

Religious, Cultural & Ethnic Holidays & Days of Observance

May 2018

This handout is to call your attention to just some of the many nationally and internationally recognized and/or celebrated diverse days of observance and religious/ethnic holidays that fall within the month of May 2018. We invite you to share it with the students, staff, and faculty you work with across campus. For more information, feel free to visit the Multicultural Resource Calendar located on Campus Life's Mosaic Center website:

http://www.diversityresources.com/aa_gsr/index.php?key=adCaO2Shix6u

Thank you,

The Mosaic: Center for Culture and Diversity, Interfaith Center, and Queer Student Lounge Staff

May 1 - Beltaine (Pagan and Wiccan): It marks the beginning of the summer season and celebrates life and fertility. Customs for celebrating Beltaine vary from country to country, however, one of the rituals most familiar to people in the United States is dancing around a May Pole and doing the Morris Dance and also a bonfire.

May 1 - Laylat al-Bara'at (Islamic): This holiday, known as the Night of Deliverance, it is the night that Allah frees those who were destined for Jahannam, the Islamic Hell. Sunni Muslims observe a nightlong vigil with prayers, repenting to Allah and seeking forgiveness. This is also the night that decides a person's life in the coming year, including whether they will have the opportunity to perform the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. In Shia Islam, this day is celebrated as the birth date of the Twelfth Imam, Imam Al Mahdi.

May 2 - Lag B'Omer begins at sundown (Jewish): This holiday occurs thirty-three days from the second night of Passover, called the "counting of the omer," during the seven weeks between Passover and Shavuot and allows a break from the usual prohibitions during this period, such as having weddings. It is a minor holiday and work is permitted.

May 4 - Festas do Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres(Portugal): This holiday begins on the fifth Sunday after Easter and is celebrated for a full week. It commemorates the gift to the Cathedral of São Miguel in the Azore Islands (off the coast of Portugal) of a statue depicting Jesus wearing a crown of thorns. The holiday is celebrated by processions, religious services, and festive gatherings.

May 10 - Ascension Day(Christian): This marks the anniversary of the day Christians believe that Jesus rose to heaven.

May 13 - Our Lady of Fatima Day (Portugal): This commemorates the miracle of the vision of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus, to shepherd children on May 13, 1917.

May 15 - Ramadan begins at sighting of crescent moon (Islamic): During this month, Muslims who have reached puberty may take no food or drink from sunrise to sunset. Observant Muslims pray and read the Qur'an, and are encouraged to give generously to charity during the month of Ramadan. After sunset, Muslims break the fast with the evening meal called the iftar.

May 19 - Shavuot begins at sundown (Festival of Weeks) (Jewish): Shavuot, taking place seven weeks after Passover, is the festival of the first fruits, and the weeks between are the most important in the harvesting season. The holiday is also celebrated in commemoration of the day when Moses received the Torah and the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

May 20 - Pentecost (Whit Sunday) (Christian): Christians celebrate Pentecost on the seventh Sunday after Easter to commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. Pentecost signifies the birth of the Christian Church. The day is sometimes called Whit Sunday (White Sunday) because the newly baptized wore white baptismal robes.

May 23 - Declaration of the Bab(Baha'i): This holiday commemorates the Bab's prediction in Shiraz, Persia, in 1844 of the imminent appearance of the new messenger of God. This is one of the nine holy days when Baha'is refrain from work.

May 29 - Ascension of Baha'u'llah(Baha'i): This observance commemorates the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith in 1892. This is one of the nine holy days when Baha'is refrain from work.

May 29 - Visakha Bucha Day (Buddhist): Also called Buddha Day, it's honored in the Theravada Buddhist tradition that predominates in Burma, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and nirvana are all celebrated on this day.

May 31 - Feast of Corpus Christi(Roman Catholic): The Feast of Corpus Christi (Latin for "Body of Christ") is a moveable Christian feast commemorating the Holy Eucharist. Observed on the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi mirrors Holy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter and the day on which Christians believe the first Eucharist, The Last Supper, took place.