Religious, Cultural & Ethnic Holidays & Days of Observance

November 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 November 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 Office of Student 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

Nov 1- Eastern Orthodox Christian : All Saints Day
Eastern Orthodox Christians observe the festival of All Saints on the Sunday after Pentecost, marking the close of the Easter season.

Nov 1- Mexico : Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos)
Beginning on the evening of October 31 and celebrated through November 2 by Mexicans and Mexican Americans, this holiday has its roots in two traditions: the Christian observance of All Saints and All Souls Day, and two Aztec festivals in which the souls of the dead were welcomed back to visit those who remembered them. Central to the observance is the creation of an ofrenda, or altar, in the home, with flowers, foods, and favorite possessions to honor the memory of deceased loved ones and to welcome their visiting souls. The holiday is celebrated with family and community gatherings, music, and feasting, and the festivity of its observance acknowledges death as an integral part of life.

Nov 1- Eastern Orthodox Christian : All Saints Day
Eastern Orthodox Christians observe the festival of All Saints on the Sunday after Pentecost, marking the close of the Easter season.

Nov 2- Christian : All Souls Day
This is a Roman Catholic holiday for commemorating those souls who have been baptized, but who are still considered to be in purgatory for committing lesser sins. Prayers offered on their behalf are thought by Roman Catholics to help cleanse these sins and increase their likelihood of entering heaven.

Nov 2- Mexico : Day of the Dead (second day of observance)
Nov 2- **Rastafarian : Anniversary of the Crowning of Haile Selassie**
This sacred holiday for the Rastafarians commemorates the coronation of Ras (Prince) Tafari Makonnen as Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia on November 2, 1930. The name "Haile Selassie" means "Power of the Trinity" in Amharic, and to his followers Emperor Haile Selassie was known as the King of Kings, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, King of Zion, and the 225th restorer of the Solomonic Dynasty. The Rastafarians, believing that the coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie was the fulfillment of Marcus Garvey's prophecy that a Black king would one day become redeemer of the Black people, took the Emperor's pre-coronation name of Ras Tafari as the official name of their religious movement. Although the Rastafarians hailed him as their messiah, Emperor Haile Selassie was a devout Christian and did not share the Rastafarian beliefs.

Nov 7- **Hindu : Diwali**
This is one of the most important festivals of the year for Hindus. It lasts for five days and combines a number of festivals to celebrate different gods and goddesses and events in their lives as described in Hindu tradition. The day before Diwali is spent cleaning the house, shopping, and decorating with flowers. A design is painted in white in front of the door of the house to bring good luck. Lamps are lit for the entire five days beside roads and streams, along edges of roofs, and on window sills to enable Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of prosperity, to find her way to every home. For Jains, Diwali is celebrated as the day that Mahavira attained Nirvana.

Nov 7- **Sikh : Bandi Chhor Divas**
The second most important Sikh festival after Vaisakhi, Bandi Chhor Divas (Day of Liberation) celebrates the release from prison of the Sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Ji, along with 52 other princes, in October 1619. Upon his release, Guru Hargobind Ji arrived in Amritsar during the Diwali festival; thereafter his liberation was always associated with Diwali.

Nov 8- **Jain : New Year**
The Jain New Year, or Veer Samvat, begins the day after the festival of Diwali and is a time of joyful celebration. In 2018, this marks the beginning of Jain New Year 2075.

Nov 12- **Baha'i : Birthday of Baha'u'llah**
This date marks the birthday of Baha'u'llah (1817-1892), prophet-founder of the Baha'i faith. Baha'u'llah was a member of one of the great aristocratic families of Persia who renounced his wealth and position to embrace the teachings of the Bab. He was subjected to imprisonment, torture, and exile. During his exile in Baghdad in 1863, he declared that he was the messenger of God predicted by the Bab. He preached the coming unification of all humanity and the
emergence of a world civilization. This is one of the nine holy days when Baha'is refrain from work.

**Nov 12- Jain : Gyan Panchami**
Gyan Panchami is celebrated on the fifth day of the Jain New Year. On this day the Jain scriptures, the Agamas, are worshipped as the source of knowledge for the Jains.

**Nov 20- Islamic : Mawlid begins at sundown**

**Nov 21- Islamic : Mawlid (Prophet Muhammad's Birthday)**
This occurs on the 12th day of the Muslim month of Rabi ul-Awwal and marks the birth of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, in 570 A.C.E.

**Nov 23- Sikh : Guru Nanak Ji's Birthday**
This holiday celebrates the birth of Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder of Sikhism. Sikhism, which comes from the Hindi word sikh, meaning "disciple," is one of the three religions most widely practiced in India with approximately 16 million followers, mostly concentrated in the state of Punjab in northern India. Sikhism is based on the revelations of its founder, the mystic guru Nanak. It opposes idolatry and emphasizes the unity of one god and all peoples. Although the Nanakshahi calendar has converted most Sikh holidays to fixed dates in the Gregorian solar calendar, out of deference to the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak Ji's birthday continues to be celebrated on the traditional Bikarami lunar date. Sikhs also celebrate the birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji (1666-1708)

**Nov 24- Sikh : Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib**
This commemorates the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675), the ninth Sikh Guru, who was executed in Delhi on the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

This begins the Lenten season of fasting, prayer, and reflection for Coptic Orthodox Christians, which begins with a 3-day fast followed by a 40-day Lenten fast ending on Christmas Eve. In years before Gregorian leap years, the fast begins on November 26 and continues through January 7.

**Nov 26- Baha'i : The Day of the Covenant**
This day commemorates Baha'u'llah's appointment of his eldest son, Abdu'l-Baha, as his successor and protector of the Covenant of Baha'u'llah. After the death of Baha'u'llah in 1892, Abdu'l-Baha fulfilled his father's mission, traveling to the United States, Canada, and Europe as an ambassador of peace and the leading exponent of the new religion.
This begins the 40-day Lenten season of fasting, prayer, and reflection for Eastern Orthodox Christians that ends on Christmas Eve.

Nov 28- **Baha'i : Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha**
This day marks the anniversary of the death of Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'u'llah's eldest son and successor, in 1921 at age 77.

Nov 30- **Roman Catholic : St. Andrew’s Day**
This is the feast day of St. Andrew, who is the patron saint of Scotland, Greece, Russia, Ukraine, Barbados, and Romania and the Romanian Orthodox Church. This day is an official flag day and bank holiday in Scotland and a national holiday in Romania.