

Religious, Cultural & Ethnic Holidays & Days of Observance

February 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 February 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 the 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

February 1 - Imbolc: Imbolc begins at sundown and is a celebration of fire and light and the return of life. (Pagan and Wiccan)

February 2 - Candlemas: This religious holiday originated with the ancient Jewish custom that required mothers to present their first male child in the temple. As a Jewish mother, Mary would have presented Jesus on February 2. The day is associated with light and purification. The holiday takes its name from the custom of blessing the church's supply of candles for the year on this date.

February 3 - Suyapa Day: This commemorates the day the 18th-century statue of the Virgin of Suyapa, the Patroness of Honduras, was discovered. Every year in early February the statue, which is considered to have miraculous powers, is toured through various parts of the country where thousands of people make pilgrimages to visit it. (Honduras)

February 12 - Shrove Monday: Christians in some countries customarily make treats to use up butter and eggs before the 40-day fast of Lent. (Christian)

February 13 - Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras): This holiday marks the final midwinter fling before Lent begins. (Christian)

February 13- Maha Shivaratri (Shiva's Night): This festival honors Shiva who, along with Vishnu and Krishna, is one of the most important deities in Hinduism. It is celebrated with fasting, prayer, and meditation. (Hindu)

February 14- Ash Wednesday: This marks the beginning of Lent, a 40-day period of prayer and fasting preceding Easter Sunday. It is observed in memory of Jesus' 40 days of fasting in the desert. Many Roman Catholics and Protestants choose to give up a favorite food or activity during Lent.

February 15- Parinirvana: In the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition, this day marks the death of Buddha in 483 B.C.E. and commemorates his attainment of final Nirvana. The date is based on the Japanese Buddhist calendar.

February 19- Beginning of Great Lent: Eastern Orthodox Lent, known as Great Lent, includes Sundays and officially ends on Lazarus Saturday, the day before Palm Sunday, although fasting continues during Holy Week. While many people no longer fast for forty days, most people observe the fast strictly for the two weeks preceding Easter. (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

February 23- Great Lent Begins: It begins with a one-week preparatory fast, followed by a 40-day fast commemorating Christ's fasting on the mountain. (Coptic Orthodox Christian)

February 26 - March 1- Festival of Ayyam-i-Ha (Intercalary Days): The days adjust the Baha'i year, which consists of 19 months with 19 days each month, to the solar calendar. These days are observed with gift-giving, special acts of charity, and preparation for fasting that precedes the new year. (Baha'i)

February 28- Purim: Jewish holiday that begins at sundown.