easter morning, you will find the church filled with white lilies in remembrance of our loved ones who are no longer with us.

This flower first came from an island near Japan. When it was brought to America, it wasn't even a springtime flower. Since that time flower growers have learned how to make it bloom in the spring. The Easter lily starts out as a hard, brown bulb that has a paper-hard shell. The bulb is buried in the earth. The sun shines, the rain falls, and at last a plant grows from the bulb. Soon a beautiful white lily blooms. Lilies are widely known as a symbol of Easter and the coming of spring. Their sweet, clean smell and simple form seem to stand for everything pure and perfect. For hundreds of years Lilies have commonly appeared as symbols of purity and holiness.

When Jesus walked the earth all plants and animals, ugly and beautiful, bowed their heads in respect. All except for the lily. The lily was too beautiful and proud to bow. After the crucifixion of Jesus the lily felt so badly that it bowed its head. And as an everlasting show of respect the lily continues to bow its head in respect.



The Narcissus

They are white or yellow springtime flowers that even grow in the Swiss Alps. They have been part of Easter celebrations for centuries. Maybe you know them by different names, daffodils or jonquils.



Dogwood

According to legend at the time of Jesus the dogwood was a large strong tree like the oak or the cedar. Because it was a strong large tree its wood was used to make the cross on which Jesus died. God in anguish for his Son's suffering decided that the dogwood would never be used again for such and awful deed. So God made the dogwood forevermore small and crooked. God also made its blossoms in the symbol of a cross with marks for the nails in the hands feet and the crown of thorns. Now each spring it blooms as a reminder of Christ's death. But because of its beauty and vibrancy it is also a reminder that Jesus rose again and lives. So through the dogwood God proclaims the truth that Jesus died for the sins of the world and rose again to give us eternal life.



Crown Of Thorns

The "crown of thorns" signifies the pain, suffering, abuse and the cruel manner in which Jesus was treated by the soldiers, as well as the disbelief of many who did not accept him as God's son. Jesus was literally tortured by the soldiers, they scorned him, they used physical abuse toward him, hitting him about the head with clubs and sticks causing the thorns to press deeper into the scalp.