



Children's National®

The Holy Days of September 2017

Celebrations, Observances and Information
Religious, Spiritual, and Cultural Occasions

Chaplaincy Services

Holy Days with fixed date

September 1 *The Ecclesiastical year begins for Orthodox Christians*

September 1—4 *Eid al Adha* **Islam** Eid al-Adha is an Islamic festival to commemorate the willingness of Ibrahim 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.

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*Catholic Mass: Thursday at 12:00 pm
(Main Chapel, room 3201, 3rd floor)
Saturday at 4:00 pm (Main Chapel, room 3201, 3rd floor)*

*Friday: Jummah Prayer at 12:30 pm
R-114/ floor 3.5 Main*

September 8 Nativity of the Virgin Catholic Christian The Church has celebrated Mary's birth since at least the sixth century. A September birth was chosen because the Eastern Church begins its Church year with September. The September 8 date helped determine the date for the feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8.

Scripture does not give an account of Mary's birth. However, the apocryphal Protoevangelium of James fills in the gap. This work has no historical value, but it does reflect the development of Christian piety. According to this account, Anna and Joachim are infertile but pray for a child. They receive the promise of a child who will advance God's plan of salvation for the world. Such a story, like many biblical counterparts, stresses the special presence of God in Mary's life from the beginning.

Saint Augustine connects Mary's birth with Jesus' saving work. He tells the earth to rejoice and shine forth in the light of her birth. "She is the flower of the field from whom bloomed the precious lily of the valley. Through her birth the nature inherited from our first parents is changed." The opening prayer at Mass speaks of the birth of Mary's Son as the dawn of our salvation, and asks for an increase of peace. *Photo: Hans Fries, Birth of Mary. Oil on Panel, German 1512. Kunstmuseum, Basel. Photo: Hans Hinz/Artothek*



September 14 Elevation of the Cross Orthodox Christian *Let all the trees of the wood, planted from the beginning of time, rejoice; for their nature hath been sanctified by the stretching of Christ on the Tree. Wherefore, now, we worship Him, lifted up, and magnify Him.*

By the mere planting of thy Cross, O Christ, the foundation of death did shake; for him whom Hades did swallow eagerly, it delivered up with trembling; for verily, thou didst reveal to us thy salvation, O holy One. Wherefore, do we glorify thee, O Son of God. Have mercy upon us.

Today the Church celebrates the feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross. Two events connected to the Honorable Cross of our Lord are commemorated this day: first, the finding of the Cross by the Empress Helena in the Holy Land; and second, the return of the Cross from Persia to Jerusalem in the year 628. read more:

<http://antiochian.org/feast-of-the-holy-cross>

September 17 Lemlunay T'boli Celebrated every third week of September. This thanksgiving festival stems from the belief of the T'boli in a golden age which they call *Lem-lunay*, a sort of Camelot or paradise which they would like to rebuild for themselves. Each festival is a venue to reenergize the people and renew their vow to work for this coveted state of life. Features the convergence of the 6 major tribes of South Cotabato (T'boli, Ubo, Manobo, Kalagan, Maguindanao, Tasaday) together with representatives from the different tribes in Davao (Tirurays, Mandaya, Surigao tribes, Langilan, Bilaan, Bagog, Mansaka). The festival was originally just a small town fiesta celebrating the feast day of Sta Cruz.



However, starting in the 70's, the religious feast has incorporated the features of the Mo-inum or thanksgiving ritual of the T'bolis. The commemorative mass held during the final day features a unique blend of Catholic ritual and ethnic color. Horse fights, traditional dances and games add more spectacle to this breathtaking and awe-inspiring festival. Here is one festival which one really has to see to believe. *Photo: T'boli woman: Getty Images*

September 20—22 Rosh Hashanah Jewish Rosh HaShanah (literally, "Head of the Year") is the Jewish New Year, which marks the beginning of a 10-day period of prayer, self-examination and repentance. This period, known as the Yamim Nora'im (Days of Awe or High Holy Days), is widely observed by Jews throughout the world, many with prayer and reflection in a synagogue. There also are several holiday rituals observed at home.

Rosh HaShanah is celebrated on the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishrei, which—because of differences in the solar and lunar calendar—corresponds to September or October on the secular calendar. Customs associated with the holiday include sounding the shofar, eating a round challah, and tasting apples and honey to represent a sweet New Year.



September 21—29 Navaratri Hindu Navaratri (nine nights) is one of the greatest Hindu festivals. It symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. Navratri takes place at the beginning of October around harvest time and, as the name implies, this festival is celebrated for nine days. Navratri is also known as Durga Puja. During this period Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati are worshipped as three different manifestations of Shakti, or cosmic energy.

The festival is dedicated to Durga, the mother goddess who also represents power. Durga annihilated the demon Mahishasura after a relentless battle lasting nine days and nights.

Navaratri is a festival in which God is adored as Mother. It is said that Shiva gave permission to Durga to see her mother for nine days in the year and this festival also remembers this visit. Families make an attempt to return home on these days, and leave on the tenth.

Hinduism is the only religion in the world which has emphasized to such an extent the motherhood of God. To celebrate a good harvest and to propitiate the nine planets, women also plant nine different kinds of food grain seeds in small containers during these nine days and then offer the young saplings to the goddess.

During Navaratri, some devotees of Durga observe a fast and prayers are offered for the protection of health and property. A period of introspection and purification, Navaratri is traditionally an auspicious time for starting new ventures.

The tenth day of the festival is called Dasera, and marks the triumph of good over evil, and also the motherhood of God.

Durga Puja is particularly important for Hindus in Bengal. After having worshipped her for nine days, her image is taken to the streets in a procession and there is much celebration and dancing. To mark Durga leaving her mother after the nine day visit, her image is cast into water. In northern parts of India, Hindus also celebrate Rama's victory over Ravana during this time. This festival is called Dussera. The ten days represent the ten heads of Ravana, and each day is used by Hindus to get rid of bad characteristics, such as lust and jealousy. The tenth day is known as the Day of Victory.

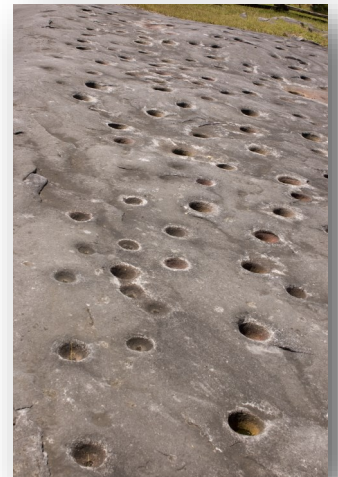


September 22 Mabon/Equinox Wicca/Pagan It is the time of the autumn equinox, and the harvest is winding down. The fields are nearly empty because the crops have been plucked and stored for the coming winter. Mabon is the mid-harvest festival, and it is when we take a few moments to honor the changing seasons, and celebrate the second harvest. On or around September 21, for many Pagan and Wiccan traditions it is a time of giving thanks, whether it is abundant crops or other blessings. It's a time of plenty, of gratitude, and of sharing our abundance with those less fortunate. *Read more:* <https://www.thoughtco.com/all-about-mabon-the-autumn-equinox-2562286>



September 24 Miwok Acorn Festival Miwok Tribes of California This tribe, like many other North American tribes, depended on the acorn for food. Acorns cannot be eaten without first being cracked, ground, and washed to remove the tannin—a substance which is not only bitter, but prevents the body from absorbing the nutrients. The grinding took place using large stone pestles in holes formed in large marbleized limestone. These grinding rocks are still visible today at the California Grinding Rock State Historic Park (see picture). The dried meal can be used in soups, mush or even bread. The average Miwok would consume nearly 2000 pounds of acorn in a year—which is why the acorn festival is so important. At the annual harvest the Miwok gathered from widely scattered locales, and still do so today.

The grinding rocks have 1185 grinding cups as well as 363 petroglyphs that depict circles, wavy lines, and human and animal tracks. Many of these are believed to be between 2000 and 3000 years old.



September 25 Ganesh Chaturthi Hindu Ganesh Chaturthi, the great Ganesh festival, also known as 'Vinayak Chaturthi' or 'Vinayaka Chavithi' is celebrated by Hindus around the world as the birthday of Lord Ganesh. It is observed during the Hindu month of Bhadra (mid-August to mid-September) and the grandest and most elaborate of them, especially in the western India state of Maharashtra, lasts for 10 days, ending on the day of 'Ananta Chaturdashi'.

A life-like clay model of Lord Ganesh is made 2-3 months prior to the day of Ganesh Chaturthi. The size of this idol may vary from 3/4th of an inch to over 25 feet.

On the day of the festival, it is placed on raised platforms in homes or in elaborately decorated outdoor tents for people to view and pay their homage. The priest, usually clad in red silk dhoti and shawl, then invokes life into the idol amidst the chanting of mantras. This ritual is called '*pranapratishttha*'. After this, the '*shhodashopachara*' (16 ways of paying tribute) follows. Coconut, jaggery, 21 '*modakas*' (rice flour preparation), 21 '*durva*' (trefoil) blades and red flowers are offered. The idol is anointed with red unguent or sandal paste (*rakta chandan*). Throughout the ceremony, Vedic hymns from the Rig Veda and Ganapati Atharva Shirsha Upanishad, and Ganesh stotra from the Narada Purana are chanted.

For 10 days, from Bhadrapad Shudh Chaturthi to the Ananta Chaturdashi, Ganesh is worshiped. On the 11th day, the image is taken through the streets in a procession accompanied by dancing, singing, to be immersed in a river or the sea. This symbolizes a ritual see-off of the Lord in his journey towards his abode in Kailash while taking away with him the misfortunes of all man.

All join in this final procession, shouting "Ganapathi Bappa Morya, Purchya Varshi Laukariya" (O father Ganesh, come again early next year). After the final offering of coconuts, flowers and camphor are made, people carry the idol to the river to immerse it.

The whole community comes to worship Ganesh in beautifully decorated tents. These also serve as the venue for free medical check-ups, blood donation camps, a charity for the poor, dramatic performances, films, devotional songs, etc. during the days of the festival.



September 27 Meskel Ethiopian Orthodox One of Ethiopia's more popular attractions to catch the eye and interest of tourists is the yearly Meskel celebration. The September Meskel Festival marks the finding of the True Cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. The festival is ancient, dating back over 1,600 years. It is celebrated with yellow Meskel daisies placed on top of huge bonfires that are lit in the evening in front of the throngs of celebrants. The main Meskel celebration includes the burning of a large bonfire, the *Demera*, in Meskel Square in Addis Ababa. This takes place on the eve of Meskel, and is based on the belief that Empress Eleni, the mother of the first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great, had a revelation in a dream. She was told that she should make a bonfire and that the smoke would show her where the True Cross was buried. She ordered the people of Jerusalem to bring wood, and after adding frankincense, the bonfire was lit and the smoke rose high up to the sky. It then fell back to earth and returned to the ground, swirling around at the exact spot where the Cross had been buried.

During the celebration of the Finding of the True Cross, ornately robed priests carrying silver crosses dance with their followers around the fires singing and chanting and carrying flaming torches. Sunday school students dressed in traditional Ethiopian plain white clothes furnish color to the event by singing hymns and presenting colorful spiritual and artistic religious shows to the crowd. Millions of followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church celebrate Meskel every year throughout the country. The festivities also mark the end of the three-month long rainy season and the return of summer to Ethiopia. No rain is expected to occur after Meskel – and indeed it is rare for this to happen. The scenery of this religious festival is a feast for the senses and for the soul.



September 29 Michael and All Angels Christian A long tradition identifies St. Michael the Archangel, as the leader who remained faithful to God, and cast Lucifer at God's command. His powerful aid has always been invoked by the Church in time of emergency.

The Popes have constantly called on St. Michael as the special protector of the Church whenever great evils threatened God's people. For this reason, St. Michael is especially honored at Rome, on Monte Gargano, near Foggia, in Italy, and in France on Mont St. Michel in Normandy.

This is the feast day of St. Michael and all the Angels. It is the most ancient of all the angel festivals. The Anglican church celebrates all angels, both named and unnamed on one day. Roman and Orthodox Churches separate them into two categories (with the unnamed angels having their feast day on October 2nd).

From fairly early on, Michaelmas was an important holiday, the religious or Christian equivalent of the autumn equinox.

September 29 Yom Kippur Jewish Yom Kippur is the most sacred and solemn day in the Jewish calendar. It means Day of Atonement. It's a day to reflect on the past year and ask God's forgiveness for any sins. Jewish people fast for 25 hours

During the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur everyone gets a chance to put things right with other people before asking God's forgiveness. This period is called The Days of Repentance or Days of Awe. It's a time when Jews can make up for the wrongs of the past year and make a firm commitment to not do the same bad thing or things again.

The special day of Yom Kippur is marked by Jewish people in a number of ways:

Many wear white as a symbol of purity

No food or drink is consumed for 25 hours. (Children under thirteen and people who are ill or pregnant do not have to fast)

No make-up or perfume is worn

No sex

No bathing

No leather shoes

The most important part of Yom Kippur is the time spent in the synagogue. Even Jews who are not particularly religious will want to attend synagogue on Yom Kippur, the only day of the year with five services. The day is spent in continuous prayer for forgiveness. The sound of the shofar (ram's horn) marks the end of the holy day.

Sources for this newsletter: timeanddate.com, franciscanmedia.org, antiochan.org, SEAsite.edu, reformjudaism.org, bbc.co.uk, thoughtco.com, brownielocks.com, paradiseethiopia.com, feastofstmichael.com

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GRACE NOTES

Grace Notes is a daily inspirational email. If you would like to receive Grace Notes please email the [Senior Chaplain](#) and ask to be included. Below is an example of a recent Grace Note.

