

Faith festivals May 2018

1st May Tuesday, Lailat-UI-Bara'ah Tradition: Muslim

On the fourteenth of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Muslim calendar and two weeks before Ramadan commences, Muslims seek forgiveness for their sins. Many Muslims believe that it is on this night that a person's destiny is fixed by Allah for the coming year, and the night is often spent in prayer, asking for forgiveness and God's guidance. Some Muslims fast during the daytime in preparation for the night. In certain parts of the world Muslims visit the graves of relatives, and the giving of charity is also traditional. In a number of places the night is marked with firework displays.

3rd May Thursday, Lag Ba'Omer Tradition: Jewish

It is a festive day on the Jewish calendar, celebrating the anniversary of the passing of the great sage and mystic Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, author of the Zohar. It also commemorates another event. In the weeks between Passover and Shavuot, a plague raged amongst the disciples of the great sage Rabbi Akiva. On Lag BaOmer the dying ceased. Source:

http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/42944/jewish/Lag-BaOmer.htm

10th May Thursday, Ascension Day (40th day after Easter) Christian (Western Churches) Tradition: Christian

This day commemorates the last earthly appearance of the Risen Christ, who, according to Christian belief, ascended into heaven in the presence of many witnesses.

13th May (Sunday) – 19th May (Saturday) Christian Aid Week Tradition: Christian

Initiated in 1945, this fund raising week raises money for work with the needy throughout the world; mainly done by house to house collections and sales of goods of various kinds.

16th May (Wednesday) to 14th June (Thursday) Ramadan Tradition: Muslim

The Muslim year is a lunar year which is about 11 days shorter than the solar year on which the Gregorian (British) calendar is based, so Ramadan occurs ten or eleven days earlier each year in the Gregorian calendar. During Ramadan Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. Fasting (sawm) is one of the five pillars of Islam, requiring self-discipline and giving everyone some experience of deprivation. Those who are not able to fast are expected to give charity to compensate for the lost days. While children may be encouraged to fast, the full fast is not compulsory until maturity, but many young people still attempt to keep some, or even all of it. Source: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/religious-festivals>

20th May (Wednesday) – 21st May (Thursday) Shavuot/The Feast of weeks/Pentecost Tradition: Jewish

Shavuot, also known as the Feast of Weeks, is a two day festival which falls seven weeks after Pesach. It celebrates the revelation of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai, and also marks the time when the first harvest was taken to the Temple. Synagogues are decorated with flowers and dairy foods are traditionally eaten. For Orthodox Jews work is not permitted throughout the festival. Source: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/religious-festivals>

23rd May Wednesday Declaration of the Bab Tradition: Baha'i

Commemorates the day in 1844 on which he announced his identity as the "Bab" ("Gate"),

the herald of the new age.

29th May Tuesday Ascension of Baha'u'llah) Tradition: Baha'i

This day marks the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith. Work is suspended on this day.

29th May Tuesday Wesak Tradition: Buddhist

The commemoration of Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana, celebrated on the day of the full moon of the sixth lunar month in Southeast Asian cultures; in Tibetan culture, Wesak commemorates only the enlightenment and parinirvana. The dates of this celebration vary significantly among Buddhist cultures and communities.

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