

Faith Festivals November 2020

1st November is **All Saints' Day** - Tradition: **Christian**

(In Western Churches; however the Catholic Church in England and Wales moves this festival to the nearest Sunday if it falls on a Saturday or a Monday.) Also known as All Hallows', originally All Martyrs', this day provides a chance to offer thanks for the work and witness of all Christian saints, recognising that not all are known or specially celebrated. Many churches stress this day rather than Hallowe'en, which falls the day before, by holding events especially designed for children. More Information:

<http://www.churchyear.net/allsaints.html> or <http://www.catholic.org/saints/allsaints/>

1st November is **Loy Kratong** - Tradition: **Buddhist**

Loy Kratong is celebrated in most of the village and town temples in Thailand and often coincides with a temple's Kathina Day. Degradable baskets are made and filled with carefully folded banana leaves, incense sticks, a candle and sometimes a coin. These are then launched on rivers, canals ponds or the sea, while a wish for good fortune is offered to the spirits of the water. Eels and turtles are sometimes liberated into the water at this time. Thai forest temples in the UK will not observe Loy Kratong. For more

<http://festivalasia.net/festivals/Loi-Krathong-2015.html>

2nd November is **All Souls' Day** - Tradition: **Christian**

On this day in particular, the departed are remembered and prayers on their behalf are offered. This was originally a pagan festival which, since from earliest times Christians have prayed for the souls of the dead was merged into Christian liturgy as European population converted to Christianity. In the year 998 All Souls, 'the faithful departed', began to be remembered in the Church calendar on this day "The theological basis for the feast is the doctrine that the souls which, on departing from the body, are not perfectly cleansed from venial sins, or have not fully atoned for past transgressions, are debarred from the Beatific Vision, and that the faithful on earth can help them by prayers, alms deeds and especially by the sacrifice of the Mass". Thus souls must stay in purgatory until sufficiently cleansed to enter paradise. Source

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01315b.htm>. More Information: <http://www.diocesealex.org/articles/2014/10/why-do-we-pray-dead-all-souls-day-nov-2> . For a historical perspective in Britain, see also <http://catholictradition.blogspot.co.uk/2009/11/all-hallows-eve-october-31.html>

8th November (Sunday) is **Remembrance Sunday** -- Tradition: **All faith and none**

This commemorated on the Sunday nearest to Armistice Day (11th November), it is devoted to the solemn remembrance of the dead of the two World Wars and subsequent wars. Prayer services occur at the Cenotaph in London and war memorials all over the country. A moment of silence at 11 a.m. is generally observed. This year's Remembrance Sunday is all the more important that it falls during the remembrance marking the centenary anniversary of the First World War. More at:

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/remembrance/how-we-remember/remembrance-sunday/> and <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/remembrance-sunday>

12th – 16th November **DIVALI/DEEPAVALI**

Tradition: **Hindu/Jain**

For Hindus this is a New Year festival lasting from one to five days, during which fireworks are set off and lights are hung out. It is a festival of light, coinciding with the darkest night of the lunar month. Various interpretations are given to the festival in different parts of India, but it is generally associated with Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity, or with the victorious return of Rama and Sita to the kingdom of Ayodhya after their exile. Divali marks the beginning of the Indian financial year. For more, see: <http://www.diwalifestival.org/>

Sikh: (Bandi Chhor Divas)

Sikhs also celebrate Divali since Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, was released from Gwalior prison on this day. The Guru refused to accept release when it was offered him by the Emperor Jehangir unless 52 imprisoned Hindu princes were also given their freedom. To meet the Emperor's condition that only those who hold on to his cloak could leave the prison, the Guru had a coat with long tassels made. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is illuminated at this time and

firework displays take place there. It is a time for new clothes, presents and sweets. For more <http://www.sikhnet.com/news/bandi-chhor-divas>

24th November is Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur - Tradition: Sikh (Nanakshahi calendar)

Born in Amritsar, Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth of the ten Gurus who founded Sikhism. He is honoured and remembered as the man who championed the rights for all religious freedom. He taught liberation from attachment, fear and dependence. Strength should be gained through truth, worship, sacrifice and knowledge. During the reign of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, Islam was imposed on the people. Hindu temples were demolished and turned into mosques, higher taxes were charged to non-Muslims and the Emperor persecuted those who would not conform to Islamic law. Guru Tegh Bahadur spoke out amid this persecution, upholding the right of Kashmiri Hindus to worship in the manner of his or her choice. He refused to convert to Islam and in 1675, he was publicly beheaded opposite the Red Fort in Delhi. In so doing he sacrificed his head rather than his faith, on behalf of individual Indians who had turned to him for help. The site of his execution was later turned into an important Gurdwara. He's also remembered for his poetry, much of which is included in the Guru Granth Sahib. For more <http://www.sikhs.org/guru9.htm> and <http://www.sikhnet.com/news/martyrdom-guru-tegh-bahadur-sikh-thanksgiving>

29th November Advent Sunday

Tradition: **Christian (Western Churches)**

The start of the Christian year four Sundays before Christmas It is often celebrated by lighting the first candle in the advent crown – a circular wreath of greenery. A further three candles are lit on subsequent Sundays, culminating with the Christmas candle on the 25th December. This signifies the transition from darkness to light.

30th November is Saint Andrew's Day – Tradition: Christian

Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, Greece and Russia and was Christ's first disciple. He was crucified at Patras in Greece and has been patron saint of Scotland since the 8th century. In the Anglican Communion he is associated with missionary activity. Saint Andrew's Day is Scotland National Holiday. For more <http://www.saintandrew.us/> or <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/s/standrewsday.asp>

30th November is Guru Nanak Dev Sahib's birthday - Tradition: Sikh

Born in 1469 CE, Nanak was the first Sikh Guru. To celebrate significant birthdays such as his, an Akhand path, a complete uninterrupted reading of the Guru Granth Sahib, is begun about two days earlier, so that it will be finished on the morning of the festival. Sikhs gather at the gurdwara to hear sermons and lectures (katha) and sing hymns (kirtan) about the life of the first Guru. The congregation will share a meal (langar) donated, prepared by volunteers and shared among all the community present. The Gurdwaras are usually illuminated and there are firework displays. More Information: It is believed that Sikhism is originated in Punjab, which is now in India and Pakistan during 16th century. Now more than 20 million people follow Sikhism worldwide, mostly staying in India. Sikhism is recognized as one of the youngest religions in the world. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak and his nine successors (considered as ten Gurus of Sikhism). Guru Nanak was born in the year of 1469. He spreads a simple message "Ek Onkar" means "We are all one, with the One Creator of all Creation". Guru Nanak's students were known as Sikhs, the word "Sikh" means "seeker of truth". The scripture of the Sikhs is known as "Sri Guru Granth Sahib" considered as their living Guru, the hymns of the Gurus they refer are known as Gurbani, and their place of worship is known as "Gurdwara". The Ten Gurus of Sikhism are Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan, Guru Har Gobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Har Krishan, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and Guru Gobind Singh. The Noble teachings of Sikhism are: 1) there is only one God and the name of the God is Truth, 2) recognize inner truth through meditation and chanting, 3) live a simple and honest life, 4) treat everyone equally, 5) serve others. Source <http://www.calendarlabs.com/calendars/religious/sikh-calendar.php> . For a short illustrated biography of Guru Nanak see <http://www.sikh-history.com/sikhhist/gurus/nanak1.html>

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