



Chaplaincy Services

Holy Days, Celebrations and Observances of August 2019

Holy Days With No Fixed Date

August

Eagle Dance The Native American Eagle dance performed by several tribes consists of movements that emulate an eagle. The dancers are clothed with replications of eagle attire. The performance includes sequences of songs and dances. In Native American tribes, the eagle has a symbolic meaning. These Native American tribes believe that the eagle has a spiritual connection to their prayers.

The Native American tribes that perform the Eagle dance believe that the eagle has the theoretical ability to move about between heaven and earth. In times gone by, the Native Americans have believed that the eagle has supernatural powers. Also, these Native American tribes believe that the eagle has the power to control rain and thunder. Therefore, the Eagle dance originated as a result of this figurative meaning.

The Native American tribes performed the Eagle dance when there was a need for divine intervention. Historically, the Native Americans performed the dance for a variety of reasons, including friendship creation and curing a sickness. They traditionally believed that the eagle has the supernatural power to transport prayers to the gods.

The Native Americans believe that the eagle symbolizes wisdom, strength and power. Some tribes believe that the eagle's flight signifies the passage of the sun's movements. Eagle's feathers are sacred, especially the Golden Eagle and Bald Eagle. Therefore, it is a privilege to wear the eagle's feathers. Also, these Native American tribes believe that the eagle's feathers should never touch the ground. Moreover, the eagle's feathers are used as object decorations in the eagle dance ceremonies.

The performance of the Eagle dance is a depiction of the eagle's life cycle from birth to death. In olden times, Native American tribes may have performed the dance to bring rain for crops. Two central dancers perform an imitation of the eagle's movements. Also, a group of male dancers provide background singing and drum music. However, there is no specific method to perform the dance. It varies with each tribe. In general, the dance consists of the eagle's day to day movements. For instance, the dancers may perform a replica of the animal's hunting and feeding progressions. The dancers make flapping movements to imitate the eagle's flight.

Different Indian tribes perform the Eagle dance during a sacred ceremony. Traditionally, the Iroquois, Comanche and Calumet tribes have performed the dance during spiritual ceremonies. In the present day, it's usually performed by the Jemez and Tesuque tribes located in New Mexico. The dance can be performed during any season, but it is normally performed in the early part of the Spring season.



Hopi Snake Dance Considered the brothers of the Hopi people, snakes play an important and mysterious role in Hopi culture. One of the most well-known Hopi rituals, the Snake Dance is a rain ceremony held in late August. This dance is performed to honor Hopi ancestors and to aid the snakes in carrying prayers for rain to the underworld.

A 16-day celebration is held to prepare for the Snake Dance, which takes place on the last day of festivities. Throughout the weeks leading up to the dance itself prayer sticks, sandpaintings and an altar are made. Sacred water, green corn stalks and beans are all placed upon the altar to represent the rain.

Each year a boy and a girl around the age of 14 are chosen to represent the Snake Youth and Antelope Maid throughout the festivities. Dressed in white, the children stand in front of the sandpainting while their legends are shared with the community.

Snake priests and boys of the Snake Clan gather snakes a few days before the dance while foot races are held in the villages. The winner of the first race receives a prayer plume to plant in his field for a good harvest and the winner of the second race is provided a jar of sacred water to pour over his crops.

On the morning of the Snake Dance the boys wash the snakes in water and herbs before placing them on a bed of clean sand. As the dance begins, the snakes are placed in a kisi (shrine) in the village plaza. Snake priests reach into the shrine and carry the snakes as they dance. At the end of the ceremony, the snakes are released to find the rain gods in the underworld, carrying the prayers of the dancers to them. *Photo: ancient-origins.net*



Hopi Flute Ceremony Held on opposite years from the Snake Dance, the Flute ceremony is held in August. This nine-day celebration is held to encourage rain and the growth of the corn crop, as well as the continuity of life after death. During the days leading up to the ceremony, an altar is constructed with carvings and paintings to represent the clouds that will bring rain to the villages.

The Flute Ceremony begins with a procession through the village. The clan chief leads a group that includes the flute boy, flute girls, men carrying cornstalks and warriors with bullroarers. Prayers for rain are said and a priest scatters corn meal on the ground before the flute altar. Water is poured into a bowl from all directions to symbolize the rain clouds and a bullroarer is used to represent the sound of thunder.

The unwrapping of the tiponi occurs on the sixth day of celebration. The tiponi is made of wood, shaped like a cup and decorated with rain cloud and corn symbols. Inside the cup rests a single ear of corn or corn grains. This corn represents the seed that was carried by the early tribes throughout their migrations. Wrapped in cotton string and feathers, the tiponi is unwrapped by a flute priest so the corn within can be planted. A new ear of corn is then placed within it and re-wrapped until the following year. *PhotoH: thekachinahouse.com*



Holy Days With Fixed Date

August 1 Fast in Honor of the Holy Mother of Jesus Jesus's mother Mary is a major figure for most of the world's 2 billion Christians who are either Catholic or Eastern Orthodox, however, Eastern Christians have a more extensive and enduring tradition of fasting throughout the Christian year. In the opening 14 days of August, Orthodox Christians look ahead to the August 15 Great Feast of the Dormition (or the "falling asleep" or death) of the Theotokos. The title Theotokos refers to Jesus's mother and is Greek for "birth-giver" or "bearer of God."

Unlike Western Christians, observant Orthodox families spend a little over half of each year living with some form of dietary limitation, described in general as fasting. The two-week fast in early August is sometimes called the Dormition Fast and bars consumption of red meat, poultry, dairy products including eggs, fish, oil and wine.

August 1 Lammas Wicca/Pagan Thousands will celebrate Lammas today – marking the first harvest of the season. The date is usually celebrated in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and other countries in the Northern Hemisphere by baking Lammas bread, making corn dollies, bundling twigs together and enjoying large feasts with friends and family.

Lammas day – or ‘loaf mass’ – is traditionally when people celebrate the first wheat harvest in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and is noted as the first harvest festival (but much earlier than THE harvest festival which is in September) of the season.

Grains that are harvested at Lammas time include, wheat, barley, oats and rye as well as the plants meadowsweet, mint, sunflower and Calendula.

The festival’s roots date back to Anglo Saxon times when the festival was referred to as the ‘feast of first fruits’. It also marks the end of the hay harvesting season.

Lammas Day is usually around the beginning of August and coincides with when tenant farmers would have presented the first crop harvest to their landlord.

Traditionally villagers would take a loaf of bread into church that was made with the first crop. This loaf was then blessed and, according to Anglo Saxon tradition, broken into four pieces with each of the pieces placed at the corner of a barn to protect the newly harvested grain.

Lammas bread was often made in shapes including wheat, owls, figures of the ‘corn god’ and others. Other symbolic offerings include Lammas charms such as a ‘besom’ (a bundle of twigs), green Lammas ribbons and sprigs of mint.



August 10 Tisha B'av Jewish Tisha B'Av, the Fast of the Ninth of Av, is a day of mourning to commemorate the many tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people, many of which coincidentally occurred on the ninth of Av.

Tisha B'Av literally means “the ninth (day) of Av” in Hebrew. It usually occurs during August. Tisha B'Av primarily commemorates the destruction of the first and second Temples, both of which were destroyed on the ninth of Av (the first by the Babylonians in 423 B.C.E.; the second by the Romans in 69 C.E.).

Although this holiday is primarily meant to commemorate the destruction of the Temple, it is appropriate to consider the many other tragedies of the Jewish people that also occurred on this day. Among them are: the crushing of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt at the hands of the Romans in 133 C.E.; the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290 C.E.; the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492; and the beginning of World War I in 1914, which by general historical consensus led to World War II and the Holocaust.

Tisha B'Av is the culmination of a three-week period of incrementally increasing mourning, beginning with the fast of the 17th of Tammuz that commemorates the first breach of the walls of Jerusalem, before the First Temple was destroyed. During this three-week period, weddings and other parties are not permitted, and many Jewish people refrain from cutting their hair. From the first to the ninth of Av, it is customary to refrain from eating meat or drinking wine (except on the Sabbath) and from wearing new clothing.

The restrictions on Tisha B'Av are similar to those on Yom Kippur: to refrain from eating and drinking (even water); washing, bathing, shaving or wearing cosmetics; wearing leather shoes; and engaging in sexual relations. Work in the ordinary sense of the word is also restricted. People who are ill need not fast on this day. Many of the traditional mourning practices are observed: people refrain from smiles, laughter and idle conversation, and sit on low stools.

In synagogue, the book of Lamentations is read and mourning prayers are recited. The ark where the Torah is kept is draped in black. *Photo: chabad.org*



August 10 Waqf al Arafa Islam Arafat Day is the second day of the Hajj pilgrimage and is the day before the first day of the major Islamic Holiday of Eid ul-Adha. Arafat Day falls on the 9th day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the twelfth and final month in the Islamic calendar. As the exact day is based on lunar sightings, the date may vary between countries.



At dawn on Arafat Day, Muslim pilgrims will make their way from Mina to a nearby hillside and plain called Mount Arafat and the Plain of Arafah. It was here that Muhammad gave his Farewell Sermon in 632 CE.

The Hajj is the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. This pilgrimage is a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be carried out at least once in their lifetime by all who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey. The state of being capable of performing the Hajj is called *istita'ah*, and a Muslim who fulfills this condition is called a *mustati*. The Hajj is considered the largest annual gathering of people in the world.

The Quran tells of how God asked the prophet, Ibrahim, to sacrifice his son as a test of his faith. As the prophet prepared to submit to God's will, the devil tried to dissuade him and the prophet Ibrahim threw rocks at the devil. This act is repeated by pilgrims at Hajj who throw stones at symbolic pillars.

Part of Hajj is being seen as equal in the eyes of God. All men wear two pieces of white sheets so that all the attendee's wealth and social status are the same. Women's clothing is less restrictive, but they must wear white and they can only show their hands and feet. Unlike other Islamic rites, there is no gender segregation at Hajj. Men and women are permitted to stand side by side.

August 12 - 15 Eid al-Adha Islam Eid al-Adha is an Islamic festival to commemorate the willingness of Ibrahim (also known as Abraham) to follow Allah's (God's) command to sacrifice his son, Ishmael. Muslims around the world observe this event.

At Eid al-Adha, many Muslims make a special effort to pray and listen to a sermon at a mosque. They also wear new clothes, visit family members and friends and may symbolically sacrifice an animal in an act known as *qurbani*. This represents the animal that Ibrahim sacrificed in the place of his son.

In some traditionally Muslim countries, families or groups of families may purchase an animal known as *udhiya*, usually a goat or sheep, to sacrifice, but this is not common or legal in many parts of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States or many other countries. In these countries, groups of people may purchase a whole carcass from a butcher or slaughterhouse and divide it amongst themselves or just buy generous portions of meat for a communal meal on Eid-al-Adha. People also give money to enable poorer members of their local community and around the world to eat a meat-based meal.

In the period around Eid al-Adha, many Muslims travel to Mecca and the surrounding area in Saudi Arabia to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. Package holidays are organized from many countries. Muslims may plan and save for many years to enable them to take part in this event, which is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Eid al-Adha is a public holiday in places such as the Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. It is not a nationwide public holiday in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom or the United States. However, some Islamic organizations may be closed or offer a reduced level of service and there may be some local congestion around mosques in countries where Eid al-Adha is not a public holiday.

Ibrahim, known as Abraham in the Christian and Jewish traditions, was commanded by God to sacrifice his adult son. He obeyed and took Ishmael (Ismail or Ismael) to Mount Moriah. Just as he was to sacrifice his son, an angel stopped him and gave him a ram to sacrifice in place of his son.



August 15 Assumption/Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic/Orthodox Christian Assumption Day is celebrated on or around August 15 in many countries, particularly in parts of Europe and South America. It is also called the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God (in the eastern countries) or the Feast of the Assumption.

Colorful processions through the streets and firework displays mark the celebration of the Feast of the Assumption in Italy, as they do in Italian-American communities throughout the United States. In Sicily and rural areas outside Rome, a bowing procession is the day's main event. A statue of the Virgin Mary is carried through the town to a ceremonial arch of flowers, where a group of people holding a statue of Christ awaits her arrival. Both statues are inclined toward each other three times, and then the Christ figure precedes the figure of Mary back to the parish church for a special benediction.

In Sao Paulo and other parts of southern Brazil, the feast is called Nosa Senhora dos Navegantes, or "Our Lady of the Navigators". Pageants are held on decorated canoes, each carrying a captain, a purser, three musicians, and two rowers. They travel to small villages to entertain and feast. Towns may have small church processions with musicians whose costumes and demeanors depict the "Three Wise Men" who are mentioned in the Bible.

In previous years some Italian plazas were flooded. Citizens would ride through the temporary "lakes" in carriages and it was common for people to carry bowls of rose-scented water, which they sprinkled on themselves – possibly a carryover from a pagan ritual in which the gods were petitioned to provide adequate rainfall for the crops, or as a tribute to the pagan goddess Isis of the Sea. Assumption Day is also an important holiday in France where the Virgin Mary has been the patron saint since 1638.

Assumption Day is a public holiday in countries such as Austria, Belgium, Chile, Croatia, France, parts of Germany, Guatemala, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland (the holiday may be regional or limited to certain groups in Switzerland). However, Assumption Day is not a public holiday in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Assumption Day commemorates the belief that when Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, died, her body was not subjected to the usual process of physical decay but was "assumed" into heaven and reunited there with her soul. This holiday, which has been celebrated since the fourth century CE, is a Christianization of an earlier harvest festival and, in many parts of Europe, is known as the Feast of Our Lady of the Harvest.

For centuries celebrations were held in the honor of the goddess Isis of the Sea, who was born on this day according to mythology. With the coming of Christianity church leaders decided that the easiest way to handle this pagan ritual was to simply change it into a Christian holiday, hence the introduction of Assumption Day came forth.

Like the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption was not always an official dogma of the Roman Catholic Church – not until Pope Pius XII ruled it so in 1950. It is, however, a pious belief held by some Orthodox Christians and some Anglicans. It is regarded as the principal feast day of the Virgin Mother.

Remnants of the ancient celebration include night time bonfires and public illuminations, both probably symbolic of the Sun, in Italy. The idea of prosperity is also evident in the throwing of coins from windows down to the street in some cultures. Symbolic images of the Virgin Mary and her assumption into heaven have been associated with the day. Blue is the color most often associated with the Virgin Mary. It symbolizes truth and clarity, and it is the color of the sky, which symbolizes heaven. The lily, which is a symbol of purity, chastity, and simplicity, is also associated with the Virgin Mary.



August 23 Krishna Janmashtami Hindu Krishna Janmashtami is one of the most important Hindu festivals that celebrates the birth of Krishna, the eighth incarnation of the god Vishnu. It is celebrated on the eighth day of the Hindu month of Bhadrava, which is usually in August or September.

Many people fast until the sighting of the new moon, which is followed by a full night vigil that commemorates the birth of Krishna at midnight. There are ceremonies and prayers at temples, as well as rituals that are performed such as bathing the idol of the infant Krishna, dressing it in new clothes and jewelry, then placing his image in a silver cradle with toys.

Some areas have performances such as folk dramas that depict scenes from Krishna's life in Mathura. Other areas have rituals that include pots that have money, curds and butter that are hung high over the streets, and boys form human pyramids to try to break the pot, which is held in Maharashtra and known as Govinda. The event is accompanied with a feast of 108 dishes, a number that has come to be identified as religious by the faithful. Traditional processions are held as part of the celebrations.

Krishna Janmashtami is a gazetted holiday in India so government offices and many businesses (including local offices and shops) are closed. It is not a nationwide public holiday in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, but some cities may hold large celebrations for the Janmashtami festival.

There are numerous legends that tell the life of Krishna. He is known for his mischievous pranks, such as tricking people out of their freshly churned butter or stealing clothes while they bathed in the river. Krishna is known for defeating the 100-headed serpent, Kaliya, by dancing it to submission.

There are many paintings, sculptures and classical dances that depict the life of Krishna, which typically show him as a child dancing and holding a ball of butter. He is also often shown as the divine lover, playing the flute and surrounded by adoring women. The climbing games reflect the stories of Krishna, who as a boy loved milk and butter so much that they had to be kept out of his reach.

Ladies draw patterns of little children's footprints outside that are walking towards their house to symbolize the entry of the infant Krishna into his foster-home or their homes.



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Below is an example of a Grace Note



Chaplaincy Staff:
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Rev. Eliezer Oliveira, habla Espanol, room 4115, x 5050
Rev. Matthew Schlageter, room 4115, x 6736
Rev. Lavender Kelley, room 4115, x 4638

Catholic Mass is held Thursday at noon and Saturday at 4 p.m. in the Main Chapel, third floor Main, room 3201.

Jummah Prayer is held Friday at 12:15 p.m. in the Main Chapel, third floor Main, room 3201