

Religious, Cultural & Ethnic Holidays & Days of Observance

May 2019

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 2019. 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

May 1- Pagan and Wiccan : Beltaine

Beltaine, second to Samhain in importance, falls opposite Samhain on the Wheel of the Year. 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, the English name for May Day dances.

May 5 - Islamic : Ramadan begins at sighting of crescent moon

May 6- Islamic : Ramadan (5/6-6/4)

This begins the first day of the Islamic month of Ramadan, a month of fasting and the holiest month of the Muslim year. The fast of Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, and mandatory for every Muslim who has reached puberty except those who are ill, pregnant, or on a journey. During this month, no water or food may be taken from sunrise to sunset. Worshippers eat a light meal, called suhoor, early in the morning prior to daybreak. After sunset, Muslims break the fast with the evening meal called the iftar. Those who miss days of fasting in Ramadan due to exempted conditions must make up the missed fasting days prior to the next Ramadan. The festival of Laylat al-Qadr occurs during Ramadan and commemorates the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an (the holy book of scriptures) to the Prophet Muhammad. Observant Muslims pray, read the Qur'an, and worship at home or at a mosque. The feast of Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan.

May 13- Portugal : Our Lady of Fatima Day

This commemorates the miracle of the vision of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus, to shepherd children on May 13, 1917.

May 20- Buddhist : Visakha Bucha Day

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 22- Jewish : Lag BaOmer begins at sundown

May 23- Jewish : Lag BaOmer begins at sundown

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 23- Baha'i : Declaration of the Bab

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- Baha'i : Ascension of Baha'u'llah

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 30- Islamic : Laylat al-Qadr begins at sundown

May 30- Christian : Ascension Day

This marks the anniversary of the day Christians believe that Jesus rose to heaven.

May 31- Islamic : Jumu'atul-Widaa

This holiday, which literally means "Friday of farewell," is observed on the last Friday in the month of Ramadan before Eid al-Fitr. Regarded by some Muslims as the second holiest day of the month of Ramadan, this is a time when Muslims attend congregation in lieu of the midday prayer and perform ibadah, acts of submission and devotion to Allah. This is a public holiday in Bangladesh.