

Religious, Cultural & Ethnic Holidays & Days of Observance

January 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 January 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

Jan 1- Roman Catholic : Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

This is a liturgical feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrated by the Roman Catholic Church on January 1, the Octave Day of Christmas (the eighth day after Christmas).

Jan 1- Baha'i : World Peace Day

This is a day devoted to meditating and praying for peace throughout the world.

Jan 4- Roman Catholic : Elizabeth Ann B. Seton Feast Day

This feast honors the first American-born saint and founder of the American Sisters of Charity, the first American order of Roman Catholic nuns.

Jan 5- Sikh : Guru Gobind Singh's Birthday

Jan 6- Armenian Apostolic Church : Christmas

The Armenian Apostolic Church, also known as the Armenian Orthodox Church, has one of the oldest traditions in the Christian world. In the early fourth century, Armenia became the first country to accept Christianity as a state religion. In A.D. 506, the Armenian Apostolic Church broke from the Eastern Orthodox Churches, becoming one of the original Oriental Orthodox Churches. In 1923 the Armenian Orthodox Church adopted the Gregorian calendar with one significant difference: the Church celebrates the birth of Jesus on Epiphany rather than on December 25. In the original Christian tradition, the feast of Epiphany celebrated three events that revealed God to mankind: the nativity, the visit of the three Magi, and the baptism of Christ. However, in the fourth century, the Roman Church adopted December 25 as the new date to celebrate the nativity. The Armenian Apostolic Church is the only Christian church that still celebrates the nativity on Epiphany, its original date of celebration. In Jerusalem, the Church

continues to follow the Orthodox Old Calendar and celebrates Christmas on the Julian date for Epiphany, or January 19.

Jan 6- Christian : Epiphany

Twelve days after Christmas the three kings arrived in Bethlehem with gifts for the baby Jesus. Called Twelfth Night in English, it was once celebrated throughout Europe with feasts and frolics. In England today old traditions are reviving in Twelfth Night parties marking the end to the Christmas season. In Spain, Mexico, and other Hispanic countries of the Americas the holiday, called Día de los Tres Magos, or simply Tres Reyes, was never abandoned. Like Jesus, children receive gifts on this day rather than Christmas Day, and families celebrate with big meals, often with specialties such as roast sucking pig. Many countries follow the ancient tradition of baking a cake or bread that conceals a trinket. The person who is served the piece with the trinket is treated as King or Queen for the day.

Jan 6- Three Kings Day (Día de los Tres Reyes)

Jan 7- Coptic Orthodox Christian, Eastern Orthodox Christian, Rastafarian : Christmas

Christmas is celebrated on this date, set according to the Julian calendar, by the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt and several Eastern Orthodox Christian communities (e.g., Russian, Serb, and Ukrainian Orthodox Christians). Christmas is also observed on this day by Rastafarians, who follow the Ethiopian calendar, which has its roots in the Coptic Orthodox tradition. In Gregorian leap years, Coptic Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on January 8.

Jan 13- Buddhist : Bodhi Day (Buddha's Enlightenment)

Among Mahāyāna Buddhists, this holiday celebrates Buddha's attaining understanding of the truth of existence, freeing himself from all human suffering, and finding perfect happiness. The date is based on the Japanese Buddhist calendar.

Jan 14- Eastern Orthodox Christian : New Year

This date marks the observance of New Year's Day according to the Julian calendar by several Eastern Orthodox Christian Churches (e.g., Russian, Serb, and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches).

Jan 15- Hindu : Makar Sankranti

This is a harvest festival that marks the beginning of spring in India. Hindus make pilgrimages to holy rivers to bathe and purify themselves of their sins. In the state of Gujarat in northwestern India, people fly colorful kites as offerings to the Sun God. This harvest festival is known as Pongal in southern India.

Jan 15- Hindu : Pongal

This four-day harvest festival is celebrated in southern India and marks the beginning of the spring season. The celebratory dish is pongal, a creamy pudding made with rice, moong dal (split mung beans), jaggery (cane sugar), milk, ghee (clarified butter), and cardamom, cooked in a festive brass pot and topped with toasted cashews, raisins, and chopped fresh coconut.

Jan 19- Coptic Orthodox Christian, Eastern Orthodox Christian : Epiphany

This day commemorates the visit of the three kings, Magi, to the infant Jesus. Coptic Orthodox Christians and several Eastern Orthodox Churches celebrate Epiphany on this day based on the Julian calendar. The Armenian Orthodox Church celebrates Christmas on this day in Jerusalem, where Armenian Orthodox Christians still follow the Julian calendar. In Gregorian leap years, Coptic Orthodox Christians celebrate Epiphany on January 20.

Jan 20- Baha'i : World Religion Day

Established in 1950, this day celebrates the oneness of the world's religions and emphasizes that religion is the motivating force for world unity.

Jan 20- Jewish : Tu Bishvat begins at sundown**Jan 21- Dominican Republic : Our Lady of Altagracia****Jan 31- Jewish : Tu Bishvat (New Year of the Trees)**

Although a minor Jewish holiday, New Year of the Trees is widely celebrated—especially with a focus on children—as a time to renew the land and to plant trees.