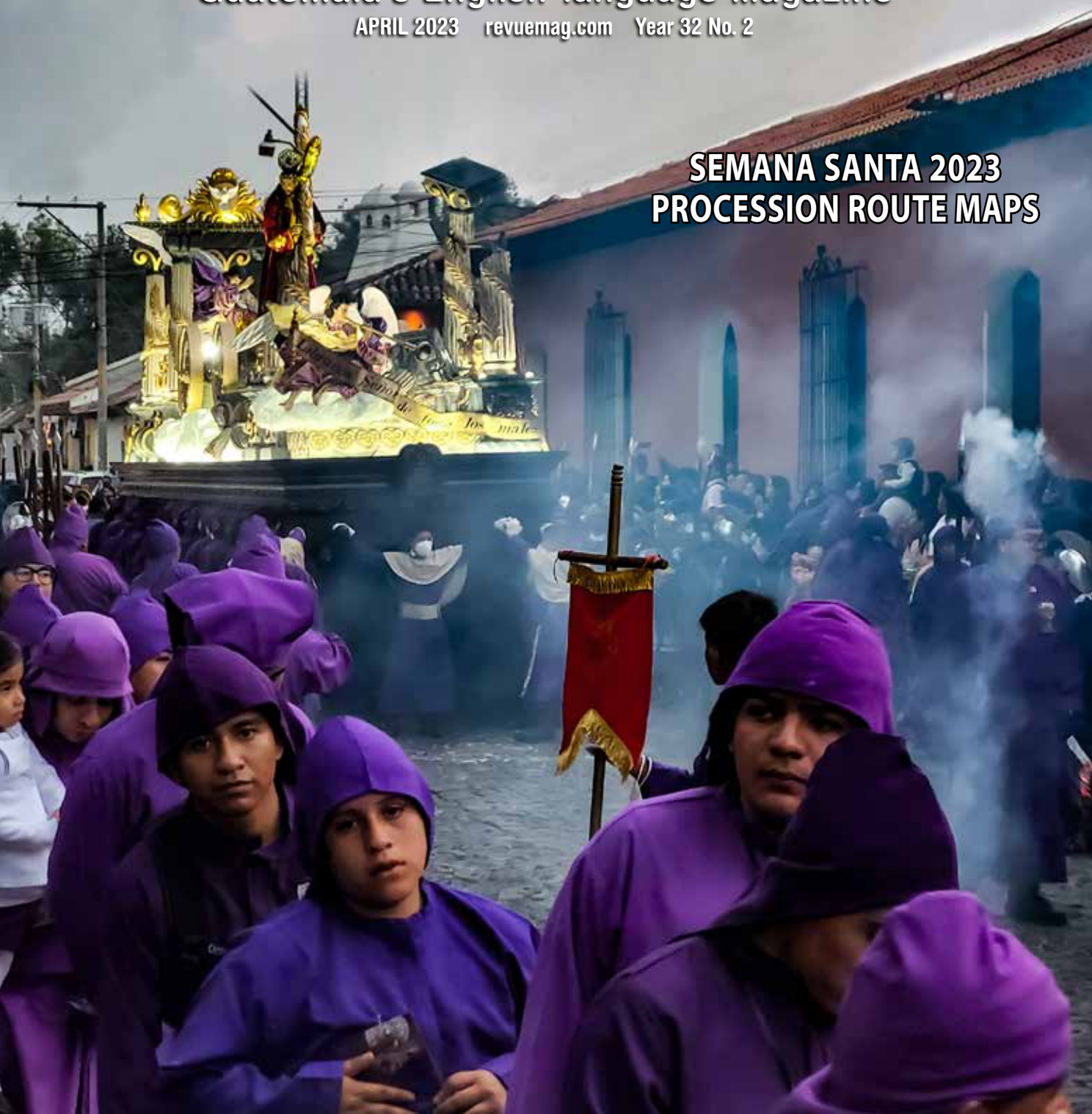


REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine

APRIL 2023 revuemag.com Year 32 No. 2

**SEMANA SANTA 2023
PROCESSION ROUTE MAPS**



THIS MONTH IN REVUE

On the Cover

Semana Santa
in Guatemala
"Jovenes en devotion"
by Kelsey Sanabria



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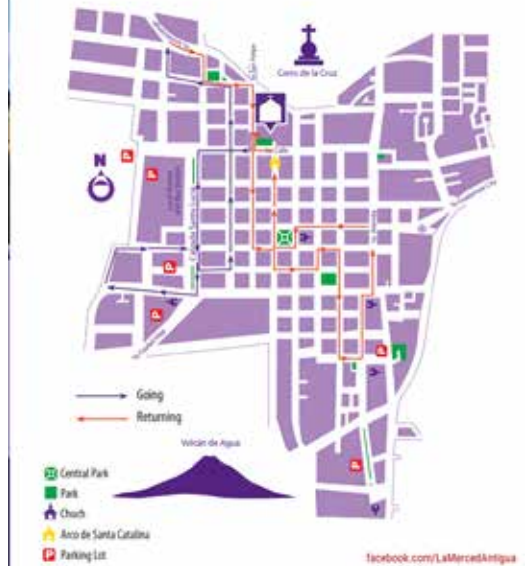
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SEMANA SANTA 2023 PROCESSION MAPS

From Palm Sunday through Good Friday there are six major processions and contributing writer Hadazul Cruz did all of the research for the 2023 routes and mapped them out in detail. ...[page 34](#)



SEMANA SANTA ON LAKE ATITLÁN

A blending of Mayan and Christian Tradition

by Kerstin Sabene

In stark contrast to the colorful and elaborate pageantry of Semana Santa in Antigua, San Pedro La Laguna is a bit more laid back but enchanting nevertheless. There are numerous processions throughout Holy Week including a charming children's procession on Maundy Thursday. ...[page 56](#)



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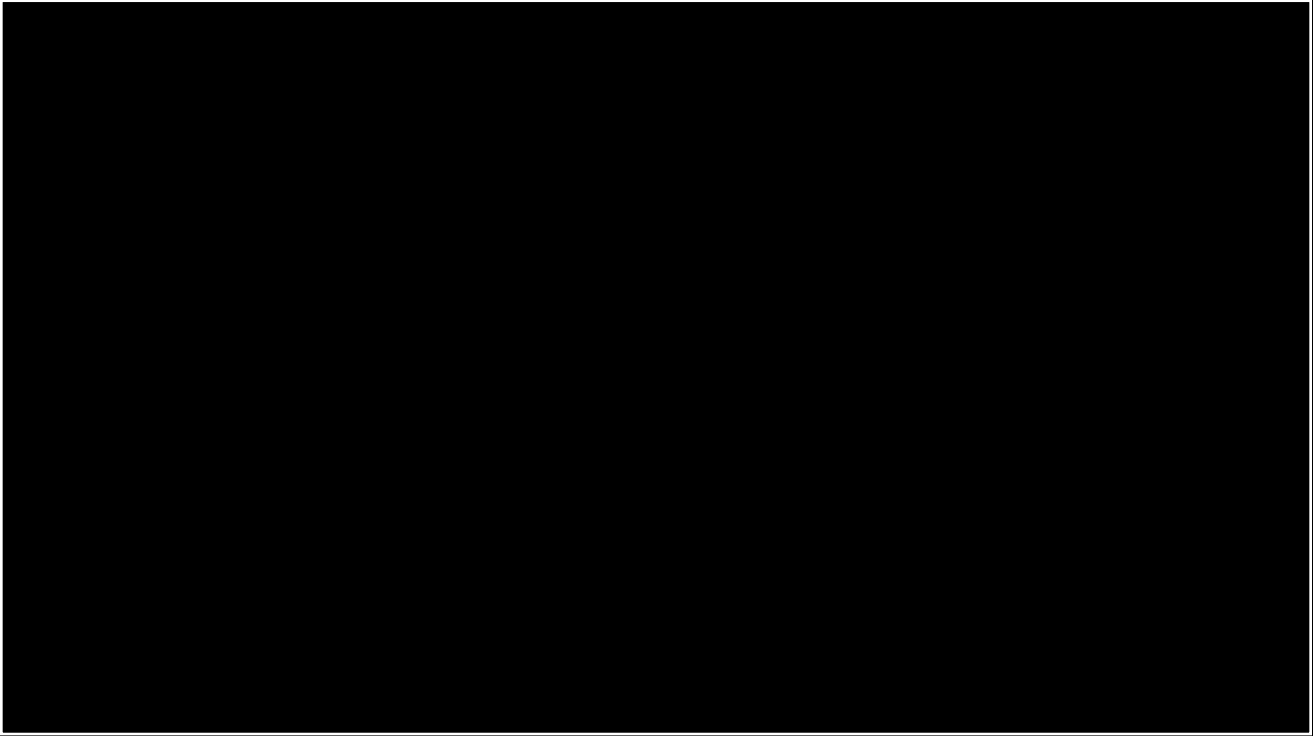


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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Semana Santa is in full bloom for the first time in years, and we have the Holy Week Procession Maps to help you navigate and be a part of this amazing tradition.

From Palm Sunday through Good Friday there are six major processions and contributing writer Hadazul Cruz did all of the research for the 2023 routes and mapped them out in detail.

Although La Antigua is the center of the Semana Santa events, there are incredible celebrations going on throughout the country.

In our Flashback series, writer/photographer Kerstin Sabene shares her Holy Week experience at Lake Atitlán where there is a blending of Maya and Christian tradition.

Whatever you do this month, we hope you enjoy it. Thanks for reading Revue.

—*Terry & John Kovick Biskovich*



Jordan Banks

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2nd Place Judges Vote "Cucuruchos" Antigua by
Mario Arguedas CR





Mario Arguedas



3rd Place Judges Vote **"Ajmoro"** Santa María de Jesús
by Wilson Vásquez Orón







"Mis tradiciones" Alfombra en Antigua
by Daniel Iguardia



"Señor Sepultado de la Cienaga"
Colonia Molina, Quetzaltenango by Luis A. Soto S.

***"When I do good I feel good, when I do bad I feel bad,
and that's my religion." —Abraham Lincoln***



"Disciple Boys, Good Friday"
Santiago Atitlán by Kerstin Sabene

MARRO
ARGUEDAS.



"Cucuruchos" Antigua
by Mario Arguedas CR



1st Place Judges Vote "Fé, Justicia y Colores" Guatemala
City by Francisco Hernández







Third Place Popular Vote **"La Plegaria"** Santiago Atitlán by Alexierra

"Virgen de los Dolores con su Rosario"
Iglesia de Pinares del Norte, zona 18
by Elisa Aguirre Mejía





by Mario Arguedas

Second Place Popular Vote **"Bendiciendo a tu pueblo"**
Antigua, 5a Avenida esquina by Rodrigo Suárez







First Place Popular Vote "untitled" Antigua by Gabriel Valdez



April 2nd
8:30 p.m.

Palm Sunday

The image of Jesús Nazareno de La Merced dates back to the middle of the seventeenth century, and belonged to the now abandoned Hermitage of San Jerónimo.

La Reseña Procession is characterized by the anda's biblical themed adornment.



Central Park

Park

Church

Arco de Santa Catalina

Parking Lot

facebook.com/LaMercedAntigua

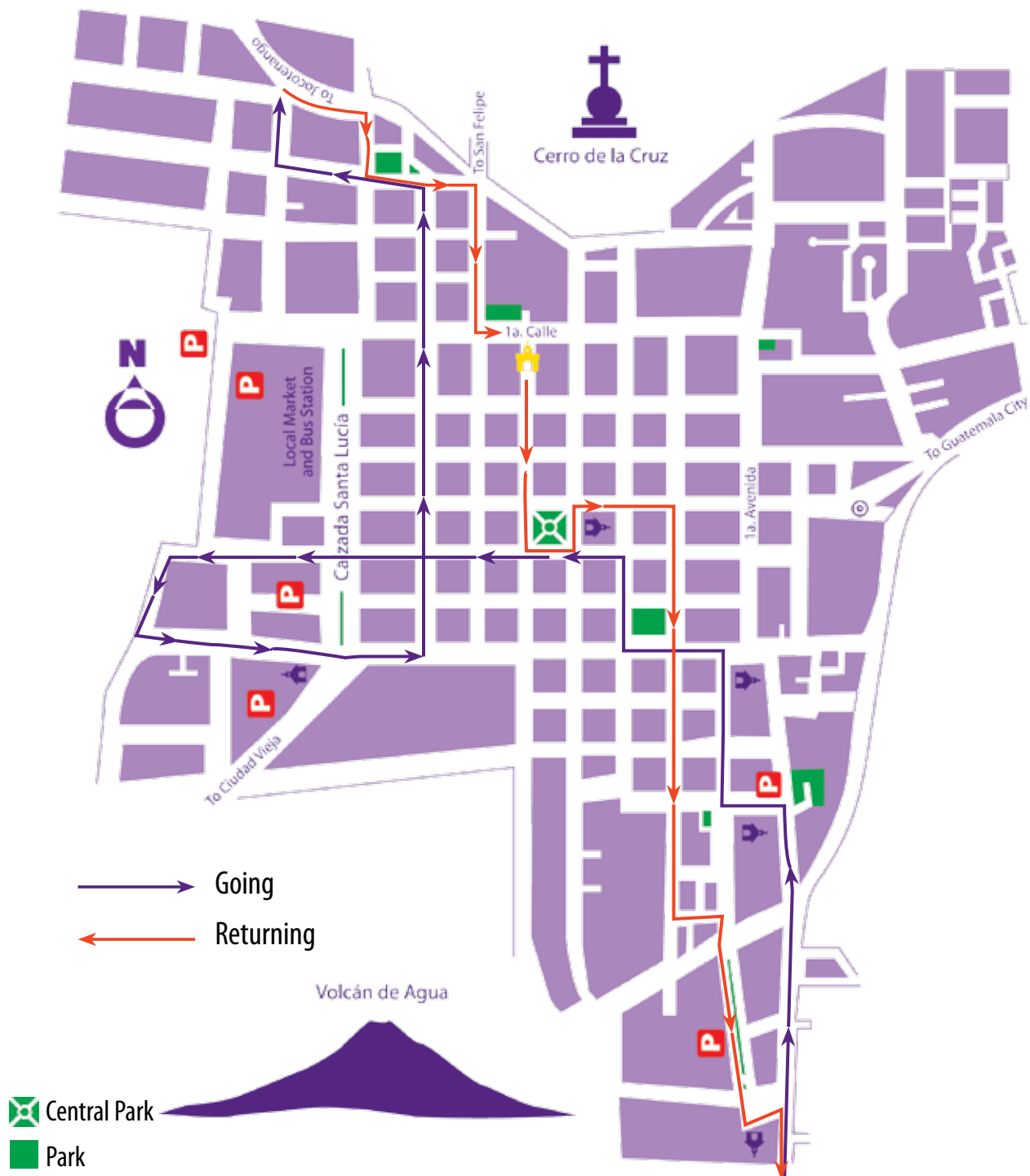


April 6th

Holy Thursday

According to historians the veneration of this consecrated image dates back to 1578. The sculpture is attributed to the friar and artist Juan de Aguirre, who came from Peru to Guatemala.

Simplicity took over this procession and that is why this beautiful image is known as JESÚS NAZARENO DE LA HUMILDAD”.

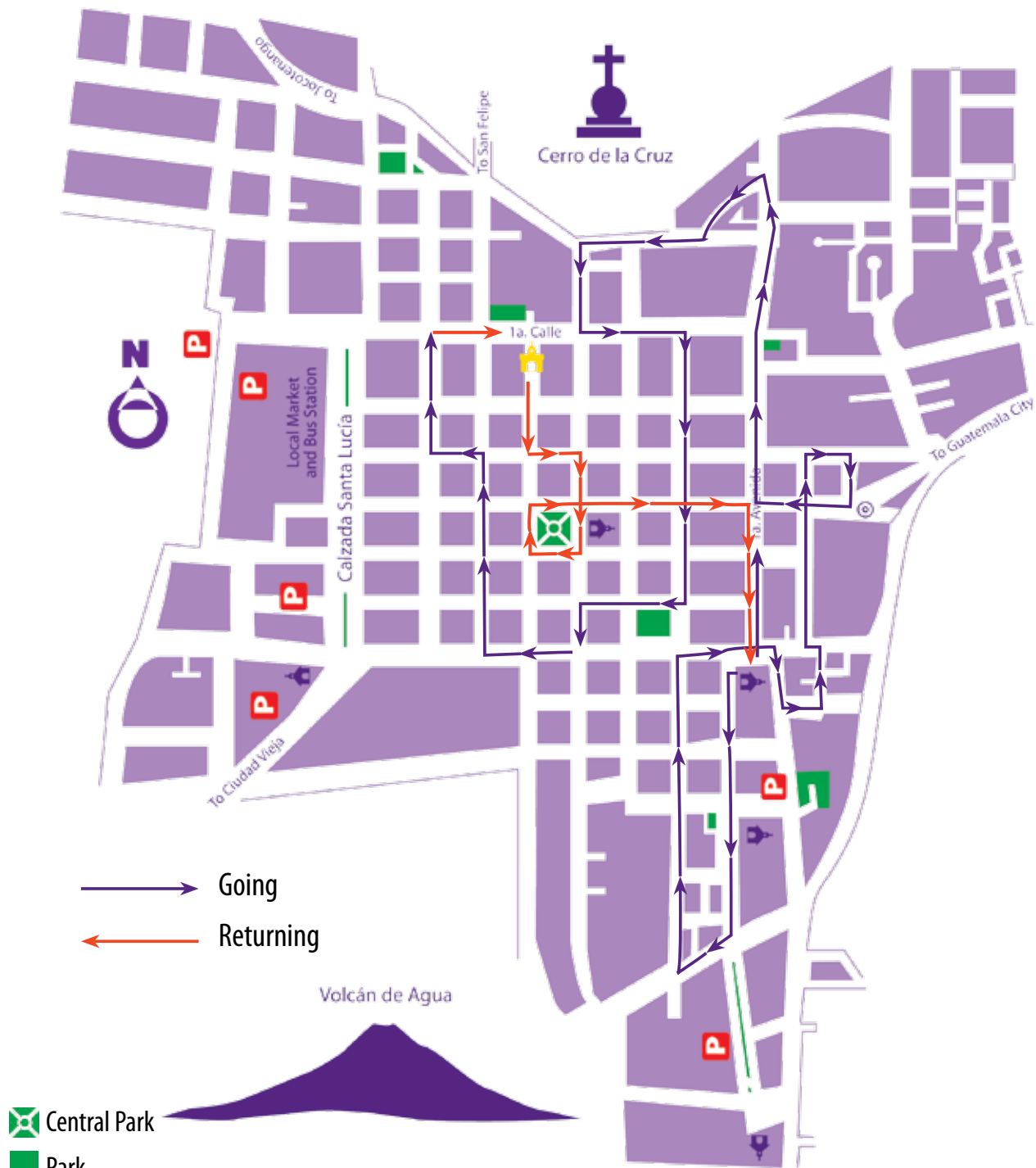




April 6th

Holy Thursday

The image of Jesús Nazareno del Perdón dates back to the 17th century, and presented as an altarpiece at San Francisco church until 1773. After the Santa Marta earthquakes, it was located in the second viacrucis chapel at Calle de los Pasos. In 1932 the image was processioned for the first time on Holy Tuesday but since 1955 the procession has been move to Holy Thursday.



→ Going
← Returning

Central Park

Park

Church

Arco de Santa Catalina

Parking Lot

<https://www.facebook.com/JesusDelPerdonSFG>



April 7th

Good Friday

The Good Friday Procession includes characters in Roman costume, one representing Pontius Pilate, and others dressed as Palestinians; also, representations of the Roman Praetorian Guard mounted on horses, giving with this an aspect of realism to the commemoration of the “Via Crucis” of Jesus.

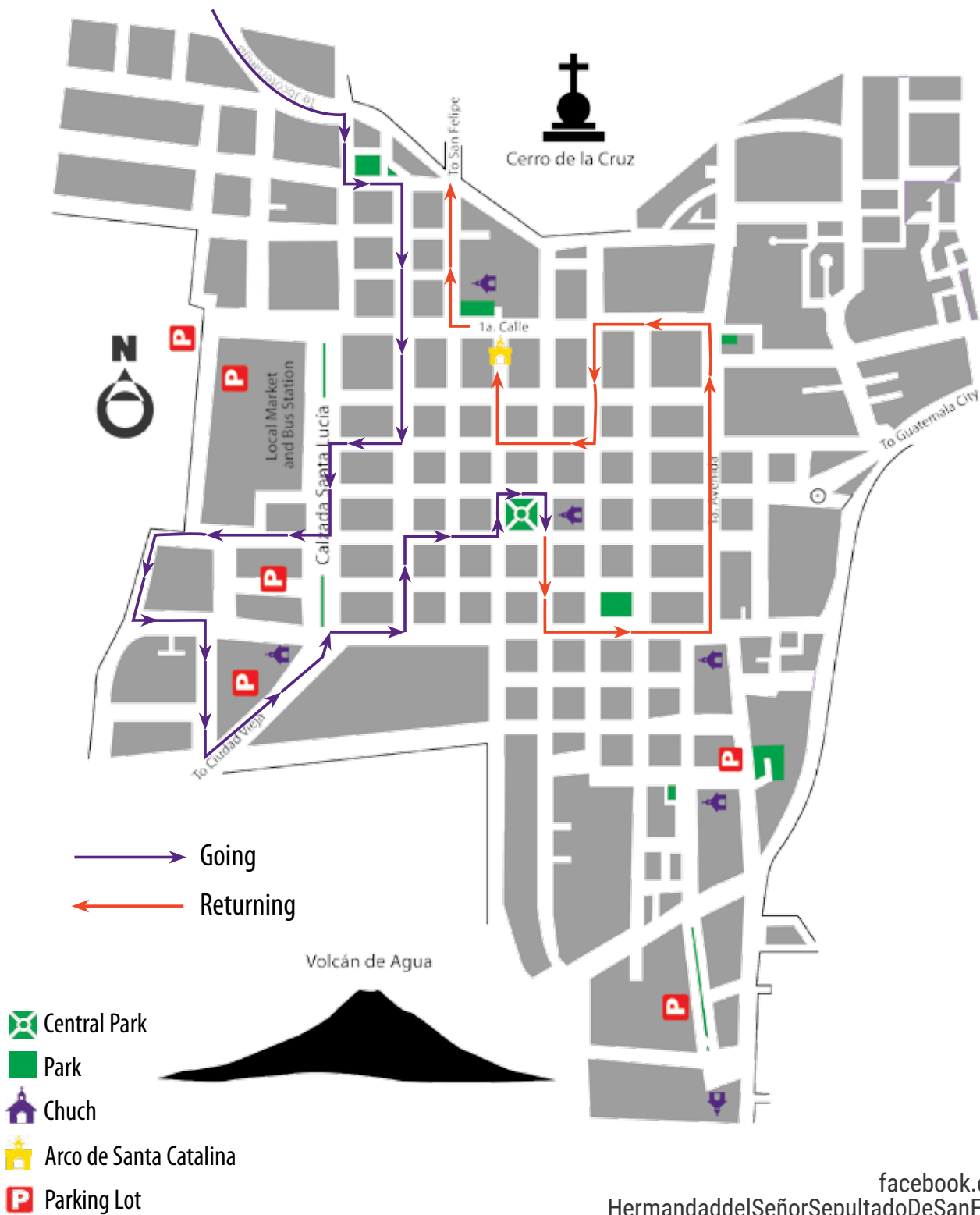


April 7th
3:00 p.m.

Good Friday

The image of Jesús Sepultado that is currently on the main altar of the Sanctuary came to San Felipe de Jesús in 1670, from San Juan el Perdido, Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa.

Several miracles have been attributed to this beautiful image.



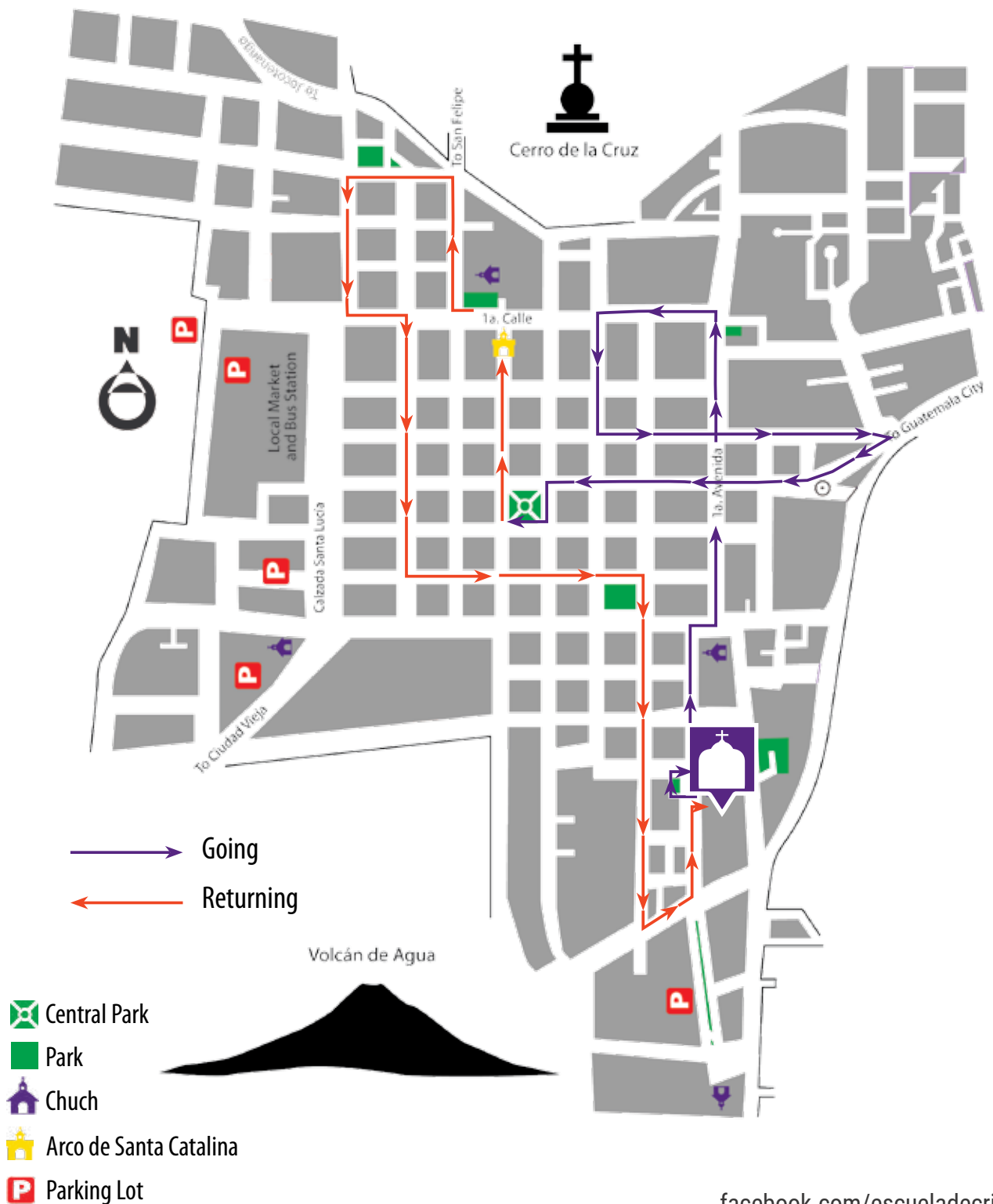


April 7th
4:00 p.m.

Good Friday

The procession of the Holy Burial from Escuela de Cristo Church, has a combination of elements from Seville, Zamora and Valladolid in Spain .

It is one of the longest processions in La Antigua, not only referring to the processional route but also the procession itself.





"Esperando turno" Antigua
Jaime Barrientos





"Sacrificio" La Niña Bonita de los Cuchumatanes,
La Villa de Chiantla Huehuetenango by Waldo López



"Penance in Procession" Santiago Atitlán
by Warren Capps

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Children's Procession, San Pedro





FLASHBACK

Semana Santa on Lake Atitlán

A blending of Mayan and Christian Tradition

text and photos by Kerstin Sabene

Living in La Antigua Guatemala affords me the opportunity of being right in the heart of one of the grandest celebrations of Lent (*Cuaresma*) in all of Latin America—Semana Santa! I even had the good fortune of experiencing some of the Holy Week festivities on the shores of Lake Atitlán, specifically those in San Pedro La Laguna, Sololá and Santiago.

In stark contrast to the colorful and elaborate pageantry of Semana Santa in Antigua, San Pedro La Laguna is a bit more laid back but enchanting nevertheless. Here, there are numerous processions throughout Holy Week including a charming children's procession on Good Thursday. Also known as Maundy Thursday, it commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the apostles.

I had learned that the children's procession would begin at 8:30 a.m. sharp,





Disciple Boys on Good Friday, Santiago



Disciple Boys on Good Friday, Santiago

Hanging fruit adorns processional routes in San Pedro



so I was up at the crack of dawn to ensure a timely arrival at Parque Central in front of the church. Dozens of women and approximately 200 children were assembling on the plaza right outside the beautifully decorated Iglesia San Pedro. You could sense the excitement and anticipation as mothers and *abuelas* (grandmothers) scurried about, making last-minute adjustments to the white lacy veils worn by the little girls as a testament to their faith and devotion. In striking contrast, the women of San Pedro wore brilliantly colored, hand-woven checkerboard shawls.

Offerings of fruit and vegetables play a significant role in the ceremonies of San Pedro La Laguna and Santiago during Semana Santa. On Holy Wednesday, fruit

baskets and corozo palm flowers are carried from the *cofradia* or brotherhood of Santa Cruz to the Church of San Pedro in a unique procession that is accompanied by prominent community members and local authorities.

Throughout town, hanging fruit adorns the gateways through which processions pass. I watched as dozens of men built these structures. Long poles of wood are meticulously covered in green leaves from a local plant and then hoisted up and tethered to their permanent position along the processional routes as pineapple, melons, kixlan kum and other colorful fruits dangle from above.

As in Antigua, beautiful *alfrombras* or carpets were prepared on the processional



Alfombra, Santiago







Maximon at cofradia Santa Cruz in Santiago

routes. Having seen hundreds of alfombras in Antigua, I appreciated the more prominent use of Mayan figures and deities as part of the unique design at the lake communities, especially in the village of Santiago. People worked diligently to create these ephemeral works of art, some made with stencils and brilliantly colored sawdust, pine needles and flower petals.

On Good Friday morning, I boarded a small public boat that would ferry me across the lake to Santiago. We floated along blissfully in the sunshine beneath three volcanoes towering in the distance: Volcán Atitlán, Volcán Tolimán and Volcán San Pedro. At the docks in Santiago, children greeted us, eager to sell us goods they had hand-crafted with pride.



Good Friday, Iglesia Santiago

Santiago Atitlán is inhabited by one of the largest indigenous communities in Guatemala, the Tz'utujil, and the celebration of Semana Santa here is probably one of the best examples of syncretism—the blending of Mayan and Christian religions—in the country. In Santiago, the people celebrate both the resurrection of Jesus as well as the rebirth of Maximón, a Mayan deity also known as the Rilaj Mam or great transformer of matter, life and soul. The Mam is cared for and lives in the *cofradia* Santa Cruz. On Holy Wednesday at mid-day, the Mam is hung by his neck in his own chapel in order to come back to life again at the time of Jesus' vengeful death on Good Friday.

I had made my way along the road that leads up from the dock to the Iglesia Santiago where the main events

of Semana Santa would occur. Men and woman carrying beautiful large candles were entering the church, and a huge glass coffin decorated with flowers and twinkling lights was being prepared off to the right side. A life-size statue of Jesus is placed on top of a cross on the floor in the center of the church and worshippers wait patiently for a turn to kneel in front of Jesus and pay their respects or confess their transgressions. At this point, clouds of copal incense filled the entire area.

After this powerful display of devotion, Jesus is then carefully placed into the glass coffin and carried through the streets of Santiago in a procession that lasts throughout the night.

“When Jesus dies on the cross, his spirit goes out into the corn fields,” said Vincent Stanzione, a historian of religion who has lived and worked among the Tz'utujil Maya for more than 20 years. “For the traditional Maya of Santiago, Semana Santa marks the change between the dry and rainy seasons while forming a flowering





and fruitful petition for a bountiful harvest to come. The traditional Maya believe that at the time of his sacrificial death, Jesus' ancestral spirit transforms into the spirit of the *milpa* that gently blows in the mountain breeze."

According to Mayan mythology, the sacrifice of Jesus will come to fruition on May 5, the day of the Santa Cruz, when Father Sun passes directly overhead and the Maize Lord Jesus stands strong in the milpa. The maize or corn plant is seen as the incarnate body of the 'spirited soul' of Jesus, known to the people as MaNawal, the transforming ancestor of the maize-tassel people—the Tz'utujil.

"The idea of deities sacrificing one another to be regenerated by death that renews the world is the way the traditional Maya express their mythic metaphor that life comes from death," stated Stanzione. "Life is a plant governed by the Father Sun, which is the son of the nurturing Mother Earth of the mountain. The rituals performed here during Semana Santa are traditional Mayan ceremonies that renew the Earth on the sacred path of the sun.

Semana Santa is the time when the first rains feed the Earth just as the blood that drops from Jesus sacrificed on the cross brings the People of the Maize back to life."

Women wearing checkerboard shawls in San Pedro







Untitled by Gustavo Zepeda

***"Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads."
—Henry David Thoreau***



"Centurión"
Chiantla Huehuetenango
by Hugo Rodriguez



"El Turno" Guatemala City by Henry Cukier





"Santísima Virgen de Dolores" Santa Inés
Antigua by José Carrillo



"Tradiciones de fe" Antigua
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"Paso sereno por Jocotenango"
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Procesión del Prendimiento
San Antonio Huista, Huehuetenango
by Byron Sequen



"Jovenes en devotion" by Kelsey Sanabria



by Erwin Pelaez

***"My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness."
—Dalai Lama***



"Fe y Devoción"
by Jorge M Reyes Carrillo



"Por el Arco va Jesús" Calle del Arco, Antigua
by Sergio Antonio Juárez Lemus.







"Siluetas Cuaresmales" Mixco2
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