

Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals 2016 - 2017

shap

EDUCATION IN RELIGIONS

(THE SHAP WORKING PARTY ON
WORLD RELIGIONS IN EDUCATION)

Calendar of Religious Festivals

July 2016 – December 2017



This fine example of Muslim architecture is to be found on the old Silk Road in the historic town of Khiva, in Uzbekistan. This was the site in the 1830s of a caravanserai, an inn that welcomed travellers from the trade routes of Bukhara, Persia and Russia.

EDITORIAL 2016 – 2017

Welcome to this year's Shap Calendar. Please read this Editorial carefully before trying to use the eCalendar material. Much remains the same as ever in this **47th edition** of the Calendar, but there are some important changes as set out below, and hints of more likely to come in a year's time.

Change 1. We now show **the day of the week** when each festival falls. This feature only applies to the eCalendar Booklet and not to the PDFs or Wallchart.

Change 2. We now use the **Name of the Festival** to show in **BOLD** if its date remains the same in each (Gregorian) year; In *ITALICS* if it changes by just one or two days from year to year; and in *ITALICS* but UNDERLINED if it varies considerably, as most Lunar dates do. This feature only applies to the eCalendar Booklet and not to the PDFs or Wallchart.

Change 3. There are now **five download websites** for each Festival and in all cases but one (Christianity will follow next year) these follow a regular pattern:

- a) Description, often from within the appropriate tradition;
- b) An alternative description, usually from a different type of source;
- c) Educational material, for school, college or research;
- d) Audio visual materials of an evocative nature;
- e) Something creatively different.

Change 4. **The bottom row of the Wallchart** now lists twelve eminent individuals whose beliefs have shaped what they have become and what they have achieved. Their contribution to Science, Ethics, Humanism, Atheism, Agnosticism or Theistic belief is noteworthy. Notes on their lives and achievements, compiled by Professor Brian Gates, will feature at the start of each month in the Calendar Booklet, together with his selection of informative download websites.

Here are twelve people who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

Change 5. A copy of each of the **Calendar Editorials** from previous years – as far as we have them – is now posted in an article listed near the top of the Calendar page of the Website - go to:

http://www.shapworkingparty.org.uk/downloads/calendar_editorials_1972-2015.pdf

Look for intriguing comments from five different Editors.

Change 6. Until recently all **Baha'i festival dates** remained the same each year, although different time zones led to inconsistencies of celebration. The world wide Baha'i community has now introduced a new Badi' Calendar to help synchronise Baha'i celebrations throughout the world. Please study the new arrangements for their festival year, but expect some slight changes in the dates of certain of their festivals from year to year. For further detail **search the web** for 'Baha'i Dates 172 to 221 B.E.', which explains the situation clearly, and provides dates for many years to come. Note that the Birth dates for the Bab and for Baha'u'llah, which used to fall in consecutive months (October and November) now fall on consecutive days either in November (1st and 2nd in 2016) or October 21st and 22nd in 2017 and back to November (9th and 10th in 2018). Other dates vary according to whether Naw-Ruz falls on March 20 (in 2016 and 2017) or March 21 (in 2018). And note that all Baha'i festivals commence at sunset on the **evening before** the Gregorian dates we show.

Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals 2016 - 2017

Then there are some **Possible Changes** the Working Party is considering for future years:

- Possible Change 1.** Much of the information in our Calendar Booklet is of a descriptive nature. We are considering restricting the descriptive element so as to draw out the **symbolic and meaningful aspects** of each Festival.
- Possible Change 2.** We currently print **only** the Wallchart. We are considering printing certain other pages to ensure that users all receive some **element of description and also some indication of the inner meaning of the festivals** in what they receive, and not just the festival dates.
- Possible Change 3.** Shap is hard at work this year, and one aim in mind is to produce an **eBook** of help to all involved in the **RE Classroom**. Several articles in the **eBook** are likely to relate to Festivals and we are looking for materials from within faith communities and in Schools and Colleges that would be relevant to the current scene. For more information visit the **Shap website** (www.shap.org).
- Possible Change 4.** A large number of our customers **fail to pay** for the Key to the eCalendar (£4) or the Wallchart (£6) we send them. These we eventually delete in large numbers from our Database each year. We are considering amending our system to ask for payment in advance **next year**, but in the meantime we now include a personalised Invoice with the eCalendar Key (instead of inside the eCalendar). This shows your Shap Number, your name, your postal address and your email address. Please pay promptly this year if you wish to receive **next year's** revised and exciting package.

N.B. If paying by BACS or Cheque, please include your **magic four figure Shap number**, which ensures we can trace the source of your payment. Each year we receive over 20 payments we cannot identify, many of them simply from a Local Authority or County Council without further designation. If paying by cheque, please post it to the Shap Address as shown on your recent Invoice: i.e. **Shap Working Party, c/o Peter Woodward, 200 School Lane, Aston. Market Drayton. TF9 4JD**. Tel. 07497 354154

- Possible Change 5.** We apologise that a small number of errors crept into our system last June (partly due to health issues), mainly when copying dates from our Booklet into the three PDFs and thence into the Wallchart. We hope to avoid the need for circulating a further Corrigenda by more extensive/intensive proof reading this year. Offers of help with this process, principally in mid June next year, would be welcome.

We hope these changes, both current and projected, will not prove too confusing, and that the new formats will be helpful in your work. Please let us have your feedback on whether you find them helpful or perhaps over complex.

Peter Woodward

Shap Calendar Editor

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Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals 2016–2017

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Edited for the Shap Working Party by

Peter Woodward

**with Roger Butler, Malcolm Deboo, Wendy Dossett, Brian Gates,
Mary Hayward, John Hinnells, Paul Hopkins, Clive Lawton,
David Rose and Jasjit Singh**

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The contents and advertisements in this calendar are compiled and published in good faith and the Working Party accepts no liability for any claim arising from them whether the loss is direct or indirect.

Origins of the Shap Working Party

In the spring of 1969 a conference for those interested in the development of 'comparative religion in education' was held near the village of Shap in the Lake District. Participants came from a variety of religious backgrounds and represented the full range of education from primary school to university. Professors Ninian Smart, Fred Hilliard and Geoffrey Parrinder presented papers, as did Harold Blackham, John Hinnells, Raymond Johnston and Eric Sharpe. A working party on 'world religions in education' emerged from this initial conference, taking the name of Shap from the place where it was formed.

Today Shap's members come from a still wider variety of religious and cultural backgrounds and have the professional and academic experience to advise and support individuals and organizations who seek to improve their understanding of religions, beliefs and religious festivals. The Working Party is renowned for providing accurate information and resources about religions and religious festivals to schools and colleges, and increasingly to other public sector organizations and to the business world.

For fuller information see the document 'WHAT IS THE SHAP WORKING PARTY?' which features elsewhere on our eCalendar download website.

The present officers of Shap *are as follows:*

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The Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education

SHAP CALENDAR OF RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

July 2016 – December 2017

Please Note

1. The page number references given at the end of each entry relate to:
 - a)** the first edition of the book, ***Festivals in World Religions***, published for the Shap Working Party by Longman in 1986;
 - b)** the new edition of the same book published by RMEP in 1998.
2. Orthodox Christians (and especially the Eastern Orthodox) celebrate their festivals using either the 'Old' (the Julian) or the 'New' (Gregorian) calendar. The Orthodox choice of calendar tends to reflect local conditions and is NOT a matter of church doctrine. The formula for calculating the date of Easter differs for the Eastern Orthodox from that used in the Christian West. However, the Orthodox Easter Cycle is celebrated on the same dates in all Eastern Orthodox communities. In 2017 Eastern and Western dates for the Easter cycle coincide.
3. Jewish festivals commence, like Shabbat, at sunset on the evening of the day prior to the date shown.
4. Muslim festivals begin in the evening before the Gregorian dates we show in this Calendar. Since they are lunar, each Muslim Festival's date recedes by 11 days each Gregorian year.
5. Several Pagan festivals also commence at sunset.
6. Zoroastrian dates vary according to the three different 'Calendars' currently in use. The dates of several Zoroastrian festivals (notably in the Shenshai and the Kadmi / Qadimi Calendars) recede by one day each Gregorian Leap Year.
7. ***month** indicates uncertainty as to the exact date of the festival.
8. For an experimental period we now use the **Name of the Festival** to show in **BOLD** if its date remains the same in each (Gregorian) year; In *ITALICS* if it changes by just one or two days from year to year; and in *ITALICS* but UNDERLINED if it varies considerably, as most Lunar dates do.
9. There are now **five download websites** for each **Festival** and in all cases but one (Christianity will follow next year) these follow a regular pattern:
 - i) Description, often from within the appropriate tradition;
 - ii) An alternative description, usually from a different type of source;
 - iii) Educational material, for school, college or research;
 - iv) Audio visual materials of an evocative nature
 - v) Something creatively different.
10. **The bottom row of the new Wallchart** is no longer empty but lists twelve eminent individuals whose major contribution to Science, Ethics, Humanism, Atheism, Agnosticism or Theistic belief is noteworthy. Notes on their achievements and their lives feature at the start of each month in the Calendar Booklet, along with informative download websites, prepared and selected by Professor Brian Gates of the University of Cumbria. See Editorial.

7. CALENDAR OF DATES AND DESCRIPTIONS

2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016

July 2016

Friday, 1 July

JASHN-E TIRGAN (TIR JASHAN) Zoroastrian (Iranian)

Jashn-e Tirgan is an ancient quarter year summer festival, celebrated about three months after the spring NoRuz. Tirgan is devoted to the divinity Tir and is associated with the dog-star Sirius and the coming of the rains in Iran and the fertility they bring.

On this day it is customary to visit the Fire Temple to give thanks to Ahura Mazda, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, listen to stories of how the boundaries of Iran were established in antiquity with its Central Asian neighbour Turan (now Turkmenistan) by an archer shooting an arrow, share a community meal, play with 'rainbow' bracelets made of seven coloured silks, splash each other with water, and dance and make merry.

a) pp 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Cais SOAS - Celebrations - Jashn-e-Tirgan](#)
2. [Bintudaddy: Tirgan Iranian Summer Festival \(Yeki Bood Yeki Nabood\)](#)
3. [Zoroastrian Heritage - Tirgan](#)
4. [Images for Jashn-e-Tirgan](#)
5. [Iran Review: Arash the Archer and the Festival of Rain \(Jashn-e Tirgan\)](#)

Sunday, 3 July

LAILAT-UL-QADR / THE NIGHT OF POWER / HONOUR / DIGNITY Muslim (Sunni)

This commemorates the night in 610 CE when the prophet Muhammad received his first visit from the angel Jibril (Gabriel) and his revelation of the *Qur'an*. Muslims believe that the date of this night is kept secret by God, but that they 'may seek the Night of Dignity in the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan' (Bukhaari, quoting Aisha, who heard it from the Prophet). Many Muslims spend the last ten days and nights of Ramadan secluded in the mosque, praying and studying the *Qur'an* to ensure they receive the special benefits promised for their prayers and devotions on Lailat-ul-Qadr.

For the purpose of communal activities, or for those who can only spend one night in devotions at the mosque, Sunnis favour the 27th day (beginning the evening of the 26th) whilst the Shi'a favour the 23rd day of Ramadan. Of this night, the *Qur'an* states, "Lailat-ul-Qadr is better than a thousand months." Surah 97:1-5 (see esp. 97: 3).

The first revelation: Surah 2:185.

a) p 218; b) pp 112,120.

More information at ...

1. [Lailatul Qadar - The Night of Power](#)
2. [Islamic Finder - Lailat ul Qadr](#)
3. [Win Calendar - Lailat-ul-Qadr](#)
4. [Sound Vision: Lailat ul Qadr](#)
5. [Duas: 'Common' A'amaal for Laylatul Qadr](#)

July 2016

Wednesday, 6 July

RATHA YATRA *Hindu*

'Chariot journey'. This is observed most notably at Puri in the Indian state of Orissa, where processions of thousands of devotees pull huge waggons (*rathas*) supporting images of Krishna. He is known under the name of 'Jagannath', (Lord of the Universe), from which the English term 'juggernaut' comes. Krishna is attended on his journey by his brother and sister. The festival and others like it are celebrated in Britain with processions through various parts of London on appropriate Sundays.

a) p 123; b) pp 68-69, 75, 79-80.

More information at ...

1. [Rath Yatra - the Chariot Festival of Puri](#)
2. [ISKCON UK: Ratha Yatra - Festival of the Chariots](#)
3. [Harekrasna: The Ratha Yatra](#)
4. [Rath Yatra: The Chariot Festival of Puri, with photos](#)
5. [Swaminarayan: Rath Yatra](#)

Thursday, 7 July

EID-UL-FITR / FEAST OF FAST BREAKING (1st Shawwal) *Muslim*

Celebrations of this festival may extend over the first three days of the month of Shawwal, the month following Ramadan, although only the first day's celebration is religiously sanctioned. It is a time for making gifts to the poor (*Zakat-ul-Fitr*, the charity of the fast, must be paid before the *Eid* prayer). Now is a time for new clothes, good food, and presents for children. Families get together and contact friends, especially those who live far away. The community will assemble for *Eid* prayer and a sermon at the mosque or at a large place which will accommodate the whole community of the town or village. The traditional greeting is '*Eid Mubarak*' - 'a happy and blessed *Eid*'. (There is no reference to this in the *Qur'an* but there is in the *Hadith*, the traditions of the Prophet).

a) pp 220-223; b) pp 110,112, 114-116, 120, 140, vii.

More information at ...

1. [Eid-al-Fitr – History and Interesting Facts about the Festival](#)
2. [Dua: Eid ul Fitr - 1st Shawwl - Eid salat](#)
3. [Islamic City: Eid ul Fitr](#)
4. [Foods and Menu Ideas for a Festive Eid-ul-Fitr](#)
5. [The Huffington Post: Articles on Eid Ul Fitr](#)

July 2016

Friday, 8 July – Sunday, 17 July (Kadmi)

Friday, 11 March – Sunday, 20 March (Iranian)

FRAVARDIGAN / MUKTAD Zoroastrian

The Fravardigan festival (the festival of the *fravashis*), popularly known as *Muktad* (All Souls), commences ten days before NoRuz and is the last festival of the old year. The Zoroastrian day commences at sunrise and not midnight, and so during sunrise on the first day of the festival the immortal souls, together with their *fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, artistically depicted as half man/half bird), are welcomed by name by the Zoroastrian *Mobeds* or *Magi* (priests).

For ten days they reside in the place of worship, hovering around a table full of metal vases, each specifically earmarked for an individual family and containing white flowers. They leave the physical world after the last ceremony, held on the tenth evening, but before the dawn of NoRuz. The designated priest - as a farewell gesture - will then empty the water from one of the metal vases, which he will turn upside down, signifying that it is time for the immortal souls and the *fravashis* to return to the spiritual world.

Theologically Fravardigan is the most important Zoroastrian festival after NoRuz, but, since it deals with one's departed ancestors, many Zoroastrians regard it to be their holiest festival. During these ten days Zoroastrians often take time off from work, pray extensively, recite the five *Gathas* (hymns composed by Zarathushtra) and ensure their houses are thoroughly cleaned. They prepare daily samples of sacred food enjoyed by their departed ancestors while still alive, and take these to the place of worship, to be tasted by them during the daily ceremonies. This ritually consecrated food, along with chosen fruits, is then shared by the living in the special *Hamaspathmaidem Gahambar*, a communal feast celebrated after the ceremony is over.

a) pp 250-252; b) pp 129-130, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Muktad - When Souls Come-a-Visiting](#)
2. [Celebrate and Remember - Fravardigan Days or Muktad](#)
3. [Faiths Forum - Fravardigan/Muktad](#)
4. [Images for Fravardigan](#)
5. [What to do and pray during the Muktad](#)

Saturday, 9 July

ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARTYRDOM OF THE BAB Baha'i

This day recalls the death of the *Bab*, executed by firing squad in Tabriz, Persia, at noon on July 9th in 1850. Baha'is commemorate his death at noon with readings and prayers from the Baha'i Scriptures. It has become a holy day of rest when Baha'is should refrain from work.

a) pp 26-27; b) pp 19, 21-22.

More information at ...

1. [Baha'i World News Service: Anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Bab](#)
2. [Baha'i Blog: The Martyrdom of the Bab and Jesus Christ](#)
3. [Baha'i Library - Martyrdom of the Bab](#)
4. [Susan Gammage: Holy Day Celebration for the Martyrdom of the Bab](#)
5. [Huffington Post - Martyrdom of the Bab](#)

July 2016

Friday, 15 July

ASALHA PUJA *Buddhist*

Dhammacakka day – 'The turning of the wheel of teaching'. This is a Theravada celebration of the First Proclamation by Gautama to five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares. In it he taught the Middle Way, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths.

a) p 47; b) pp 24, 31, i, ii.

More information at ...

1. [Buddhist Festivals - Asalha Puja](#)
2. [Chiang Mai University: Asalha Puja Day](#)
3. [My Triple Blog: Asalha Puja Day](#)
4. [Asalha Puja in Pictures](#)
5. [Battaya Mail: Thai Buddhists nationwide perform religious rites on Asalha Puja Day](#)

Monday, 18 July

NAVROZE / NO RUZ *Zoroastrian (Kadmi)*

New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. In the tenth century a group of Zoroastrians fled from Iran and were given religious sanctuary by the Hindus of Western India, where they became known as Parsis (or Persians). During the twentieth century the Zoroastrians of Iran have revised their calendar to take account of the leap year, while the Parsis of India have continued following the traditional imperial or Shenshai calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world to practise Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!

a) pp 252-253; b) 127-128, 130-132, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Zoroastrian Heritage - Papeti - Navroze/No Ruz](#)
2. [Zawa: Joy Grows from the Conquest of Evil - Navroze, No Ruz, Papeti](#)
3. [Navroze Special - A Parsi Feast awaits you](#)
4. [India Opines: A Glimpse into Parsi Cuisine This Navroze](#)
5. [Iran Chamber Society: No-Rooz, The Iranian New Year at Present Times](#)

Saturday, 23 July

BIRTHDAY OF HAILE SELASSIE I *Rastafarian*

This is one of the holiest days of the Ethiopian year. It is celebrated widely throughout Ethiopia. Wherever Rastafarians live they rejoice to honour the birthday with *Nyahbinghi* drumming, hymns and prayers.

More information at ...

1. [Rasta Ites: Reasoning on His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie the First](#)
2. [Biography of Haile Selassie I](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Birthday of Haile Selassie](#)
4. [Photos of Haile Selassie I](#)
5. [Brainy Quotes: Haile Selassie Quotes](#)

Saturday, 23 July

KHORDAD SAL *Zoroastrian (Kadmi)*

Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day following NoRuz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.

a) pp 253, 255; b) pp 128-132.

More information at ...

1. [Mango Salute: Khordad Sal - A Celebration of the Prophet Zarathustra](#)
2. [A History of Khordad Sal](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Khordad Sal](#)
4. [Sakshigopal: Happy Khordad Sal! Birthday Day of Zoroaster!](#)
5. [Festivals advices - Khordad sal - the birthday of Zoroaster](#)

August 2016

Monday, 1 August

LAMMAS/LUGHNASADH (pronounced Loo-nassa) *Wiccan*

LUGHNASADH *Pagan*

Lughnasadh, otherwise called *Lammas*, is the time of the corn harvest, when Pagans reap those things they have sown and when they celebrate the fruits of the mystery of Nature. At Lughnasadh, Pagans give thanks for the bounty of the Goddess as Queen of the Land.

More information at ...

1. [The goddess and the green man - Lammas](#)
2. [Pagan/Wiccan: All About Lammas](#)
3. [The White Goddess: Lammas](#)
4. [Images for the Festival of Lammas](#)
5. [Mything Links: Lammas, Lughnasadh](#)

Saturday, 6 August

THE TRANSFIGURATION *Christian (Julian Calendar: 19 August)*

This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John; here, as his death approached, they saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.

For Orthodox Christians this is an especially important festival, pointing to Christ as both human and divine. Although Moses and Elijah had died centuries before, they could both live again in the presence of the Son of God, implying that a similar return to life can apply to all who face death.

Matthew 17:1-17, Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36.

a) p 101; b) pp 106-107, 109.

More information at ...

[The Orthodox Church in America - The Transfiguration](#)

[The Expository Files: The Transfiguration](#)

[About Catholicism: The Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)

[Bible.org: The Transfiguration \(Matthew 17:1-13\)](#)

[NC Register: 10 things you need to know about Jesus' Transfiguration](#)

Saturday, 6 August

CHOKOR (also CHO KOR DU CHEN) *Buddhist*

This is a Tibetan and Nepalese festival that commemorates the first teaching (*the turning of the wheel of law*) given by the historical Buddha. It is a colourful and relaxed mid-summer festival, when statues of the Buddha and copies of the scriptures, engraved on narrow, rectangular wooden blocks, are carried round the district with music and jollity, symbolising the promulgation of the Buddha's teaching. The whole community, clerical and lay, male and female, joins in the processions and the picnics that follow.

More information at ...

1. [Diamond Way Buddhism UK Blog: Today is Chokhor Duchen, a 'Ten Million Multiplier'](#)
2. [Chokor du Chen – Buddha Multiplying Day](#)
3. [Mythic Maps: Chokor Duchen](#)
4. [Tibet Travel: Festivals - Chokor Duchen](#)
5. [Blogspot: Dream of my guru on Chokhor Duchen](#)

August 2016

Sunday, 7 August – Tuesday, 16 August (*Kadmi*)

Friday, 11 March – Sunday, 20 March (*Iranian*)

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a) pp 250-252; b) pp 129-130, 144.

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Tuesday, 9 August

HERD BOY AND WEAVING MAID FESTIVAL / QIXIJIE / CH'I HOU CHIEH Chinese

This Double Seven festival perpetuates an ancient folk tale of two stars, one on either side of the Heavenly River (the Milky Way). They are held to have been a herd boy and a heavenly weaving maid who had married but were separated when she returned to heaven. The lovers are allowed a reunion on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month when a flock of magpies form a bridge across the Heavenly River. But if it rains on that day, the River overflows and sweeps away the bridge, so preventing their meeting for a whole year. Women traditionally pray for clear skies on the night of the seventh day of the month.

a) p 70; b) p 43.

More information at ...

1. [Tai Chi Chuan Centre - Weaving Girl](#)
2. [World of Tales: Chinese Folk Tales - The Herd Boy and the Weaving Maiden](#)
3. [The Herd Boy and the Weaving Maid, and other Oriental Folk Tales](#)
4. [You Tube - The Cow Herd and the Weaving Maid and other stories](#)
5. [China Travel: Double Seventh Festival - Herd Boy and Weaving Maid](#)

August 2016

*** Saturday, 13 August – Monday, 15 August**

***O-BON* Japanese**

A Japanese festival when the spirits of the departed are welcomed back home with feasting and dancing. Fires are often lit to illuminate their arrival and departure. Celebrations in rural areas may take place one month earlier.

a) pp 162-163; b) pp 82, 86-87, 89.

More information at ...

1. [Go Japan: Japanese Festivals - O-bon](#)
2. [The Japan Guy: What is Obon?](#)
3. [Kids Web Japan; Bon Holidays](#)
4. [O-Bon in Pictures](#)
5. [The Diplomat: Obon - Japan Welcomes the Ancestors \(And Other Spirits Too\)](#)

Sunday, 14 August

***TISHA B'AV* Jewish**

This is the saddest day of the Jewish calendar. A full day fast is held at the conclusion of three weeks of mourning, while reflecting on the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem. Other tragedies in Jewish history are also recalled, many of which have coincidentally happened on this day. The Book of Lamentations is read at this time.

a) pp 208-209; b) pp 106-107, 109.

More information at ...

1. [The Laws of Tisha B'Av](#)
2. [Jewfaq: Tisha B'Av](#)
3. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/holidayd.html>
4. [Tisha B'Av - the Ninth day of Av](#)
5. [My Jewish Learning: Tisha B'Av](#)

Sunday, 14 August

***ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY* Christian (Roman Catholic)**

Tuesday, 15 August

***THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY* Christian (Anglican)**

***DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD* Christian (Orthodox) (Julian Calendar:28 August)**

On this day many Christians celebrate the 'taking up' of Mary, body and soul, to heaven. Many Catholic communities mark the festival of the Assumption with processions and fêtes.

a) pp 97-98; b) pp 49, 55, 59.

More information at ...

- [The Mary Page: A Variety of Customs associated with the Assumption](#)
[About Catholicism: Assumption of Mary](#)
[Time and Date: Assumption of Mary](#)
[Catholic Culture: The Assumption of Our Lady](#)
[Mary Pages: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#)

August 2016

Wednesday, 17 August

NAVROZE / NO RUZ Zoroastrian (Shenshai - Parsi)

New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. In the tenth century a group of Zoroastrians fled from Iran and were given religious sanctuary by the Hindus of Western India, where they became known as Parsis (or Persians). During the twentieth century the Zoroastrians of Iran have revised their calendar to take account of the leap year, while the Parsis of India have continued following the traditional imperial or Shenshai calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world to practise Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!

a) pp 252-253; b) 127-128, 130-132, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Zoroastrian Heritage - Papeti - Navroze/No Ruz](#)
2. [Zawa: Joy Grows from the Conquest of Evil - Navroze, No Ruz, Papeti](#)
3. [Navroze Special - A Parsi Feast awaits you](#)
4. [India Opines: A Glimpse into Parsi Cuisine This Navroze](#)
5. [Iran Chamber Society: No-Rooz, The Iranian New Year at Present Times](#)

Wednesday, 17 August

FESTIVAL OF HUNGRY GHOSTS / ZHOHGYUANJIE / CHUNG YUAN Chinese

Chinese Buddhist and ancestral festival also called the 'Festival of Hungry Ghosts'. Paper objects for use in the spirit world are made and offered to aid the spirits who have no resting place or descendants. Large paper boats are made and burnt at temples to help spirits on their journey across the sea of torment to *Nirvana*.

a) pp 70, 72; b) p 43.

More information at ...

1. [About Chinese Culture: The Hungry Ghost Festival](#)
 2. [About Mandarin: Ghost Month and Ghost Festival](#)
 3. [Discover Hong Kong. Festivals/Chinese - The Hungry Ghosts festival](#)
 4. [Images of Hungry Ghosts](#)
 5. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/27/hungry-ghosts-china-_n_3821532.html
- [Bukit Brown: 'Hungry Ghost Month' - Reflections](#)

Thursday, 18 August

RAKSHA BANDHAN Hindu

This festival takes place on the full moon of Shravana. *Raksha* means 'protection' and *bandhan* means 'to tie'. Girls and married women in families of a north Indian background tie a *rakhi* (amulet) on the right wrists of their brothers, wishing them protection from evil influences of various kinds. Different celebrations take place on this day in different parts of India. So, for example, in western Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa, Hindus offer coconuts to the sea god, Lord Varuna and so the festival is called Nariyal Purnima, coconut full-moon.

a) pp 69-70 b) 139-140.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Raksha Bandhan](#)
2. [Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India: Raksha Bandhan](#)
3. [Indif Devotional: Raksha Bandhan - The Festival of Brotherhood and Love](#)
4. [Maps of India: Raksha Bandhan](#)
5. [Culture: Festivals - Rakhi \(Raksha Bandhan\)](#)

August 2016

Friday 19 August

THE TRANSFIGURATION *Christian - by the Julian Calendar*

This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John; here, as his death approached, they saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.

For Orthodox Christians this is an especially important festival, pointing to Christ as both human and divine. Although Moses and Elijah had died centuries before, they could both live again in the presence of the Son of God, implying that a similar return to life can apply to all who face death.

Matthew 17:1-17, Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36.

a) p 101; b) pp 106-107, 109.

More information at ...

[The Orthodox Church in America - The Transfiguration](#)

[The Expository Files: The Transfiguration](#)

[About Catholicism: The Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)

[Bible.org: The Transfiguration \(Matthew 17:1-13\)](#)

[NC Register: 10 things you need to know about Jesus' Transfiguration](#)

Monday, 22 August *Zoroastrian (Shenshai)*

Saturday, 26 March *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

KHORDAD SAL *Zoroastrian*

Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day following NoRuz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.

a) pp 253, 255; b) pp 128-132.

More information at ...

1. [Mango Salute: Khordad Sal - A Celebration of the Prophet Zarathustra](#)

2. [A History of Khordad Sal](#)

3. [Mythic Maps - Khordad Sal](#)

4. [Sakshigopal: Happy Khordad Sal! Birthday Day of Zoroaster!](#)

5. [Festivals advices - Khordad sal - the birthday of Zoroaster](#)

Thursday, 25 August

JANMASHTAMI / KRISHNA JAYANTI

This birthday is widely celebrated throughout the Hindu world. Krishna is a very popular avatar or incarnation of Lord Vishnu and many Hindus fast in his honour until midnight, the time of Krishna's birth. Those unable to fast will take some fruit and milk. In the temples Krishna is welcomed with singing, dancing and sweets. In some homes and temples an image of the new-born Krishna is put in a cradle and special sweets (e.g. the powder, *panjiri*, given traditionally to women after childbirth) are offered and distributed.

a) pp 129-130; b) pp 71, 75.

More information at ...

1. [Mangalore: Sri Krishna Jayanti](#)

2. [Festivals of India: Sri Krishna Jayanti/Krishnaastami Krishna: How to Celebrate](#)

[Janmashtami](#)

3. [Mythic Maps: Janmashtami](#)

4. [Janmashtami in Pictures](#)

5. [AstroVed: Fill Your Life with Love and Abundance - Krishna's Birthday](#)

August 2016

Sunday, 28 August

THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD *Christian (Eastern Orthodox. Julian Calendar)*

On this day, Eastern Orthodox Christians commemorate the passing of Mary, Mother of Christ, in the presence of the Apostles. Miraculously brought together at her house, Mary told the Apostles of the reason for their gathering, and comforted them. She raised her hands to pray for peace for the world, and blessed each apostle before giving up her spirit. The apostles buried Mary at Gethsemane, where Jesus had also been buried; but on the third day after the burial, when they were eating together, Mary appeared to them, saying "Rejoice". In this way, the apostles first learned that Mary's body had been taken up into Heaven, where Christ had already taken her spirit. When the apostles went to the grave, her body was gone, leaving a sweet fragrance. The symbolism of this event encompasses the idea of death as 'falling asleep' (this is what 'dormition' means), to be followed by eventual resurrection.

a) pp 97-98; b) pp 49, 55, 59.

More information at ...

[Orthodox Wiki: Dormition of the Mother of God](#)

[Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: Feast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady, The Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary](#)

[The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary](#)

[Russian Orthodox Church: Dormition of the Holy Virgin](#)

[John the Theologian, The Dormition of the Holy Theotokos](#)

Monday, 29 August – Monday, 5 September

PARYUSHAN Jain

These are eight days of purification, devoted to study, prayer, meditation and fasting, and ending with a period of confession and forgiveness. Often monks will be invited to give teachings from the Jain scriptures. Paryushana means 'to stay in one place', which signifies a time of reflection and repentance. Originally the practice was monastic for the most part.

a) pp 142, 146-147, 149; b) pp77, 78-79, 80.

More information at ...

1. [Jain World: Paryushan Parva](#)

2. [Colostate Education: Paryushana Parva](#)

3. [eJainism: Paryushan Parva](#)

4. [Images for Paryushan Parva](#)

5. [Jaina: Federation of Jain Associations in North America: Paryushan Parv](#)

September 2016

* **Sunday, Sept/Oct**

HARVEST FESTIVAL *Christian (Western, Anglican and Free Churches)*

Special services are held around this time of year to give thanks for the goodness of God's gifts in providing a harvest of crops along with all the other fruits of society. Displays of produce are often made, usually distributed afterwards to those in need. Increasingly the emphasis is on a wider interpretation than just the harvests of the fields and seas.

a) p 82; b) p 54.

More information at ...

[Activity Village - Suggestions for the Harvest Festival](#)

[Woodlands School: Harvest Festival](#)

[Images of Harvest Festival Celebrations](#)

[Send a Cow: Harvest Festival](#)

[Barnabas: God is a faithful gardener](#)

Thursday, 1 September

INSTALLATION OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IN THE HARMANDIR SAHIB,

Amritsar 1604 CE *Sikh*

In 1604, in the place of worship where the Golden Temple now stands, the Sikhs' fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, installed for the first time the Adi Granth, a volume of scripture for the Sikh community. It consisted of the hymns of the first five Gurus plus those of other 'saint-poets'. Hymns by the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur, were later incorporated in the scripture, so forming the present Guru Granth Sahib.

a) p 244; b) p 126.

More information at ...

1. [All About Sikhs: Harmandir Sahib - Installation of the Holy Granth](#)
2. [SGPC: Guru Granth Sahib](#)
3. [Sikhism Guide: Sri Guru Granth Sahib](#)
4. [Sikh Scriptures, Images, Excerpts and Quotations](#)
5. [Gurbani Files: Sri Guru Granth Sahib - A Brief Introduction](#)

Saturday, 3 September – Tuesday, 13 September

1st to 10th DHUL-HIJJAH *Muslim*

For Muslims the first 10 days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah are held to be especially holy when good deeds are particularly rewarded by God. These days encompass the allotted days for the performance of the Hajj (pilgrimage) and the first day of Eid-ul-Adha (the feast of sacrifice).

More information at ...

1. [The Blessed Days of Dhul Hijjah](#)
2. [ICNA: Virtues of the First 10 Days of 'Dhul-Hijja'](#)
3. [The First Ten Days of Dhul Hijjah: Days of Virtue and Righteous Deeds](#)
4. [Virtues of the First Ten Days of Dhul-Hijjah](#)
5. [Islamic Centre: 12th Month in the Islamic Calendar: Dhul Hijjah](#)

Sunday, 4 September

FRAVARDIN MAH PARAB *Zoroastrian (Shenshai - Parsi)*

On the day of Fravardin, the 19th day of the month of Fravardin, the first month of the year, Zoroastrians visit the vicinity of the Towers of Silence in India (or in the UK the Zoroastrian Cemetery in Brookwood, Surrey) to participate in a jashan ceremony in memory of the departed fravashis (guardian spirits and souls of the community). Sacred food is prepared as an offering to the departed during the jashan and is later shared by the participants.

More information at ...

1. [Sympatico: Fravashisympatihttp://www3.sympatico.ca/zoroastrian/fravar.htm](http://www3.sympatico.ca/zoroastrian/fravar.htm)

2. [Muktad - When Souls Come-a-Visiting](#)

3. [Farvardegan day on Farvardin Roj, Farvardin Mah](#)

4. [Images for Fravardin Mah Parab](#)

<https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=Fravardigan&client=gmail&sa=N&rls=aso&authuser=2&biw=1366&bih=659&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=0ahUKEwjbtJbW5v7KAhUJaRQKHS3HBj04ChCwBAG95>

September 2016

Monday, 5 September

GANESHA CHATURTHI **Birthday of Ganesh** *Hindu*

Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi is a Hindu festival in honour of Ganesh/Ganesha, (also known as Ganapati and Vinayaka), the god of good fortune and new beginnings. A popular story explains why Ganesha, the son of Parvati and Shiva, has the head of an elephant. This festival is particularly significant for Hindus from Maharashtra and is celebrated in a major way in Mumbai (Bombay). Celebrations can last one, five or ten days, and will conclude with the immersion in water of the image of Ganesh.

a) pp 128-129; b) pp 70-71, 75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)
2. [Taj Online: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)
3. [Go India: Guide to the Ganesh Chaturthi Festival in India](#)
4. [Swaminarayan: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)
5. [Ashtavinayaka: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)

Monday, 5 September

SAMVATSARI (International Forgiveness Day) *Jain*

This is the last day of Paryushana, which many regard as the most important eight or ten day festival of Jainism. It is the holiest day of the Jain calendar and many Jains observe a complete fast. The whole day is spent in prayers and contemplation, asking for forgiveness from others.

1. [Samvatsari - When jains purify themselves](#)
2. [Samvatsari, the climax of the festival of Paryushana Parva](#)
3. [Why do Jains say 'michchhami-dukkadam' and when do they say it?](#)
4. [Samvatsari Greetings Cards](#)
5. [Samvatsari - The Festival of Forgiveness](#)

Sunday, 11 September

ETHIOPIAN NEW YEAR'S DAY *Rastafarian*

Ethiopian families love to celebrate their New Year, which they call Enqutatash, with presents and visits. Rastafarians throughout the world honour it too. They have a four year cycle, in which each year is named after an evangelist. This is the beginning of the year of Luke.

More information at ...

1. [The New Year is a happy time in Ethiopia](#)
2. [Ethiopian Calendar: Ethiopian New Year](#)
3. [Rastafarians celebrate Ethiopian New Year's Day](#)
4. [Jamaican Rasta wishes you a Happy New Year](#)
5. [Rastafarian holy days now honoured in UK prisons](#)

Sunday, 11 September – Thursday, 15 September

HAJJ / PILGRIMAGE TO MAKKAH (8th to 12th Dhul-Hijjah) *Muslim*

All Muslims who can afford to do so, and are not prevented through ill-health, are required to make this pilgrimage once in their lifetime (although there is no prohibition on making the pilgrimage more than once). A series of ritual acts are performed by the pilgrims during the first two days of Hajj, prior to the three day festival of Eid-al-Adha which is celebrated in Makkah by the pilgrims

More information at ...

1. [Saudi Embassy - Hajj](#)
2. [Islamic City: Hajj - The Journey of a Lifetime](#)
3. [Why do Millions Gather in Mecca Every Year?](#)
4. [Hajj in Pictures and Photos](#)
5. [The Guardian - Hajj](#)

September 2016

Monday, 12 September

YAUM-ARAFAH / THE DAY OF ARAFAT (9th Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim

This day marks the culminating event of the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Makkah. Muslims who are on *Hajj* spend the day in prayer on Mount Arafat to commemorate the end of the revelation of the *Qur'an* to the Prophet. Those not on *Hajj* are also expected to pray and to fast.

Surah 5: 4

a) pp 223-224; b) pp116-117.

More information at ...

1. [Al Maghrib: The Truth Behind the Day of Arafah and its Name](#)
2. [Arab News: The Day of Arafat](#)
3. [Pilgrims throng Mount Arafat in Makkah](#)
4. [The Day of Arafat in Pictures and Photos](#)
5. [Arafat](#)

Tuesday, 13 September

EID-UL-ADHA/THE FESTIVAL OF SACRIFICE (10th Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim

This major festival (*al-Eid al-Kabir*) marks the end of the *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Makkah) on the tenth day of the twelfth month of *Dhul-Hijja*. The *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam. Pilgrims sacrifice animals at the village of Mina on their way back to Makkah from Mount Arafat (where they have spent the first day of the festival) in commemoration of Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Muslims all over the world sacrifice an animal if they can afford it. Much of the meat is distributed to the poor, and some is shared with relatives and friends.

Surah 37:99-111, 22:26-33 and 3:96-97.

a) pp 224-227; b) pp 111-112, 114-115, 117-118, 120, 137, 143.

More information at ...

1. [Imam Ilyas Sidyot: The spirit behind Eid-ul-Adha](#)
2. [Islamic Concern: Sacrifice and Eid ul Adha](#)
3. [Eid ul Adha for Schools](#)
4. [123 Greetings: Eid ul Adha](#)
5. [Ahadith: Search for Hadith on Eid ul Adha - 30 results](#)

Thursday, 15 September

RABBIT IN THE MOON FESTIVAL/ZHONGQIUJIE/CHUNG CHIU Chinese

This Mid-Autumn festival celebrates the moon's birthday. Traditionally, offerings of moon cakes are made by women to the goddess of the moon. Offerings are also made to the rabbit in the moon, who is pounding the elixir of life with a pestle. 'Spirit money' is bought along with incense and offered to the moon by women. They also make special 'moon' cakes containing ground lotus and sesame seeds or dates. These contain an image of the crescent moon or of the rabbit in the moon, and children holding brightly coloured lanterns are allowed to stay up late to watch the moon rise from some nearby high place.

a) p 72; b) pp 43-44.

More information at ...

1. [Mystery Authors: Rabbit in the Moon Festival](#)
2. [SACU: Mid Autumn Festival](#)
3. [Wiki How: Enjoy a Chinese Moon Festival](#)
4. [China Highlights: Mid-Autumn Festival Stories](#)
5. [Chinese Child Book: Chinese Moon Festival Background](#)

September 2016

Tuesday, 20 September – Monday, 26 September

HIGAN Japanese

Friday, 23 September

SHUBUN NO HI Japanese

Marks the autumn equinox. As at the spring equinox, harmony and balance are the themes; sutras are recited and the graves of relatives are visited.

a) p 164; b) p 87.

More information at ...

1. [Shuubun-no-Hi or Autumnal Equinox Day?](#)
2. [Kalamalama - Shubun no hi](#)
3. [Tokyo 5: Shubun no hi](#)
4. [Shubun no hi - cleaning the ancestral tombs](#)
5. [In Culture Parent: Happy O-Higan!](#)

Wednesday, 21 September

THE FESTIVAL OF THE POOL/EID UL GHADEER (or GHADIR) (18^h Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim (Shi'a)

This is a festival observed by Shi'a Muslims, for whom it is an extremely important day. It commemorates an event shortly before the death of the Prophet. When returning from Makkah to Medina after his final pilgrimage, the Prophet, who was travelling with many thousands of his followers, stopped at an oasis (the pool of Khumm) to deliver a sermon. While preaching he is believed by Shi'a Muslims to have raised the hand of Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, and proclaimed, 'For whoever I am his leader, Ali is his leader. O God, love those who love him, and be hostile to those who are hostile to him'.

Immediately after this statement the Prophet revealed an *ayah* (verse) of the Qur'an: 'Today I have perfected your religion and completed my favour upon you, and I was satisfied that Islam be your religion' (*Qur'an* 5, 3.) For Shi'a Muslims the 'perfecting' of the religion of Islam was the announcement concerning Ali, which they understand to be his clear appointment to be successor to the prophet as the spiritual and temporal leader of Islam.

More information at ...

1. [Islamic Occasions - Eid ul Ghadeer](#)
2. [The Ismaili: Eid-e Ghadir](#)
3. [Ziaraat: Significance of Eid-e-Ghadeer](#)
4. [Slide Share: Eid Alghadeer](#)
5. [Seratonline: Why do Shias celebrate Eid-e- Ghadeer?](#)

Thursday, 22 September *AUTUMN EQUINOX (MABON) Wiccan Pagan*

Thursday, 22 September *AUTUMN EQUINOX (Alban Elued or Alban Elfed) Druid*

Day and night stand hand in hand as equals. As the shadows lengthen, Pagans see the darker faces of the God and Goddess. For many Pagans, this rite honours old age and the approach of Winter.

More information at ...

1. [The White Goddess: The Wheel of the Year - Mabon, the Autumn Equinox](#)
2. [Two Pagans: Blessed Mabon](#)
3. [The Celtic Connection: Mabon - by Akasha](#)
4. [Simple Wiccan Mabon Ritual](#)
5. [The Llewellyn Encyclopedia: Mabon Ritual](#)

September 2016

Wednesday, 29 September

MICHAELMAS *National*

One of the four Quarter Days in the UK legal calendar.

More information at ...

1. [Culture UK - Michaelmas](#)
2. [Catholic Culture: Michaelmas Day](#)
3. [About Paganism: Michaelmas](#)
4. [Are we ready to embrace the Michaelmas Goose once again?](#)
5. [Waldorf Homes Schools: Michaelmas Circle, Story and Resources](#)

October 2016

Saturday, 1 October

JASHN-E MEHERGAN (or **MIHR JASHAN**) *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

Jashn-e Mehergan is an early autumn festival, and like NoRuz its origins have been lost in antiquity. Mehergan is dedicated to the divinity Meher or Mithra, who is associated with the sun and with justice. The ripening of the crops and fruits at this time of the year is seen as symbolic of the ripening of the world into fullness, before the moment of the ultimate victory over evil. It evokes the physical resurrection of the body along with its immortal soul, as promised by Ahura Mazda. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple to offer thanks to the Creator God, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of King Faridoon's triumphant capture of the evil Zohak and to share in a community meal that includes dry fruits and nuts, along with a drink, dancing and merrymaking.

a) pp 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Iran Review - Jashn-e-Mehregan](#)
2. [Fouman: Collective Iranian Culturebase - Mehregan](#)
3. [Cais/SOAS: Celebrations - The Festival of Mehregan](#)
4. [Anobanini: Mehrgan-Mihragan-Jashn-e Mehr](#)
5. [Historical Iran: Iranian Sites and People](#)

Saturday, 1 October – Sunday, 9 October

NAVARATRI *Hindu*

Navaratri means nine nights, the length of the festival. Hindus from different areas of India celebrate it in different ways. In the north the Ram Lila is performed each night, in celebration of Lord Rama's victory over Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. All around the world families from Gujarat gather to participate in circle dances associated with the Goddess Durga and with Lord Krishna. Many Punjabis worship the Goddess daily during Navaratri, and observe a strictly vegetarian diet. On the eighth day, Durga Ashtami, Punjabi Hindus fast before conducting worship of the Goddess that involves honouring young girls as the embodiment of her power.

a) pp 130-133; b) pp 61, 65, 72-73, 75.

More information at ...

1. [Ahmedabad on Internet: Festivals - Navaratri](#)
2. [Gujarat India: All about Gujarat - Navratri](#)
3. http://www.ahmedabadcity.com/tourismtest/php/festival_navratri.php Rudraksha: Navratri festival/Navratri puja
4. [Photos celebrate the ending of Navratri](#)
5. [Huffington Post: Navratri Photos - Durga Puja: Worshipping the Divine Mother](#)

2 October

GANDHI JAYANTI *Hindu*

Gandhi Jayanti is an Indian national holiday that celebrates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, who is referred to as the 'Father of the Nation'. He was the driving force behind the foundation of the state of India. His birthday is celebrated with services, prayers and painting and essay contests with topics that glorify peace and non-violence, and the singing of Gandhi's favourite devotional song entitled 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram' (Ram Dhun for short). The distribution of alcohol is banned on Gandhi Jayanti, as on other national holidays.

More information at ...

1. [Festivals of India: Gandhi Jayanti](#)
2. [Speech in honour of Gandhi](#)
3. [Gandhi - Celebrations and Quotations](#)
4. [Gandhi - pictures and comments](#)
5. [Quotations from Mahatma Gandhi](#)

October 2016

Monday, 3 October

ISLAMIC NEW YEAR 1438 / AL-HIJRA / RA'S UL 'AM (Muharram 1) Muslim

This day commemorates the *Hijra* or migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Medina in 622 CE, which led to the establishment of the Muslim community there. The day is not universally celebrated amongst Sunni Muslims but is notable as Muslim years are dated from this time and are marked AH (After the *Hijrah*). In 2015 CE the Muslim year 1437 AH begins. For some Muslim communities this is a day of celebration at the mosque, where stories are told of the Prophet and his Companions. For the Shi'a community the more important significance is that this is the first day of the period of fasting, mourning and remembrance leading up to Ashura.

a) pp 213-215, 227-228; b) pp 112, 118.

More information at ...

1. [Islam for the World: Al Hijrah or the Prophet's Emigration](#)
2. http://www.mythicmaps.net/Festival_calendar/February/Al-Hijra.htm
3. [Jakarta Post: Unique traditions mark Islamic New Year](#)
4. [BBC Religions: Al-Hijra - The Muslim New Year](#)
5. [Al Hijra Celebrations](#)
6. [World Bulletin: The Ottoman way of celebrating the Islamic New Year](#)

Monday, 3 October – Tuesday, 4 October

ROSH HASHANAH (Head of the Year) Jewish

(New Year's Day, 5777 years from the creation of the world). Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of ten days of repentance and self examination, during which G-d sits in personal judgment on every individual. The blowing of the ram's horn (*shofar*) in the synagogue is a reminder of Abraham's sacrifice of a ram instead of his son, Isaac. Apples dipped in honey are eaten in the hope of a 'sweet' new year. The greeting is '*Leshanah Tovah Tikatev*' (may you be inscribed for a good year).

Genesis 22, Leviticus 23:24-25.

a) pp 193-196; b) pp 90, 99-102, 109, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Jewfaq: Rosh Hashanah](#)
2. [Jewish Virtual Library: Rosh HaShana - History and Overview](#)
3. [Rosh Hashanah for Tiny Tots](#)
4. [Rosh Hashanah - Images and Pictures](#)
5. [About Judaism: Rosh Hashanah](#)

7 October DURGA PUJA Hindu

In Nepal, Bangladesh and (in India) West Bengal and other north eastern areas, Durga Puja is the biggest annual festival and lasts several days. In Kolkata hundreds of *pandals* (decorated temporary shrines) are put up. The Goddess's slaying of the demon, Mahishasura, is celebrated, and in Nepal the celebration involves animal sacrifices. The festival ends with the immersion of figures of Durga in rivers and sea.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: The History and Origin of Durga Puja](#)
2. [About India: Guide to Durga Puja Festival in India](#)
3. [The Essentials of Durga Pujahttp://www.southlondondurgapuja.com/](http://www.southlondondurgapuja.com/)
4. [Durga Puja in Photographs](#)
5. [Everything you need to know about Durga Puja in Kolkata](#)

October 2016

Sunday, 9 October

PICNIC IN A HIGH PLACE / CLIMB A HIGH MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL / CHONGYANGJIE / CH'UNG YANG Chinese

This Double Ninth festival is the day for hill climbing or 'going up on a high place'. It reminds of an ancient seer who foretold an imminent natural calamity and escaped by going into the hills. The rest of humanity ignored his warnings and perished. Kites are flown, family graves visited, and a 'golden pig' is shared by large families with fruit, wine, tea and rice.

a) pp 72-73; b) p 44.

More information at ...

1. [China Vista - Picnic in a High Place](#)
2. [Travel China Guide - Chong Yang](#)
3. [About Taoism: Double Ninth Festival - Ching Yang Jie](#)
4. [Pictures for Kite Flying Day](#)
5. [English People: Chong Yang Jie: The story of how the plague monster was defeated](#)

11 October DUSSEHRA / VIJAYA DASHAMI Hindu

In north India the day after Navaratri ends is celebrated as the 'victorious tenth' (Vijaya Dashami) and huge figures of Ravana are filled with fireworks and burned on Ram Lila grounds (public areas). In the UK some temple congregations carry this out on a smaller scale.

More information at ...

1. [Dussehr Info: Dussehra - Know About the Mega Festival of Happiness](#)
2. [UCLA: Culture/Festivals/Dussehra](#)
3. [I love India - Dussehra](#)
4. [Dussehra in Images](#)
5. [Calendarlabs - Dussehra](#)

Wednesday, 12 October

YOM KIPPUR (Day of Atonement) Jewish

This is the final day of the ten days of repentance, and is the holiest day of the year in the Jewish calendar. The Bible calls it the 'Sabbath of Sabbaths', and it is marked by 'afflicting the soul' – expressed through a total fast lasting 25 hours. Jews spend the eve and most of the day in prayer, asking for forgiveness for past wrongs and resolving to improve in the future. The Book of Jonah is read. A common greeting is 'G'mar Chatimah Tovah' ('May you finally be sealed for good').

Leviticus 16:4-34, 23:27-32.

a) pp 196-199; b) pp 12, 90-91, 97-99, 102-103, 109, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Jewish Virtual Library: Yom Kippur](#)
2. [USA Today: On Yom Kippur, Jews split on which shoes to choose](#)
3. [What is Yom Kippur?](#)
4. [Greetings Cards for Yom Kippur](#)
5. [Jewfaq: Yom Kippur](#)

October 2016

Wednesday, 12 October

ASHURA (10th Muharram) *Muslim*

For Sunni Muslims this is one of the two days of a minor fast that the Prophet kept in his lifetime. The second day of the fast may be observed either on the day preceding or the day following the 10th of Muharram. For Shi'a Muslims this is a day when they recall a great tragedy that took place on Muharram 10, AH 61 (680 CE). The Imam Husayn (son of Ali and Fatimah and therefore grandson of the Prophet) travelling with his family and many followers, was attacked by the troops of the Caliph Yazid.

After eight days without water Husayn was killed and his family and followers massacred at Karbala (now in Iraq). Shi'a Muslims remember the events in the days leading up to Ashura when they fast and recall these terrible events. The importance of this holy day can be judged from a popular Shi'a saying which some attribute to a Muslim poet and some to the sixth Imam, Jafar al-Saadiq: "Live as if every day is Ashura, every land Karbala!"

a) pp 228-230; b) pp 118-119

More information at ...

1. [About Islam: The Day of 'Ashura](#)
2. [World Time: Shi'ite Muslims Around the World Mark Ashura](#)
3. [Ashura of Muharram - a Shia and Sunni Muslim Observance](#)
4. [Huffington Post: Ashura - Dates, Rituals and History Explained with Photos](#)
5. [Religion Facts: What is Ashura?](#)

Sunday, 16 October – Sunday, 23 October

INTER FAITH WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE *National*

Prayers from the literature of several different world religions are published each year in a special leaflet for use in this week. This custom receives the support of members from many different religious communities.

More information at ...

1. [Week of Prayer for World Peace](#)
2. [Banner Cross Methodist Church: What is the Week of Prayer for World Peace?](#)
3. [Barnabas in Schools: Week of Prayer for World Peace](#)
4. [Images for World Peace and Prayer Day](#)
5. [Brahma Kumaris: Building Interfaith Bridges](#)

Sunday, 16 October

PAVARANA DAY *Buddhist*

The last day of the Rains Retreat (the *Vassa*) is known as *Pavarana* Day or 'Leaving the *Vassa*'. *Pavarana* means 'to invite' and on this day monks who have completed the Retreat invite their fellows to admonish them for any failings. It is also known as '*Sangha* Day'.

a) pp 42-43, 49-50, 52; b) p 29, 32, 33.

More information at ...

1. [Buddhapadipa Temple: Pavarana Day](#)
2. [Buddha Space: Pavarana Day and 'Buddha Space'](#)
3. [Buddhamind - Festivals: Pavarana](#)
4. [Pavarana Day in Pictures](#)
5. [Little Bang Word Press: Pavarana Day](#)

October 2016

Monday, 17 October – Monday, 24 October

SUKKOT Jewish

An eight day harvest festival also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, which commemorates the 40 years that the Jews spent in the wilderness on the way from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. A temporary hut or booth – called a *sukkah* – is used during this time for eating meals and for visits and socialising. In hot countries families may live in their *sukkah* during the festival. The roof, which has to be open in part to the elements, is covered with branches and decorated with fruit. Four species of plant, the *lulav* (palm branch), the *etrog* (a yellow citrus fruit), the *hadas* (myrtle) and the *aravah* (willow) are used at the festival. Leviticus 23:33-43.

a) pp 187-190; b) pp 90-91, 97-99, 109, vi.

NB The first two days (Oct 17, 18) and the last two days (Oct 23,24) are full festival days when, for Orthodox Jews, work is not permitted.

More information at ...

1. [Jewish Virtual Library - Sukkot](#)
2. [Reform Judaism: Sukkot - Feast of Booths](#)
3. [A Succot Story for Children](#)
4. [Sukkot in Pictures and Photos](#)
5. [Jewfaq: Sukkot](#)

Thursday, 20 October

CONFERRING OF GURUSHIP ON THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB BY GURU GOBIND SINGH 1708 CE Sikh

In 1708, shortly before his death, Guru Gobind Singh (the Sikhs' tenth Guru) declared that, instead of having another human Guru, from now on Sikhs would regard the scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, as Guru.

a) p 244; b) p 126.

More information at ...

1. [Sikh Wiki: Guru Maneo Granth \(Consider the Granth to be the Guru\)](#)
2. [Sikh Missionary Society: Sikhism-Takhts-Sri Hazoor Sahib](#)
3. [Sri-Guru Granth Sahib - Holy Book](#)
4. [Images of Conferring of Guruship on the Guru Granth Sahib](#)
5. [Structure of the Guru Granth Sahib](#)

Tuesday, 25 October

SIMCHAT TORAH Jewish

This festival, whose name means 'Rejoicing in the *Torah*', marks the completion of the annual cycle of reading from the *Torah*. As the reading of the *Torah* in the synagogue should be continuous, a second scroll is begun again as soon as the final portion of the *Torah* has been read from the first scroll; so, the reading from Deuteronomy ends, and soon after, so that there is no break, Genesis begins - the *Torah* is a circle that never ends. All the *Torah* scrolls are paraded around the synagogue, with children dancing and singing, as do several of the adults, giving as many people as possible the honour of carrying a *Torah* scroll. Most progressive Jews celebrate this one day earlier, combining it with the eighth day of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret.

a) pp 191-193; b) pp 99-100, 109, vi.

More information at ...

1. [About Judaism: Simchat Torah](#)
2. [Jewfaq: Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah](#)
3. [Simchat Torah - Activities for Kids](#)
4. [Simchat Torah: Arts and Crafts](#)
5. [Huffington Post: Simchat Torah: Dates, Dances, Customs, Shemini Atzeret Explained](#)

October 2016

Sunday, 30 October

DIVALI / DEEPAVALI Hindu

For Hindus this is a New Year festival lasting from one to five days, during which lights are hung out and fireworks are exploded. It is a festival of light, coinciding with the darkest night of the lunar month. Various interpretations are given to the festival in different parts of India, but it is generally associated with Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity, or with the victorious return of Rama and Sita to the kingdom of Ayodhya after their exile. For many Hindu business people Divali marks the beginning of a new financial year.

a) pp 134-136; b) pp 63, 73-75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Diwali - Festival of Lights - Light Up Your Life!](#)
2. [Diwali - The festival of lights](#)
3. [Primary Homework Help: Diwali](#)
4. [Diwali, the Festival of Lights - in Pictures](#)
5. [Nalis: The Origins of Diwali](#)

Sunday, 30 October

DIVALI / DEEPAVALI Jain

Diwali has a special significance for Jains, as on this day in 527 BCE Mahavira gave his last teachings and attained ultimate liberation. Today lamps are lit and children are given sweets by their parents. Some devout Jains fast for the two days of Divali, following the example of Mahavira. Jain business people traditionally start their accounting year from Divali.

More information at ...

1. <http://www.jainuniversity.org/diwali.aspx>
2. [Jain Samaj: Jainism - Significance of Diwali in Jain Dharma](#)
3. [Huffington Post: A Jain Perspective on Diwali](#)
4. [Jain University: Diwali](#)
5. [Jain Diwali in pictures](#)
6. [Jagran Post: Special way of celebrating Diwali by Jains](#)

Sunday, 30 October

DIVALI / BANDHI CHHOR DIVAS Sikh

Sikhs also celebrate Divali since Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, was released from Gwalior prison on this day. The Guru refused to accept release when it was offered him by the Emperor Jehangir unless 52 imprisoned Hindu princes were also given their freedom. To meet the Emperor's condition that only those who could hold on to his cloak could leave the prison, the Guru had a coat with long tassels made. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is illuminated at this time and firework displays take place there. It is a time for new clothes, presents and sweets.

a) pp 237-239; b) pp 125-126, vii.

More information at ...

1. [Sikh Net: Bandi Chhor Divas](#)
2. [Sikh Dharma: Bandi Chhor Divas](#)
3. [Sikh Guru: Divali/Bandi Chhor Divas \(Prisoner Release Day\)](#)
4. [Storyboard of Sikh Divali](#)
5. [The Huffington Post: Bandi Chhor Divas](#)

October 2016

Monday, 31 October

SAMHAIN (pronounced Sow-in) *Wiccan Pagan*

SAMHUINN *Druid*

The wheel of the year is seen to begin at Samhain. This is the Celtic New Year, when the veil between the worlds of life and death stands open. Samhain is the festival of death when Pagans remember and honour those who have gone before. Fires are lit and 'dead wood' is burned before stepping into the darkness of winter. Pagans celebrate death as part of life. This is not a time of fear, but a time to understand more deeply that life and death are part of a sacred whole.

More information at ...

1. [The White Goddess: The Wheel of the Year/Samhain](#)
2. [About Paganism/Wicca: Samhain History](#)
3. [Wicca - The Celtic Connection: Samhain](#)
4. [A Collection of Samhain Poetry](#)
5. [Inventors: The History of Halloween or Samhain](#)

Monday, 31 October

HALLOWEEN

WINTER NIGHTS *Heathen*

Halloween is a holiday celebrated on the night of October 31. The word Halloween is a shortening of All Hallows Evening, also known as Hallowe'en or All Hallows' Eve. Traditional activities include trick-or-treating, bonfires, costume parties, visiting 'haunted houses', and carving jack-o-lanterns. Irish and Scottish immigrants carried versions of the tradition to North America in the nineteenth century. Other western countries embraced the holiday in the late twentieth century including Ireland, the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom as well as of Australia and New Zealand.

More information at ...

1. [Halloween History](#)
2. [Time and Date: Halloween in the United States](#)
3. [British Council/Learn British Kids: Halloween](#)
4. [Winter Nights Festival: About Vetrnaetr](#)
5. [Wyrddwords/Vispa: Winter Nights](#)

November 2016

Tuesday, 1 November

ALL SAINTS' DAY (All Hallows', originally All Martyrs') *Christian (Western Churches)*
(The Catholic Church in England and Wales moves this festival to the nearest Sunday if it falls on a Saturday or a Monday.)

This day provides a chance to offer thanks for the work and witness of all Christian saints, recognising that not all are known or specially celebrated. Many churches stress this day rather than Hallowe'en, which falls the day before, by holding events especially designed for children.

a) pp 99-100; b) pp 48-49, 53-54, 57.

More information at ...

[Women for Faith and Family: Prayers and Devotions - All Saints](#)

[Holiday Insights: All Saints Day](#)

[About Catholicism: All Saints Day](#)

[Church Year: The Solemnity of All Saints Day](#)

[Spanish fiestas - All Saints Day](#)

Tuesday, 1 November

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE BAB *Baha'i*

The *Bab* (the title means 'the Gate') was born in Shiraz, Persia in 1819. He was the prophet-herald of the Baha'i community and called people to religious renewal and to await the coming of a new messenger from God - 'the one whom God shall make manifest'. Baha'is believe that this latter figure was Baha'u'llah (the title means 'Glory of God'). Baha'is observe this holy day by abstaining from work. Their gatherings normally involve prayers, devotional readings, music and fellowship.

a) p 26; b) pp 19-20.

More information at ...

1. [Tacoma Baha'i: The Anniversary of the Birth of the Bab - October 20th](#)

2. [Baha'i Blog: The Life of the Bab](#)

3. [Suggested Devotional Program for the Birth of the Bab](#)

4. [Susan Gammage: The Birth of the Bab - Holy Day Programme](#)

5. [Bella Online - The Voice of Women: Birth of the Bab](#)

Wednesday, 2 November

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BAHU'ULLAH *Baha'i*

Founder of the Baha'i faith, he was born the eldest son of a Persian nobleman in Tehran, Persia, in 1817.

a) pp 26, 166; b) pp 19-21.

More information at ...

1. <http://birth-of-baha-u-llah.123holiday.net/> Wikipedia - Birth of Baha'u'llah

2. [123 Holiday: Birth of Baha'u'llah](#)

3. [Baha'i Invitation: Birth of Baha'u'llah - The Lord of the Age - Who is Baha'u'llah?](#)

4. [Bahauallah.org: The Life of Baha'u'llah - A photographic narrative](#)

5. [Baha'i Blog: The Birth of Baha'u'llah and the Spirit of the Age](#)

Wednesday, 2 November

ALL SOULS' DAY *Christian*

On this day in particular the departed are remembered and prayers on their behalf are offered. From earliest times Christians have prayed for the souls of the dead. In the year 998, All Souls, 'the faithful departed', began to be remembered in the Church calendar on this day.

More information at ...

[BBC Religions: All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day](#)

[About Catholicism: All Souls Day](#)

[All Souls Day](#)

[Fisheaters: All Souls Day](#)

[This is Ecuador: All Souls Day in Ecuador](#)

<http://bahai-invitation.com/feast/fhd09.html>

November 2016

Wednesday, 2 November

ANNIVERSARY OF THE CROWNING OF HAILE SELASSIE I *Rastafarian*

One of the holiest days of the Rastafarian year, it celebrates Haile Selassie's accession to the Ethiopian throne.

More information at ...

1. [The Dread Library: Crowning of Haile Selassie I](#)
2. [Rasta Ites: The Coronation of His Imperial Majesty Qadamawie Emperor Haile Selassie I](#)
3. [BBC: Religions/Rastafari/Beliefs/Haile Selassie](#)
4. [Photos of the Coronation of Haile Selassie I](#)
5. [A Celebration of Women: 84th Anniversary of the Crowning of Haile Selassie](#)

Sunday, 13 November

REMEMBRANCE DAY *National*

The Sunday nearest to Armistice Day, devoted to remembering the dead of the two World wars and subsequent wars.

More information at ...

1. [History Extra: In focus - Remembrance Day Traditions](#)
2. [The Guardian: Remembrance Sunday - call for Church of England to ditch Cenotaph role](#)
3. [The Story behind the Remembrance Poppy](#)
4. [Poppies at the Tower of London](#)
5. [The War Poetry Web: Poems for Remembrance Day and Peace Events](#)

Monday, 14 November

ANAPANASATI DAY *Buddhist*

This is the last day on which the *Kathina* may be held. On the final day of the three months long Rains Retreat, or at some time during the month that follows it, it is observed by monks in the Theravada tradition. Cloth is presented to the *Sangha* by members of the lay Buddhist community, and this is then transformed into a *Kathina* robe, made up by sewing patches of cloth together. This is then presented by the monks present to one particular monk, often an especially deserving or virtuous one, in a special ceremony conducted by four of his colleagues. The laity are able to gain merit for themselves by watching the ceremony.

a) pp 43, 48-50, 52; b) pp 29, 31-33, 37, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing](#)
2. [Kathina Ceremony: Historical and Spiritual Significance](#)
3. [Vipassana Research Institute: Anapana for Children](#)
4. [Frequently Asked Questions about Anapanasati](#)
5. [Anapanasati - Mindfulness with Breathing In and Out](#)

Monday, 14 November

LOY KRATONG *Buddhist*

Loy Kratong is celebrated in most of the village and town temples in Thailand and often coincides with a temple's Kathina Day. Degradable baskets are made and filled with carefully folded banana leaves, incense sticks, a candle and sometimes a coin. These are then launched on rivers, canals ponds or the sea, while a wish for good fortune is offered to the spirits of the water. Eels and turtles are sometimes liberated into the water at this time. Thai Forest Temples in the UK do not observe Loy Kratong.

More information at ...

1. [Historical foundations of the festival of Loy Kratong](#)
2. [Loy Krathong in Contemporary Thailand](#)
3. [Thailand for Children - Loy Kratong](#)
4. [Loy Kratong and Yee Peng - baskets and lanterns that float away](#)
5. [Celebrating Loy Kratong in Bangkok](#)

November 2016

Monday, 14 November

BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK (1469 CE) *Sikh*

Although the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, was born in April 1469, his birth anniversary (one of Sikhs' most widely celebrated *gurpurbs*) is still generally celebrated on the full moon day of the lunar month of Kartik. As is the case with other *gurpurbs*, an *akhand path* (a complete, unbroken reading of the Guru Granth Sahib) commences two days earlier so that it ends on the morning of the festival. Sikhs gather at the gurdwara for hymn-singing (*kirtan*) and to hear *kathas* (homilies) and share the *langar* (free meal). The gurdwara may be illuminated and street processions may take place too.

a) pp 240-242, 244; b) pp 122-123, 126.

More information at ...

1. [Guru Nanak](#)
2. [Ten Interesting Facts about Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the Founder of Sikhism](#)
3. <http://www.indiatvnews.com/lifestyle/news/guru-nanak-dev-ji-facts-5681.html>
3. [SPCK - Assemblies Org UK: The birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji - A Sikh celebration](#)
4. [Guru Nanak Jayanti in Photos](#)
5. [Times of India: Guru Nanak Jayanti](#)

Tuesday, 15 November

SCHICHI-GO-SAN (Seven-Five-Three) *Japanese*

Girls of seven, boys of five and girls of three are dressed up in new clothes and taken to a Shinto shrine to pray for their future well-being.

a) p 166; b) p 87.

More information at ...

1. [Notes of Nomads: Shichi-go-san Festival, Japan](#)
2. [Go Japan Go: Shichi-Go-San](#)
3. [Kids Web Japan: Schichi-go-san](#)
4. [Zooming Japan: Schichi-go-san - 7-5-3 Day on November 15th](#)
5. [Traditions and customs: Schichi-go-san](#)

Thursday, 24 November

MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1675) *Sikh*

As ordered by the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, the ninth Guru was beheaded (in Sis Ganj, near Chandi Chowk in Old Delhi) for upholding Kashmiri Brahmins' refusal to convert to Islam. These Hindus had turned to him for help and he had told them to inform Aurangzeb that they would convert if the Guru converted. Guru Tegh Bahadur is honoured for sacrificing his head (*sir*) rather than his faith (*sis*) for the religious freedom of those of a different religious persuasion from himself.

a) pp 240-242, 244; b) pp 124, 126.

More information at ...

1. [Sikh Missionary Society: The Supreme Sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur](#)
2. [Sikh History: Guru Tegh Bahadur ji \(1621 - 1675\)](#)
3. [Ten Quotes of Guru Tegh Bahadur](#)
4. [Guru Tegh Bahadur Shabads](#)
5. [Patshahi 10: Who killed Guru Tegh Bahadur?](#)

Sunday, 27 November

ADVENT SUNDAY *Christian (Western Churches)*

The start of the Christian year, four Sundays before Christmas. It is often celebrated by lighting the first candle in the advent crown – a circular wreath of greenery. A further three candles are lit on subsequent Sundays, culminating with the Christmas candle on the 25th December. This signifies the transition from darkness to light, the light of Christ coming into the world.

a) pp 82-83; b) pp 48-49, 59, 66, 77, 142.

More information at ...

- [Woodlands Junior School: Advent](#)
- [Living Hope: The meaning of the Advent Wreath](#)
- [Why Christmas: The Tradition of Advent](#)
- [Eric Huntsman - The Advent theme of joy](#)
- [Ken Collins - Holydays – The Season of Advent](#)

November 2016

Wednesday, 30 November

ST ANDREW'S DAY *National*

Andrew, the apostle, was brother of St Peter, and the first disciple to follow Jesus. He was crucified at Patras in Greece and has been patron saint of Scotland since the 8th century. In the Anglican communion he is associated with missionary activity.

a) *p 100*; b) *pp 57, 59*.

More information at ...

1. [Time and Date: St Andrew's Day in the UK](#)
2. [Catholic Culture: November 30th - Feast of St. Andrew, apostle](#)
3. [Activity Village - St Andrew's Day](#)
4. [British Library: Medieval manuscripts blog - Happy St Andrew's Day](#)
5. [The Scotsman: St Andrew's Day - History, Date and Traditions](#)

December 2016

Thursday, 8 December

BODHI DAY *Buddhist*

Buddhists around the world celebrate Gautama's attainment of Enlightenment on this day under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, in Northern India. Many consider this to be the most sacred of holy places as the birth place of their tradition. Bodhi Day is celebrated in many mainstream Mahayana traditions including Zen and in Pureland Buddhist schools in China, Japan and Korea. Buddhists commemorate this day by meditating, studying the Dharma, chanting *sutras* (Buddhist texts) and performing kind acts toward other beings. Some celebrate by a traditional meal of tea, cakes and readings.

a) pp 45-47, 49-50, 54; b) pp 30, 32-35, 33.

More information at ...

1. [How to Celebrate Bodhi Day](#)
2. [Belief.net: Beginners Heart - Happy Bodhi Day](#)
3. [Family Dharma Connection: Happy Bodhi Day](#)
4. [Decorate your Bodhi Tree](#)
5. [Examiner: Bodhi Day - What it is and how to observe it](#)

Thursday, 8 December

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY *Christian (Roman Catholic)*

Celebrates the doctrine held mainly by Roman Catholics that Mary herself was born free from Original Sin, leaving her sinless for the conception and bearing of Jesus.

a) p 96; b) pp 49, 54-55.

More information at ...

[Catholic Answers: The Immaculate Conception and the Assumption](#)

[BBC Religions: The Immaculate Conception](#)

[About Catholicism: What is the Immaculate Conception?](#)

[Mary's Immaculate Conception](#)

[New Advent: Immaculate Conception](#)

Saturday, 10 December

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY *National*

In 1948 The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'All human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms.'

More information at ...

1. [United Nations Human Rights: What are human rights?](#)
2. [OHCHR: United Nations/Human Rights](#)
3. [NRCAT - Torture is a Moral Issue: Sign the Statement](#)
4. [Images for Human Rights Day](#)
5. [Quotes about Human Rights](#)

December 2016

Monday, 12 December

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY / MILAD UN NABI (12th Rabi'ul-Awwal) Muslim (Sunni)

Saturday, 17 December

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY / MILAD UN NABI (17th Rabi'ul-Awwal) Muslim (Shi'a)

Observed by Sunni Muslims on 12th Rabi' Al-Awwal, and by the majority of Shi'a Muslims five days later on 17th Rabi' Al-Awwal - (though Nizari Ismaili Shi'a Muslims who are followers of the Aga Khan celebrate this on the same date as Sunnis, whereas Dawoodi Bohra Ismailis celebrate at the same time as other Shi'a).

The day is widely celebrated within the Muslim world and is a public holiday in a number of Muslim countries. In the sub-continent of India and certain Arab countries like Egypt, the celebration starts with reading from the Qur'an, followed by poetry and songs in praise of the Prophet. There are also lectures and story telling. In some big cities of the Muslim world the day is marked with processions and flag waving under a huge decoration of lights. In the UK many Muslims celebrate at the mosque, but some refuse to observe the Prophet's birthday, claiming it is a non-Islamic innovation introduced more than 600 years after the life of the Prophet. Tradition is not clear as to the exact date of the Prophet's birth.

a) pp 230-231; b) pp 119-120.

More information at ...

1. [Islamic Supreme Council - Mawlid un Nabi](#)
2. [Celebrating Mawlid un Nabi - any proof?](#)
3. [BBC Milad un Nabi](#)
4. [Mawlid al Nabi - through festival cards](#)
5. [Milad un Nabi - Legal and Religious Status](#)

Wednesday, 21 December

YULE (archaic form Geola, pronounced Yula) Wiccan Pagan

WINTER SOLSTICE (Alban Arthan or Alban Arthuan) Druid

Yule is the time of the winter solstice, when the sun is reborn, an image of the return of all new life. Heathens celebrate Yule for twelve nights and days, starting the evening before the Winter Solstice (called Mother's night) when they think of their female ancestors and spiritual protectors. The night heralds the beginning of the major holiday in Heathenry.

More information at ...

1.

http://www.witchvox.com/va/dt_va.html?a=usxx&c=holidays&sc=yule&id=1900Wicca: [The Winter Solstice - The Yule Log](#)

2. [Pagan/Wiccan: All About Yule](#)
3. [Why Christmas: Customs - The History of the Yule Log](#)
4. [Images for Yule Cards](#)
5. [You Call it Christmas, We Call it Yule](#)

Saturday, 24 December

CHRISTMAS EVE *Christian*

Evening carol services, crib services and Midnight Masses inaugurate the festival of Christmas. Santa Claus (from the Dutch *Sinter Klaus*) is a legendary figure, based on St Nicholas of Myra, and is supposed to bring presents to children on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

a) pp 83-84; b) p 50.

More information at ...

[BBC Religion: The Story of Christmas](#)

[Woodlands Junior School: Christmas Eve Traditions](#)

[Fish Eaters: Christmas Eve and Christmas Day](#)

[Cozi: 50 Holiday Traditions for Christmas](#)

[Why Christmas: Christmas Eve Traditions and Customs](#)

December 2016

Sunday, 25 December

CHRISTMAS DAY *Christian (see also 6/7 January 2017)*

Christmas Day Celebrates the birth of Jesus, whom Christians believe to be the son of God. The words of St John's Gospel (Chapter 1:1-18) are read in many churches at this time; these speak of 'the Word made flesh', pointing to Christian belief in the Incarnation (God 'made flesh', or human). Gifts are given as reminders of the offerings brought to the infant Jesus at Bethlehem, and Christmas carols, plays and evergreens are associated with this time, while nativity sets are displayed in many churches and in some homes.

Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-7.

a) pp 83-85; b) pp 12-13, 16, 38, 46-51, 58, 81, 136, 141-143, iv.

More information at ...

[CBN: The Real Meaning of Christmas](#)

[Calendar Updates: Christmas Day](#)

[Office Holidays: Christmas Day](#)

[Anno Mundi: The True Meaning of Christmas](#)

[The Huffington Post: The True Meaning of Christmas](#)

Sunday, 25 December – Sunday, 1 January

HANUKAH *Jewish*

Hanukah is the Jewish Festival of Lights, which celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was recaptured from the Syrian Greeks by the Maccabee brothers in about 162 BCE. For the eight evenings of the festival, candles are lit from right to left in a *hanukkiyah*, a nine-branched *menorah* – one candle for each evening. The ninth candle is the *shamash* (the servant candle) from which the other candles are lit. Foods cooked with oil – such as doughnuts and *latkes* (potato cakes) – are traditional to remember the miracle with oil that kept the Temple lights burning so many years ago. A game of *dreidel*, a special small spinning top, is popular with children to commemorate 'the great miracle that happened there/here'.

a) pp 201-205; b) pp 90-91, 104-106, 109, 143-144.

More information at ...

1. [About Judaism: What is Hanukkah?](#)

2. [Images for Hanukah](#)

3. [TorahTots – Fun games: Hanukah](#)

4. [History of Hanukah](#)

5. [Jewfaq: Chanukkah](#)

Monday, 26 December *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

Tuesday, 24 May *Zoroastrian (Parsi)*

ZARATOSHT NO DISO

Zartosht no diso is the death anniversary of Prophet Zarathushtra and is a sorrowful occasion. Tradition records that he was assassinated at the age of 77. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple, participate in special remembrance prayers (to him and to the *Fravashis*, the guardian spirits of departed ancestors), and ponder upon the *Gathas* or Hymns of Zarathushtra, which embody his eternal message to humanity.

a) p 255; b) p 131

More information at ...

1. [Zartosht no Diso - a History](#)

2. [I Love India: Festivals/Zartosht-no-diso Celebrations](#)

3. [Crystal Links: Zoroaster and Death](#)

4. [The Parsee Society: Images for Zartosht no diso](#)

5. <http://www.pza.org.sg/Zarathustra/Life of Zarathustra.htm>
[Zarathustra.com: The Life and Death of Zarathustra](#)

December 2016

Saturday, 31 December

OMISOKA *Japanese*

Japanese festival which prepares for the new year by cleansing Shinto home shrines and Buddhist altars. The bells of Buddhist temples are struck 108 times to warn against the 108 evils to be overcome.

a) p 168; b) pp 88, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Kidzworld: Omisoka - Japanese New Year](#)
2. [NIC: Omisoka - Japan New Year's Eve and Shogatsu - New Year's Holidays](#)
3. [Japan - Kidsweb: Omisoka - Ushering in the New Year](#)
4. [Zooming Japan; Omisoka - Japanese New Year's Eve](#)
5. [Bella Online: Japanese Festivals - Omisoka - New Year's Eve](#)

Saturday, 31 December

HOGMANAY *National*

A celebration widely observed throughout the UK, and especially in Scotland where bagpipes, *haggis* and first footing are widespread. Clearing one's debts, cleaning the house, welcoming guests and strangers and a host of other traditions feature at this time.

More information at ...

1. [BBC News: Hogmanay celebrations: Scotland brings in the new year](#)
2. [Rampant Scotland - Hogmanay](#)
3. [Hogmanay-top-facts](#)
4. [British Food and Drink: Hogmanay](#)
5. <http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/hogmany.html>History of New-years

7. CALENDAR OF DATES AND DESCRIPTIONS

2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017

January 2017

Here is the first of twelve people, one chosen for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

January

Ibn Sina / Avicenna

980 – 1037 CE

The first of the twelve 'people of belief' is from southern Russia and lived there a thousand years ago. He was fascinated by musical tones, scales and instruments; even more by bone structures and fractures, different medical conditions including cancer, modes of contraception and avoidance of infection. He wrote extensively on all of these, as on theology, geology, psychology and philosophy – well over a hundred books in all. He was a Muslim who went by the name of *Ibn Sina*, but he is usually called *Avicenna* by European scholars. He lived from 980 – 1037.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/bone-fractures-ibn-sinas-medicine>

<http://www.strangescience.net/ibnsina.htm>

http://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_avicenna.html

<http://www.1001inventions.com/ibnsina>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00855lt>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GvzOqKPqVc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-rqvSWsISw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URoVqCLB8-Y>

Sunday, 1 January

NEW YEAR'S DAY / HOGMANAY *National*

A day widely observed throughout the UK, as is New Year's Eve the preceding night, and especially in Scotland where bagpipes, *haggis* and first footing are widespread. It is customary to make New Year's Resolutions at this time.

More information at ...

1. [BBC News: Hogmanay celebrations: Scotland brings in the new year](#)
2. [Rampant Scotland - Hogmanay](#)
3. [Hogmanay-top-facts](#)
4. [British Food and Drink: Hogmanay](#)
5. <http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/hogmany.html> History of New-years

Sunday, 1 January – Tuesday, 3 January

GANJITSU *Japanese*

New Year's Day celebrations in Japan are sometimes extended for up to three days, during which businesses are closed, families spend time together, decorations are put up and the first visit of the year is paid to local Shinto shrines.

a) p 153-154; b) pp 82-83.

More information at ...

1. [Guide to Japan – New Year - Ganjitsu](#)
2. [Asian Society: Japanese New Year](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Ganjitsu](#)
4. [Japanese New Year has arrived - its Ganjitsu](#)
5. [Ganjitsu: Japanese New Year](#)
6. <http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/japan/index-setsibun.htm>

January 2017

Friday, 1 January

THE NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS *Christian*

This day celebrates the circumcision or naming of Jesus at eight days old in accordance with Jewish custom, as recorded in Luke 2:21.

More information at ...

[Mythic Maps: The Circumcision and Naming of Jesus](#)

[Godward Archives: The Man who circumcised Jesus](#)

[Thinking Anglicans](#)

[Circumstitions](#)

[Orthodox wiki Circumcision of our Lord](#)

Thursday, 5 January

BIRTHDAY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH (1666 CE) *Sikh*

This is celebrated as the Birth Anniversary of the tenth Guru, who instituted the Five Ks and established the Order of the *Khalsa* on Vaisakhi (Baisakhi). Like other anniversaries associated with the lives of the Gurus, the day is referred to as a *Gurpurb*, and is marked by the ending of an *akhand path*, an unbroken reading of the whole Guru Granth Sahib, which lasts for 48 hours.

a) pp 240-242, 244; b) pp 123, 126.

More information at ...

1. [Global World: Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh](#)

2. [Time and Date Holidays: Guru Govind Singh](#)

3. [Guru Gobind Singh Ji 1606-1708](#)

4. [Guru Govind Singh in Images and Cards](#)

5. [Sikh Dharma: Guru Gobind Singh's Birth](#)

Friday, 6 January

EPIPHANY *Christian*

This is the twelfth day of Christmas. It celebrates the visit of the *magi* or wise men to the infant Jesus, bearing symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Some Mediterranean Catholic countries welcome the 'magic wise men' who arrive by boat, bearing gifts for children. In the Church calendar the Epiphany season lasts until the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Roman Catholics celebrate this day on Sunday, 3 January. Matthew 21:1-12.

a) pp 79, 86; b) pp 48-51, 59.

More information at ...

[Topmarks Education - Epiphany](#)

[Time and Date: Epiphany](#)

[What is Epiphany ?](#)

[BBC Epiphany](#)

[Royal Events - Epiphany](#)

Friday, 6 January

THEOPHANY / BAPTISM OF CHRIST *Christian (Roman Catholics observe the 'Baptism of the Lord' on 9 January; Orthodox Churches on Julian date: 19 January)*

Christians commemorate the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist; they recall how at this event the heavens were opened and a voice was heard proclaiming Jesus, while God's spirit descended on him in the form of a dove. During this event God was manifest as three persons in one – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 'Theophany' means 'Manifestation of God'. The first miracle of Jesus, performed at Cana in Galilee, is also remembered at this time.

More information at ...

[Greek Orthodox USA - Epiphany](#)

[Time and Date: Epiphany](#)

[The Baptism of Jesus](#)

[Theopedia - The Baptism of Jesus](#)

[Where was Jesus Baptised?](#)

January 2017

Friday, 6 January / Saturday, 7 January

CHRISTMAS EVE AND DAY *Christian (Eastern Orthodox/Armenian: Julian calendar); Rastafarian*

Many Eastern Orthodox and Armenian churches, and certain others related to them, including the Rastafarian communities, still use the Julian, rather than the Gregorian Calendar which is currently used by Western Christians. Accordingly they celebrate Christmas and certain other festivals thirteen days after the Western churches, so that the 6th and 7th of January in the Orthodox calendar equate to the 24th and 25th December in the Western one.

More information at ...

1. [RastaMind - Merry Reggae Christmas](#)
2. [The Rastafarian Perception of Christmas](#)
3. [Rastafari - An Introduction for Beginners](#)
4. <http://www.acobas.net/teaching/activities/rastafari/rastawebquest/beliefs.html>
5. [Rastarian Christmas in Pictures](#)
6. [Beliefs, Practices and Sacraments of Rastafari](#)

Thursday, 12 January

BIRTHDAY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA *Hindu*

Born Narendra Nath Datta in 1902 in Calcutta, he was an Indian Hindu monk who became the chief disciple of the 19th century saint Ramakrishna. Vivekananda, as he became known, was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world and helped to develop Hinduism during the latter part of the 19th century to the stage where it held the status of a major world religion. He pioneered the development of the Ramakrishna Mission and the creation of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre movement first in India and then throughout the world, travelling widely and emphasising the devotional and social aspects of the teaching and practice of his beloved Guru, Ramakrishna.

More information at ...

1. [Swami Vivekananda: Life and Teachings](#)
2. [Vedanta Centre UK](#)
3. [Vivekananda and the Vedanta Network](#)
4. [50 Inspiring and Motivational Quotes from Swami Vivekananda](#)
5. [Vedanta philosophy](#)

Wednesday, 13 January

MAKAR SANKRANTI / PONGAL / LOHRI *Hindu BASANT Sikh*

Sankranti (Sangrand in Punjabi) is the start of a new zodiac sign i.e. the date is based on the solar rather than the lunar calendar. Tamils celebrate Pongal and eat a rice dish which gives the festival its name. For many Hindus it is a day for almsgiving and patching up quarrels and disagreements. Punjabis (including some Sikhs) celebrate the day as Lohri. Fires are lit outside and peanuts and sesame sweets are eaten round them. The traditional Punjabi meal consists of cornmeal chapatis and a mustard leaf dish. If a baby boy has been born during the previous year he is carried around the fire.

a) p 113; b) pp 63-64, 75.

More information at ...

1. [Hindu Festivals - Makar Sankranti](#)
2. [About Hinduism: Festivals/Lohri](#)
3. [SCFI - Lohri](#)
4. [Greetings Cards - Makar Sankranti](#)
5. [Makar Sankranti: Reaping the Benefits of the Season](#)

January 2017

Sunday, 15 January

WORLD RELIGION DAY *Baha'i and other faiths*

This day promotes interfaith understanding by emphasizing factors common to all faiths. It was first introduced among Baha'i communities in the 1950s, and is now celebrated by a wider spread of communities, including the Baha'i, on the third Sunday of January.

More information at ...

1. [Time and Date - World Religion Day](#)
2. [Blog: World Religion Day](#)
3. [http://townshipofbrock.ca/8th-annual-durham-region-world-religion-day-january-19th-2014/Holiday Lessons for Children for World Religion Day](http://townshipofbrock.ca/8th-annual-durham-region-world-religion-day-january-19th-2014/Holiday-Lessons-for-Children-for-World-Religion-Day)
4. [Images for World Religions Day](#)
5. [Huffington Post – Baha'i World Religion Day](#)

Monday, 16 January

SHINRAN MEMORIAL DAY *Buddhist*

Shinran Shonin (1173-1262) was the founder of Jodo Shin-shu (or Shin Buddhism), one of the schools of Pure Land Buddhism. It is celebrated by some Mahayana Buddhists

More information at ...

1. [Shinran Shonin - Buddhist Reformer](#)
2. [Shinran - Trailblazing Founder of Jodo Shinshu](#)
3. [Three Letters of Master Shinran's Wife, Eshinni, to their Daughter, Kakushinni](#)
4. [Notes on the wasan of Shinran](#)
5. [Shinran - a peaceful Buddhist thinker - by George Gatenby](#)

Wednesday 18 January – Wednesday, 25 January

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY *Christian*

This week was first set aside in 1908. The theme for 2017 is: 'Reconciliation – the love of Christ complets us'. Each year the growing commitment to ecumenism has increased the impact and the impetus of the week: special services are held, and dialogue on unity is encouraged; some worshippers attend united services, while others may visit each other's churches or invite preachers from denominations different from their own. The Week runs from the Confession of Peter (Jan 18) to the Conversion of Paul (Jan 25).

More information at ...

- [CTBI: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#)
- [World Council of Churches - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#)
- [Canadian Council of Churches - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#)
- [Praying for Christian Unity](#)
- [A Selection of Thematic Music for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#)

Thursday, 19 January (according to the Julian calendar)

THEOPHANY / BAPTISM OF CHRIST *Christian (Eastern Orthodox)*

At Theophany Orthodox Christians commemorate the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist; they recall how at this event the heavens were opened and a voice was heard proclaiming Jesus, while God's spirit descended on him in the form of a dove. During this event God was manifest as three persons in one – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 'Theophany' means 'Manifestation of God'. The first miracle of Jesus, performed at Cana in Galilee, is also remembered at this time.

More information at ...

- [Theophany in the Orthodox Church](#)
- [Orthodox Christians celebrate the Epiphany in cold water](#)
- [Orthodox Epiphany in the River Jordan](#)
- [The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan](#)
- [Coptic celebration of Theophany](#)

January 2017

Wednesday, 25 January

HONEN MEMORIAL DAY *Buddhist*

Honen (1133-1212 CE) is one of the outstanding figures in the history of Japanese Buddhism, and was the founder of Jodo Shinshu, one of the schools of Pure Land Buddhism.

More information at ...

1. [Mythic Maps - Honen Memorial Day](#)
2. <http://www.vbtemple.org/What and Where is the Pure Land?>
3. [Kyoto National Museum: The Illustrated Biography of Priest Honen](#)
4. [Honen and the Chion-in](#)
5. [New World Encyclopedia entry for Honen](#)

Friday, 27 January

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY *National*

This is a remembrance day for all the different categories of people who suffered at the hands of the Nazis during the second World War (1939-45) and in other genocides in different parts of the world. It aims to keep fresh in the mind the memory of all those who suffered and died at any period, and to help ensure that no such atrocity happens again. The date was chosen as the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

1. [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust - Information and Resources](#)
2. [The Guardian: Holocaust Remembrance Day](#)
3. [11 Facts about the Holocaust](#)
4. [Holocaust Memorial Day - Remembering the Horror of Auschwitz](#)
5. [Huffington Post: International Holocaust Remembrance Day](#)

Saturday, 28 January

CHINESE NEW YEAR / SPRING FESTIVAL / CHUNJIE / YUAN TAN *Chinese*

New Year's Day is the most important event in the traditional Chinese calendar and marks the beginning of the first lunar month. The festival is colourfully celebrated with fireworks, dances (such as the famous Lion Dance) and the giving of gifts, flowers and sweets. Gold is a dominant colour to symbolise the wish for prosperity, and red is also much used as a lucky colour. Business accounts should be settled and all debts paid before the New Year begins. Celebrations can last three or more days. 2017, which is 4715 in Chinese culture, is the year of the **Rooster**.

a) pp 66-68; b) pp 40-41, 44, ii, iii.

More information at ...

1. [Lots to Learn about the Chinese New Year](#)
2. [Public Holidays – Chinese New Year](#)
3. [Information for Teachers on the Chinese New Year](#)
4. [Chinese Zodiac Signs and Animals](#)
5. [A Charming New Year](#)

Monday, 30 January

JASHN-E SADEH *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

Jashn-e Sadeh is a mid winter festival, celebrated 50 days and nights before the advent of the spring NoRuz, and signifies that the days are getting longer. On this day it is customary to pay visits to the Fire Temple to give thanks to the Creator God, to celebrate with a bonfire after sunset, to recite the *Atash Niyayeesh* or litany to fire, listen to stories of the legendary Iranians during the reign of King Hoshang, who discovered the art of making fire, share piping hot stew and bread, and enjoy the dancing and merry making.

a) pp 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Farsi: Jashn-e Sadeh - Festival of Fire](#)
2. [Farsinet: Jashn-e Sadeh](#)
3. [Discovery of Fire - and Jashn-e-Sadeh](#)
4. [Celebration of Jashn-e-Sadeh in Iran](#)
5. [An Introduction to Jashn-e Sadeh - Fire Festival](#)

February 2017

Here is the second of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

February Charles Darwin 1809 – 82

Darwin is one of the best known of British scientists, so much so that 12 February is today known as Darwin Day – the anniversary of his birth. His careful observations of nature continued throughout his life – spent chiefly in his native countryside but especially during the five years of his famous survey expedition on HMS Beagle in South America, the Galapagos Islands, New Zealand and Australia. He was fascinated by rocks and fossils, worms and bees, molluscs and birds, the entire natural world. This led him to believe in a process of gradual and continuous evolution over millions of years, rather than in a view of a fixed creation. He saw how much suffering is evident in that process as well as in his own family life, and throughout his life he never ceased to want to make sense of it all.

For more information, go to:
Biographical detail

http://www.aboutdarwin.com/darwin/darwin_01.html

[The main components of Darwin's story of human evolution](#)

www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/zq8gqcdm

His complete writings

<http://darwin-online.org.uk>

[On his being an agnostic](#)

<http://publicdomainreview.org/2011/06/28/was-charles-darwin-an-atheist> Omnibus site

including classroom activities

<http://darwin200.christs.cam.ac.uk>

Wednesday, 1 February

IMBOLC/CANDLEMAS Pagan

Imbolc, also called Oimelc and Candlemas, celebrates the awakening of the land and the growing power of the Sun. Snowdrops, which appear at this time of the year, are seen as the heralds of spring.

More information at...

1. [Chalice Centre - Imbolc](#)
2. [History of Imbolc](#)
3. [Imbolc - As the light lengthens, so the cold strengthens](#)
4. [Imbolc through images](#)
5. [Celtic Lore for Imbolc](#)

February 2017

Wednesday, 1 February

SARASWATI PUJA/ VASANT PANCHAMI Hindu

BASANT Sikh (Punjabi)

This festival marks the beginning of Spring, and is widely celebrated in north India. In eastern India, and notably in Bengal, Hindus worship especially Saraswati, the goddess of learning and the arts. Yellow is particularly associated with the festival and so *murtis* of Saraswati are dressed in yellow. Another (secular) tradition is kite-flying, associated especially with the city of Lahore.

a) p 116; b) 65, 72, 75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism - Saraswati Puja](#)
2. [Vasant Panchami - Saraswati Puja](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Vasant Panchami](#)
4. [Saraswati Puja in pictures](#)
5. [Huffington Post - Saraswati Puja](#)

Thursday, 2 February

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE / CANDLEMAS Christian (Anglican)

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD Christian (Roman Catholic)

This is often called **Candlemas** from the custom of congregations holding lighted candles during the celebration in church. It records the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and his recognition by the aged Simeon, expressed in the words of the *Nunc Dimittis*. The festival was formerly known as the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary – reflecting Mary's following of Jewish tradition after the birth of a son.

Luke 2:22-38.

a) p 102; b) pp 48-49, 58-59.

More information at ...

- [Presentation of the Lord in the Temple in pictures](#)
[Candlemas - The Presentation of the Lord - the Church Year](#)
[Project Britain - Candlemas Day](#)
[The book of days - Candlemas](#)
[Greek Orthodox views of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple](#)

Friday, 3 February

SETSUBUN/BEAN SCATTERING Japanese

The day for the Bean Scattering ceremony, performed both in homes and in temples.

a) p 156; b) pp 81, 83.

More information at ...

1. [How to throw beans at Setsubun](#)
2. [Setsubun: Bean Throwing Festival](#)
3. [Setsubun for Kids](#)
4. [Kyoto Guide: Setsubun and other annual events](#)
5. [Magazine Japan: Drive Away Evil Spirits with 'Setsubun'](#)

Wednesday, 8 February (or Wednesday, 15 February)

PARINIRVANA Buddhist

Mahayanists mark the final passing away from this world of Gautama Buddha at Kushinagara, India, at the age of 80. Pure Land Buddhists refer to it as *Nirvana* Day.

More information at ...

1. [BuddhaNet: Kusinara - Place of the Great Passing](#)
2. [About Buddhism - The Parinirvana of the Historical Buddha](#)
3. [Nirvana-Parinirvana-Enlightenment-Buddhahood](#)
4. [Images of the Parinirvana of the Buddha](#)
5. [MahaParinirvana and the Parinirvana of the Buddha](#)

February 2017

Saturday, 11 February

LANTERN FESTIVAL / YUANXIAOJIE / TENG CHIEH *Chinese*

This is the Lantern Festival which marks the first full moon of the year and the lengthening of the days. Strings of lanterns in various designs are hung out as decoration.

a) p 68; b) p 41.

More information at ...

1. [Chinese Fortune Calendar - Lantern Festival](#)
2. [China: English - Features - Festivals](#)
3. [Project Britain: Teng Chieh](#)
4. [Travel China Guide - Lantern Festival](#)
5. [Chinese New Year and Food for the Lantern Festival](#)

Saturday, 11 February

TU B 'SHEVAT *Jewish*

A popular minor festival which celebrates the New Year for trees. Jewish tradition marks the 15th of Shevat as the day when the sap in the trees begins to rise, heralding the beginning of spring. It is customary for Jews all over the world to plant young trees at this time and to eat fruit produced in Israel. For religious accounting purposes all trees have their anniversaries on this festival, regardless of when they were planted.

a) p 209; b) pp 108-109.

More information at ...

1. [Jewfaq - Holidays - Tu B'Shevat](#)
2. [Aish - Tu Bshvat - New Year for Trees](#)
3. [Tu B'Shevat for Tots](#)
4. [Images for Tu B'Shevat](#)
5. [My Jewish Learning -Tu B'ishvat](#)

Wednesday, 15 February (or Wednesday, 8 February)

PARINIRVANA *Buddhist*

Mahayanists mark the final passing away from this world of Gautama Buddha at Kushinagara, India, at the age of 80. Pure Land Buddhists refer to it as *Nirvana* Day.

More information at ...

1. [BuddhaNet: Kusinara - Place of the Great Passing](#)
2. [About Buddhism - The Parinirvana of the Historical Buddha](#)
3. [Nirvana-Parinirvana-Enlightenment-Buddhahood](#)
4. [Images of the Parinirvana of the Buddha](#)
5. [MahaParinirvana and the Parinirvana of the Buddha](#)

***Saturday/Sunday/Monday, 18/19/27 February**

LOSAR *Buddhist*

Tibetan New Year festival, but it is often celebrated in Nepal as well. Although largely a secular celebration, it also includes the rededication of the country to Buddhism. It especially celebrates the miracles performed by the historical Buddha at Sravasti, the capital city of the kingdom of Kosala.

More information at ...

1. [Homestay - Losar](#)
2. [Buddhist Holidays: Losar](#)
3. [The World's Best Festivals - Losar](#)
4. [Worldbridges Tibet: Losar](#)
5. [Losar - Tibetan New Year](#)

February 2017

Friday, 24 February

MAHASHIVRATRI (Great Shiva Night) *Hindu*

Every night of the new moon is dedicated to Shiva, but this one is particularly important. It is the night on which Shiva is said to perform the cosmic dance, leading from creation to destruction. Many Hindus fast at this time. All-night prayers focus on Shiva and his shrines and statues. Milk is poured on his symbol, the *lingam*.

a) pp 116-117; b) pp 65-66, 75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism - Mahashivratri](#)
2. [I Love India - Mahashivratri](#)
3. [BBC Religions - Hinduism: Mahashivratri](#)
4. [Images of Mahashivratri](#)
5. [Times of India - Mahashivratri](#)

Monday, 27 February

FIRST DAY OF LENT / THE GREAT FAST *Christian (Orthodox)*

This is the beginning of the Lenten Fast, which involves abstinence from meat, fish and dairy products until Easter.

Unlike the Western tradition, where Lent begins on the *Wednesday* before the first Sunday of Lent, Eastern Churches start Lent on the *Monday* before the first Sunday. In addition, since Lent is calculated in relation to Easter, it follows that when the Orthodox date for Easter differs from that of the Western Churches, the whole Lenten period will similarly differ.

a) p 80; b) pp 48, 51.

More information at ...

- [Antiochian - Fasting: Great Lent](#)
- [The Fasting Rule of the Orthodox Church](#)
- [The Great Lent - a Week by Week Meaning](#)
- [About Greek Food - Great Lent Food and Traditions](#)
- [Blog: Great Lent Gourmet](#)

Tuesday, 28 February

SHROVE TUESDAY (Pancake Day) *Christian (Western Churches)*

Commonly known as Pancake Day, this is the day before the start of Lent. Traditionally it is a day for repentance and absolution in preparation for Lent ('shrive' means to receive or make confession). Pancakes were originally made to use up all the rich foods, such as butter and eggs, before Lent. In some parts of the world people celebrate Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) by holding carnivals.

a) p 86; b) pp 51, 141.

More information at ...

- [Woodlands Junior School: Shrove Tuesday \(Pancake Day\)](#)
- [Topmarks: Shrove Tuesday](#)
- [Shrove Tuesday - a day for being shriven](#)
- [BBC Good Food - Pancake Day Recipes](#)
- [Time Out: Pancake Day in London](#)

March 2017

Here is the third of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

March Emily Kame Kngwarreye 1910 - 96

Every human life is remarkable - to the person who lives that life! Historically, most lives are soon forgotten. But much religious reflection focuses on remembering individuals and our remembrances of their contributions to our current world. (Westminster Abbey is a national family album - and so are our local war memorials!). But even religious traditions themselves are often largely overlooked. This is particularly true of the Aboriginal people of Australia (visited by Darwin on his journey and by many others). Their own centuries of memories of shared meanings of life and death have been recorded in stories and celebrations, drawings and bodily décor, but, as has happened with other indigenous people elsewhere, they have been pushed into near oblivion since the forced settlement of their land and its eventual conquest by power hungry Europeans.

Someone who has become known and appreciated well beyond her clan, but really only when she was nearly eighty years old, is Emily Kame Kngwarreye. She lived some 150 miles from Alice Springs in the Northern Territories of Australia, sensitive to changes in the seasons, to the challenges of growing food and to the significance of particular 'dreaming' sites for Anmatyerre identity. Drawing on this she began eight years of intensive art work, producing over 3,000 paintings, now treasured in galleries and exhibitions throughout the world.

For more information, go to:

Visual introduction <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/global-culture/global-art-architecture/a/kngwarreye-earths-creation>

Biography

<https://www.kateowengallery.com/artists/Emi200/Emily-Kame-Kngwarreye.htm>

Overview and chronology

http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/utopia_the_genius_of_emily_kame_kngwarreye/emily_kame_kngwarreye

<http://www.philtar.ac.uk/encyclopedia/westoc/abor.html>

Reflections of a western art critic

http://www.artcollector.net.au/Assets/427/1/2_kngwarreye.pdf

Close-up commentary on individual paintings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxU0uHi8H24>

The international context of Aboriginal painting

<http://vernissage.tv//2010/11/25/remembering-forward-australian-aboriginal-painting-since-1960-at-museum-ludwig-cologne>

Wednesday, 1 March

ST DAVID'S DAY *National*

Anniversary of the death of St David, the patron saint of Wales, who lived in the 6th century CE. As monk, abbot and bishop he helped to spread Christianity among the Celtic tribes of western Britain.

a) p 260; b) p 135.

More information at ...

1. [Time and Date - St David's Day](#)
2. [Museum Wales - St David's Day](#)
3. [Woodlands Junior School - St David's Day](#)
4. [St David's Day in pictures](#)
5. [St David's Cathedral](#)

March 2017

Wednesday, 1 March – 15 April

LENT Christian (Western Churches)

A period of forty days (not counting Sundays) that leads up to Easter. It is a time of fasting and discipline in preparation for Easter. Traditionally Christians give up something during this time to mark the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness, which end on Easter day. Many Christians still do this, but for some the emphasis is now more on following a simpler lifestyle throughout the year. Those who give something up save the cost of these items, perhaps in a box, for Church funds or for a charity. Many Christians feel it is a time for study groups, prayer and Bible reading.

Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22.

a) pp 86-87; b) pp 11, 13, 48-49, 51, 135, 141, 143.

More information at ...

[About Christianity: Lent](#)

[Project Britain - Lent](#)

[Ken Collins on The Season of Lent](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions about Lent](#)

[The True Meaning of Lent - the Restored Church of God](#)

Wednesday, 1 March

ASH WEDNESDAY Christian (Western Churches)

The first day of Lent when Christians remember the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness and the temptations he faced during this time. In Catholic and some Anglican churches, services are held where the worshipper's forehead is marked with a cross of ash, which has been made from burning the palm crosses of the previous year – hence the name Ash Wednesday.

Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13

a) p 87; b) pp 49, 51, 141, 144.

More information at ...

[BBC Religions: Ash Wednesday](#)

[Ash Wednesday in pictures](#)

[Catholic Culture - Ash Wednesday - Dictionary entry](#)

[The Lutheran History and Meaning of Ash Wednesday](#)

[Ash Wednesday in the Orthodox Church](#)

Friday, 3 March

HINAMATSURI / DOLLS' FESTIVAL / GIRLS' DAY Japanese

Clay dolls representing the Emperor and Empress, reminiscent of the ancient Heian court, are displayed in the home; and offerings of peach blossom, rice-wine and rice-cakes are placed before them, along with miniature multi-coloured sweetmeats. The dolls are intended to carry away any illness afflicting or threatening the daughters of the house. The day is widely celebrated by praying for daughters to grow up to be healthy and dutiful.

a) pp 158-9; p 84.

More information at ...

1. [Girls' Day Dolls](#)

2. [Japanese About - Hinamatsuri](#)

3. [web-japan: Hinamatsuri](#)

4. [Hinamatsuri in Pictures](#)

5. [Kyoto National Museum - All about Japanese Hina Dolls](#)

Friday, 3 March

THE WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER Christian

This international, interdenominational prayer movement was begun in 1887. The service material is produced by a different country each year. In 2017 the theme will be 'Am I being unfair to you?' and the material has been prepared by Christian women in the Philippines.

More information at ...

[Women's World Day of Prayer in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#)

[History of the Women's World Day of Prayer > History](#)

[World Day of Prayer: Scotland - Informed Prayer - Prayerful Action](#)

[Churches Together in England - Making Connections - Women's World Day of Prayer](#)

[Adventist Churches: International Women's Day of Prayer](#)

March 2017

Friday, 10 March

MAHAVIRA JAYANTI (599 BCE) Jain

Festival celebrating the birthday of the last *Tirthankara*, or great teacher and model for the Jains. The events surrounding his birth are re-enacted. If there are monks or nuns present, they will read from the scriptures and teach about the rest of Mahavira's life, following which lay people return home to a celebratory feast.

a) pp 142-144; b) pp 77, 80

More information at ...

1. [Festivals: Mahavir Jayanti](#)
2. [Mahavir Jayanti, the Birthday of Mahavira, and 'Related Issues'](#)
3. [BBC Religion - Jainism: Mahavira](#)
4. [You Tube - Mahavira Jayanti](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaHxJm5S3ic)
5. [Times of India - Mahavir Jayanti](#)

Saturday, 11 March – Monday, 20 March (Iranian Zoroastrian)

Saturday, 8 July – Monday 17th July (Kadmi)

FRAVARDIGAN / MUKTAD Zoroastrian

The Fravardigan festival (the festival of the *fravashis*), popularly known as *Muktad* (All Souls), commences ten days before NoRuz and is the last festival of the old year. The Zoroastrian day commences at sunrise and not midnight, and so during sunrise on the first day of the festival the immortal souls, together with their *fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, artistically depicted as half man/half bird), are welcomed by name by the Zoroastrian *Mobeds* or *Magi* (priests).

For ten days they reside in the place of worship, hovering around a table full of metal vases, each specifically earmarked for an individual family and containing white flowers. They leave the physical world after the last ceremony, held on the tenth evening, but before the dawn of NoRuz. The designated priest - as a farewell gesture - will then empty the water from one of the metal vases, which he will also turn upside down, signifying that it is time for the immortal souls and the *fravashis* to return to the spiritual world.

Theologically Fravardigan is the most important Zoroastrian festival after NoRuz, but, since it deals with one's departed ancestors, many Zoroastrians regard it to be their holiest festival. During these ten days Zoroastrians often take time off from work, pray extensively, recite the five *Gathas* (hymns composed by Zarathushtra) and ensure their houses are thoroughly cleaned. They prepare daily samples of sacred food enjoyed by their departed ancestors while still alive, and take these to the place of worship, to be tasted by them during the daily ceremonies. This ritually consecrated food, along with chosen fruits, is then shared by the living in the special *Hamaspathmaidem Gahambar*, a communal feast celebrated after the ceremony is over.

a) pp 250-252; b) pp 129-130, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Muktad - When Souls Come-a-Visiting](#)
2. [Celebrate and Remember - Fravardigan Days or Muktad](#)
3. [Faiths Forum - Fravardigan/Muktad](#)
4. [Images for Fravardigan](#)
5. [What to do and pray during the Muktad](#)

March 2017

Sunday, 12 March

PURIM Jewish

Purim is a carnival festival recalling the saving of the Jewish community of Persia through the actions of a young Jewish woman, which is retold in the Book of Esther (the *Megillah*). The whole book/scroll is read twice in the synagogue, once on the evening of Purim and then also on the morning after. Colourful costumes and masks are often worn amid lots of noise as the name of Haman (the villain of the story) is drowned out by the congregation with rattles and hooters and boos whenever it is read. Many people come in fancy dress. *Hamantashen* (cakes filled with poppy seeds, literally 'Haman's pockets', or with jam or chocolate) are baked and eaten at this time.

a) pp 199-201; b) pp 90, 103-104, 108-109, 139, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Jewish Virtual Library - Purim](#)
2. [My Jewish Learning - Purim](#)
3. [Virtual Jerusalem: Purim](#)
4. [Purim colouring pages for Tots](#)
5. [Aish - Purim](#)

Sunday/Monday, 12/13 March

MAGHA PUJA Buddhist

This commemorates the occasion when 1,250 enlightened personal disciples of the Buddha came spontaneously to the Bamboo Grove on the full moon of Magha (usually February). The Buddha predicted his death and recited a summary of his teachings and a code of discipline (which monks are expected to recite every fortnight). The day is observed with meditation, chanting and listening to sermons.

a) p 53 b) p 34.

More information at ...

1. [Buddhamind: Festivals - Magha Puja](#)
2. [The Day of Four Marvellous Events](#)
3. [Chiang Mai University - Magha Puja Day](#)
4. [Dhammakaya - Magha Puja Day](#)
5. [Celebrating Magha Puja](#)
6. <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Buddhism/Articles/Celebrating-Magha-Puja-Day.aspx>

Monday, 13 March

HOLI Hindu

A spring festival lasting one to five days. Bonfires are lit and revellers throw coloured powders and dyes over each other. Various stories and customs are associated with the festival: the throwing of coloured dyes is linked with Krishna and his antics with the *gopis* (milkmaids); another story associated with Holi is that of Prahlada and Holika: Prahlada worshipped Vishnu in defiance of his father, King Hiranyakashipu's wishes. Prahlada survived when his aunt, Holika, who was supposedly immune to fire, held him while she sat on a bonfire intended to kill him.

a) pp 118-119; b) pp 14, 66-67, 69, 75, 135, 138.

More information at ...

1. [The Festival of Holi](#)
2. [Hinduism - Holi - Festival of Colours](#)
3. [Colours of India - Holi](#)
4. [Colourful Holi](#)
5. [India Express - Holi](#)

March 2017

Tuesday, 14 March 2017

HOLA MAHALLA/HOLA MOHALLA *Sikh*

In 1680 Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru, introduced this festival at Anandpur in Punjab, India, as an alternative to the Hindu festival of Holi. It includes competitive displays of swordsmanship, horsemanship, archery and wrestling, together with displays of weapons and symposia of poetry. It is a colourful occasion, particularly for young Sikhs. It is celebrated on the day of Holi, or the day after.

a) pp 236, 239-240, 244; b) p 126

More information at ...

1. [All about Sikhs: Holla Mohalla](#)
2. [Hola Mohalla](#)
3. [Hola Mohalla](#)
4. [Images for Hola Mohalla](#)
5. [Sikhiwiki: Hola Mohalla](#)

Friday, 17 March

ST PATRICK'S DAY *National*

This is a day celebrated in honour of the patron saint of Ireland, who lived in Britain in the 4th century CE. After his escape from being held hostage in Ireland, he became a priest and returned there to evangelise. His symbol is the shamrock, sprigs of which are worn on this day. Parades are held in Dublin and elsewhere, often of a secular nature.

a) p 260; b) p 135.

More information at ...

1. [History and fun-facts for St Patrick's Day](#)
2. [On this day St Patrick dies](#)
3. [BBC Religions - Christianity: Saint Patrick](#)
4. [St Patrick's Day - Traditional set dance](#)
5. [Welcome to the Quote Garden - Quotations for Saint Patrick's Day](#)

Saturday, 18 March – Friday, 24 March

HIGAN *Japanese*

Monday, 20 March

SHUNBUN NO HI *Japanese*

This is the day of the Spring equinox. As at the autumn equinox, harmony and balance are the themes, *sutras* are recited, and the graves of relatives are visited.

a) p 159; b) p 84.

More information at ...

1. [Vernal Equinox Day - Shunbun no Hi](#)
2. [Alien Times - Shunbun No Hi](#)
3. [Vernal Equinox Day: Shunbun-no-hi](#)
4. [Shunbun No Hi in Pictures](#)
5. [The Nihon Sun: Celebrating Shunbun no hi in Japan](#)

Monday, 20 March

NAW-RUZ *Baha'i*

Naw-Ruz is the Baha'i New Year's Day and coincides with the spring equinox. It is an ancient Persian festival celebrating the 'New Day' and it marks the end of the annual nineteen day fast that concludes the old year. Celebrations start at sunset on the day before, often with gatherings for prayer and a festive meal.

a) 26; b) pp 19-21.

More information at ...

1. [Baha'i Library: Naw-Ruz: The Baha'i New Year](#)
2. [Naw-Ruz - The Baha'i and Zoroastrian New Year](#)
3. [Baha'i - Naw-Ruz](#)
4. [Baha'i Prayers: Naw-Ruz](#)
5. [Naw Ruz - Spiritual Springtime](#)

March 2017

Sunday, 19 March

JOSEPH OF NAZARETH / ST JOSEPH'S DAY *Christian (Anglican) (RC on 20th this year)*

In some churches a feast day is held in honour of Joseph, who, together with Mary, was responsible for Jesus' upbringing.

a) p 99; b) p 49.

More information at ...

[Fisheaters: Feast of St. Joseph](#)

[St Joseph's Medals](#)

[Calendar Updates - St Joseph's Day](#)

[St Joseph's Day in New Orleans](#)

[St Joseph's Table - An Age-Old Tradition](#)

Monday, 20 March

SPRING EQUINOX (Ostara) *Pagan*

VERNAL EQUINOX (Alban Eiler or Alban Eilir) *Druid*

Now night and day stand equal. The Sun grows in power and the land begins to bloom. By the Spring Equinox, the powers of the gathering year are equal to the darkness of winter and death. The God (the Green Man) awakens during this season. Some dedicate this time to Eostre, the Anglo-Saxon Goddess of fertility.

More information at ...

1. [Pagan Wiccan: Spring Equinox Celebrations Around the World](#)

2. [Vernal Equinox - Everything you need to know - 2016](#)

3. [The Spring Equinox](#)

4. [Spring is in the air - and so are these lively festivals](#)

5. [School of the Seasons - Celebrating Spring Equinox](#)

Tuesday, 21 March

JAMSHEDI NORUZ *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

The Zoroastrian NoRuz (New Year's Day) is celebrated on the the first day of spring, and is the most important festival in the Zoroastrian year. Tradition claims it was founded by Prophet Zarathushtra himself, when, it is believed, the prophet received his first revelation from the Creator God, Ahura Mazda. It is popularly known as Jamsheedi NoRuz, since the pre Zoroastrian King Jamsheed assisted the Creator God, Ahura Mazda, by building an underground dwelling (similar to Noah's Ark). This saved the creation from being utterly destroyed during the prolonged, bitter, snowy winter brought about by the evil spirit (Angra Mainyu).

NoRuz represents the resurgence of life and the symbolic victory of the forces of light over darkness. Prior to NoRuz the family spring cleans the whole house, and preparations are made to grow green herbs and paint boiled eggs for the *haftsheen* table, which contains items associated with the seven attributes of Ahura Mazda – these are known as the *Amesha Spentas*. It is customary to wear new clothes and offer gifts, visit the Fire Temple to seek blessing from Ahura Mazda, and participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, followed by eating, drinking, dancing and making merry.

No Ruz is deeply embedded in Iranian culture, and is still celebrated as the New Year in Islamic Iran, although without any religious connotations.

a) pp 248-250, 252, 255; b) pp 130-132, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Norouz - Mary Boyce - The Holiest and Most Joyous Festival of the Iranian Year](#)

2. [Crystal Links: Noruz](#)

3. [Mythic Maps: Jamshedi Noruz](#)

4. [Nauruz in Photos and Text](#)

5. [Nowruz - Origin and History](#)

March 2017

Friday, 24 March

AVA MAH PARAB (ABAN JASHAN) *Zoroastrian (Shenshai - Parsi)*

Ava is short for the divinity Aredvi Sura Anahita, the guardian protector of the waters, who is associated with fertility. On the day of Ava, the 10th day of the month of Ava, the 8th month, Zoroastrians celebrate the birthday of the waters by going to the seas, rivers and streams and reciting the *Aredvi Sura Niyayeesh* or 'Litany to the Waters'. They offer thanks to the great purifier who nourishes the world and offer to the waters flowers, sugar, coconuts and specially prepared flat cakes made with sweet lentils.

a) pp 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Frashogard: Ava Mah Parab - The Wondrous Power of Water](#)
2. [Food and Drink Customs during Ava Mah Parab](#)
3. [The Relevance and Significance of the month of Avan](#)
4. [Images for Ava Mah Parab](#)
5. [Wikipedia: Aban Jashan](#)

Saturday, 25 March

LADY DAY *National*

One of the four Quarter Days in the UK legal calendar.

Saturday, 25 March

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD / LADY DAY *Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox) (Julian Calendar 7 April)*

Lady Day celebrates the angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she is to bear a child, and Mary's response in the Magnificat. The day provides an opportunity to focus on the doctrine of the incarnation. Luke 1:26-38, 46-55.

a) pp 96-97; b) pp 48-49, 55, 59.

More information at ...

[Mythic Maps: The Annunciation](#)

[Catholic Culture: Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord](#)

[BBC: The Annunciation](#)

[Nazareth: the Church of the Annunciation](#)

[American Catholic: Annunciation of the Lord](#)

Sunday, 26 March

MOTHERING SUNDAY (Simnel Sunday) *Christian*

Mid-Lent Sunday, the 4th Sunday in Lent, has now become secularised and is more popularly known as Mother's Day. It was, traditionally, a Sunday when Christians revisited their 'mother church' and took gifts to their mothers, which often included a *simnel* cake.

a) p 26; b) p 136.

More information at ...

[Woodlands Junior School: Mothering Sunday](#)

[Anglican History: Mothering Sunday](#)

[Mothering Sunday: UK and US](#)

[Time and Date: Mothering Sunday](#)

[Ely Anglican: How Mothering Sunday became Mother's Day](#)

March 2017

Sunday, 26 March Zoroastrian (Iranian)

Tuesday, 22 August Zoroastrian (Shenshai)

KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian

The Birthday of Zarathushtra, one of the most important Zoroastrian festivals. *Khordad* means perfection and although the actual date of his birth cannot be accurately identified, the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day following NoRuz.

It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra; to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony; to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra; and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.

a) pp 252-255; b) pp 130-132, 31.

More information at ...

1. [Mango Salute: Khordad Sal - A Celebration of the Prophet Zarathustra](#)
2. [A History of Khordad Sal](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Khordad Sal](#)
4. [Sakshigopal: Happy Khordad Sal! Birthday Day of Zoroaster!](#)
5. [Festivals advices - Khordad sal - the birthday of Zoroaster](#)

April 2017

Here is the fourth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

April William Wordsworth 1770 – 1850

Exposure to nature – spring flowers and autumnal leaves, waterfalls and mountain views, the sea calm or savage – all can arouse in the individual a sense of wonder. They are no proof of the existence of God, but this sense is often at the root of what many call religious experience. One who conveys this well in his play with words is William Wordsworth. Though he's travelled widely, it is the Lake District, in the north-west of England, that was the prompt for many of these feelings. Both he and it are popular today with Japanese visitors as echoing their own homeland wonderment at trees, stones, waterfalls and Shinto shrines.

April 6 was his birthday.

For more information, go to:

Overview

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/wordsworths_01.shtml

Comprehensive biography

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/william-wordsworth>

Words as pictures

<http://www.picturequotes.com/william-wordsworth-quotes>

A way in

<http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=marshall&book=literature&story=wordsworth>

His poems and other writings

<http://www.bartleby.com/145/wordchrono.html>

Resourecpack

[https://wordsworth.org.uk/geisha/assets/files/Introducing%20William%20Wordsworth%20secondary%20pack\(1\).pdf](https://wordsworth.org.uk/geisha/assets/files/Introducing%20William%20Wordsworth%20secondary%20pack(1).pdf)

Activities

<http://www.channel4learning.com/support/programmenotes/netnotes/section/sectionid100663443.htm>

Sunday, 2 April

PASSION SUNDAY *Christian*

This is the 5th Sunday in Lent, when Christians begin to concentrate their thoughts on the Passion or suffering of Jesus.

More information at ...

[Passion Sunday in pictures](#)

[Liturgy: Passion Sunday?](#)

[Answers: Passion Sunday - 6th Sunday or 5th Sunday of Lent?](#)

[Catholic Activity: Carling or Passion Sunday](#)

[Meditating on the Passion of Jesus](#)

April 2017

Tuesday, 4 April

FESTIVAL OF PURE BRIGHTNESS / TOMB SWEEPING DAY / QINGMINGJIE / CH'ING MING *Chinese*

The first occasion in the year when family graves are visited. After cleansing and sweeping the graves, offerings are made to spirits, and many people picnic by the grave to 'join' their ancestors in the feast. Families make a special effort to be together and to return to the family graveyard.

a) pp 68-69; b) pp 39, 42, 44.

More information at ...

1. [China - Festivals - Pure Brightness](#)
2. [China Travel - Pure Brightness Festival](#)
3. [Qingming Festival \(Tomb-sweeping Day\)](#)
4. [Tomb Sweeping Day in Pictures](#)
5. [Chinese Culture: Tomb Sweeping Festival](#)

Wednesday, 5 April

RAMA NAVAMI *Hindu*

This is the birthday of Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu. It is celebrated at twelve noon (since Rama was reputedly born at noon) by the ceremony of *arati* (pronounced aar-tee), usually performed in front of either the baby Rama (represented by a doll) in a swinging cradle or a devotional picture showing this scene.

a) p 121; b) pp 67-68, 75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Ramnavami - Birthday of Lord Rama](#)
2. [Taj: Festivals - About Ram Navami](#)
3. [Mythic Maps: Ramnavami](#)
4. [Ramnavami: Greetings Cards](#)
5. [Hindupedia: Rama Navami](#)

Saturday, 8 April

HANAMATSURI *Buddhist (Japanese)*

This flower festival marks the Japanese celebration of the Buddha Shakyamuni's birthday, which Mahayana Buddhists fix in 565 BCE. The flowers accentuate the tradition that the Buddha was born in a garden, so floral shrines are made and an image of the infant Buddha is set in it and bathed. Pure Land Buddhists also celebrate the Buddha's birthday at this time. Theravadins celebrate Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away, all on the same day, but a little later in the year, at the full moon in May.

a) p159; b) pp 82, 84, 89.

More information at ...

1. [Examiner: Buddhist Celebrations - Hanamatsuri, the Buddha's Birthday](#)
2. [Journal of Shin Buddhism: Hanamatsuri](#)
3. [Mythic Maps: Hanamatsuri](#)
4. [Photos and text for Hanamatsuri](#)
5. [Vatican Greetings to Buddhists for the Feast of Vesakh/Hanamatsuri/2013](#)

Sunday, 9 April

PALM SUNDAY *Christian (Western Churches) (Orthodox date: 24 April)*

Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week, when Christians remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, where later he would be arrested and crucified. Many churches commemorate the day by processions, with the congregation carrying symbolic palm leaves folded in the form of a cross, or branches of palm trees.

Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-40, John 12:12-19.

a) p 87; b) pp 49, 51, 141, 144.

More information at ...

- [The Parish Church of St James - Palm Sunday](#)
- [Orthodox Christian Palm Sunday](#)
- [Catholic Online: Palm Sunday](#)
- [Share Faith: Palm Sunday](#)
- [The Trinidad Guardian: The true meaning of Palm Sunday](#)

April 2017

Sunday, 9 April – Saturday, 15 April

HOLY WEEK Christian (Western Churches)

This is the most solemn week of the Christian year, in which Christians recall the events of the final week of the earthly life of Jesus.

a) p 87; b) pp 14, 46, 49, 51-52, 54, 141, 143.

More information at ...

[Christianity Today: Articles on Holy Week](#)

[Orthodox Christian Holy Week](#)

[Holy Week in Spain](#)

[Holy week in the Catholic Encyclopedia](#)

[Belief Net: Christian Holidays during Holy Week](#)

Tuesday, 11 April

HANUMAN JAYANTI Hindu

Hanuman Jayanti is a Hindu festival which recalls the birth of Lord Rama's supreme devotee, the monkey-headed Hanuman, whose feats figure in the Ramayana epic. Hanuman's birth is celebrated at sunrise on the full-moon day of the lunar month of Chaitra.

a) pp 121, 139; b) pp 68, 75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Lord Hanuman](#)

2. [Hanuman Jayanti - Significance, History and How to Celebrate](#)

3. [Hindu Blog - Hanuman Jayanti](#)

4. [Desi Comments: Hanuman Jayanti in Pictures and Comments](#)

5. [Swaminaryan: Hanuman Jayanti](#)

Tuesday, 11 April – Tuesday, 18 April

PASSOVER/PESACH Jewish

This major Jewish festival lasts eight days and commemorates the liberation of the Children of Israel and their Exodus from slavery in Egypt. The highlight is the *Seder* meal, held in each family's home at the beginning of the festival, when the story of their deliverance is recounted, as narrated in the *Haggadah* (the Telling, or the Story). *Matzah*, (unleavened bread) is eaten throughout the festival, as are other foods that contain no leaven (yeast). There is a major spring cleaning in the home shortly before the festival to ensure that no trace of leaven is left in the house during Pesach. Coconut pyramids and *matza* balls (which are put in soups) are foods that might be eaten at this time.

Exodus 7-12.

a) pp 179-184; b) pp 13, 53, 90, 93-96, 107, 109.

NB The first two days (April 11, 12) and the last two days (April 17, 18) are full festival days when, for Orthodox Jews, work is not permitted.

More information at ...

1. [Jewfaq: Pesach: Passover](#)

2. [Jewish Virtual Library: Passover - Pesach - History and Overview](#)

3. [Chabad: Passover](#)

4. [Passover in Pictures](#)

5. [Aish: Passover](#)

Thursday, 13 April

SONGKRAN Buddhist

Traditional New Year's Day festival in Thailand, where containers of water are thrown as a symbol of washing away all that is evil. Fragrant herbs are often placed in the jug or bucket containing the water.

More information at ...

1. [What is Songkran?](#)

2. [Things to know about the Thailand Water Festival - Songkran](#)

3. [The Songkran Water Festival](#)

4. [Seventeen photographs of Songkran in Thailand](#)

5. [Songkran - National Holiday in Thailand](#)

April 2017

Thursday, 13 April

MAUNDY THURSDAY *Christian (Western Churches)*

Christians remember the Last Supper, at which Jesus blessed bread and wine and commanded his disciples to remember him whenever they did this. From this instruction comes the institution known under a variety of names – the Eucharist, the Mass, the Holy Communion, the Breaking of Bread, the Divine Liturgy. It has become the central act of worship in almost all Christian traditions. In Roman Catholic and some Anglican churches the feet of twelve members of the congregation are washed in remembrance of Jesus' washing the feet of the twelve disciples. The name 'maundy' comes from a Latin term 'mandatum' ('commandment'), signifying Jesus' new commandment to his disciples, as recorded in John 15:17.

Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-26, Luke 22:14-20.

a) pp 87-88; b) pp 49, 52, 54, iv.

More information at ...

[About Christianity: Maundy Thursday](#)

[Fisheaters: Maundy Thursday](#)

[Christianity for Dummies: What is Maundy Thursday?](#)

[Woodlands Junior School: Maundy Thursday \(Holy Thursday\)](#)

[Royal Events and Ceremonies: Royal Maundy Service](#)

Friday, 14 April

GOOD FRIDAY *Christian*

This day commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus. Although essentially a sombre day, it is called 'Good' since, for Christians, it is the ultimate example of God's sacrifice when Jesus gave up his life for the world. Meditative services are held in church to mark the time that Jesus spent on the cross. Traditionally, particularly in the Roman Catholic world, fish rather than meat is eaten on Fridays. Hot cross buns, although now found in supermarkets throughout the year, were formerly associated with Good Friday.

Matthew 27:32-34, Mark 15:21-32, Luke 23:26-43, John 19:17-27.

a) p 88; b) pp 49-52.

More information at ...

[Church Year: Good Friday](#)

[Jerusalem - The Way of the Cross](#)

[Catholic Online: Good Friday](#)

[Project Britain: Good Friday \(Holy Friday\)](#)

[Goarch: Great and Holy Friday](#)

Friday, 14 April

VAISAKHI/BAISAKHI – The Sikh New Year Festival *Sikh*

In 1699, on Vaisakhi, the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, founded the Order of the Khalsa. Five men, who later came to be known as the *Panj Piare* (Five Beloved Ones), were prepared to offer their lives when the Guru asked for volunteers. According to tradition this is when he initiated both the Panj Piare and many others into the Khalsa, with men taking the name 'Singh' and women taking the name 'Kaur'. Nowadays, early in the morning, many Sikhs are initiated by 'taking amrit', and so committing themselves to a discipline that includes daily prayers and the wearing of the external markers of Khalsa identity (the Five Ks). Outside each gurdwara the Nishan Sahib (the Sikh pennant) is ceremonially bathed on this day and then replaced on its flagpole.

a) pp 236-237; b) pp 63, 67, 75, 121-122, 124-126, 140, 143, viii.

More information at ...

1. [The Holiday Spot: Baisakhi](#)

2. [Sikhism Guide: Vaisakhi](#)

3. [Sikh Net: Vaisakhi - Birth of the Khalsa - Sikh Stories of Children](#)

4. [Baisaki Greetings and Bangra Dancing](#)

5. [The Huffington Post: Vaisakhi](#)

April 2017

Saturday, 15 April

HOLY SATURDAY (Easter Eve) *Christian*

This is the last day of Lent. Special services involving the lighting of the *Paschal* Candle and the renewal of baptismal vows take place in the evening in preparation for Easter.

a) pp 88-90; b) pp 49, 52-53.

More information at ...

[BBC: Holy Week and Holy Saturday](#)

[Fisheaters: Holy Saturday](#)

[About Catholicism: Holy Saturday](#)

[Women for Faith and Family: Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil](#)

[The Voice: The Days of Holy Week](#)

Sunday, 16 April

Easter is calculated on a lunar calendar, and thus moves each year in relation to the solar calendar. Orthodox and Western churches calculate differently when the necessary intercalary adjustments should be made; consequently there is no consistent relationship between the dates of Orthodox and Western timings of Easter. In 2017 the Easter cycle dates coincide for Eastern and Western traditions.

EASTER DAY *Christian (Western Churches)*

Easter Day is the most important festival of the Christian year, since this is when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Many Easter traditions, such as the giving of chocolate Easter eggs symbolise the gift of new life.

Matthew 28:1-11, Mark 16:1-10, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10.

a) p 90; b) pp 11, 13, 16, 28, 38, 46-49.

More information at ...

<http://www.request.org.uk/main/festivals/easter/easter00.htm> Time and Date: Easter

[Sunday](#)

[Calendar Updates: Easter](#)

[Woodlands Junior School: Easter Sunday \(Easter Day\)](#)

[Fisheaters: Easter Sunday](#)

[BBC Plans for an Easter Spectacle in South Shields - for the non-religious](#)

PASCHA/EASTER *Christian (Orthodox)*

For Orthodox Christians Easter Day is the most important festival of the Christian year, as it is when they celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. A vigil is kept during the preceding night and the resurrection of Christ greeted with the lighting of candles and the affirmation 'Christ is risen'. Customs include colouring and decorating hard boiled eggs as symbols of new life - cracking them symbolises the opening of Christ's tomb. All Orthodox Christian communities celebrate Easter *and* the associated cycle of festivals at the same time.

Matthew 28:1-11, Mark 16:1-10, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10.

a) p 90; b) pp 11, 13, 16, 28, 38, 46-49.

More information at ...

[Orthodox Wiki: Pascha](#)

[Goarch: The Great and Holy Feast of Pascha](#)

[Orthodox Research Institute: It is Pascha not Easter!](#)

[Pascha polyglotta: Χριστός ἀνέστη - Christ is Risen - in 250 Languages](#)

[Feast of Feasts: An Orthodox Christian Celebration of Holy Pascha](#)

April 2017

Thursday, 20 April - Monday, 1 May

RIDVAN *Baha'i*

The most important Baha'i festival. It was in these 12 days that Baha'u'llah declared himself as the Promised One prophesied by the *Bab*. The festival is named after the garden outside Baghdad in which he was staying. The first, ninth and twelfth days are especially significant and are celebrated as holy days, when no work is done. (This is also true of other Baha'i festival dates.) It is during this period that Baha'is elect their local, national and international governing bodies.

a) pp 23-25. b) pp 17, 19-20, 22.

1. [Baha'i Library: Ridvan](#)
2. [About Alternative Religions: Ridvan](#)
3. [BBC Religions: Ridvan - History and Significance](#)
4. [The Ridvan Garden](#)
5. [Universal House of Justice - Annual Messages for Ridvan](#)

Saturday, 22 April

ADAR MAH PARAB *Zoroastrian (Shenshai - Parsi)*

On the day of Adar, the 9th day, during the month of Adar, the 9th month, Zoroastrians celebrate the birthday of fire. It is customary for Zoroastrians to go to the fire temple to make offerings of sandalwood or incense at this time, and to thank the holy fire for the warmth and light it has given throughout the year. Traditionally on this day food is not cooked in the house as the fire is given a rest and the *Atash Niyayeesh* or litany to the fire is recited in honour of the house fire or the ceremonial oil lamp.

a) p 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Parsikhabar - Celebrating the Atash nu Parab](#)
2. [Atash nu Parab](#)
3. [Zoroastrian Religion's Most Frequently Asked Question](#)
4. [Images for Adar Mah Parab](#)
5. [Zoroastrian Places of Worship - Atash Bahram - Modern Fire Temples](#)

Sunday, 23 April

ST GEORGE'S DAY *National*

St George is the patron saint of England. His particular significance to England is not clear since he lived and died in the Middle East as a martyr for his Christian faith, but it is possible that his popularity grew after the Crusades, when his red cross on a white background was adopted as the symbol of the English Crusaders.

More information at ...

1. [Britannia History: St George](#)
2. [St George's Day observed in Spain](#)
3. [Woodlands Junior School, Kent: The Patron Saint of England - St George](#)
4. [Google creates doodle to celebrate England's patron saint](#)
5. [The English are 'too nervous' to celebrate St George's Day](#)

Monday, 24 April

YOM HA-SHOAH (Holocaust Day) *Jewish*

A day of remembrance when Jewish people remember the six million Jews, including one and a half million children, who were victims of the Nazi Holocaust. Memorial candles are lit and special services are held. The date is chosen as the closest date (in the Jewish year) to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

More information at ...

1. [Yom Hashoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day](#)
2. [Reform Judaism: Yom HaShoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day](#)
3. [How to talk to kids about the Holocaust](#)
4. [Yom Hashoah - Remembrance Day Siren in Israel](#)
5. [Jewish Virtual Library: Yom Ha'Shoah - Holocaust Memorial Day](#)

April 2017

Monday, 24 April

THE PROPHET'S NIGHT JOURNEY AND ASCENT / LAILAT (LAYLAT) UL ISRA WA-L-MIRAJ
(27th Rajab) Muslim

This festival celebrates the journey of the Prophet Muhammad, in the tenth year of his prophethood, from Makkah to Jerusalem, and through the heavens to the presence of God, all in one night. On this night Muslims believe the Prophet received the command that they should pray five times each day. The rock in Jerusalem from which the Prophet ascended is now contained in the Dome of the Rock. Muslims mark this night by reading the *Qur'an* and saying additional prayers.

Suras 2:144 and 17:1 refer. The full story is in the *Hadith*, along with the times of prayer.
a) p 231; b) pp 119-120.

More information at ...

1. [Sunna Lessons: The Prophet's Night Journey and Ascension](#)
2. [Essaouira: Lailat al Miraj](#)
3. [Message of the Aqalayn: The Prophet's Night Journey and Ascent to Heaven](#)
4. [The Night Journey - the Prophet Muhammad's Meeting with Allah](#)
5. [Message of the Aqalayn: The Prophet's Night Journey and Ascent to Heaven](#)

Friday, 28TH April

NICHIREN AND THE CHANTING OF THE DAIMOKU Buddhist

On 28th April 1253, at the age of 31, the Japanese Buddhist priest Nichiren (born on February 16th in 1222 CE in the east of Japan) first taught the mantra *Nam myoho rengo kyo* to a small group at the Seichō-ji temple he had entered at the age of 20 in 1233. It was there he had set out to master all the Buddhist teachings available to him in Japan at that time. He came to believe that the profundity of the Lotus Sutra, which expounds the universal potential for Buddhahood, is expressed in this mantra. For Nichiren, the practice of chanting '*Nam myoho rengo kyo*, (the *daimoku*) opens the path to inner transformation from which compassionate action for the happiness of self and others arises.

As a result of his radical teachings he met with several attacks from his opponents, including an illegal attempt to execute him, and was twice exiled. During his second exile on Sado Island (in 1272) he inscribed the first *Gohonzon*, a mandala written in characters which represents life in the balanced state of Buddhahood. The core practices undertaken by believers are a twice-daily recitation from the Lotus Sutra and the chanting of the *daimoku* in front of the *Gohonzon*. For Nichiren Buddhists the 28th April is a day of celebration and gratitude.

More information at ...

1. [Nichiren Buddhism - an Overview](#)
2. [The Life of Nichiren - and much else](#)
3. [Nichiren Buddhism](#)
4. [Images for Gohonzon](#)
5. [Nichiren and Nichiren Buddhism](#)
6. <http://www.sgi-uk.org/buddhism/history/life-nichiren>

Sunday, 30 April

MAY EVE / BELTAINE EVE Wiccan/Pagan

See text for Monday, *1 May* below.

May 2017

Here is the fifth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

May

Alfred Adler

1870 – 1937

A central figure in the development of psychology, Adler drew attention to the ways in which the individual's development in life is shaped by its starting point. For instance, the family size and position in the birth order is associated with certain behavioural characteristics. Earliest childhood recollections (ie what is memorable to the individual) are often indicative of an underlying aspect and an indication of what matters in their future lives.

Some of his ideas have entered everyday usage (eg 'inferiority complex'; others are well worth exploring (eg the notion of individual 'life-lines'). Most of his life and work was based in Austria, with his last ten years in the USA. His Jewish heritage and later on his Christian faith both contributed to his understanding of global interdependence.

May 28 is the anniversary of his death, which occurred when he was lecturing in Scotland. For more information, go to:

Biog

<http://www.notablebiographies.com/A-An/Adler-Alfred.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npXF1JKh7sQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/alfredadler/lifeandtimes> Theory and Application

<http://www.alfredadler.edu/about/theory>

www.vision.org/visionmedia/alfred-adler-adlerian-psychology/41045.aspx

<http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/alfredadler> Writings

www.picturequotes.com/alfred-adler-quotes

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/at/adler.htm>

Monday, 1 May

BELTAINE *Wiccan/Pagan*

BELTAINE *Druid*

The wheel of the year continues to turn and spring gives way to summer's full bloom and the fertility of the land is at its height. Many pagans celebrate Beltaine by lighting fires and leaping over them, and/or with maypole dances, symbolizing the mystery of the Sacred Marriage of Goddess and God.

More information at ...

1. [The Goddess and the Green Man](#)
2. [Cultural Heritage of Ireland: The festival of Beltaine and the Beltany Stone Circle](#)
3. [Spirit of Old - Beltaine](#)
4. [Newgrange: Beltane - The Fire Festival](#)
5. [Chalice Centre: May - Beltaine: The Return of Summer](#)

May 2017

Tuesday, 2 May

YOM HA'ATZMA'UT Jewish

Israeli Independence Day, commemorating the declaration of independence of Israel in 1948.

More information at ...

1. [My Jewish Learning: Yom Ha'Atzma'ut](#)
2. [Union of Reform Judaism - Yom Ha'Atzma'ut](#)
3. [Yom Ha'Atzma'ut Activities](#)
4. [Imagesfor Yom Ha'Atzmaut](#)
5. [BJ: Yom Ha'zikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut](#)

Wednesday, 10 May

VESAKHA PUJA / WESAK / BUDDHA DAY Buddhist

On Wesak Theravadin Buddhists celebrate the birth, enlightenment under the *Bodhi* Tree in Bodhgaya in North India, and the final passing away of Gautama Buddha. Mahayanist Buddhists have separate days for each of these events and on Buddha Day celebrate both the birth and the enlightenment of the Buddha. They also celebrate his enlightenment on *Bodhi* Day in December. It is common in almost all Buddhist traditions to decorate the houses where Buddhists live with lanterns and garlands, and the temples are ringed with little oil lamps, consisting of a simple cloth or cotton wick in a small clay vessel of oil. Many Buddhists send 'Wesak cards' to their friends. Particular stress is laid on this day on the Buddha's enlightenment and many lay people come together at monasteries for this, the biggest of the Buddhist festivals.

a) pp 7, 45-47, 49-50, 54; b) pp 13, 30, 32-35, 37, 139.

More information at ...

1. [Crystal Links: Wesak](#)
2. [The Significance of Vesak - Buddha Day](#)
3. [BBC: Wesak](#)
4. [You Tube: The Wesak Festival - the full moon of the Buddha](#)
5. [Souled Out: The Significance of Wesak](#)

Friday, 12 May

THE NIGHT OF FORGIVENESS / LAILAT-UL-BARA'AH (14th Sha'ban) Muslim
BIRTHDAY of 12th IMAM, Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Mahdi Muslim (Shi'a)

On the fourteenth of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Muslim calendar and two weeks before Ramadan commences, Muslims seek forgiveness for their sins. Many Muslims believe that it is on this night that a person's destiny is fixed by Allah for the coming year, and the night is often spent in prayer, asking for forgiveness and God's guidance. Some Muslims fast during the daytime in preparation for the night. In certain parts of the world Muslims visit the graves of relatives, and the giving of charity is also traditional. In a number of places the night is marked with firework displays.

Lailat-ul-Bara'ah falls on the day that is celebrated by the Ithna Asheri Shi'a community as being the birthday of the 12th Imam (Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Mahdi), and they therefore observe the night in prayer and worship, and then celebrate the birthday during the daytime.

a) p 233; b) p 120.

More information at ...

1. [Travelling the world - Laylat ul Bara'ah](#)
2. [India Forums: Lailat-ul-Bara'h \(Night of Forgiveness\)](#)
3. [Ummah: Laylat al-Bara'ah or Shab-e-Barat - Night of Salvation](#)
4. [The Night of Bara'ah - in pictures](#)
5. [Islamic Board: Lailat al-Bara'ah](#)

May 2017

Sunday, 14 May

LAG B'OMER *Jewish*

The *Omer* is a period of 49 days, lasting from Pesach to Shavuot. It is a time of sadness, relieved on this, the 33rd day, by a break in the days of mourning. Lag b'Omer recalls the end of a plague in Roman times during the lifetime of Rabbi Akiva, and is often celebrated by out of door, fresh air activities. A large number of weddings take place on this day, since they are not usually permitted during most of the rest of the Omer period.

a) p 207; b) p 107.

More information at ...

1. [Jewfaq: The Counting of the Omer](#)
2. [My Jewish Learning: Lag B'Omer](#)
3. [Chabad: Lag B'Omer](#)
4. [Lag B'Omer Customs](#)
5. [Aish: Counting the Omer](#)

Sunday, 14 May – Saturday, 20 May

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK *Christian*

Initiated in 1945, this week is devoted to fund raising by members of various churches, mainly through house to house collections and sales of goods of various kinds. The money given is for work with the needy throughout the world. Christian Aid works in nearly 60 countries, helping people, regardless of religion or race, to improve their own lives and tackle the causes of poverty and injustice.

More information at ...

[Christian Aid](#)

[Christian Aid Week](#)

[Durham Cathedral: Sermon - Christian Aid Week](#)

[You Tube: This is Christian Aid](#)

[Life and Work: A Prayer for Christian Aid Week](#)

Tuesday, 23 May

ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF THE BAB *Baha'i*

The *Bab* heralded the arrival of Baha'ullah and was co-founder of the Baha'i faith. He first declared his mission in Persia in 1844. He inaugurated the Baha'i calendar which is numbered from the year of this declaration.

a) p 27; b) pp 19, 21-22.

More information at ...

1. [Baha'i teachings - declaration of the Bab on how religion begins](#)
2. [Mythic Maps: Anniversary of the Declaration of the Bab](#)
3. [Enable Me to Grow: Observing the Declaration of the Bab](#)
4. [Tacoma Baha'i: The Anniversary of the Declaration of the Bab](#)
5. [Huffington Post - enter the gate](#)

Wednesday, 24 May *Zoroastrian (Shenshai, Parsi)*

Tuesday, 26 December *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

ZARATOSHT NO DISO

Zaratosht no diso is the death anniversary of the Prophet Zarathushtra and is a sorrowful occasion. Tradition records that this is when he was assassinated at the age of 77. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple, participate in special remembrance prayers to him and to the *Fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors), and ponder upon the *Gathas* or Hymns of Zarathushtra, which embody his eternal message to humanity.

a) p 255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Zartosht no Diso - a History](#)
2. [I Love India: Festivals/Zartosht-no-diso Celebrations](#)
3. [Crystal Links: Zoroaster and Death](#)
4. [The Parsee Society: Images for Zartosht no diso](#)
5. <http://www.pza.org.sg/Zarathustra/Life of Zarathustra.htm>[Zarathustra.com: The Life and Death of Zarathustra](http://www.zarathustra.com/)

May 2017

Thursday, 25 May

ASCENSION DAY (40th day after Easter) *Christian (Western Churches) and Orthodox (The Catholic Church in England and Wales celebrates it on the following Sunday, 28 May.)*

Ascension Day commemorates the last earthly appearance of the Risen Christ, who, according to Christian belief, ascended into heaven in the presence of many witnesses. It is one of the four most important dates in the Christian calendar.

Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53, Acts of the Apostles 1:9-11.

a) p 92; b) pp 49-53.

More information at ...

[Share Faith: Ascension Day](#)

[Time and Date: Ascension Day](#)

[Woodlands Junior School: Ascension Day](#)

[Bartleby: Quotations for Ascension Day](#)

[Amish America: How do Amish Observe Ascension Day?](#)

Saturday, 27 May to Sunday, 25 June

RAMADAN *Muslim (Ramadan is the name of the 9th month of the Islamic Calendar.)*

The Muslim year is a lunar year which is about 11 days shorter than the solar year on which the Gregorian (British) calendar is based, so Ramadan occurs ten or eleven days earlier each year in the Gregorian calendar.

During the month of Ramadan Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. Fasting (*sawm*) is one of the five pillars of Islam, requiring self-discipline and giving everyone some experience of deprivation. Those who are not able to fast are expected to give charity to compensate for the lost days. While children may be encouraged to fast, the full fast is not compulsory until maturity, but many young people still attempt to keep some, or even all of it.

For Muslims it is the holiest month of the year, and one they try to dedicate to spiritual renewal, prayer and intensive devotional reading of the *Qur'an*. It is the month in which, according to Islamic belief, the Prophet received the first revelation of verses of the *Qur'an*. No food or drink may be consumed during the hours of daylight, and those fasting must also abstain from smoking and from sexual relations. Muslims who are travelling or sick and women who are pregnant or nursing a child are excused from the fast. Travellers and menstruating women are required to make up the days of missed fasting during the year ahead. After the custom of the Prophet, the fast is traditionally broken each evening by taking dates and water.

Surah 2:183-188.

a) pp 218-220; b) pp 11, 13, 110, 113-114, 120, 140, 143.

More information at ...

1. [Mkidwai Tripod: Facts of Ramadan - Fasting](#)

2. [BBC Religions: Islam - Ramadan](#)

3. [Ramadan for Kids](#)

4. [Ramadan in Pictures](#)

5. [Jannah: Ramadan - Articles, Resources and Activities for Kids](#)

Sunday, 28 May

ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASCENSION OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH *Baha'i*

This day commemorates the death of Baha'u'llah at Bahji, near Acre, in northern Israel in 1892. His shrine there is the holiest place on earth for Baha'is and is the focus towards which all Baha'is face when praying.

a) p 27; b) pp 19, 21-22.

More information

1. [Baha'i Reference Library: Ascension of Baha'u'llah](#)

2. [Bodybuilding: Baha'is commemorate Ascension of Baha'u'llah](#)

3. [Paintdrawer: Ascension of Baha'u'llah](#)

4. [You Tube: Ascension of Baha'u'llah](#)

5. [Good Reads - Quotations from Bahá'u'lláh](#)

May 2017

Tuesday, 30 May

DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL / DUANWUJIE / TUAN YANG CHIEH Chinese

Most notable now for the great dragon boat races which take place between slim rowing boats (sometimes 100 feet long) shaped like dragons. People also go down to the rivers to picnic and celebrate on boats. Originally the festival commemorated the suicide by drowning of the poet and statesman Ch'u Yuan in about 279 BCE.

a) pp 69-71; b) pp 38, 43-44.

More information at ...

1. [Travel China Guide: Dragon Boat Festival](#)
2. [International Dragon Boat Federation: The Dragon Boat - History and Culture](#)
3. [The Chinese Dragon Boat Festival for Chinese Children](#)
4. [Dragon Boat Festival in Pictures](#)
5. [The Chinese Dragon Boat Festival](#)

Wednesday, 31 May – Thursday, 1 June

SHAVUOT / THE FEAST OF WEEKS / PENTECOST Jewish

Shavuot, also known as the Feast of Weeks, is a two day festival which falls seven weeks after Pesach. It celebrates the revelation of the *Torah* to Moses on Mount Sinai, and also marks the time when the first wheat harvest was taken to the Temple. Synagogues are decorated with flowers and dairy foods are traditionally eaten. For Orthodox Jews work is not permitted throughout the festival.

Exodus 19 & 20, Leviticus 23:15-22, Deuteronomy 16:9-12.

a) pp 184-187; b) pp 13, 91, 95-97, 107, 109, 142.

More information at ...

1. [Reform Judaism: Shavuot](#)
2. [Jewish Facts: Shavuot](#)
3. [Torahtots - Shavuot](#)
4. [Chabad: Shavuot Recipes](#)
5. [About Judaism: Shavuot](#)

June 2017

Here is the sixth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

June Emmeline Pankhurst 1857 - 1928

100 years ago half the adult population of the UK was not allowed to vote – because they were not men. And 100 years ago a small group of women felt so strongly that this was wrong that their protests against this restriction led to the smashing of windows and the deliberate provocation of policemen, followed by hunger strikes during their subsequent imprisonment. Emmeline Pankhurst was one of these. Her beliefs required direct action. She set up the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903 and campaigned with her daughters to change the law. Her campaign raises issues about 'extremism' and the limits of what counts as non-violent protest. Suffrage (hence the feminine 'suffragette') matters if human beings are to be genuinely free – or does it? A century later, she and her followers would have been astonished by the behaviour of such a high proportion of women (and men) who do not now even bother to vote. She died 14 June, 1928.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.onthisdeity.com/14th-june-1928-%E2%80%93-the-death-of-emmeline-pankhurst/>

Biography

<http://www.biographyonline.net/politicians/uk/emily-pankhurst.html>

<http://www.motivationmatterslimited.co.uk/news/321.htm>

www.facts-about.org.uk/famous-people.../emmeline-pankhurst.htm

Photo collection

<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/photos/emmeline-pankhurst>

Pathe film record

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/emmeline-pankhurst>

Freedom or death speech – text

<http://www.britpolitics.co.uk/emmeline-pankhurst-suffragette-freedom-or-death-speech>

Extracts from her autobiography: My own story

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/suffragette-heroine-emmeline-pankhurst-words-6648769>

Classroom resource site on struggle for women's voting rights, including time-line

<http://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/the-suffragettes>

June 2017

Sunday, 4 June

PENTECOST / WHIT SUNDAY *Christian (Western Churches)*

An important festival in the Christian year, *Pentecost* is often seen as the 'birthday' of the Church, since this is when the disciples of Jesus first proclaimed the Gospel after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is named after the Jewish festival day on which this event happened. The alternative name of Whitsuntide comes from the custom of converts presenting themselves for baptism on this day dressed in white.

Acts of the Apostles 2:1-13.

a) p 92; b) pp 13, 16, 46-48, 53-54, 96, 140, 143

More information at ...

[Got Questions?: What is Pentecost Sunday?](#)

[About Catholicism: Pentecost](#)

[Fisheaters: Vigil of the Pentecost and Whitsunday](#)

[Patheos: What is Pentecost? Why Does It Matter?](#)

<http://www.stpaulskingsville.org/pentecost.htm> Explore Faith: Questions of Faith and Doubt - Pentecost

PENTECOST *Christian (Orthodox Churches)*

An important festival in the Christian year, *Pentecost* is often seen as the 'birthday' of the Church, since this is when the disciples of Jesus first proclaimed the Gospel after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is named after the Jewish festival day on which this event happened.

Acts of the Apostles 2:1-13.

a) p 92; b) pp 13, 16, 46-48, 53-54, 96, 140, 143

More information at ...

[Go Arch: The Feast of Holy Pentecost](#)

[Orthodoxy: The Church Year - Pentecost: The Descent of the Holy Spirit](#)

[Orthodox Wiki: Pentecost](#)

[Russian Orthodox Church of Three Saints: Pentecost - The Birthday of the Church](#)

[Antiochian Orthodoxy: The Great Feast of Pentecost](#)

Sunday, 11 June

TRINITY SUNDAY *Christian (Western Churches)*

In the West, Trinity Sunday is celebrated on the Sunday after Pentecost (or Whitsunday). On Trinity Sunday, Christians reflect on the mystery of God, who is seen as One but is understood in and through God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(Eastern Orthodox Christians celebrate All Saints at this time).

Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 1:18; 15:26.

a) 81, 92-93, 103; b) 53-54.

More information at ...

[St James Hampton Hill - Trinity Sunday](#)

[Church Year: Trinity Sunday](#)

[Fisheaters: Trinity Sunday](#)

[The Painted Prayer Book: Trinity Sunday - Drenched in the Mystery](#)

<http://www.stpaulskingsville.org/trinity.htm> Questions - What is Trinity Sunday?

Thursday, 15 June

DAY OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE INSTITUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION *Christian (Anglican)*
(Also known as Corpus Christi)

The Anglican church celebrates this on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday (which falls on 11 June this year). The day recalls the act of Jesus in instituting the celebration of Holy Communion.

a) p 93; b) pp 49, 54.

More information at ...

[The Coptic Church - The Eucharist](#)

[All Saints Belmont - sermon of Thanksgiving for the Holy Communion](#)

[MHSJB Word Press: Corpus Christit In Germany](#)

[Can we provide Holy Communion over the Web?](#)

[New Apostolic Church International: Holy Communion](#)

June 2017

Friday, 16 June

MARTYRDOM OF GURU ARJAN (1606) Sikh

This *gurpurb* marks the day when the fifth Guru was put to death on the orders of the Moghul Emperor, Jehangir, for supporting his rival, Khusrau. Guru Arjan drew together compositions by the first five Gurus along with hymns by other 'saint-poets' and so compiled the *Adi Granth* (the Sikh scriptures). He also supervised the construction of the original temple where the Golden Temple, Amritsar, now stands. As with other *gurpurbs*, the day is preceded by an *akhand path*, a continuous reading of the scriptures. Traditionally, a cooling drink is distributed, recalling that the Guru was tortured in the extreme heat of June.

a) pp 240-242, 244; b) pp 123, 126.

More information at ...

1. [Search Sikhism - Guru Arjan Dev](#)
2. [Sikh 24: Shaheedi of Guru Arjan Dev Jee](#)
3. [Sikhs Org.: The Fifth Master Guru Arjan Dev \(1563-1606\)](#)
4. [Fifth Sikh Guru - Guru Arjan Dev Ji Sahib](#)
5. [Sikhiwiki: Martyrdom of Guru Arjan](#)

Sunday, 18 June

LAILAT-UL-QADR / THE NIGHT OF POWER / HONOUR / DIGNITY Muslim (Shi'a)

This commemorates the night in 610 CE when the prophet Muhammad received his first visit from the angel Jibril (Gabriel) and his revelation of the *Qur'an*. Muslims believe that the date of this night is kept secret by God, but that they 'may seek the Night of Dignity in the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan' (Bukhaari, quoting Aisha, who heard it from the Prophet). Many Muslims spend the last ten days and nights of Ramadan secluded in the mosque, praying and studying the *Qur'an*, to ensure they receive the special benefits promised for their prayers and devotions on Lailat-ul-Qadr.

For the purpose of communal activities, or for those who can only spend one night in devotions at the mosque, Sunnis favour the 27th day (beginning the evening of the 26th) whilst the Shi'a favour the 23rd day of Ramadan. Of this night, the *Qur'an* states, "Lailat-ul-Qadr is better than a thousand months." Surah 97:1-5 (see esp. 97: 3).

The first revelation: Surah 2:185.

b) p 218; b) pp 112,120.

More information at ...

1. [Lailatul Qadar - The Night of Power](#)
2. [Islamic Finder - Lailat ul Qadr](#)
3. [Win Calendar - Lailat-ul-Qadr](#)
4. [Sound Vision: Lailat ul Qadr](#)
5. [Duas: 'Common' A'amaal for Laylatul Qadr](#)

Sunday, 18 June

CORPUS CHRISTI (The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ) Christian (Roman Catholic)

The festival of Corpus Christi celebrates the institution of the Mass/Eucharist. It falls 60 days after Easter. In the ancient world it was customary to scatter flowers in the path of important people as a sign of respect and reverence, and this custom was adopted by the Church to honour the Blessed Sacrament as it was carried in procession on this festival day.

In some countries, including England & Wales, the festival is celebrated on the Sunday after Trinity Sunday.

a) p 93; b) pp 49, 54.

More information at ...

[Arundel Cathedral: Corpus Christi](#)

[Social Journalist: Corpus Christi is a Western Catholic Feast](#)

[New Advent: Feast of Corpus Christi](#)

[Time and date: Festival of Corpus Christi](#)

[Santo Rosario: The Sacrament of the Eucharist - A Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)

June 2017

Tuesday, 21 June MIDSUMMER SOLSTICE Wiccan/Pagan

Tuesday, 21 June SUMMER SOLSTICE (*Alban Heruin or Alban Hefin*) Druid

The summer solstice is the festival of Midsummer, sometimes called Litha. The light of the sun is at the height of its power. It is a time of plenty and celebration.

More information at ...

1. [Witchvox: Midsummer/Summer Solstice](#)
2. [Almanac - Summer Solstice](#)
3. [BBC: Summer Solstice](#)
4. [Summer Solstice at Stonehenge, in pictures](#)
5. [When is the Longest Day? When is the Shortest Day?](#)

Wednesday, 21 June

WORLD HUMANIST DAY

This is a Humanist holiday, celebrated annually around the world but especially in America, on the June solstice. It is seen as a day for spreading awareness of [Humanism](#) as a philosophical [life stance](#) and as a means for effecting change in the world. It is also seen as a time for Humanists to gather socially and promote the positive values of Humanism.

The manner in which World Humanist Day is celebrated varies considerably among local Humanist groups, reflecting the individuality and non-dogmatism of Humanism as a whole. Whilst the event might be a simple gathering, such as a dinner or picnic, with ample time for both socialising and reflection, the method of celebration is left to individual Humanists. Some groups develop intricate social rituals, music, and proceedings which highlight the metaphoric symbolism of the solstice and the light (knowledge) which brings us out of darkness (ignorance).

More information at ...

1. [The Spiritual Naturalist: Happy World Humanist Day!](#)
2. [Secular Seasons - World Humanist Day](#)
3. [Happy World Humanist Day](#)
4. [iHumanism: World Humanism Day](#)
5. [World Humanist Day](#)

Thursday, 22 June

LAILAT-UL-QADR / THE NIGHT OF POWER / HONOUR / DIGNITY Muslim (Sunni)

This commemorates the night in 610 CE when the prophet Muhammad received his first visit from the angel Jibril (Gabriel) and his revelation of the *Qur'an*. Muslims believe that the date of this night is kept secret by God, but that they 'may seek the Night of Dignity in the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan' (Bukhaari, quoting Aisha, who heard it from the Prophet). Many Muslims spend the last ten days and nights of Ramadan secluded in the mosque, praying and studying the *Qur'an*, to ensure they receive the special benefits promised for their prayers and devotions on Lailat-ul-Qadr.

For the purpose of communal activities, or for those who can only spend one night in devotions at the mosque, Sunnis favour the 27th day (beginning the evening of the 26th) whilst the Shi'a favour the 23rd day of Ramadan. Of this night, the *Qur'an* states, "Lailat-ul-Qadr is better than a thousand months." Surah 97:1-5 (see esp. 97: 3).

The first revelation: Surah 2:185.

c) p 218; b) pp 112,120.

More information at ...

1. [Lailatul Qadar - The Night of Power](#)
2. [Islamic Finder - Lailat ul Qadr](#)
3. [Win Calendar - Lailat-ul-Qadr](#)
4. [Sound Vision: Lailat ul Qadr](#)
5. [Duas: 'Common' A'amaal for Laylatul Qadr](#)

June 2017

Saturday, 24 June

MIDSUMMER DAY *National*

One of the four Quarter Days in the UK legal calendar

More information at ...

1. [Mysterious Britain: Midsummer's Day](#)
2. [Celebrating the Swedish Way: Midsummer Day](#)
3. [Humour: Midsummer's Day - June24th](#)
4. [Images for Midsummer's Day](#)
5. [Britannica summarises Midsummer's Eve](#)

Sunday, 25 June

RATHA YATRA *Hindu*

'Chariot journey'. This is observed most notably at Puri in the Indian state of Orissa, where processions of thousands of devotees pull huge waggons (*rathas*) supporting images of Krishna. He is known under the name of 'Jagannath', (Lord of the Universe), from which the English term 'juggernaut' comes. Krishna is attended on his journey by his brother and sister. The festival and others like it are celebrated in Britain with processions through various parts of London on appropriate Sundays.

a) p 123; b) pp 68-69, 75, 79-80.

More information at ...

1. [Rath Yatra - the Chariot Festival of Puri](#)
2. [ISKCON UK: Ratha Yatra - Festival of the Chariots](#)
3. [Harekrnsna: The Ratha Yatra](#)
4. [Rath Yatra: The Chariot Festival of Puri, with photos](#)
5. [Swaminarayan: Rath Yatra](#)

Monday, 26 June

EID-UL-FITR / FEAST OF FAST BREAKING (1st Shawwal) *Muslim*

Celebrations of this festival may extend over the first three days of the month of Shawwal, the month following Ramadan, although only the first day's celebration is religiously sanctioned. It is a time for making gifts to the poor (*Zakat-ul-Fitr*, the charity of the fast, must be paid before the *Eid* prayer). Now is a time for new clothes, good food, and presents for children. Families get together and contact friends, especially those who live far away. The community will assemble for *Eid* prayer and a sermon at the mosque or at a large place which will accommodate the whole community of the town or village. The traditional greeting is '*Eid Mubarak*' - 'a happy and blessed *Eid*'. (There is no reference to this in the *Qur'an* but there is in the *Hadith*, the traditions of the Prophet).

b) pp 220-223; b) pp 110,112, 114-116, 120, 140, vii.

More information at ...

1. [Eid-al-Fitr – History and Interesting Facts about the Festival](#)
2. [Duas: Eid ul Fitr - 1st Shawwl - Eid salat](#)
3. [Islamic City: Eid ul Fitr](#)
4. [Foods and Menu Ideas for a Festive Eid-ul-Fitr](#)
5. [The Huffington Post: Articles on Eid Ul Fitr](#)

July 2017

Here is the seventh of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

July Nelson Mandela 1918 - 2013

In his youth South Africa was a very unfair country, with laws dividing people unequally according to their racial background and skin colour. The majority of white settlers from Europe ('Boers') justified this approach by appealing to a distorted interpretation of the Bible. Nelson Mandela challenged this as a trained lawyer and also by working with those prepared to use violence to achieve social justice. For this he was arrested as a terrorist and imprisoned for life, mainly on Robben Island in Table Bay, Cape Town. After 27 years he was released and, from his position as leader of the African National Congress and the elected President of the whole country, he sought to transform it into a 'Rainbow' nation of politically equal races. In place of the bitter hostilities of inherited antipathy, he encouraged forgiveness by his own personal example and through the work of the Peace and Reconciliation Commission. Both within South Africa and throughout the world he represents not only black resistance but all types of human resistance against oppression. His birthday on 18th July is now celebrated internationally as Mandela Day.

For more information, go to:

General overview of life

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/famouspeople/nelson_mandela

Comprehensive biography with pictures and sound

<https://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/biography>

His most famous speech

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/series/great-speeches-nelson-mandela>

Excerpts from his writings

<http://www.adweek.com/galleycat/remembering-nelson-mandela-through-his-writing/81631?red=as>

Activities for a Mandela Day

www.mandeladay.com

His take on religion

<http://mg.co.za/article/2013-12-12-mandela-and-the-confessions-of-a-closet-christian>

Saturday, 1 July

JASHN-E TIRGAN (TIR JASHAN) Zoroastrian (Iranian)

Jashn-e Tirgan is an ancient quarter year summer festival, celebrated about three months after the spring NoRuz. Tirgan is devoted to the divinity Tir and is associated with the dog-star Sirius and the coming of the rains in Iran and the fertility they bring.

On this day it is customary to visit the Fire Temple to give thanks to Ahura Mazda, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, listen to stories of how the boundaries of Iran were established in antiquity with its Central Asian neighbour Turan (now Turkmenistan) by an archer shooting an arrow, share a community meal, play with 'rainbow' bracelets made of seven coloured silks, splash each other with water, and dance and make merry.

a) pp 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Cais SOAS - Celebrations - Jashn-e-Tirgan](#)
2. [Bintudaddy: Tirgan Iranian Summer Festival \(Yeki Bood Yeki Nabood\)](#)
3. [Zoroastrian Heritage - Tirgan](#)
4. [Images for Jashn-e-Tirgan](#)
5. [Iran Review: Arash the Archer and the Festival of Rain \(Jashn-e Tirgan\)](#)

July 2017

Saturday, 8 July – Monday 17th July (Kadmi)

Saturday, 11 March – Monday, 20 March (Iranian)

FRAVARDIGAN / MUKTAD Zoroastrian

The Fravardigan festival (the festival of the *fravashis*), popularly known as *Muktad* (All Souls), commences ten days before NoRuz and is the last festival of the old year. The Zoroastrian day commences at sunrise and not midnight, and so during sunrise on the first day of the festival the immortal souls, together with their *fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, artistically depicted as half man/half bird), are welcomed by name by the Zoroastrian *Mobeds* or *Magi* (priests).

For ten days they reside in the place of worship, hovering around a table full of metal vases, each specifically earmarked for an individual family and containing white flowers. They leave the physical world after the last ceremony, held on the tenth evening, but before the dawn of NoRuz. The designated priest - as a farewell gesture - will then empty the water from one of the metal vases, which he will turn upside down, signifying that it is time for the immortal souls and the *fravashis* to return to the spiritual world.

Theologically Fravardigan is the most important Zoroastrian festival after NoRuz, but, since it deals with one's departed ancestors, many Zoroastrians regard it to be their holiest festival. During these ten days Zoroastrians often take time off from work, pray extensively, recite the five *Gathas* (hymns composed by Zarathushtra) and ensure their houses are thoroughly cleaned. They prepare daily samples of sacred food enjoyed by their departed ancestors while still alive, and take these to the place of worship, to be tasted by them during the daily ceremonies. This ritually consecrated food, along with chosen fruits, is then shared by the living in the special *Hamaspahmaidyem Gahambar*, a communal feast celebrated after the ceremony is over.

a) pp 250-252; b) pp 129-130, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Muktad - When Souls Come-a-Visiting](#)
2. [Celebrate and Remember - Fravardigan Days or Muktad](#)
3. [Faiths Forum - Fravardigan/Muktad](#)
4. [Images for Fravardigan](#)
5. [What to do and pray during the Muktad](#)

***Saturday, 8/15 July**

ASALHA PUJA / DHAMMA DAY Buddhist

Dhammacakka day - 'The turning of the wheel of teaching'. This is a Theravada celebration of the First Proclamation by Gautama to five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares. In it he taught the Middle Way, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths.

a) p 47; b) pp 24, 31, i, ii.

More information at ...

1. [Buddhist Festivals - Asalha Puja](#)
2. [Chiang Mai University: Asalha Puja Day](#)
3. [My Triple Blog: Asalha Puja Day](#)
4. [Asalha Puja in Pictures](#)
5. <http://www.encyclopediathai.org/sunthai/ceremony/AsarnhaBucha.htm%09Battaya>
[Mail: Thai Buddhists nationwide perform religious rites on Asalha Puja Day](#)
<http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/blog/thailand-social-manager/read/295700/asalha-puja-day>

July 2017

Sunday, 9 July

ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARTYRDOM OF THE BAB *Baha'i*

This day recalls the death of the *Bab*, executed by firing squad in Tabriz, Persia, at noon on July 9th in 1850. Baha'is commemorate his death at noon with readings and prayers from the Baha'i Scriptures. It has become a holy day of rest when Baha'is should refrain from work.

a) pp 26-27; b) pp 19, 21-22.

More information at ...

1. [Baha'i World News Service: Anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Bab](#)
2. [Baha'i Blog: The Martyrdom of the Bab and Jesus Christ](#)
3. [Baha'i Library - Martyrdom of the Bab](#)
4. [Susan Gammage: Holy Day Celebration for the Martrydom of the Bab](#)
5. [Huffington Post - Martyrdom of the Bab](#)

Thursday, 13 July – Saturday, 15 July

O-BON *Japanese (in Japan – not Tokyo - see 13 August)*

A Japanese festival when the spirits of the departed are welcomed back home with feasting and dancing. Fires are often lit to illuminate their arrival and departure. Celebrations in rural areas may take place one month earlier.

a) pp 162-163; b) pp 82, 86-87, 89.

More information at ...

1. [Go Japan: Japanese Festivals - O-bon](#)
2. [The Japan Guy: What is Obon?](#)
3. [Kids Web Japan; Bon Holidays](#)
4. [O-Bon in Pictures](#)
5. [The Diplomat: Obon - Japan Welcomes the Ancestors \(And Other Spirits Too\)](#)

Tuesday, 18 July

NAVROZE / NO RUZ *Zoroastrian (Kadmi)*

New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. In the tenth century a group of Zoroastrians fled from Iran and were given religious sanctuary by the Hindus of Western India, where they became known as Parsis (or Persians). During the twentieth century the Zoroastrians of Iran have revised their calendar to take account of the leap year, while the Parsis of India have continued following the traditional imperial or Shenshai calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world to practise Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!

a) pp 252-253; b) 127-128, 130-132, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Zoroastrian Heritage - Papeti - Navroze/No Ruz](#)
2. [Zawa: Joy Grows from the Conquest of Evil - Navroze, No Ruz, Papeti](#)
3. [Navroze Special - A Parsi Feast awaits you](#)
4. [India Opines: A Glimpse into Parsi Cuisine This Navroze](#)
5. [Iran Chamber Society: No-Rooz, The Iranian New Year at Present Times](#)

Sunday, 23 July

BIRTHDAY OF HAILE SELASSIE I *Rastafarian*

This is one of the holiest days of the Ethiopian year. It is celebrated widely throughout Ethiopia. Wherever Rastafarians live they rejoice to honour the birthday with *Nyahbinghi* drumming, hymns and prayers.

More information at ...

1. [Rasta Ites: Reasoning on His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie the First](#)
2. [Biography of Haile Selassie I](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Birthday of Haile Selassie](#)
4. [Photos of Haile Selassie I](#)
5. [Brainy Quotes: Haile Selassie Quotes](#)

July 2017

Sunday, 23 July Zoroastrian (*Kadmi*)

Sunday, 26 March Zoroastrian (*Iranian*)

KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian

Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day following NoRuz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.

a) pp 253, 255; b) pp 128-132.

More information at ...

1. [Mango Salute: Khordad Sal - A Celebration of the Prophet Zarathustra](#)
2. [A History of Khordad Sal](#)
3. [Mythic Maps - Khordad Sal](#)
4. [Sakshigopal: Happy Khordad Sal! Birthday Day of Zoroaster!](#)
5. [Festivals advices - Khordad sal - the birthday of Zoroaster](#)

Thursday, 27 July

CHOKOR (also **CHO KOR DU CHEN**) *Buddhist*

This is a Tibetan and Nepalese festival that commemorates the first teaching (*the turning of the wheel of law*) given by the historical Buddha. It is a colourful and relaxed mid-summer festival, when statues of the Buddha and copies of the scriptures, engraved on narrow, rectangular wooden blocks, are carried round the district with music and jollity, symbolising the promulgation of the Buddha's teaching. The whole community, clerical and lay, male and female, joins in the processions and the picnics that follow.

More information at ...

1. [Diamond Way Buddhism UK Blog: Today is Chokhor Duchen, a 'Ten Million Multiplier'](#)
2. [Chokor du Chen – Buddha Multiplying Day](#)
3. [Mythic Maps: Chokor Duchen](#)
4. [Tibet Travel: Festivals - Chokor Duchen](#)
5. [Blogspot: Dream of my guru on Chokhor Duchen](#)

August 2017

Here is the eighth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

August Hugo Grotius 1583 – 1645

Much of the world's surface is covered in water and just as people have argued and fought over who controls which lands, so the same thing happened as the result of 'voyages of discovery'. Hugo Grotius (Huig de Groot) from Holland was one of the first people to suggest how these clashes might be avoided. Something of a child prodigy – he went to university when aged 11, became a lawyer, a diplomat and a Christian theologian – and he drew on all this experience in his writings. These were dominated by his development of International Law as in *De jure belli ac pacis* (The rights of war and peace) and *Mare liberum* (Freedom of the Seas). Just as the risk of war was evident over sea and land, so it was between people with different religious beliefs. Here he wrote extensively regarding claims to truth in religion and he set out to demonstrate by the use of natural reasoning how it is possible to overcome squabbles between Christians. Died August 28th, 1645.

For more information, go to:

Biographical overviews

http://myhero.com/hero.asp?hero=Hugo_Grotius_06

<http://www.duhaime.org/LawMuseum/LawArticle-1155/Hugo-Grotius-1583-1645-Netherlands.aspx>

<https://mathewlyons.wordpress.com/2011/10/12/the-grotian-moment-hugo-grotius-and-the-invention-of-international-law>

Quotations

http://www.azquotes.com/author/23838-Hugo_Grotius

Writings

<http://oll.libertyfund.org/person/3775>

Escape from prison

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkLXsPJLC3M> nb: skip ad

Tuesday, 1 August

TISHA B'AV Jewish

This is the saddest day of the Jewish calendar. A full day fast is held at the conclusion of three weeks of mourning, while reflecting on the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem. Other tragedies in Jewish history are also recalled, many of which have coincidentally happened on this day. The Book of Lamentations is read at this time.

a) pp 208-209; b) pp 106-107, 109.

More information at ...

1. [The Laws of Tisha B'Av](#)

2. [Jewfaq: Tisha B'Av](#)

3. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/holidayd.html>

4. [Reform Judaism: Tishah B'Av](#)

5. [Tisha B'Av - the Ninth day of Av](#)

6. [My Jewish Learning: Tisha B'Av](#)

August 2017

Tuesday, 1 August

LAMMAS/LUGHNASADH (pronounced Loo-nassa) *Wiccan*

LUGHNASADH *Pagan*

Lughnasadh, otherwise called *Lammas*, is the time of the corn harvest, when Pagans reap those things they have sown and when they celebrate the fruits of the mystery of Nature. At Lughnasadh, Pagans give thanks for the bounty of the Goddess as Queen of the Land. More information at ...

1. [The goddess and the green man - Lammas](#)
2. [Pagan/Wiccan: All About Lammas](#)
3. [The White Goddess: Lammas](#)
4. [Images for the Festival of Lammas](#)
5. [Mything Links: Lammas, Lughnasadh](#)

Sunday, 6 August

THE TRANSFIGURATION *Christian (Julian Calendar: 19 August)*

This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John; here, as his death approached, they saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.

For Orthodox Christians this is an especially important festival, pointing to Christ as both human and divine. Although Moses and Elijah had died centuries before, they could both live again in the presence of the Son of God, implying that a similar return to life can apply to all who face death.

Matthew 17:1-17, Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36.

a) p 101; b) pp 106-107, 109.

More information at ...

[The Orthodox Church in America - The Transfiguration](#)

[The Expository Files: The Transfiguration](#)

[About Catholicism: The Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)

[Bible.org: The Transfiguration \(Matthew 17:1-13\)](#)

[NC Register: 10 things you need to know about Jesus' Transfiguration](#)

Monday, 7 August

RAKSHA BANDHAN *Hindu*

This festival takes place on the full moon of Shravana. *Raksha* means 'protection' and *bandhan* means 'to tie'. Girls and married women in families of a north Indian background tie a *rakhi* (amulet) on the right wrists of their brothers, wishing them protection from evil influences of various kinds. Different celebrations take place on this day in different parts of India. So, for example, in western Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa, Hindus offer coconuts to the sea god, Lord Varuna, so the festival is called Nariyal Purnima, coconut full-moon.

a) pp 69-70 b) 139-140.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Raksha Bandhan](#)
2. [Society for the Confluence of Festivals in India: Raksha Bandhan](#)
3. [Indif Devotional: Raksha Bandhan - The Festival of Brotherhood and Love](#)
4. [Maps of India: Raksha Bandhan](#)
5. [Culture: Festivals - Rakhi \(Raksha Bandhan\)](#)

August 2017

Monday, 7 August – Wednesday 16th August (Kadmi)

Saturday, 11 March – Monday, 20 March (Iranian)

FRAVARDIGAN / MUKTAD Zoroastrian

The Fravardigan festival (the festival of the *fravashis*), popularly known as *Muktad* (All Souls), commences ten days before NoRuz and is the last festival of the old year. The Zoroastrian day commences at sunrise and not midnight, and so during sunrise on the first day of the festival the immortal souls, together with their *fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, artistically depicted as half man/half bird), are welcomed by name by the Zoroastrian *Mobeds* or *Magi* (priests).

For ten days they reside in the place of worship, hovering around a table full of metal vases, each specifically earmarked for an individual family and containing white flowers. They leave the physical world after the last ceremony, held on the tenth evening, but before the dawn of NoRuz. The designated priest - as a farewell gesture - will then empty the water from one of the metal vases, which he will turn upside down, signifying that it is time for the immortal souls and the *fravashis* to return to the spiritual world.

Theologically Fravardigan is the most important Zoroastrian festival after NoRuz, but, since it deals with one's departed ancestors, many Zoroastrians regard it to be their holiest festival. During these ten days Zoroastrians often take time off from work, pray extensively, recite the five *Gathas* (hymns composed by Zarathushtra) and ensure their houses are thoroughly cleaned. They prepare daily samples of sacred food enjoyed by their departed ancestors while still alive, and take these to the place of worship, to be tasted by them during the daily ceremonies. This ritually consecrated food, along with chosen fruits, is then shared by the living in the special *Hamaspathmaidem Gahambar*, a communal feast celebrated after the ceremony is over.

a) pp 250-252; b) pp 129-130, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Muktad - When Souls Come-a-Visiting](#)
2. [Celebrate and Remember - Fravardigan Days or Muktad](#)
3. [Faiths Forum - Fravardigan/Muktad](#)
4. [Images for Fravardigan](#)
5. [What to do and pray during the Muktad](#)

Sunday, 13 August – Tuesday, 15 August

O-BON Japanese (in Tokyo – for rest of Japan, see 13 July)

A Japanese festival when the spirits of the departed are welcomed back home with feasting and dancing. Fires are often lit to illuminate their arrival and departure. Celebrations in rural areas may take place one month earlier.

a) pp 162-163; b) pp 82, 86-87, 89.

More information at ...

1. [Go Japan: Japanese Festivals - O-bon](#)
2. [The Japan Guy: What is Obon?](#)
3. [Kids Web Japan; Bon Holidays](#)
4. [O-Bon in Pictures](#)
5. [The Diplomat: Obon - Japan Welcomes the Ancestors \(And Other Spirits Too\)](#)

Tuesday, 15 August

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Christian (Roman Catholic)

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Christian (Anglican)

DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD Christian (Orthodox) (Julian Calendar: 28 August - *qv* for further detail)

On this day many Christians celebrate the 'taking up' of Mary, body and soul, to heaven. Several Catholic communities mark the festival of the Assumption with processions and fêtes.

a) pp 97-98; b) pp 49, 55, 59.

More information at ...

- [The Mary Page: A Variety of Customs associated with the Assumption](#)
[About Catholicism: Assumption of Mary](#)
[Time and Date: Assumption of Mary](#)
[Catholic Culture: The Assumption of Our Lady](#)
[Mary Pages: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#)

August 2017

Tuesday, 15 August

JANMASHTAMI / KRISHNA JAYANTI

This birthday is widely celebrated throughout the Hindu world. Krishna is a very popular avatar or incarnation of Lord Vishnu and many Hindus fast in his honour until midnight, the time of Krishna's birth. Those unable to fast will take some fruit and milk. In the temples Krishna is welcomed with singing, dancing and sweets. In some homes and temples an image of the new-born Krishna is put in a cradle and special sweets (e.g. the powder, panjiri, given traditionally to women after childbirth) are offered and distributed.

a) pp 129-130; b) pp 71, 75.

More information at ...

1. [Mangalore: Sri Krishna Jayanti](#)
2. [Festivals of India: Sri Krishna Jayanti/Krishnaastami Krishna: How to Celebrate Janmashtami](#)
3. [Mythic Maps: Janmashtami](#)
4. [Janmashtami in Pictures http://www.krishna.com/how-celebrate-janmashtami](http://www.krishna.com/how-celebrate-janmashtami)
5. [AstroVed: Fill Your Life with Love and Abundance - Krishna's Birthday](#)

Thursday, 17 August

NAVROZE / NO RUZ Zoroastrian (*Kadmi*)

New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. In the tenth century a group of Zoroastrians fled from Iran and were given religious sanctuary by the Hindus of Western India, where they became known as Parsis (or Persians). During the twentieth century the Zoroastrians of Iran have revised their calendar to take account of the leap year, while the Parsis of India have continued following the traditional imperial or Shenshai calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world to practise Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!

a) pp 252-253; b) 127-128, 130-132, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Zoroastrian Heritage - Papeti - Navroze/No Ruz](#)
2. [Zawa: Joy Grows from the Conquest of Evil - Navroze, No Ruz, Papeti](#)
3. [Navroze Special - A Parsi Feast awaits you](#)
4. [India Opines: A Glimpse into Parsi Cuisine This Navroze](#)
5. [Iran Chamber Society: No-Rooz, The Iranian New Year at Present Times](#)

Saturday, 19 August – Saturday, 26 August

PARYUSHAN Jain

These are eight days of purification, devoted to study, prayer, meditation and fasting, and ending with a period of confession and forgiveness. Often monks will be invited to give teachings from the Jain scriptures. Paryushana means 'to stay in one place', which signifies a time of reflection and repentance. Originally the practice was monastic for the most part.

a) pp 142, 146-147, 149; b) pp77, 78-79, 80.

More information at ...

1. [Jain World: Paryushan Parva](#)
2. [Colostate Education: Paryushana Parva](#)
3. [eJainism: Paryushan Parva](#)
4. [Images for Paryushan Parva](#)
5. [Jaina: Federation of Jain Associations in North America: Paryushan Parv](#)

August 2017

Saturday 19 August

THE TRANSFIGURATION *Christian - by the Julian Calendar*

This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John; here, as his death approached, they saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.

For Orthodox Christians this is an especially important festival, pointing to Christ as both human and divine. Although Moses and Elijah had died centuries before, they could both live again in the presence of the Son of God, implying that a similar return to life can apply to all who face death.

Matthew 17:1-17, Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36.

a) p 101; b) pp 106-107, 109.

More information at ...

[The Orthodox Church in America - The Transfiguration](#)

[The Expository Files: The Transfiguration](#)

[About Catholicism: The Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ](#)

[Bible.org: The Transfiguration \(Matthew 17:1-13\)](#)

[NC Register: 10 things you need to know about Jesus' Transfiguration](#)

Tuesday, 22 August *Zoroastrian (Shenshai)*

Sunday, 26 March *Zoroastrian (Iranian)*

KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian

Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day following NoRuz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.

a) pp 253, 255; b) pp 128-132.

More information at ...

1. [Mango Salute: Khordad Sal - A Celebration of the Prophet Zarathustra](#)

2. [A History of Khordad Sal](#)

3. [Mythic Maps - Khordad Sal](#)

4. [Sakshigopal: Happy Khordad Sal! Birthday Day of Zoroaster!](#)

5. [Festivals advices - Khordad sal - the birthday of Zoroaster](#)

Thursday, 24 August – Saturday, 2 September

1st to 10th DHUL-HIJJAH *Muslim*

For Muslims the first 10 days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah are held to be especially holy when good deeds are particularly rewarded by God. These days encompass the allotted days for the performance of the Hajj (pilgrimage) and the first day of Eid-ul-Adha (the feast of sacrifice).

More information at ...

1. [The Blessed Days of Dhul Hijjah](#)

2. [ICNA: Virtues of the First 10 Days of 'Dhul-Hijja'](#)

3. [The First Ten Days of Dhul Hijjah: Days of Virtue and Righteous Deeds](#)

4. [Virtues of the First Ten Days of Dhul-Hijjah](#)

5. [Islamic Centre: 12th Month in the Islamic Calendar: Dhul Hijjah](#)

August 2017

Saturday, 26 August

SAMVATSARI (International Forgiveness Day) Jain

This is the last day of Paryushana, which many regard as the most important eight or ten day festival of Jainism. It is the holiest day of the Jain calendar and many Jains observe a complete fast. The whole day is spent in prayers and contemplation, asking for forgiveness from others.

1. [Samvatsari - When jains purify themselves](#)
2. [Samvatsari, the climax of the festival of Paryushana Parva](#)
3. [Why do Jains say 'michchhami-dukkadam' and when do they say it?](#)
4. [Samvatsari Greetings Cards](#)
5. [Samvatsari - The Festival of Forgiveness](#)

Friday, 25 August

GANESHA CHATURTHI Birthday of Ganesh Hindu

Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi is a Hindu festival in honour of Ganesh/Ganesha, (also known as Ganapati and Vinayaka), the god of good fortune and new beginnings. A popular story explains why Ganesha, the son of Parvati and Shiva, has the head of an elephant. This festival is particularly significant for Hindus from Maharashtra and is celebrated in a major way in Mumbai (Bombay). Celebrations can last one, five or ten days, and will conclude with the immersion in water of the image of Ganesh.

a) pp 128-129; b) pp 70-71, 75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)
2. [Taj Online: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)
3. [Go India: Guide to the Ganesh Chaturthi Festival in India](#)
4. [Swaminarayan: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)
5. [Ashtavinayaka: Ganesh Chaturthi](#)

Monday, 28 August

THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD Christian (Eastern Orthodox. Julian Calendar)

On this day, Eastern Orthodox Christians commemorate the passing of Mary, Mother of Christ, in the presence of the Apostles. Miraculously brought together at her house, Mary told the Apostles of the reason for their gathering, and comforted them. She raised her hands to pray for peace for the world, and blessed each apostle before giving up her spirit. The apostles buried Mary at Gethsemane, where Jesus had also been buried; but on the third day after the burial, when they were eating together, Mary appeared to them, saying "Rejoice". In this way, the apostles first learned that Mary's body had been taken up into Heaven, where Christ had already taken her spirit. When the apostles went to the grave, her body was gone, leaving a sweet fragrance. The symbolism of this event encompasses the idea of death as 'falling asleep' (this is what 'dormition' means), to be followed by eventual resurrection.

a) pp 97-98; b) pp 49, 55, 59.

More information at ...

[Orthodox Wiki: Dormition of the Mother of God](#)

[Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: Feast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady, The Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary](#)

[The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary](#)

[Russian Orthodox Church: Dormition of the Holy Virgin](#)

[John the Theologian, The Dormition of the Holy Theotokos](#)

August 2017

Monday, 28 August

HERD BOY AND WEAVING MAID FESTIVAL / QIXIJIE / CH'I HOU CHIEH *Chinese*

This Double Seven festival perpetuates an ancient folk tale of two stars, one on either side of the Heavenly River (the Milky Way). They are held to have been a herd boy and a heavenly weaving maid who had married but were separated when she returned to heaven. The lovers are allowed a reunion on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month when a flock of magpies form a bridge across the Heavenly River. But if it rains on that day, the River overflows and sweeps away the bridge, so preventing their meeting for a whole year. Women traditionally pray for clear skies on the night of the seventh day of the month.

a) p 70; b) p 43.

More information at ...

1. [Tai Chi Chuan Centre - Weaving Girl](#)
2. [World of Tales: Chinese Folk Tales - The Herd Boy and the Weaving Maiden](#)
3. [The Herd Boy and the Weaving Maid, and other Oriental Folk Tales](#)
4. [You Tube - The Cow Herd and the Weaving Maid and other stories](#)
5. [China Travel: Double Seventh Festival - Herd Boy and Weaving Maid](#)

Thursday, 31st August – Monday, 4 September

HAJJ / PILGRIMAGE TO MAKKAH (8th to 12th Dhul-Hijjah) *Muslim*

All Muslims who can afford to do so, and are not prevented through ill-health, are required to make this pilgrimage once in their lifetime (although there is no prohibition on making the pilgrimage more than once). A series of ritual acts are performed by the pilgrims during the first two days of Hajj, prior to the three day festival of Eid-al-Adha which is celebrated in Makkah by the pilgrims

More information at ...

1. [Saudi Embassy - Hajj](#)
2. [Islamic City: Hajj - The Journey of a Lifetime](#)
3. [Why do Millions Gather in Mecca Every Year?](#)
4. [Hajj in Pictures and Photos](#)
5. [The Guardian - Hajj](#)

September 2017

Here is the ninth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

September Confucius 551 - 479 BCE

Historically the most influential of Chinese persons of all time is: K'ung Fu-tzu. His teachings continue in Chinese schools today and many universities throughout the world (including British ones) have Confucian Institutes. He was so highly regarded during his life that within a year of his death the practice of offering sacrifices to him had begun. He made no claims as to his own importance, but throughout his adult life he focussed on living a life based on Truth. He taught that learning to live morally matters more than anything else in life – it brings happiness to both the individual and to the wider society – and this becomes more deeply understood the longer we centre our lives in this way. Such an approach can be helped by playing music, reciting poetry, and through physical movement, but principally through the fact that the inward experience which accompanies these then shows itself in outward behaviour. His thinking is commonly presented as promoting moral education, but closer examination evokes a reminder of the interplay of the moral with the religious in all aspects of education. The Analects are probably the most authentic version of his direct teachings. He was born 'between Spring and Autumn' in 551 BCE.

For more information, go to:

his place within the Confucian tradition

<http://www.philtar.ac.uk/encyclopedia/confuc/early.html>

biography

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Confucius.aspx>

popular illustrated overview of his teachings

<http://www.china-family-adventure.com/who-was-confucius.html>

some quotations

<http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Confucius>

The Analects

<http://classics.mit.edu/Confucius/analects.html>

Radio programme

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00547k8>

of Confucius

http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=confucius+for+children&hl=en-GB&qbv=2&prmd=ivns&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwih5NK6v_fMAhVJAcAKHaRHCOUQsAQIOA

Confucian institutes around the world

http://english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm

Confucius Day

<http://holidayinsights.com/moreholidays/September/confuciusday.htm>

<http://chineseculture.about.com/od/chinesefestivals/a/Happy-Birthday-Confucius.htm>

September 2017

* **Sunday, Sept/Oct**

HARVEST FESTIVAL *Christian (Western, Anglican and Free Churches)*

Special services are held around this time of year to give thanks for the goodness of God's gifts in providing a harvest of crops along with all the other fruits of society. Displays of produce are often made, usually distributed afterwards to those in need. Increasingly the emphasis is on a wider interpretation than just the harvests of the fields and seas.

a) p 82; b) p 54.

More information at ...

[Activity Village - Suggestions for the Harvest Festival](#)

[Woodlands School: Harvest Festival](#)

[Images of Harvest Festival Celebrations](#)

[Send a Cow: Harvest Festival](#)

[Barnabas: God is a faithful gardener](#)

Friday, 1 September

YAUM-ARAFAH / THE DAY OF ARAFAT (9th Dhul-Hijjah) *Muslim*

This day marks the culminating event of the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Makkah. Muslims who are on *Hajj* spend the day in prayer on Mount Arafat to commemorate the end of the revelation of the *Qur'an* to the Prophet. Those not on *Hajj* are also expected to pray and to fast.

Surah 5: 4

pp 223

b) -224; b) pp116-117.

More information at ...

1. [Al Maghrib: The Truth Behind the Day of Arafah and its Name](#)

2. [Arab News: The Day of Arafat](#)

3. [Pilgrims throng Mount Arafat in Makkah](#)

4. [The Day of Arafat in Pictures and Photos](#)

5. [Arafat](#)

Friday, 1 September

INSTALLATION OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IN THE HARMANDIR SAHIB,

Amritsar 1604 CE Sikh

In 1604, in the place of worship where the Golden Temple now stands, the Sikhs' fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, installed for the first time the Adi Granth, a volume of scripture for the Sikh community. It consisted of the hymns of the first five Gurus plus those of other 'saint-poets'. Hymns by the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur, were later incorporated in the scripture, so forming the present Guru Granth Sahib.

a) p 244; b) p 126.

More information at ...

1. [All About Sikhs: Harmandir Sahib - Installation of the Holy Granth](#)

2. [SGPC: Guru Granth Sahib](#)

3. [Sikhism Guide: Sri Guru Granth Sahib](#)

4. [Sikh Scriptures, Images, Excerpts and Quotations](#)

5. [Gurbani Files: Sri Guru Granth Sahib - A Brief Introduction](#)

September 2017

Saturday, 2 September – Monday, 4 September

EID-UL-ADHA/THE FESTIVAL OF SACRIFICE (10th Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim

This major festival (*al-Eid al-Kabir*) marks the end of the *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Makkah) on the tenth day of the twelfth month of *Dhul-Hijja*. The *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam. Pilgrims sacrifice animals at the village of Mina on their way back to Makkah from Mount Arafat (where they have spent the first day of the festival) in commemoration of Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Muslims all over the world sacrifice an animal if they can afford it. Much of the meat is distributed to the poor, and some is shared with relatives and friends.

Surah 37:99-111, 22:26-33 and 3:96-97.

a) pp 224-227; b) pp 111-112, 114-115, 117-118, 120, 137, 143.

More information at ...

1. [Imam Ilyas Sidyot: The spirit behind Eid-ul-Adha](#)
2. [Islamic Concern: Sacrifice and Eid ul Adha](#)
3. [Eid ul Adha for Schools](#)
4. [123 Greetings: Eid ul Adha](#)
5. [Ahadith: Search for Hadith on Eid ul Adha - 30 results](#)

Monday, 4 September

FRAVARDIN MAH PARAB Zoroastrian (Shenshai - Parsi)

On the day of Fravardin, the 19th day of the month of Fravardin, the first month of the year, Zoroastrians visit the vicinity of the Towers of Silence in India (or in the UK the Zoroastrian Cemetery in Brookwood, Surrey) to participate in a jashan ceremony in memory of the departed fravashis (guardian spirits and souls of the community). Sacred food is prepared as an offering to the departed during the jashan and is later shared by the participants.

More information at ...

1. [Sympatico: Fravashisympatihttp://www3.sympatico.ca/zoroastrian/fravar.htm](http://www3.sympatico.ca/zoroastrian/fravar.htm)
2. [Muktdad - When Souls Come-a-Visiting](#)
3. [Farvardegan day on Farvardin Roj, Farvardin Mah](#)
4. [Images for Fravardin Mah Parab](#)
<https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=Fravardigan&client=gmail&sa=N&rls=aso&authuser=2&biw=1366&bih=659&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=0ahUKewjbtJbw5v7KAhUJaRQKHS3HBj04ChCwBAq9>
5. [Farvardegan](#)

Tuesday, 5 September

FESTIVAL OF HUNGRY GHOSTS / ZHOHGYUANJIE / CHUNG YUAN Chinese

Chinese Buddhist and ancestral festival also called the 'Festival of Hungry Ghosts'. Paper objects for use in the spirit world are made and offered to aid the spirits who have no resting place or descendants. Large paper boats are made and burnt at temples to help spirits on their journey across the sea of torment to *Nirvana*.

a) pp 70, 72; b) p 43.

More information at ...

1. [About Chinese Culture: The Hungry Ghost Festival](#)
2. [About Mandarin: Ghost Month and Ghost Festival](#)
3. [Discover Hong Kong. Festivals/Chinese - The Hungry Ghosts festival](#)
4. [Images of Hungry Ghosts](#)
5. [Bukit Brown: 'Hungry Ghost Month' - Reflections](#)

September 2017

Sunday 10 September

THE FESTIVAL OF THE POOL/EID UL GHADEER (or GHADIR) (18^h Dhul-Hijjah) Muslim (Shi'a)

This is a festival observed by Shi'a Muslims, for whom it is an extremely important day. It commemorates an event shortly before the death of the Prophet. When returning from Makkah to Medina after his final pilgrimage, the Prophet, who was travelling with many thousands of his followers, stopped at an oasis (the pool of Khumm) to deliver a sermon. While preaching he is believed by Shi'a Muslims to have raised the hand of Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, and proclaimed, 'For whoever I am his leader, Ali is his leader. O God, love those who love him, and be hostile to those who are hostile to him'.

Immediately after this statement the Prophet revealed an *ayah* (verse) of the Qur'an: 'Today I have perfected your religion and completed my favour upon you, and I was satisfied that Islam be your religion' (*Qur'an* 5, 3.) For Shi'a Muslims the 'perfecting' of the religion of Islam was the announcement concerning Ali, which they understand to be his clear appointment to be successor to the prophet as the spiritual and temporal leader of Islam.

More information at ...

1. [Islamic Occasions - Eid ul Ghadeer](#)
2. [The Ismaili: Eid-e Ghadir](#)
3. [Ziaraat: Significance of Eid-e-Ghadeer](#)
4. [Slide Share: Eid Alghadeer](#)
5. [Seratonline: Why do Shias celebrate Eid-e- Ghadeer?](#)

Monday, 11 September

ETHIOPIAN NEW YEAR'S DAY *Rastafarian*

Ethiopian families love to celebrate their New Year, which they call Enqutatash, with presents and visits. Rastafarians throughout the world honour it too. They have a four year cycle, in which each year is named after an evangelist. This is the beginning of the year of Luke.

More information at ...

1. [The New Year is a happy time in Ethiopia](#)
2. [Ethiopian Calendar: Ethiopian New Year](#)
3. [Rastafarians celebrate Ethiopian New Year's Day](#)
4. [Jamaican Rasta wishes you a Happy New Year](#)
5. [Rastafarian holy days now honoured in UK prisons](#)

Wednesday, 20 September – Tuesday, 26 September

HIGAN Japanese

Saturday, 23 September

SHUUBUN NO HI Japanese

Marks the autumn equinox. As at the spring equinox, harmony and balance are the themes; sutras are recited and the graves of relatives are visited.

a) p 164; b) p 87.

More information at ...

1. [Shuubun-no-Hi or Autumnal Equinox Day?](#)
2. [Kalamalama - Shubun no hi](#)
3. [Tokyo 5: Shubun no hi](#)
4. [Shubun no hi - cleaning the ancestral tombs](#)
5. [In Culture Parent: Happy O-Higan!](#)

September 2017

Thursday, 21 September – Friday, 22 September

ROSH HASHANAH (Head of the Year) *Jewish*

(New Year's Day, 5778 years from the creation of the world). Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of ten days of repentance and self examination, during which G-d sits in personal judgment on every individual. The blowing of the ram's horn (*shofar*) in the synagogue is a reminder of Abraham's sacrifice of a ram instead of his son, Isaac. Apples dipped in honey are eaten in the hope of a 'sweet' new year. The greeting is '*Leshanah Tovah Tikatev*' (may you be inscribed for a good year).

Genesis 22, Leviticus 23:24-25.

a) pp 193-196; b) pp 90, 99-102, 109, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Jewfaq: Rosh Hashanah](#)
2. [Jewish Virtual Library: Rosh HaShana - History and Overview](#)
3. [Rosh Hashanah for Tiny Tots](#)
4. [Rosh Hashanah - Images and Pictures](#)
5. [About Judaism: Rosh Hashanah](#)

Thursday, 21 September – Friday, 29 September

NAVARATRI *Hindu*

Navaratri means nine nights, the length of the festival. Hindus from different areas of India celebrate it in different ways. In the north the Ram Lila is performed each night, in celebration of Lord Rama's victory over Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. All around the world families from Gujarat gather to participate in circle dances associated with the Goddess Durga and with Lord Krishna. Many Punjabis worship the Goddess daily during Navaratri, and observe a strictly vegetarian diet. On the eighth day, Durga Ashtami, Punjabi Hindus fast before conducting worship of the Goddess that involves honouring young girls as the embodiment of her power.

a) pp 130-133; b) pp 61, 65, 72-73, 75.

More information at ...

1. [Ahmedabad on Internet: Festivals - Navaratri](#)
2. [Gujarat India: All about Gujarat - Navratri](#)
3. http://www.ahmedabadcity.com/tourismtest/php/festival_navratri.php Rudraksha: Navratri festival/Navratri puja
4. [Photos celebrate the ending of Navratri](#)
5. [Huffington Post: Navratri Photos - Durga Puja: Worshipping the Divine Mother](#)

Friday, 22 September *AUTUMN EQUINOX (MABON) Wiccan Pagan*

Friday, 22 September *AUTUMN EQUINOX (Alban Elued or Alban Elfed) Druid*

Day and night stand hand in hand as equals. As the shadows lengthen, Pagans see the darker faces of the God and Goddess. For many Pagans, this rite honours old age and the approach of Winter.

More information at ...

1. [The White Goddess: The Wheel of the Year - Mabon, the Autumn Equinox](#)
2. [Two Pagans: Blessed Mabon](#)
3. [The Celtic Connection: Mabon - by Akasha](#)
4. [Simple Wiccan Mabon Ritual](#)
5. [The Llewellyn Encyclopedia: Mabon Ritual](#)

September 2017

Friday, 22 September

ISLAMIC NEW YEAR 1439 / AL-HIJRA / RA'S UL 'AM (Muharram 1) *Muslim*

This day commemorates the *Hijra* or migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Medina in 622 CE, which led to the establishment of the Muslim community there. The day is not universally celebrated amongst Sunni Muslims but is notable as Muslim years are dated from this time and are marked AH (After the *Hijrah*). In 2017 CE the Muslim year 1439 AH begins. For some Muslim communities this is a day of celebration at the mosque, where stories are told of the Prophet and his Companions. For the Shi'a community the more important significance is that this is the first day of the period of fasting, mourning and remembrance leading up to Ashura.

b) pp 213-215, 227-228; b) pp 112, 118.

More information at ...

1. [Islam for the World: Al Hijrah or the Prophet's Emigration](http://www.mythicmaps.net/Festival_calendar/February/Al-Hijra.htm)
http://www.mythicmaps.net/Festival_calendar/February/Al-Hijra.htm
2. [Jakarta Post: Unique traditions mark Islamic New Year](#)
3. [BBC Religions: Al-Hijra - The Muslim New Year](#)
4. [Al Hijra Celebrations](#)
5. [World Bulletin: The Ottoman way of celebrating the Islamic New Year](#)

Saturday, 23 September

SHUUBUN NO HI *Japanese*

Marks the autumn equinox. As at the spring equinox, harmony and balance are the themes; sutras are recited and the graves of relatives are visited.

a) p 164; b) p 87.

More information at ...

1. [Shuubun-no-Hi or Autumnal Equinox Day?](#)
2. [Kalamalama - Shubun no hi](#)
3. [Tokyo 5: Shubun no hi](#)
4. [Shubun no hi - cleaning the ancestral tombs](#)
5. [In Culture Parent: Happy O-Higan!](#)

Tuesday, 26 September – Saturday, 30 September

DURGA PUJA *Hindu*

In Nepal, Bangladesh and (in India) West Bengal and other north eastern areas, Durga Puja is the biggest annual festival and lasts several days. In Kolkata hundreds of *pandals* (decorated temporary shrines) are put up. The Goddess's slaying of the demon, Mahishasura, is celebrated, and in Nepal the celebration involves animal sacrifices. The festival ends with the immersion of figures of Durga in rivers and sea.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: The History and Origin of Durga Puja](#)
2. [About India: Guide to Durga Puja Festival in India](#)
3. [The Essentials of Durga Puja](http://www.southlondondurgapuja.com/)<http://www.southlondondurgapuja.com/>
4. [Durga Puja in Photographs](#)
5. [Everything you need to know about Durga Puja in Kolkata](#)

Friday, 29 September

MICHAELMAS *National*

One of the four Quarter Days in the UK legal calendar.

More information at ...

1. [Culture UK - Michaelmas](#)
2. [Catholic Culture: Michaelmas Day](#)
3. [About Paganism: Michaelmas](#)
4. [Are we ready to embrace the Michaelmas Goose once again?](#)
5. [Waldorf Homes Schools: Michaelmas Circle, Story and Resources](#)

September 2017

Saturday, 30 September DUSSEHRA / VIJAYA DASHAMI Hindu

In north India the day after Navaratri ends is celebrated as the 'victorious tenth' (Vijaya Dashami) and huge figures of Ravana are filled with fireworks and burned on Ram Lila grounds (public areas). In the UK some temple congregations carry this out on a smaller scale.

More information at ...

1. [Dussehr Info: Dussehra - Know About the Mega Festival of Happiness](#)
2. [UCLA: Culture/Festivals/Dussehra](#)
3. [I love India - Dussehra](#)
4. [Dussehra in Images](#)
5. [Calendarlabs - Dussehra](#)

Saturday, 30 September

YOM KIPPUR (Day of Atonement) Jewish

This is the final day of the ten days of repentance, and is the holiest day of the year in the Jewish calendar. The Bible calls it the 'Sabbath of Sabbaths', and it is marked by 'afflicting the soul' – expressed through a total fast lasting 25 hours. Jews spend the eve and most of the day in prayer, asking for forgiveness for past wrongs and resolving to improve in the future. The Book of Jonah is read. A common greeting is 'G'mar Chatimah Tovah' ('May you finally be sealed for good').

Leviticus 16:4-34, 23:27-32.

a) pp 196-199; b) pp 12, 90-91, 97-99, 102-103, 109, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Jewish Virtual Library: Yom Kippur](#)
2. [USA Today: On Yom Kippur, Jews split on which shoes to choose](#)
3. [What is Yom Kippur?](#)
4. [Greetings Cards for Yom Kippur](#)
5. [Jewfaq: Yom Kippur](#)

October 2017

Here is the tenth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

October William Penn 1644 - 1718

What have Quakers in 17th century England got to do with Pennsylvania in the USA? William Penn, the son of an important royalist admiral broke from the British political and religious establishment, joined the Society of Friends, and crossed the Atlantic to establish a 'Holy Experiment' which gave its name – and that of his father - to that state. He believed that everyone has the resource of an 'inner light' to live by and he made conscience and democracy central to both personal and political life. A treaty with American Indians was preferable to violence and the theft of their lands. Philadelphia was to live up to its name as a town of brotherly love. Back in England he was made to suffer for his beliefs, but nevertheless he continued to promote the idea of a commonwealth of all American people - and similarly of all Europeans. They should each be served by elected parliaments. Critics have pointed out that he accepted the common practice of owning slaves in Pennsylvania; however, it's likely that he followed the practice reported by Paul in his letter to Philemon in the New Testament – all relationships including that of owner and slave are transformed by Christian love.

For more information, go to:

Biography

http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/colonial/jb_colonial_penn_1.html

<http://www.quaker.org/wmpenn.html>

<http://www.ushistory.org/penn/bio.htm>

His vision

<http://explorepahistory.com/story.php?storyId=1-9-3>

Inventor of a European Parliament

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/daniele-archibugi/william-penn-englishman-who-invented-european-parliament>

Quotations

http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/william_penn.html

Writings: The fruit of solitude – maxims

<http://www.hallvorthington.com/Penn/Maxims.html>

Storyboard

<http://www.storyboardthat.com/storyboards/ryanbrown83/social-studies-william-penn-project>

Fact sheet

<http://www.facts-about.org.uk/famous-people-facts-starting-with-w/william-penn.htm>

<http://13colonies.mrdonn.org/quakers.html>

October 2017

Sunday, 1 October

ASHURA (10th Muharram) Muslim

For Sunni Muslims this is one of the two days of a minor fast that the Prophet kept in his lifetime. The second day of the fast may be observed either on the day preceding or the day following the 10th of Muharram. For Shi'a Muslims this is a day when they recall a great tragedy that took place on Muharram 10, AH 61 (680 CE). The Imam Husayn (son of Ali and Fatimah and therefore grandson of the Prophet) travelling with his family and many followers, was attacked by the troops of the Caliph Yazid.

After eight days without water Husayn was killed and his family and followers massacred at Karbala (now in Iraq). Shi'a Muslims remember the events in the days leading up to Ashura when they fast and recall these terrible events. The importance of this holy day can be judged from a popular Shi'a saying which some attribute to a Muslim poet and some to the sixth Imam, Jafar al-Saadiq: "Live as if every day is Ashura, every land Karbala!"

a) pp 228-230; b) pp 118-119

More information at ...

1. [About Islam: The Day of 'Ashura](#)
2. [World Time: Shi'ite Muslims Around the World Mark Ashura](#)
3. [Ashura of Muharram - a Shia and Sunni Muslim Observance](#)
4. [Huffington Post: Ashura - Dates, Rituals and History Explained with Photos](#)
5. [Religion Facts: What is Ashura?](#)

Sunday, 1 October

JASHN-E MEHERGAN (or MIHR JASHAN) Zoroastrian (Iranian)

Jashn-e Mehergan is an early autumn festival, and like NoRuz its origins have been lost in antiquity. Mehergan is dedicated to the divinity Meher or Mithra, who is associated with the sun and with justice. The ripening of the crops and fruits at this time of the year is seen as symbolic of the ripening of the world into fullness, before the moment of the ultimate victory over evil. It evokes the physical resurrection of the body along with its immortal soul, as promised by Ahura Mazda. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple to offer thanks to the Creator God, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of King Faridoon's triumphant capture of the evil Zohak and to share in a community meal that includes dry fruits and nuts, along with a drink, dancing and merrymaking.

a) pp 254-255; b) p 131.

More information at ...

1. [Iran Review - Jashn-e-Mehregan](#)
2. [Fouman: Collective Iranian Culturebase - Mehregan](#)
3. [Cais/SOAS: Celebrations - The Festival of Mehregan](#)
4. [Anobanini: Mehrgan-Mihragan-Jashn-e Mehr](#)
5. [Historical Iran: Iranian Sites and People](#)

Monday, 2 October

GANDHI JAYANTI Hindu

Gandhi Jayanti is an Indian national holiday that celebrates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, who is referred to as the 'Father of the Nation'. He was the driving force behind the foundation of the state of India. His birthday is celebrated with services, prayers and painting and essay contests with topics that glorify peace and non-violence, and the singing of Gandhi's favourite devotional song entitled 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram' (Ram Dhun for short). The distribution of alcohol is banned on Gandhi Jayanti, as on other national holidays.

More information at ...

1. [Festivals of India: Gandhi Jayanti](#)
2. [Speech in honour of Gandhi](#)
3. [Gandhi - Celebrations and Quotations](#)
4. [Gandhi - pictures and comments](#)
5. [Quotations from Mahatma Gandhi](#)

October 2017

Wednesday, 4 October

RABBIT IN THE MOON FESTIVAL/ZHONGQIUJIE/CHUNG CH'U Chinese

This Mid-Autumn festival celebrates the moon's birthday. Traditionally, offerings of moon cakes are made by women to the goddess of the moon. Offerings are also made to the rabbit in the moon, who is pounding the elixir of life with a pestle. 'Spirit money' is bought along with incense and offered to the moon by women. They also make special 'moon' cakes containing ground lotus and sesame seeds or dates. These contain an image of the crescent moon or of the rabbit in the moon, and children holding brightly coloured lanterns are allowed to stay up late to watch the moon rise from some nearby high place.

a) p 72; b) pp 43-44.

More information at ...

1. [Mystery Authors: Rabbit in the Moon Festival](#)
2. [SACU: Mid Autumn Festival](#)
3. [Wiki How: Enjoy a Chinese Moon Festival](#)
4. [China Highlights: Mid-Autumn Festival Stories](#)
5. [Chinese Child Book: Chinese Moon Festival Background](#)

Thursday 5 October – Thursday, 12 October

SUKKOT Jewish

An eight day harvest festival also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, which commemorates the 40 years that the Jews spent in the wilderness on the way from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. A temporary hut or booth – called a *sukkah* – is used during this time for eating meals and for visits and socialising. In hot countries families may live in their *sukkah* during the festival. The roof, which has to be open in part to the elements, is covered with branches and decorated with fruit. Four species of plant, the *lulav* (palm branch), the *etrog* (a yellow citrus fruit), the *hadas* (myrtle) and the *aravah* (willow) are used at the festival.

Leviticus 23:33-43.

a) pp 187-190; b) pp 90-91, 97-99, 109, vi.

NB The first two days (Oct 5, 6) and the last two days (Oct 11, 12) are full festival days when, for Orthodox Jews, work is not permitted.

More information at ...

1. [Jewish Virtual Library - Sukkot](#)
2. [Reform Judaism: Sukkot - Feast of Booths](#)
3. [A Succot Story for Children](#)
4. [Sukkot in Pictures and Photos](#)
5. [Jewfaq: Sukkot](#)

Friday, 13 October

SIMCHAT TORAH Jewish

This festival, whose name means 'Rejoicing in the *Torah*', marks the completion of the annual cycle of reading from the *Torah*. As the reading of the *Torah* in the synagogue should be continuous, a second scroll is begun again as soon as the final portion of the *Torah* has been read from the first scroll; so, the reading from Deuteronomy ends, and soon after, so that there is no break, Genesis begins - the *Torah* is a circle that never ends. All the *Torah* scrolls are paraded around the synagogue, with children dancing and singing, as do several of the adults, giving as many people as possible the honour of carrying a *Torah* scroll. Most progressive Jews celebrate this one day earlier, combining it with the eighth day of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret.

a) pp 191-193; b) pp 99-100, 109, vi.

More information at ...

1. [About Judaism: Simchat Torah](#)
2. [Jewfaq: Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah](#)
3. [Simchat Torah - Activities for Kids](#)
4. [Simchat Torah: Arts and Crafts](#)
5. [Huffington Post: Simchat Torah: Dates, Dances, Customs, Shemini Atzeret Explained](#)

October 2017

Monday, 16 October – Monday, 23 October

INTER FAITH WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE *National*

Prayers from the literature of several different world religions are published each year in a special leaflet for use in this week. This custom receives the support of members from many different religious communities.

More information at ...

1. [Week of Prayer for World Peace](#)
2. [Banner Cross Methodist Church: What is the Week of Prayer for World Peace?](#)
3. [Barnabas in Schools: Week of Prayer for World Peace](#)
4. [Images for World Peace and Prayer Day](#)
5. [Brahma Kumaris: Building Interfaith Bridges](#)

Thursday, 19 October – Monday, 23 October

DIVALI / DEEPAVALI *Hindu*

For Hindus this is a New Year festival lasting from one to five days, during which lights are hung out and fireworks are exploded. It is a festival of light, coinciding with the darkest night of the lunar month. Various interpretations are given to the festival in different parts of India, but it is generally associated with Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity, or with the victorious return of Rama and Sita to the kingdom of Ayodhya after their exile. For many Hindu business people Divali marks the beginning of a new financial year.

a) pp 134-136; b) pp 63, 73-75.

More information at ...

1. [About Hinduism: Diwali - Festival of Lights - Light Up Your Life!](#)
2. [Diwali - The festival of lights](#)
3. [Primary Homework Help: Diwali](#)
4. [Diwali, the Festival of Lights - in Pictures](#)
5. [Nalis: The Origins of Diwali](#)

Thursday, 19 October

DIVALI / DEEPAVALI *Jain*

Diwali has a special significance for Jains, as on this day in 527 BCE Mahavira gave his last teachings and attained ultimate liberation. Today lamps are lit and children are given sweets by their parents. Some devout Jains fast for the two days of Diwali, following the example of Mahavira. Jain business people traditionally start their accounting year from Diwali.

More information at ...

<http://www.jainuniversity.org/diwali.aspx>1. [Jain Samaj: Jainism - Significance of Diwali in Jain Dharma](#)

2. [Huffington Post: A Jain Perspective on Diwali](#)
3. [Jain University: Diwali](#)
4. [Jain Diwali in pictures](#)
5. [Jagran Post: Special way of celebrating Diwali by Jains](#)

Thursday, 19 October

DIVALI / BANDHI CHHOR DIVAS *Sikh*

Sikhs also celebrate Diwali since Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, was released from Gwalior prison on this day. The Guru refused to accept release when it was offered him by the Emperor Jehangir unless 52 imprisoned Hindu princes were also given their freedom. To meet the Emperor's condition that only those who could hold on to his cloak could leave the prison, the Guru had a coat with long tassels made. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is illuminated at this time and firework displays take place there. It is a time for new clothes, presents and sweets.

a) pp 237-239; b) pp 125-126, vii.

More information at ...

1. [Sikh Net: Bandi Chhor Divas](#)
2. [Sikh Dharma: Bandi Chhor Divas](#)
3. [Sikh Guru: Diwali/Bandi Chhor Divas \(Prisoner Release Day\)](#)
4. [Storyboard of Sikh Diwali](#)
5. [The Huffington Post: Bandi Chhor Divas](#)

October 2017

Friday, 20 October

CONFERRING OF GURUSHIP ON THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB BY GURU GOBIND SINGH 1708 CE *Sikh*

In 1708, shortly before his death, Guru Gobind Singh (the Sikhs' tenth Guru) declared that, instead of having another human Guru, from now on Sikhs would regard the scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, as Guru.

a) p 244; b) p 126.

More information at ...

1. [Sikh Wiki: Guru Maneo Granth \(Consider the Granth to be the Guru\)](#)
2. [Sikh Missionary Society: Sikhism-Takhts-Sri Hazoor Sahib](#)
3. [Sri-Guru Granth Sahib - Holy Book](#)
4. [Images of Conferring of Guruship on the Guru Granth Sahib](#)
5. [Structure of the Guru Granth Sahib](#)

Saturday, 21 October

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE BAB *Baha'i*

The *Bab* (the title means 'the Gate') was born in Shiraz, Persia in 1819. He was the prophet-herald of the Baha'i community and called people to religious renewal and to await the coming of a new messenger from God - 'the one whom God shall make manifest'. Baha'is believe that this latter figure was Baha'u'llah (the title means 'Glory of God'). Baha'is observe this holy day by abstaining from work. Their gatherings normally involve prayers, devotional readings, music and fellowship.

a) p 26; b) pp 19-20.

More information at ...

1. [Tacoma Baha'i: The Anniversary of the Birth of the Bab - October 20th](#)
2. [Baha'i Blog: The Life of the Bab](#)
3. [Suggested Devotional Program for the Birth of the Bab](#)
4. [Susan Gammage: The Birth of the Bab - Holy Day Programme](#)
5. [Bella Online - The Voice of Women: Birth of the Bab](#)

Sunday, 22 October

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BAHU'LLAH *Baha'i*

Founder of the Baha'i faith, he was born the eldest son of a Persian nobleman in Tehran, Persia, in 1817.

a) pp 26, 166; b) pp 19-21.

More information at ...

1. <http://birth-of-baha-u-llah.123holiday.net/> Wikipedia - Birth of Baha'u'llah
2. [123 Holiday: Birth of Baha'u'llah](#)
3. [Baha'i Invitation: Birth of Baha'u'llah - The Lord of the Age - Who is Baha'u'llah?](#)
4. [Bahauallah.org: The Life of Baha'u'llah - A photographic narrative](#)
5. [Baha'i Blog: The Birth of Baha'u'llah and the Spirit of the Age](#)

* Tuesday, 24 October / Wednesday, 25 October

PAVARANA DAY *Buddhist*

The last day of the Rains Retreat (the *Vassa*) is known as *Pavarana* Day or 'Leaving the *Vassa*'. *Pavarana* means 'to invite' and on this day monks who have completed the Retreat invite their fellows to admonish them for any failings. It is also known as 'Sangha Day'.

a) pp 42-43, 49-50, 52; b) p 29, 32, 33.

More information at ...

1. [Buddhapadipa Temple: Pavarana Day](#)
2. [Buddha Space: Pavarana Day and 'Buddha Space'](#)
3. [Buddhamind - Festivals: Pavarana](#)
4. [Pavarana Day in Pictures](#)
5. [Little Bang Word Press: Pavarana Day](#)

October 2017

Saturday, 28 October

PICNIC IN A HIGH PLACE / CLIMB A HIGH MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL / CHONGYANGJIE / CH'UNG YANG *Chinese*

This Double Ninth festival is the day for hill climbing or 'going up on a high place'. It reminds of an ancient seer who foretold an imminent natural calamity and escaped by going into the hills. The rest of humanity ignored his warnings and perished. Kites are flown, family graves visited, and a 'golden pig' is shared by large families with fruit, wine, tea and rice.

a) pp 72-73; b) p 44.

More information at ...

1. [China Vista - Picnic in a High Place](#)
2. [Travel China Guide - Chong Yang](#)
3. [About Taoism: Double Ninth Festival - Ching Yang Jie](#)
4. [Pictures for Kite Flying Day](#)
5. [English People: Chong Yang Jie: The story of how the plague monster was defeated](#)

Tuesday, 31 October

SAMHAIN (pronounced Sow-in) *Wiccan Pagan*

SAMHUINN *Druid*

The wheel of the year is seen to begin at Samhain. This is the Celtic New Year, when the veil between the worlds of life and death stands open. Samhain is the festival of death when Pagans remember and honour those who have gone before. Fires are lit and 'dead wood' is burned before stepping into the darkness of winter. Pagans celebrate death as part of life. This is not a time of fear, but a time to understand more deeply that life and death are part of a sacred whole.

More information at ...

1. [The White Goddess: The Wheel of the Year/Samhain](#)
2. [About Paganism/Wicca: Samhain History](#)
3. [Wicca - The Celtic Connection: Samhain](#)
4. [A Collection of Samhain Poetry](#)
5. [Inventors: The History of Halloween or Samhain](#)

Tuesday, 31 October

HALLOWEEN

WINTER NIGHTS *Heathen*

Halloween is a holiday celebrated on the night of October 31. The word Halloween is a shortening of All Hallows Evening, also known as Hallowe'en or All Hallows' Eve. Traditional activities include trick-or-treating, bonfires, costume parties, visiting 'haunted houses', and carving jack-o-lanterns. Irish and Scottish immigrants carried versions of the tradition to North America in the nineteenth century. Other western countries embraced the holiday in the late twentieth century including Ireland, the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom as well as of Australia and New Zealand.

More information at ...

1. [Halloween History](#)
2. [Time and Date: Halloween in the United States](#)
3. [British Council/Learn British Kids: Halloween](#)
4. [Winter Nights Festival: About Vetrnaetr](#)
5. [Wyrddwords/Vispa: Winter Nights](#)

November 2017

Here is the eleventh of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

November George Eliot/Marianne Evans 1819 – 1880

Here is one of the best reminders that in historical terms it's not that long since it was easier for a woman to use a male pseudonym if she wanted to be taken seriously as a writer. Marian/Marianne/Mary Ann Evans was very knowledgeable about the contemporary world, ranging from country life to city business. She was a gifted linguist, especially in the culture and language of Germany, and she was keenly aware of how the pressure of social conventions can dominate human behaviour. Drawing on these strengths she wrote several novels (eg *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*), each of them very popular for the depth of relationships she captured in them. She also translated two of the most powerful critiques of Christian theology: Ludwig Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* and David Strauss' *Life of Christ*. She is hailed by humanists as an exemplar of 'free thinking'. There is also a plaque in her memory at Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. Her birthday was 22nd November, 1819.

For more information, go to:

Biography

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/eliot_george.shtml

<https://humanism.org.uk/humanism/the-humanist-tradition/19th-century-freethinkers/george-eliot>

Comprehensive resource on all aspects of her life

<http://www.victorianweb.org/victorian/authors/eliot/index.html>

Her moral sensitivity

<http://www.the-philosopher.co.uk/eliot.htm>

20 quotations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMIazzqn8jo>

George Eliot images for children

<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=george+eliot+for+children&sa=N&hl=en-GB&qbv=2&prmd=ivns&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=0ahUKewiokLz1-PnMAhVKIMAKHQ8jCqQ4ChCwBAga>

Poets'

<http://www.westminster-abbey.org/our-history/people/george-eliot>

Corner

* **November**

ANAPANASATI DAY Buddhist

This is the last day on which the *Kathina* may be held. On the final day of the three months long Rains Retreat, or at some time during the month that follows it, it is observed by monks in the Theravada tradition. Cloth is presented to the *Sangha* by members of the lay Buddhist community, and this is then transformed into a *Kathina* robe, made up by sewing patches of cloth together. This is then presented by the monks present to one particular monk, often an especially deserving or virtuous one, in a special ceremony conducted by four of his colleagues. The laity are able to gain merit for themselves by watching the ceremony.

a) pp 43, 48-50, 52; b) pp 29, 31-33, 37, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing](#)
2. [Kathina Ceremony: Historical and Spiritual Significance](#)
3. [Vipassana Research Institute: Anapana for Children](#)
4. [Frequently Asked Questions about Anapanasati](#)
5. [Anapanasati - Mindfulness with Breathing In and Out](#)

November 2017

Wednesday, 1 November

ALL SAINTS' DAY (All Hallows', originally All Martyrs') *Christian (Western Churches)*
(The Catholic Church in England and Wales moves this festival to the nearest Sunday if it falls on a Saturday or a Monday.)

This day provides a chance to offer thanks for the work and witness of all Christian saints, recognising that not all are known or specially celebrated. Many churches stress this day rather than Hallowe'en, which falls the day before, by holding events especially designed for children.

a) pp 99-100; b) pp 48-49, 53-54, 57.

More information at ...

[Women for Faith and Family: Prayers and Devotions - All Saints](#)

[Holiday Insights: All Saints Day](#)

[About Catholicism: All Saints Day](#)

[Church Year: The Solemnity of All Saints Day](#)

[Spanish fiestas - All Saints Day](#)

Thursday, 2 November

ALL SOULS' DAY *Christian*

On this day in particular the departed are remembered and prayers on their behalf are offered. From earliest times Christians have prayed for the souls of the dead. In the year 998, All Souls, 'the faithful departed', began to be remembered in the Church calendar on this day.

More information at ...

[BBC Religions: All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day](#)

[About Catholicism: All Souls Day](#)

[All Souls Day](#)

[Fisheaters: All Souls Day](#)

[This is Ecuador: All Souls Day in Ecuador](#)

Thursday, 2 November

ANNIVERSARY OF THE CROWNING OF HAILE SELASSIE I *Rastafarian*

One of the holiest days of the Rastafarian year, it celebrates Haile Selassie's accession to the Ethiopian throne.

More information at ...

1. [The Dread Library: Crowning of Haile Selassie I](#)

2. [Rasta Ites: The Coronation of His Imperial Majesty Qadamawie Emperor Haile Selassie I](#)

3. [BBC: Religions/Rastafari/Beliefs/Haile Selassie](#)

4. [Photos of the Coronation of Haile Selassie I](#)

5. [A Celebration of Women: 84th Anniversary of the Crowning of Haile Selassie](#)

Saturday, 4 November

BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK (1469 CE) *Sikh*

Although the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, was born in April 1469, his birth anniversary (one of Sikhs' most widely celebrated *gurpurbs*) is still generally celebrated on the full moon day of the lunar month of Kartik. As is the case with other *gurpurbs*, an *akhand path* (a complete, unbroken reading of the Guru Granth Sahib) commences two days earlier so that it ends on the morning of the festival. Sikhs gather at the gurdwara for hymn-singing (*kirtan*) and to hear *kathas* (homilies) and share the *langar* (free meal). The gurdwara may be illuminated and street processions may take place too.

a) pp 240-242, 244; b) pp 122-123, 126.

More information at ...

1. [Guru Nanak](#)

2. [Ten Interesting Facts about Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the Founder of Sikhism](#)
<http://www.indiatvnews.com/lifestyle/news/guru-nanak-dev-ji-facts-5681.html>

3. [SPCK - Assemblies Org UK: The birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji - A Sikh celebration](#)

4. [Guru Nanak Jayanti in Photos](#)

5. [Times of India: Guru Nanak Jayanti](#)

November 2017

Saturday, 4 November

LOY KRATONG *Buddhist*

Loy Kratong is celebrated in most of the village and town temples in Thailand and often coincides with a temple's Kathina Day. Degradable baskets are made and filled with carefully folded banana leaves, incense sticks, a candle and sometimes a coin. These are then launched on rivers, canals ponds or the sea, while a wish for good fortune is offered to the spirits of the water. Eels and turtles are sometimes liberated into the water at this time. Thai Forest Temples in the UK do not observe Loy Kratong.

More information at ...

1. [Historical foundations of the festival of Loy Kratong](#)
2. [Loy Krathong in Contemporary Thailand](#)
3. [Thailand for Children - Loy Kratong](#)
4. [Loy Kratong and Yee Peng - baskets and lanterns that float away](#)
5. [Celebrating Loy Kratong in Bangkok](#)

Sunday, 12 November

REMEMBRANCE DAY *National*

The Sunday nearest to Armistice Day, devoted to remembering the dead of the two World wars and subsequent wars.

More information at ...

1. [History Extra: In focus - Remembrance Day Traditions](#)
2. [The Guardian: Remembrance Sunday - call for Church of England to ditch Cenotaph role](#)
3. [The Story behind the Remembrance Poppy](#)
4. [Poppies at the Tower of London](#)
5. [The War Poetry Web: Poems for Remembrance Day and Peace Events](#)

***Monday, 14 November**

ANAPANASATI DAY *Buddhist*

This is the last day on which the *Kathina* may be held. On the final day of the three months long Rains Retreat, or at some time during the month that follows it, it is observed by monks in the Theravada tradition. Cloth is presented to the *Sangha* by members of the lay Buddhist community, and this is then transformed into a *Kathina* robe, made up by sewing patches of cloth together. This is then presented by the monks present to one particular monk, often an especially deserving or virtuous one, in a special ceremony conducted by four of his colleagues. The laity are able to gain merit for themselves by watching the ceremony.

a) pp 43, 48-50, 52; b) pp 29, 31-33, 37, 141.

More information at ...

1. [Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing](#)
2. [Kathina Ceremony: Historical and Spiritual Significance](#)
3. [Vipassana Research Institute: Anapana for Children](#)
4. [Frequently Asked Questions about Anapanasati](#)
5. [Anapanasati - Mindfulness with Breathing In and Out](#)

Wednesday, 15 November

SCHICHI-GO-SAN (Seven-Five-Three) *Japanese*

Girls of seven, boys of five and girls of three are dressed up in new clothes and taken to a Shinto shrine to pray for their future well-being.

a) p 166; b) p 87.

More information at ...

1. [Notes of Nomads: Shichi-go-san Festival, Japan](#)
2. [Go Japan Go: Shichi-Go-San](#)
3. [Kids Web Japan: Schichi-go-san](#)
4. [Zooming Japan: Schichi-go-san - 7-5-3 Day on November 15th](#)
5. [Traditions and customs: Schichi-go-san](#)

November 2017

Friday, 24 November

MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1675) *Sikh*

As ordered by the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, the ninth Guru was beheaded (in Sis Ganj, near Chandi Chowk in Old Delhi) for upholding Kashmiri Brahmins' refusal to convert to Islam. These Hindus had turned to him for help and he had told them to inform Aurangzeb that they would convert if the Guru converted. Guru Tegh Bahadur is honoured for sacrificing his head (*sir*) rather than his faith (*sis*) for the religious freedom of those of a different religious persuasion from himself.

a) pp 240-242, 244; b) pp 124, 126.

More information at ...

1. [Sikh Missionary Society: The Supreme Sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur](#)
2. [Sikh History: Guru Tegh Bahadur ji \(1621 - 1675\)](#)
3. [Ten Quotes of Guru Tegh Bahadur](#)
4. [Guru Tegh Bahadur Shabads](#)
5. [Patshahi 10: Who killed Guru Tegh Bahadur?](#)

Thursday, 30 November

ST ANDREW'S DAY *National*

Andrew, the apostle, was brother of St Peter, and the first disciple to follow Jesus. He was crucified at Patras in Greece and has been patron saint of Scotland since the 8th century. In the Anglican communion he is associated with missionary activity.

a) p 100; b) pp 57, 59.

More information at ...

1. [Time and Date: St Andrew's Day in the UK](#)
2. [Catholic Culture: November 30th - Feast of St. Andrew, apostle](#)
3. [Activity Village - St Andrew's Day](#)
4. [British Library: Medieval manuscripts blog - Happy St Andrew's Day](#)
5. [The Scotsman: St Andrew's Day - History, Date and Traditions](#)

December 2017

Here is the twelfth of twelve people, one for each month, who exhibit great diversity in what they believe; but it is the very nature of these beliefs that has shaped their lives and their achievements; and it is what they have in common in their commitment to their beliefs that makes them of outstanding interest to us today.

December Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

1893 – 1956

Though not so well known in the UK, this is the person who probably has the greatest number of statues in his honour on display in India. From childhood onwards, Ambedkar experienced social exclusion and disadvantage because his family were regarded as 'low-caste' and 'untouchable' Dalits; this entailed compulsory separation from others in any and all social settings. He studied hard to overcome these limitations; his excellent results enabled him to study both in England and also in the USA. Qualified in law and economics, he became active as a lawyer and a political campaigner, with successive appointments in government administration, including a key role in drafting the constitution for the 1947 newly independent Indian state. In spite of his continuing efforts to establish the rights of Dalit people (and of women), such was his frustration with the way the cultural majority interpreted Hindu beliefs that he became a Buddhist. He also encouraged many fellow Dalits to do the same, leading to a famous public ceremony in 1956 in which 5,000 Dalits followed his example and embraced the Buddhist faith. He died on the 6th December, 1956 and was given a Buddhist rather than a Hindu funeral.

For more information, go to:

Biography

http://www.angelfire.com/ak/ambedkar/BR_bio.html

<http://www.culturalindia.net/reformers/br-ambedkar.html>

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/hindu2/2016/02/dr-br-ambedkar-biography-speeches-inspiring-quotes>

Texts on untouchability, including his writings

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar>

Ten quotations

<http://social.yourstory.com/2015/04/quotes-br-ambedkar/>

Pictures

http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=b+r+ambedkar&hl=en-GB&qbv=2&prmd=ivnsb&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiOvIrv_nMAhUjBMAKHZ3kBukQsAQIFA

Youtube video of his life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F26OaGKAQdQ>

December 2017

Friday 1 December

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY / MILAD UN NABI (12th Rabi'ul-Awwal) Muslim (Sunni)

Wednesday, 6 December

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY / MILAD UN NABI (17th Rabi'ul-Awwal) Muslim (Shi'a)

Observed by 17th Rabi' Al-Awwal - (though Nizari Ismaili Shi'a Muslims who are followers of the Aga Sunni Muslims on 12th Rabi' Al-Awwal, and by the majority of Shi'a Muslims five days later on Khan celebrate this on the same date as Sunnis, whereas Dawoodi Bohra Ismailis celebrate at the same time as other Shi'a).

The day is widely celebrated within the Muslim world and is a public holiday in a number of Muslim countries. In the sub-continent of India and certain Arab countries like Egypt, the celebration starts with reading from the Qur'an, followed by poetry and songs in praise of the Prophet. There are also lectures and story telling. In some big cities of the Muslim world the day is marked with processions and flag waving under a huge decoration of lights. In the UK many Muslims celebrate at the mosque, but some refuse to observe the Prophet's birthday, claiming it is a non-Islamic innovation introduced more than 600 years after the life of the Prophet. Tradition is not clear as to the exact date of the Prophet's birth.

a) pp 230-231; b) pp 119-120.

More information at ...

1. [Islamic Supreme Council - Mawlid un Nabi](#)
2. [Celebrating Mawlid un Nabi - any proof?](#)
3. [BBC Milad un Nabi](#)
4. [Mawlid al Nabi - through festival cards](#)
5. [Milad un Nabi – Legal and Religious Status](#)

Sunday, 3 December

ADVENT SUNDAY *Christian (Western Churches)*

The start of the Christian year, four Sundays before Christmas. It is often celebrated by lighting the first candle in the advent crown – a circular wreath of greenery. A further three candles are lit on subsequent Sundays, culminating with the Christmas candle on the 25th December. This signifies the transition from darkness to light, the light of Christ coming into the world.

a) pp 82-83; b) pp 48-49, 59, 66, 77, 142.

More information at ...

[Woodlands Junior School: Advent](#)

<http://www.cresourcei.org/cyadvent.html> [Living Hope: The meaning of the Advent Wreath](#)

[Why Christmas: The Tradition of Advent](#)

[Eric Huntsman - The Advent theme of joy](#)

[Ken Collins - Holydays – The Season of Advent](#)

Friday, 8 December

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY *Christian (Roman Catholic)*

Celebrates the doctrine held mainly by Roman Catholics that Mary herself was born free from Original Sin, leaving her sinless for the conception and bearing of Jesus.

a) p 96; b) pp 49, 54-55.

More information at ...

[Catholic Answers: The Immaculate Conception and the Assumption](#)

[BBC Religions: The Immaculate Conception](#)

[About Catholicism: What is the Immaculate Conception?](#)

[Mary's Immaculate Conception](#)

[New Advent: Immaculate Conception](#)

December 2017

Friday, 8 December

BODHI DAY *Buddhist*

Buddhists around the world celebrate Gautama's attainment of Enlightenment on this day under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, in Northern India. Many consider this to be the most sacred of holy places as the birth place of their tradition. Bodhi Day is celebrated in many mainstream Mahayana traditions including Zen and in Pureland Buddhist schools in China, Japan and Korea. Buddhists commemorate this day by meditating, studying the Dharma, chanting *sutras* (Buddhist texts) and performing kind acts toward other beings. Some celebrate by a traditional meal of tea, cakes and readings.

a) pp 45-47, 49-50, 54; b) pp 30, 32-35, 33.

More information at ...

1. [How to Celebrate Bodhi Day](#)
2. [Belief.net: Beginners Heart - Happy Bodhi Day](#)
3. [Family Dharma Connection: Happy Bodhi Day](#)
4. [Decorate your Bodhi Tree](#)
5. [Examiner: Bodhi Day - What it is and how to observe it](#)

Sunday, 10 December

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY *National*

In 1948 The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'All human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms.'

More information at ...

1. [United Nations Human Rights: What are human rights?](#)
2. [OHCHR: United Nations/Human Rights](#)
3. [NRCAT - Torture is a Moral Issue: Sign the Statement](#)
4. [Images for Human Rights Day](#)
5. [Quotes about Human Rights](#)

Wednesday, 13 December – Wednesday, 20 December

HANUKAH *Jewish*

Hanukah is the Jewish Festival of Lights, which celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was recaptured from the Syrian Greeks by the Maccabee brothers in about 162 BCE. For the eight evenings of the festival, candles are lit from right to left in a *hanukkiah*, a nine-branched *menorah* – one candle for each evening. The ninth candle is the *shamash* (the servant candle) from which the other candles are lit. Foods cooked with oil – such as doughnuts and *latkes* (potato cakes) – are traditional to remember the miracle with oil that kept the Temple lights burning so many years ago. A game of *dreidel*, a special small spinning top, is popular with children to commemorate 'the great miracle that happened there/here'.

a) pp 201-205; b) pp 90-91, 104-106, 109, 143-144.

More information at ...

1. [About Judaism: What is Hanukkah?](#)
2. [Images for Hanukah](#)
3. [Torahtots – Fun games: Hanukah](#)
4. [History of Hanukah](#)
5. [Jewfaq: Chanukkah](#)

December 2017

Thursday, 21 December

WINTER SOLSTICE (Alban Arthan or Alban Arthuan) Druid

Friday, 22 December

YULE (archaic form Geola, pronounced Yula) Wiccan Pagan

Yule is the time of the winter solstice, when the sun is reborn, an image of the return of all new life. Heathens celebrate Yule for twelve nights and days, starting the evening before the Winter Solstice (called Mother's night) when they think of their female ancestors and spiritual protectors. The night heralds the beginning of the major holiday in Heathenry.

More information at ...

1.

http://www.witchvox.com/va/dt_va.html?a=usxx&c=holidays&sc=yule&id=1900Wicca: [The Winter Solstice - The Yule Log](#)

2. [Pagan/Wiccan: All About Yule](#)

3. [Why Christmas: Customs - The History of the Yule Log](#)

4. [Images for Yule Cards](#)

5. [You Call it Christmas, We Call it Yule](#)

Sunday, 24 December

CHRISTMAS EVE *Christian*

Evening carol services, crib services and Midnight Masses inaugurate the festival of Christmas. Santa Claus (from the Dutch *Sinter Klaus*) is a legendary figure, based on St Nicholas of Myra, and is supposed to bring presents to children on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

a) pp 83-84; b) p 50.

More information at ...

[BBC Religion: The Story of Christmas](#)

[Woodlands Junior School: Christmas Eve Traditions](#)

[Fish Eaters: Christmas Eve and Christmas Day](#)

[Cozi: 50 Holiday Traditions for Christmas](#)

[Why Christmas: Christmas Eve Traditions and Customs](#)

Monday, 25 December

CHRISTMAS DAY *Christian (see also 6/7 January 2018)*

Christmas Day Celebrates the birth of Jesus, whom Christians believe to be the son of God. The words of St John's Gospel (Chapter 1:1-18) are read in many churches at this time; these speak of 'the Word made flesh', pointing to Christian belief in the Incarnation (God 'made flesh', or human). Gifts are given as reminders of the offerings brought to the infant Jesus at Bethlehem, and Christmas carols, plays and evergreens are associated with this time, while nativity sets are displayed in many churches and in some homes.

Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-7.

a) pp 83-85; b) pp 12-13, 16, 38, 46-51, 58, 81, 136, 141-143, iv.

More information at ...

[CBN: The Real Meaning of Christmas](#)

[Calendar Updates: Christmas Day](#)

[Office Holidays: Christmas Day](#)

[Anno Mundi: The True Meaning of Christmas](#)

[The Huffington Post: The True Meaning of Christmas](#)

December 2017

Tuesday, 26 December Zoroastrian (Iranian)

Wednesday, 24 May Zoroastrian (Parsi - Shenshai)

ZARATOSHT NO DISO Zoroastrian

Zaratosht no diso is the death anniversary of Prophet Zarathushtra and is a sorrowful occasion. Tradition records that he was assassinated at the age of 77. It is customary to visit the Fire Temple, participate in special remembrance prayers (to him and to the *Fravashis*, the guardian spirits of departed ancestors), and ponder upon the *Gathas* or Hymns of Zarathushtra, which embody his eternal message to humanity.

a) p 255; b) p 131

More information at ...

1. [Zartosht no Diso - a History](#)
2. [I Love India: Festivals/Zartosht-no-diso Celebrations](#)
3. [Crystal Links: Zoroaster and Death](#)
4. [The Parsee Society: Images for Zartosht no diso](#)
5. <http://www.pza.org.sg/Zarathustra/Life of Zarathustra.htm> Zarathustra.com: **The** Life and Death of Zarathustr

Sunday, 31 December

OMISOKA Japanese

Japanese festival which prepares for the new year by cleansing Shinto home shrines and Buddhist altars. The bells of Buddhist temples are struck 108 times to warn against the 108 evils to be overcome.

a) p 168; b) pp 88, 144.

More information at ...

1. [Kidzworld: Omisoka - Japanese New Year](#)
2. [NIC: Omisoka - Japan New Year's Eve and Shogatsu - New Year's Holidays](#)
3. [Japan - Kidsweb: Omisoka - Ushering in the New Year](#)
4. [Zooming Japan; Omisoka - Japanese New Year's Eve](#)
5. [Bella Online: Japanese Festivals - Omisoka - New Year's Eve](#)

Saturday, 31 December

HOGMANAY National

A celebration widely observed throughout the UK, and especially in Scotland where bagpipes, *haggis* and first footing are widespread. Clearing one's debts, cleaning the house, welcoming guests and strangers and a host of other traditions feature at this time.

More information at ...

1. [BBC News: Hogmanay celebrations: Scotland brings in the new year](#)
2. [Rampant Scotland - Hogmanay](#)
3. [Hogmanay-top-facts](#)
4. [British Food and Drink: Hogmanay](#)
5. <http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/hogmany.html> History of New-years

Index by Date of Festivals July 2016 – December 2017

New year celebrations are printed in bold type

NEW YEAR'S DAYS:		
Al-Hijra / Islamic New Year (Muslim)	03/10/2016	22/09/2017
Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) (Sikh)	14/04/2016	14/04/2017
Chinese New Year (Chinese)	08/02/2016	28/01/2017
Divali (Deepavali) (Hindu/Jain)	30/10/2016	19/10/2017
Ethiopian New Year's Day (Rastafarian)	11/09/2016	11/09/2017
Ganjitsu (Japanese)	01/01/2016	01/01/2017
Jamshedi Noruz (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	21/03/2016	21/03/2017
Naw-Ruz (Baha'i)	21/03/2016	21/03/2017
New Year's Day / (Hogmanay) (National)	01/01/2016	01/01/2017
Navroze / NoRuz (Zoroastrian – Shenshai/Parsi)	17/08/2016	17/08/2017
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)	3-4/10/2016	21-22/09/2017
Yuan Tan (Chinese)	08/02/2016	28/01/2017
Adar Mah Parab (Zoroastrian – Shenshai – Parsee)	22/04/2016	22/04/2017
Advent Sunday (Christian)	27/11/2016	03/12/2017
Al-Hijra / Islamic New Year (Muslim)	03/10/2016	22/09/2017
All Saints' Day (Christian)	01/11/2016	01/11/2017
All Souls' Day (Christian)	02/11/2016	02/11/2017
Anapanasati Day (Buddhist)	14/11/2016	*04/11/2017
Annunciation to the Virgin Mary	04/4or11/04/16	25/03/2017
Asalha Puja/Dharma Day (Buddhist)	15/07/2016	08/15/07/2017
Ascension Day (Christian-Western)	05/05/2016	25/05/2017
Ascension Day (Christian-RC)	08/05/2016	28/05/2017
Ascension Day (Christian-Eastern Orthodox)	09/06/2016	25/05/2017
Ash Wednesday (Christian)	10/02/2016	01/03/2017
Ashura (Muslim)	12/10/2016	01/10/2017
Autumn Equinox (Mabon) (Wiccan/Pagan) (Druid)	22/09/2016	22/09/2017
Ava Mah Parab (Aban Jashan) (Zoroastrian)	24/03/2016	24/03/2017
Bab, Anniversary of the Birth of the (Baha'i)	20/10/2016	21/10/2017
Bab, Anniversary of the Declaration of (Baha'i)	23/05/2016	23/05/2017
Bab, Anniversary of the Martyrdom of (Baha'i)	09/07/2016	09/07/2017
Baha'u'llah, Anniversary of the Ascension of (Baha'i)	29/05/2016	28/05/2017
Baha'u'llah, Anniversary of the Birth of (Baha'i)	12/11/2016	22/10/2017
Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) (Sikh)	14/04/2016	14/04/2017
Bandi Chhor Divas (Divali) (Sikh)	30/10/2016	19/10/2017
Basant/Vasant (Namdhari Sikh)	12/02/2016	01/02/2017
Beltaine (Pagan/Druid)	01/05/2016	01/05/2017
Blessed Virgin Mary, Annunciation to the (Christian)	25/03/2016	25/03/2017
Blessed Virgin Mary, Annunciation to the (Christian RC)	04/04/2016	25/03/2017
Blessed Virgin Mary, Annunciation to the (Eastern Orthodox)	07/04/2016	07/04/2017
Blessed Virgin Mary, Assumption of the (Christian - RC)	14/08/2016	15/08/2017
Blessed Virgin Mary, Immaculate Conception of the (Christian)	08/12/2016	08/12/2017
Bodhi Day (Buddhist)	08/12/2016	08/12/2017
Buddha Day – Wesak (Buddhist)	20/05/2016	10/05/2017
Candlemas (Pagan) (Christian)	01-02/02/2016	01-02/02/2017
Ch'i Hou Chieh – Double Seven Festival (Chinese)	09/08/2016	28/08/2017
Ch'ing Ming, Festival of Pure Brightness (Chinese)	04/04/2016	04/04/2017
Chinese New Year/Spring Festival (Chinese)	08/02/2016	28/01/2017
Chokor (Buddhist)	06/08/2016	27/07/2017
Chongyangjie – Picnic in a High Place (Chinese)	09/10/2016	28/10/2017
Christian Aid Week (Christian)	15-21/05/2016	14-20/05/2017
Christmas Eve (Christian)	24/12/2016	24/12/2017
Christmas Day (Christian and National)	25/12/2016	25/12/2017
Christmas Eve/Day (Christian – Eastern Orthodox, Rastafarian)	06/07/01/2016	06/07/01/2017
Chung Ch'iu / Rabbit in the Moon Festival (Chinese)	15/09/2016	04/04/2017
Chung Yuan / Festival of Hungry Ghosts (Chinese)	17/08/2016	05/09/2017
Ch'ung Yang / Picnic in a High Place Festival (Chinese)	09/10/2016	28/10/2017
Chunjie – New Year Festival (Chinese)	08/02/2016	28/01/2017

Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals 2016 - 2017

Circumcision of Jesus (Christian)	01/01/2016	01/-1/2017
Climb a High Mountain (Chinese)	09/10/2016	28/10/2017
Conferring of Guruship on Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh)	20/10/2016	20/10/2017
Corpus Christi (Christian - Anglican)	26/05/2016	15/06/2017
Corpus Christi (Christian - Roman Catholic)	29/05/2016	18/06/2017
Dharma Day/Asalha Puja (Buddhist)	15/07/2016	*08/15/07/2017
Dhul-Hijjah	03-13/09/2016	24/08-02/09/2017
Divali (Deepavali) (Hindu/Jain)	30/10/2016	19/10/2017
Divali (Bandi Chhor Divas) (Sikh)	30/10/2016	19/10/2017
Dormition (Christian)	15/08/2016	15/08/2017
Dragon Boat Festival (Chinese)	09/06/2016	30/05/2017
Duanwujie - Dragon Boat Festival (Chinese)	09/06/2016	30/05/2017
Durga Puja (Hindu)	07/10/2016	26-30/09/2017
Dussehra (Hindu)	11/10/2016	30/09/2017
Easter Day (Christian - Western Churches)	27/03/2016	16/04/2017
Easter Day/Pascha (Christian - Eastern Orthodox) /(Rastafarian)	01/05/2016	16/04/2017
Eid-ul-Adha, The Festival of Sacrifice (Muslim)	13/09/2016	02/09/2017
Eid-ul-Fitr, Festival of Fast Breaking (Muslim)	07/07/2016	26/06/2017
Eid ul Ghadeer (Muslim)	21/10/2016	10/09/2017
Epiphany (Christian)	06/01/2016	06/01/2017
Ethiopian New Year's Day (Rastafarian)	11/09/2016	11/09/2017
Fravardigan / Muktdad (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	11-20/03/2016	11-20/03/2017
Fravardigan / Muktdad (Zoroastrian - Shenshai)	07-16/08/2016	07-16/08/2017
Fravardin Mah Parab (Zoroastrian - Shenshai - Parsi)	04/09/2016	04/09/2017
Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)	05/09/2016	25/08/2017
Gandhi Jayanti (Hindu)	02/10/2016	02/10/2017
Ganjitsu (Japanese)	01/01/2016	01/01/2017
Good Friday (Christian)	25/03/2016	14/04/3017
Guru Arjan, Martyrdom of (Sikh)	16/06/2016	16/06/2017
Guru Gobind Singh, Birthday of (Sikh)	05/01/2016	05/01/2017
Guru Nanak, Birthday of (Sikh)	14/11/2016	04/11/2017
Guru Tegh Bahadur, Martyrdom of (Sikh)	24/11/2016	24/11/2017
Haile Selassie I, Birthday of (Rastafarian)	23/07/2016	23/07/2017
Haile Selassie I, Crowning of (Rastafarian)	02/11/2016	02/11/2017
Hajj (Muslim)	11-15/09/2016	31/08-04/09/2017
Halloween (Wiccan/Pagan)	31/10/2016	31/10/2017
Hanamatsuri (Buddhist/Japanese)	08/04/2016	08/04/2017
Hanukah (Jewish)	25/12/16-01/01/17	13-20/12/2017
Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)	22/04/2016	11/04/2017
Harvest Festival (Christian)	*/09 or 10/2016	*09 or 10/2017
Herd Boy and Weaving Maid (Chinese)	09/08/2016	28/08/2017
Higan (Shubun-No Hi) (Autumn) (Japanese)	20-26/09/2016	20/09-26/09/2017
Higan, (Shunbun-No Hi) (Spring) (Japanese)	18-24/03/2016	18-24/03/2017
Hinamatsuri (Japanese)	03/03/2016	03/03/2017
Hogmanay (National)	31/12/2016	31/12/2017
Hola Mahalla/Mohalla (Sikh)	24/03/2016	14/03/2017
Holi (Hindu)	23/03/2016	13/03/2017
Holocaust Memorial Day (National)	27/01/2016	27/01/2017
Holy Saturday (Christian)	26/03/2016	15/04/2017
Holy Week (Christian)	20-27/03/2016	09-16/04/2017
Honen Memorial Day (Buddhist)	25/01/2016	25/01/2017
Human Rights Day (National)	10/12/2016	10/12/2017
Hungry Ghosts Festival (Chinese)	17/08/2016	05/09/2017
Imbolc/Candlemas (Pagan)	01/02/2016	01/02/2017
Installation of Sikh Scripture in Harmandir Sahib (Sikh)	01/09/2016	01/09/2017
Inter Faith Week of Prayer for World Peace	16-23/10/2016	16-23/10/2017
Jamshedi NoRuz (Zoroastrian)	21/03/2016	21/03/2017
Janmashtami / Krishna Jayanti (Hindu)	25/08/2016	15/08/2017
Jashn-e Mehrgan (or Mihr Jashan) (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	01/10/2016	01/10/2017
Jashn-e Sadeh (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	30/01/2016	30/01/2017
Jashn-e Tirgan (Tir Jashan) (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	01/07/2016	01/07/2017
Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	26/03/2016	26/03/2017
Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian - Shenshai)	22/08/2016	22/08/2017
Krishna Jayanti / Janmashtami / (Hindu)	25/08/2016	15/08/2017
Lady Day (National)	25/03/2016	25/03/2017
Lag B'Omer (Jewish)	26/05/2016	14/05/2017
Lailat-ul-Bara'h, The Night of Forgiveness (Muslim)	22/05/2016	12/05/2017
Lailat-ul-Isra' - The Prophet's Night Journey (Muslim)	05/05/2016	24/04/2017
Lailat-ul-Qadr (Muslim - Shi'a)	28/06/2016	18/06/2017
Lailat-ul-Qadr (Muslim - Sunni)	03/07/2016	22/06/2017
Lammas (Lughnasadh) (Wiccan/Pagan)	01/08/2016	01/08/2017
Lantern Festival (Chinese)	22/02/2016	11/02/2017

Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals 2016 - 2017

Lent (Christian)	09/02-26/03/2016	01-16/04/2017
Lent, first Day of (Great Lent) (Christian – Eastern Orthodox)	14/03/2016	27/02/2017
Lohri / Makar Sankranti (Hindu)	13/01/2016	13/01/2017
Loy Kratong (Buddhist)	14/11/2016	04/11/2017
Losar (Buddhist)	08/02/2016	*18/19/27/02/2017
Lughnasadh (Lammas) (Pagan)	01/08/2016	01/08/2017
Mabon (Autumn Equinox) (Pagan)	22/09/2016	22/09/2017
Magha Puja (Buddhist)	23/03/2016	12/13/03/2017
Mahashivaratri (Hindu)	07/03/2016	24/02/2017
Mahavira Jayanti (Jain)	19/04/2016	10/03/2017
Makar Sankrant/Lohri (Hindu)	13/01/2016	13/01/2017
Maundy Thursday (Christian)	24/03/2016	13/04/2017
May Eve (Pagan)	30/04/2016	30/04/2017
Michaelmas Day (National)	29/09/2016	29/09/2017
Midsummer Solstice (Pagan/Druid)	20/06/2016	20/06/2017
Midsummer Day (National)	24/06/2016	24/06/2017
Mothering Sunday (Christian)	06/03/2016	26/03/2017
Muhammad, Birthday of (Muslim - Sunni)	12/12/2016	01/12/2017
Muhammad, Birthday of (Muslim – Shi'a)	17/12/2016	06/12/2017
Navaratri (Hindu)	01-09/10/2016	21-29/09/2017
Navroze (Zoroastrian – Shenshai; Parsi)	17/08/2016	17/08/2017
Naw-Ruz (Baha'i)	21/03/2016	20/03/2017
New Year's Day / (Hogmanay) (National)	01/01/2016	01/01/2017
Nichiren – The Chanting of the Daimokhu (Buddhist)	28/04/2016	28/04/2017
Night of Forgiveness - Lailat-ul-Bara'h (Muslim)	22/05/2016	12/05/2017
Nirvana Day (Buddhist)	08/15/02/2016	08/15/02/2017
NoRuz (Zoroastrian)	21/03/2016	21/03/2017
O-bon (Japanese) (not Tokyo)	13-15/08/2016	13-15/07/2017
O-bon (Japanese) (in Tokyo)	13-15/08/2016	13-15/08/2017
Omisoka (Japanese)	31/12/2016	31/12/2017
Palm Sunday (Christian)	20/03/2016	09/04/2017
Parinirvana (Buddhist)	08 or 15/02/2016	08 or 15/02/2017
Paryushan Parva (Jain)	29/08-5/09/2016	19-26/08/2017
Pascha/Easter Day (Christian - Eastern Orthodox)	01/05/2016	16/04/2017
Passion Sunday (Christian)	13/03/2016	02/04/2017
Passover/Pesach (Jewish)	23-30/04/2016	11-18/04/2017
Pavarana (Buddhist)	16/10/2016	24/25/10/2017
Pentecost (Whitsuntide) (Christian - Western)	15/05/2016	04/06/2017
Pentecost (Christian – Eastern Orthodox)	19/06/2016	04/06/2017
Pesach/Passover (Jewish)	23-30/04/2016	11-18/04/2017
Picnic in a High Place Festival (Chinese)	09/10/2016	28/10/2017
Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas) (Christian)	02/02/2016	02/02/2017
Prophet's Night Journey - Lailat-ul-Isra' (Muslim)	05/05/2016	24/04/2017
Pure Brightness Festival (Ch'ing Ming)(Chinese)	04/04/2016	04/04/2017
Purim (Jewish)	24/03/2016	12/03/2017
Qingmingjie (Chinese)	04/04/2016	04/04/2017
Qixijie (Chinese)	09/08/2016	28/10/2017
Rabbit in the Moon Festival (Chinese)	15/09/2016	04/10/2017
Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)	18/08/2016	07/08/2017
Ramadan (Muslim)	07/06-05/07/2016	27/05-25/06/2017
Rama Navami (Hindu)	15/04/2016	05/04/2017
Ratha Yatra (Hindu)	06/07/2016	25/06/2017
Remembrance Day (National)	13/11/2016	12/11/2017
Ridvan (Baha'i)	21/04-02/05/2016	20/04-01/05/2017
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)	03-04/10/2016	21-22/09/2017
St Andrew's Day (National)	30/11/2016	30/11/2017
St David's Day (National)	01/03/2016	01/03/2017
St George's Day (National)	23/04/2016	23/04/2017
St Joseph's Day (Christian)	19/03/2016	20/03/2017
St Patrick's Day (National)	17/03/2016	17/03/2017
Samhain / Samhuinn (Wiccan/Pagan / Druid)	31/10/2016	31/10/2017
Samvatsari (Jain)	05/09/2016	26/08/2017
Sarasvati Puja (Hindu)	12/02/2016	01/02/2017
Setsubun/Bean Scattering (Japanese)	03/02/2016	03/02/2017
Shavuot (Pentecost) (Jewish)	12-13/06/2016	31/05-01/06/2017
Schichi-go-san (Japanese)	15/11/2016	15/11/2017
Shinran Memorial Day (Buddhist)	16/01/2016	16/01/2017
Shrove Tuesday (Christian)	09/02/2016	28/02/2017
Shubun No Hi, (Autumn) (Japanese)	23/09/2016	23/09/2017
Shunbun No Hi, (Spring) (Japanese)	20/03/2016	20/03/2017
Simchat Torah (Jewish)	25/10/2016	13/10/2017
Songkran (Buddhist)	13-15/04/2016	13-15/04/2017
Spring Equinox (Ostara) (Pagan)	20/03/2016	20/03/2017
Sukkot (Jewish)	17-24/10/2016	05-12/10/2017
Summer Solstice (Pagan)	20/06/2016	20/06/2017

Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals 2016 - 2017

Teng Chieh - Lantern Festival (Chinese)	22/02/2016	11/02/2017
Thanksgiving for Institution of Holy Communion (Anglican)	26/05/2016	15/06/2017
Theophany (Christian - Eastern Orthodox)	19/01/2016	19/01/2017
Tisha B'Av (Jewish)	14/08/2016	01/08/2017
Tomb Sweeping Day (Chinese)	04/04/2016	04/04/2017
Transfiguration (Christian)	06/08/2016	06/08/2017
Trinity Sunday (Christian)	22/05/2016	11/06/2017
Tuan Yang Chieh - Dragon Boat (Chinese)	09/06/2016	30/05/2017
Tu B'Shevat (Jewish)	25/01/2016	11/02/2017
Vaisakhi (Baisakhi) (Sikh)	14/04/2016	14/04/2017
Vasant Panchami (Hindu)	12/02/2016	01/02/2017
Vasant/Basant (Namdhari Sikh)	12/02/2016	01/02/2017
Vernal Equinox (Druid)	20/03/2016	20/03/2017
Vesakha Puja (Wesak) (Buddhist)	20/21/05/2016	10/05/2017
Vijaya Dashami (Hindu)	11/10/2016	30/09/2017
Swami Vivekananda (Birthday) (Hindu)	12/01/2016	12/01/2017
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Christian)	18-25/01/2016	18-25/01/2017
Wesak (Buddhist)	20/21/05/2016	10/05/2017
Whitsuntide (Christian)	15/05/2016	04/06/2017
Winter Nights (Heathen)	31/10/2016	31/10/2017
Winter Solstice (Druid)	21/12/2016	21/12/2017
Women's World Day of Prayer (Christian)	04/03/2016	03/03/2017
World Humanist Day (National)	21/06/2016	21/06/2017
World Religion Day (National)	18/01/2016	15/01/2017
Yaum-Arafah (Muslim)	12/09/2016	01/09/2017
Yom Ha'Atzma'ut (Jewish)	12/05/2016	02/05/2017
Yom Ha-Shoah (Jewish)	05/05/2016	24/04/2017
Yom Kippur (Jewish)	12/10/2016	30/09/2017
Yuan Tan (Chinese)	08/02/2016	28/01/2017
Yuanxiaojie (Chinese)	22/02/2016	11/02/2017
Yule (Wiccan/Pagan)	21/12/2016	21/12/2017
Zaratosht-no-diso (Zoroastrian - Shenshai-Parsi)	24/05/2016	24/05/2017
Zaratosht-no-diso (Zoroastrian - Iranian)	26/12/2016	26/12/2017
Zhohgyuanjie (Chinese)	17/08/2016	05/09/2017
Zhongqiujie (Chinese)	15/09/2016	04/10/2017

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