

Faith calendar 2024



JANUARY

- 1** **Gantan-sai** Start of three-day celebrations to mark the New Year.
- 4** **Birthday of Holy Mother Sarada Devi** Commemorates the birthday of the Hindu mystic and saint.
- 6** **Epiphany** Celebrates the visit of the Wise Men (Magi) to the infant Jesus.
- 7** **Christmas Day (Eastern Orthodox)** Celebrated on this day by Eastern Orthodox Christians.
- 12** **Birthday of Swami Vivekananda** Celebrates the birth of one of the most celebrated spiritual leaders of India.
- 13** **Maghi/Lohri** Celebrates the sacrifice of the 40 Sikhs who fought for Guru Gobind & is celebrated with bonfires.
- 14** **Makar Sankranti** Marks the transition of the sun from the Zodiac of Sagittarius (Dhanu) to Capricorn (Makara).
- 15** **Pongal** Multi-day Hindu harvest festival celebrated by Tamils in India and Sri Lanka.
- 17** **Birth of Guru Gobind Singh** Tenth Sikh Guru and the last one in human form; founded the Brotherhood of the Pure (Khalsa).

MAY

- 1** **Beltane** Celebration of fertility marking the beginning of Summer.
- 2** **Twelfth Day of Ridvan** Close of the festival.
- +** **Easter Day (Orthodox Christianity)** Based on the Julian calendar.
- 5** **Yom Hashoah** Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, serves as a day of remembrance for those who perished in the Shoah (Holocaust).
- 9** **Ascension Day** Marks the ascension of Jesus Christ to Heaven after he rose from the dead on Easter Sunday.
- 10** **Akshaya Tritiya** An auspicious day that signifies the "third day of unending prosperity".
- 19** **Pentecost/Whitsun** Marks the gift of the Holy Spirit to Jesus' disciples.
- 23** **Declaration of the Báb** Celebrates the Báb's declaration of his mission as the messenger of God.
- 26** **Lag B'Omer** Occurs on the 33rd day of the Omer, the 49-day period between Passover and Shavuot.
- 28** **Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh** Commemorates the death of Bahá'u'lláh.
- 30** **Corpus Christi Celebration** Celebration of the Most Sacred Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

SEPTEMBER

- 6** **Ganesh Chaturthi** Festival that commemorates God Ganesha's birthday.
- 8** **Samvatsari** The day of forgiveness.
- 11** **Enkutatash** The Ethiopian New Year, celebrations of prayer and colourful processions.
- 15** **Mawlid un Nabi** Observance of the birthday of Prophet Muhammed.
- 21** **International Day of Peace** A day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace among and within all nations.
- 22** **Autumn Equinox** Ritual of thanksgiving.

Dates used are correct to the best of our knowledge. Some may vary regionally because they are determined by the lunar or lunisolar calendar. Some may be subject to confirmation of sighting of the crescent moon. Some may begin the evening before the listed date. Sikh dates are based on Nanak Shahi calendar. Some festivals take place over several days, please consult resources specific to each festival for guidance.

FEBRUARY

- 1** **Imbolc** Honours the goddess Brigid and marks the return of Spring.
- 2** **Candlemas** Commemorates the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple and the purification of his mother after giving birth.
- 3** **Setsubun** Part of the Spring festival with special ritual to ward off evil.
- 7** **Isra and Mi'raj** Commemorates the Prophet Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascent into heaven.
- 10** **Lunar New Year – Year of the Dragon** Most important of the traditional Chinese holidays.
- 13** **Shrove Tuesday** The day of preparation for Lent (the 40 days leading up to Easter), traditionally marked by eating pancakes.
- 13** **Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji** Celebrating the Birth Anniversary of Namdhari Satguru Ram Singh Ji
- 14** **Ash Wednesday** First day of Lent. Many Christians receive a cross of ash on their foreheads in church as a symbol of mortality and penance.
- 14** **Saraswati Puja** Celebrating the Goddess Saraswati – the goddess of knowledge.
- 15** **Parinirvana** Celebration to mark the final passing of the Buddha
- 24** **Tu B'Shevat** Marks the beginning of the 'new year' for trees.
- 26** **Ayyám-i-Há** Intercalary days.

JUNE

- 11** **Shavuot** Celebrates the giving of the Torah (Five Books of Moses), the first harvest, and the ripening of the first fruits.
- 14** **The Hajj** Once in a lifetime pilgrimage to Makkah; is the largest gathering of Muslims anywhere in the world.
- 15** **Yawm Arafat** 2nd day of Hajj, day of repentance and acceptance of supplications, many non-pilgrims fast on this holiest day in Islam.
- 16** **Eid al-Adha** Marks the sacrifice made by Prophet Abraham.
- 16** **Martyrdom of the Guru Arjan Dev** Commemorates the fifth Sikh Guru and first Sikh martyr.
- 21** **World Humanist Day** Opportunity to publicise the positive values of humanism and share the global concerns of the humanist movement.
- 23** **Wesak** Celebration of Buddha's enlightenment.
- 24** **Midsummer's Day** A celebration of the sun's power on the longest day of the year.
- 29** **The Feast of Saints Peter and Paul** Honours the martyrdom of the two saints.

OCTOBER

- 1** **Mahalaya** Marks the beginning of Navratri and Durga Puja.
- 2** **Birth of the Báb** Celebrates the birthday of The Báb, forerunner, who prepared their way for Bahá'u'lláh.
- 2** **Rosh Hashanah** The Jewish New Year, marks the start of ten days of repentance, ending on Yom Kippur.
- 3** **Navratri** Nine nights of ceremonies.
- 11** **Yom Kippur** Holiest day of the Jewish calendar, marked by a 25-hour fast and solemn prayer to repent for the previous year's sins.
- 12** **Durga Puja-Dussehra** End of Navratri.
- 16** **Sukkot** Tabernacles or Feast of Booths.
- 20** **First Reading of Guru Granth Sahib** The Sikh scripture is installed at the Golden Temple for the first time.
- 23** **Shemini Atzeret** The eighth day of Solemn Assembly.
- 24** **Simchat Torah** Celebrates and marks the conclusion of the annual cycle of public Torah reading.
- 27** **Birth of Bahá'u'lláh** One of the twin founders of the Bahá'i faith, who was born in 1817.
- 31** **Samhain** Marks the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter.

MARCH

- +** **St David's Day** Commemorates the patron Saint of Wales.
- 1** **Nineteen Day Fast** Adults fast from sunrise to sunset for 19 days; important time for prayer, reflection and spiritual renewal.
- 8** **Mahashivratri** Festival celebrated in reverence of Lord Shiva.
- 11** **Ramadan** Starts the most significant month for Muslims. Marks a period of daily fasting from dawn to sunset.
- 15** **Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna** Celebrating the birth of the Hindu incarnation of God.
- 17** **St Patrick's Day** Commemorates the patron Saint of Ireland.
- 20** **Spring Equinox** Celebration of Spring.
- 20** **Naw-Rúz** End of the Nineteen Day Fast and the beginning of the Baha'i New Year.
- 23** **Purim** Celebration of Jewish deliverance as told in the Book of Esther.
- 23** **Magha Puja** Takes place on the full moon day commemorating the life of the Buddha. Also known as Sangha Day.
- 24** **Palm Sunday** The first day of Holy Week, commemorating Jesus' triumphant entry in Jerusalem before his arrest and death.
- +** **Holi (Bonfire)** Marking the end of winter.
- +** **Holi (Festival of Colour)** Marking the end of winter.
- 25** **Birthday of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** Celebrating the birth of the Hindu mystic and saint.
- 26** **Khordad Sal** Celebrating the birth date of Zoroaster.
- 28** **Maundy Thursday** Commemorates the Last Supper.
- 29** **Good Friday** Commemorates the death of Jesus by crucifixion.
- 31** **Easter Sunday** Easter Sunday Christians celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. The Easter season lasts for 50 days to Pentecost.

JULY

- 7** **Al-Hijra** The Islamic New Year. First day of Muharram. Start of Islamic year 1446.
- 7** **Jagannath Rath Yatra** Public procession and chariot festival.
- 8** **Martyrdom of the Báb** Commemorates the Báb's execution in 1850, after which his teachings continued to spread.
- 17** **Ashura** Marks the tenth day of Muharram as the day Allah saved Moses from the Pharaoh and the martyrdom of Hussein, Prophet Muhammad's grandson, in the Battle of Karbala.
- 21** **Guru Purnima Day** An Indian and Nepalese festival dedicated to spiritual and academic teachers.
- 21** **Asalha-Dharma Day** Commemorates Buddha's first teaching to the five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares, India.
- 23** **Birthday of Emperor Haile Selassie I** A holy day of commemoration for Rastafarians.

NOVEMBER

- 1** **All Saints Day** Honours all Saints in Christian history.
- 1** **Lakshmi Puja** Most important day of Diwali devoted to Goddess Lakshmi.
- 1** **Bandi Chhor Divas** Commemorates the peaceful release of 52 kings and princes by sixth Sikh Guru (Guru Hargobind).
- +** **Diwali** Festival of lights symbolising the victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance.
- 2** **All Souls Day** Commemorates the faithful departed, family members and friends who have died.
- 15** **Shichi-Go-San** Festival celebrating the growth and well-being of young children.
- 24** **Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur** Commemorates the 9th Sikh Guru who undertook the sacrifice for protection of the oppressed.
- 24** **Solemnity of Christ the King** Festival celebrated in the Roman Catholic Church in honour of Jesus Christ as lord over all creation.
- 25** **Day of the Covenant** When Bahá'is celebrate the appointment of `Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant.
- 27** **Ascension of `Abdu'l-Bahá** Commemorates the death of `Abdu'l-Bahá.
- 27** **Guru Nanak Gurpurab** Celebrates the birth of the first Sikh Guru.
- 30** **Saint Andrew's Day** Feast day of the patron saint of Scotland.

APRIL

- 6** **Laylat al-Qadr** Marks the night in which the Qur'an was first revealed.
- 8** **Hanamatsuri** Flower festival celebrating the birthday of Shakyamuni, whose teachings form the basis of Buddhism.
- 9** **Chaitri Navratri** Commemorates Goddess Durga's birth of the cosmos and all living things within it. Ends 17 April.
- 10** **Eid al-Fitr** Marks the end of Ramadhan, the holy month of dawn-to-sunset fasting.
- 13** **Vaisakhi** Marks the birth of the Khalsa.
- 17** **Ram Navami** Celebrates the founding of the Khalsa, the Brotherhood of the Pure by Guru Gobind Singh.
- 21** **Feast of Ridván** Start of festival commemorating the commencement of Bahá'u'lláh's prophethood.
- 21** **Mahavir Jayanti** Celebrates the birth of Lord Mahavira, the last Tirthankara (saviour).
- 22** **Passover** Celebrates the Exodus, the freedom from slavery of the Children of Israel from ancient Egypt that followed the Ten Plagues.
- 23** **Hanuman Jayanti** Celebrated to commemorate the birth of Hanuman.
- 23** **St George's Day** Commemorates the patron Saint of England.
- 29** **Ninth Day of Ridván Day** when Bahá'u'lláh's family joined him at the Najibiyyih Garden, Baghdad.

AUGUST

- 1** **Lughnasadh** Marks the first day of harvest.
- 12** **Tisha B'Av** Anniversary of the destruction of the Temple of Solomon by Nebuchadnezzar and of the Second Temple by Titus.
- 13** **Obon** Festival of the souls.
- 15** **The Blessed Virgin Mary** Celebration of the mother of Jesus, Catholic Christians keep this day as Mary's Assumption into heaven.
- 19** **Raksha Bandhan** Celebrates the love and duty between sisters and brothers.
- 26** **Janmashtami** Celebrates the birthday of Lord Krishna, believed to have shown himself in human form 5,000 years ago.

DECEMBER

- 1** **Advent Sunday** The first day of the season of Advent.
- 8** **Bodhi Day** Commemorates the day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama (Shakyamuni) experienced enlightenment. Some cultures celebrate this alternative date.
- +** **Mary's Immaculate Conception** A very important Solemnity for Catholics.
- 10** **Human Rights Day** Commemorates the day in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- 11** **Geeta Jayanti** Commemorates the birthday of Bhagavad Gita, the sacred text of Hinduism.
- 24** **Christmas Eve** Marks the end of the Advent season, the period of preparation for Christmas Day. Worshipers go to a Midnight Mass Church Service.
- 25** **Christmas Day** Commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ and is widely celebrated by the exchanging of gifts.
- 25** **Hanukkah** Celebrates the rededication of Jerusalem's Second Temple and the miracle of its menorah, which was kept alight for eight days with one day's oil.