



Children's National™

Holy Days of June 2017
Celebrations, Observances, and Information
Religious, Spiritual, and Cultural Occasions

Chaplaincy Services

Holy Days With No Fixed Date

The Sundance *Sioux (and other native people)* The Sundance is the predominant tribal ceremony of Great Plains Indians, although it is practiced by numerous tribes today as a prayer for life, world renewal and thanksgiving. On a personal level, someone may dance to pray for a relative or friend, or to determine their place in the universe, while on a larger scale, the sundance serves the tribe and the earth. Indigenous people believe that unless the sun dance is performed each year, the earth will lose touch with the creative power of the universe, thereby losing its ability to regenerate.

The name Sun Dance derives from the Sioux identification of it as *Wi wanyang wacipi*, translated as "sun gazing dance." Other Plains peoples have names for the ceremony that do not refer to the sun. The Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Blackfoot names for the ceremony all refer to the medicine lodge within which the ritual dancing occurs. The medicine lodge is constructed of pole rafters radiating from a sacred central pole. However, the best-known and most widely practiced contemporary form of the ceremony is that of the Sioux, who do not construct a medicine lodge. Instead, the Sioux make a *hocoka*, or ritual circle, with a sacred cottonwood tree erected in the center and a circular arbor built around the entire perimeter, except for an open entrance to the east, so that the dancing takes place within a central arena that is completely open to the sky and to "sun gazing." However, both traditions, whether that of the medicine lodge or of the *hocoka*, involve ritual ways of making local space sacred as a setting for renewal of the people's relationship with the land itself and with all the beings of their life-world, both human and other-than-human.

The ceremony is highly variable because its performance is intimately connected to the authoritative guidance of visions or dreams that establish an individual relationship between one or more of the central participants and one or more spirit persons. In all cases, however, the primary meaning is understood to be the performance of acts of sacrifice in ritual reciprocity with spiritual powers so that the welfare of friends, family, and the whole people is enhanced. The Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfoot, and Sioux nations all practice sacrificial acts of piercing the flesh, often described pejoratively as "torture" by outsiders. Others, such as the Ute, Shoshone, and Crow nations, perform sacrificial acts of embodying their spiritual intentions through fasting and intense dancing, but not through piercing.

Read more at: <http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/encyclopedia/doc/egg.rel.046> , AND <http://www.native-americans-online.com/native-american-sun-dance.html>

Photo: Assiniboine Sundance lodge, c.1905; on Pinterest



Office of InterFaith Pastoral and Spiritual Care

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Rev. Kathleen Ennis-Durstine
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Catholic Chaplain
room 4115

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Staff/Spanish Language Chaplain
Margarita Roque 202-476-2626/ room 4115

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

Rev. Matthew Schlageter
202-476-6736/room 4115

Rev. Eliezer Oliveira
202-476-5050/ room 4115
Speaks: Portuguese/Spanish

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

Holy Days With Fixed Date

June 4 Pentecost Christian Pentecost is the festival when Christians celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is celebrated on the Sunday 50 days after Easter (the name comes from the Greek *pentekoste*, "fiftieth").

It is also called Whitsun, but does not necessarily coincide with the Whitsun Bank Holiday in the UK.

Pentecost is regarded as the birthday of the Christian church, and the start of the church's mission to the world.

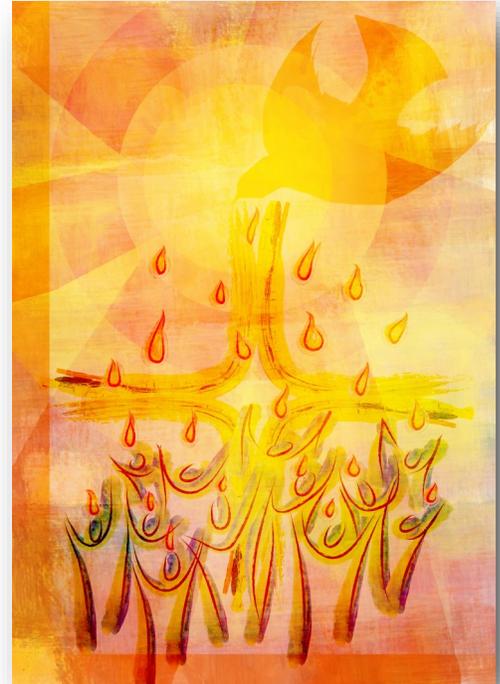
The Holy Spirit is the third part of the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that is the way Christians understand God.

Pentecost is a happy festival. Ministers in church often wear robes with red in the design as a symbol of the flames in which the Holy Spirit came to earth.

The symbols of Pentecost are those of the Holy Spirit and include flames, wind, the breath of God and a dove.

Pentecost comes from a Jewish harvest festival called Shavuot.

The apostles were celebrating this festival when the Holy Spirit descended on them. It sounded like a very strong wind, and it looked like tongues of fire. The apostles then found themselves speaking in foreign languages, inspired by the Holy Spirit. People passing by at first thought that they must be drunk, but the apostle Peter told the crowd that the apostles were full of the Holy Spirit.



June 9 St. Columba of Iona Christian Today is the feast of St. Columba, second patron of Ireland and Apostle of the Picts in Scotland.

He was a man of northwest Ireland, born in 521 in Gartan, County Donegal, later dying on the Scottish island of Iona, on June 9th, 597.

St. Columba is the patron Saint of Derry, where he founded his first Monastery. Today, in that place, now stands the beautiful St. Columba's Chapel, Long Tower.

St. Columba was baptized Colm, meaning 'dove'. Cille, 'of the church', was later added to his name, for he dedicated his life to the Christian faith.

St. Columba came from a wealthy family of Royal Irish blood. He received a good education. Hungry for learning and deeply devout, he was sent to a monastery at Movilla to continue his studies.

There, under the tutelage of St. Finnian, he received the tonsure and took the habit. He left Movilla a deacon and spent some years in Leinster.

Later, he studied under another St. Finnian, at the monastery of Clonard.

By this time, Christianity was flourishing in Ireland. The study of Latin and theology was drawing hoards of young men, attracted to the monastic life. Ireland was truly becoming the land of Saints and scholars for which it is so well known.

Apparently, the scholars at Clonard numbered 3,000. This St. Finnian had studied at the Welsh school of St. David. Of course, this in turn influenced St. Columba, who was ordained a priest at Clonard. There he became one of what was known as the Twelve Apostles of Ireland.

In the year 544, Ireland was struck by plague, and the monks dispersed. St. Columba returned to his native land of Ulster, where he founded his very first monastery in Derry. Later, he would also found the other famous monasteries of Durrow and Kells (which monastery, of course, later produced the famous Book of Kells).

There are numerous accounts as to why Colmcille left his beloved Ireland for Scotland. These accounts entail three main explanations. Perhaps, there are aspects of truth in each of them, shedding light on the saint's character. Read more at: <http://corjesusacrattissimum.org/2015/06/feast-of-st-columba/>

Photo depicts St. Columba, or St. Colmcille, departing for Scotland. British Postage Stamp



June 11 Trinity Sunday Christian Trinity Sunday (or the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, as it's known to Roman Catholics) is primarily a commemoration of Western Christian liturgical churches, commonly observed on the first Sunday after Pentecost. It is a celebration of the doctrine of the Trinity, concerning the various interdependent aspects of God commonly known as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is the beginning of Ordinary Time of the Western Christian calendar. In Eastern churches, however, the Trinity is a part of the Pentecost celebration.

The doctrine of the Trinity, on which Trinity Sunday is based, holds God to be triune, having the quality of three-in-oneness. In this view, God is a single being existing always and forever as a perfect communion of three distinct persons, which are commonly called the Father (the Source of Eternal Majesty), the Son (the Eternal Word or Logos), and the Holy Spirit.

Some Christians contend that one of the three (often the Father) is the truly supreme God, whereas the Son and the Holy Spirit are considered aspects of the former's divinity. Others believe the three parts of the Trinity are different ways that an eternal God has chosen to manifest himself to humanity. However, most Christians now hold that the Trinity refers to three persons in one substance. From this standpoint, the answer to the question What is God? is infinite, endless divinity, while the answer to the question Who is God? is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

For the Roman Catholic Church, Trinity Sunday is a day of transition between the seasons of Pentecost, with its reflections on what the Godly triune has done to accomplish the salvation of mankind, and Ordinary Time, wherein the focus of the Church swings to how people should respond to the infinite love of the Almighty. The color of the vestments and sanctuary for the day is typically white, signifying the pure light of God's love. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the festival marked the end of a three-week moratorium on Church weddings for the Pentecost season.

For many Christians, Trinity Sunday is an important time of reflection. Between the seasons of Pentecost and Ordinary Time, the celebration allows space for the contemplation of the triune nature of God and the different ways his infinite love is expressed to humanity.



June 15 Corpus Christi Christian Many Christians in the United States, particularly those of the Catholic faith, observe Corpus Christi in honor of the Holy Eucharist. It is also known as the Feast of the Most Holy Body of Christ, as well as the Day of Wreaths.

In commemoration of the Last Supper on the day before Jesus' crucifixion many people, especially those who belong to the Catholic denomination, receive Communion on this day. It is celebrated on the Sunday after Trinity Sunday in some parts of the United States, although the day falls on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday in other places. Some people, particularly children, may celebrate their first Communion on this day. This practice, also known as Eucharist, is observed throughout the life of a Christian and is a time of worship when people believe they come together as one body to remember and celebrate the life and works of Jesus Christ. It involves the acceptance of bread and wine in memory of the body and blood of Christ.

Corpus Christi is a festival that has been celebrated by many Christians, particularly the Catholic Church, in honor of the Eucharist since 1246. The name "Corpus Christi" is a Latin phrase that refers to the body of Christ. This event commemorates the Last Supper on the day before Jesus' crucifixion, as described in the Bible. Corpus Christi is primarily celebrated by the Roman Catholic Church but it is also included in the calendar of some Anglican churches.

June 15 Feast of St. Vladimir Christian St. Vladimir I, 956-1015, Grandson of St. Olga and illegitimate son of Sviatoslav, grand duke of Kiev, and his mistress, Malushka, he was given Novgorod to rule by his father. Civil war broke out between his half-brothers Yaropolk and Oleg; Yaropolk made himself ruler by defeating and killing Oleg, and when he captured Novgorod, Vladimir was forced to flee to Scandinavia in 977. Vladimir returned with an army and captured Novgorod and defeated and slew Yaropolk at Rodno in 980; Vladimir was now sole ruler of Russia, notorious for his barbarism and immorality. After his conquest of Kherson in the Crimea in 988, he became impressed by the progress of Christianity and approached Eastern Emperor Basil II about marrying the emperor's daughter Ann. He was converted, reformed his life and married Anne. On his return to Kiev, he invited Greek missionaries to Russia, let his people to Christianity, borrowed canonical features from the West and built schools and churches He is patron of the Russian Catholics. Feast day July 15.

June 16 Guru Arjan Dev Martyrdom Sikh Guru Arjan, 1563-1606, the fifth Sikh Guru and the first Sikh martyr.

The Guru laid the foundation of the Golden Temple (*Harmandir Sahib*) in Amritsar. He also designed the four doors in a Gurdwara, proclaiming that "My faith is for the people of all castes and all creeds from whichever direction they come and to whichever direction they bow."

He also declared that all Sikhs should donate a tenth of their earnings to charity.

The greatest contribution he made to the Sikh faith was to compile all of the past Gurus' writings into one book, now the holy scripture: the *Guru Granth Sahib*. It was this holy book that made him a martyr.

Guru Arjan Dev included the compositions of both Hindu and Muslim saints which he considered consistent with the teachings of Sikhism and the Gurus. In 1606, the Muslim Emperor Jahangir ordered that he be tortured and sentenced to death after he refused to remove all Islamic and Hindu references from the Holy book.

He was made to sit on a burning hot sheet while boiling hot sand was poured over his burnt body. After enduring five days of unrelenting torture Guru Arjan Dev was taken for a bath in the river. As thousands watched he entered the river never to be seen again. The way in which he died changed the course of Sikhism forever.



June 21 Solstice Wicca/Pagan Solstice, or Litha means a stopping or standing still of the sun. It is the longest day of the year and the time when the sun is at its maximum elevation.

A Pagan blessing for Solstice: As the sun spirals its longest dance, Cleanse us; As nature shows bounty and fertility, Bless us; Let all things live with loving intent, and to fulfill their truest destiny

This date has had spiritual significance for thousands of years as humans have been amazed by the great power of the sun. The Celts celebrated with bonfires that would add to the sun's energy, Christians placed the feast of St John the Baptist towards the end of June and it is also the festival of Li, the Chinese Goddess of light.

Like other religious groups, Pagans are in awe of the incredible strength of the sun and the divine powers that create life. For Pagans this spoke in the Wheel of the Year is a significant point. The Goddess took over the earth from the horned God at the beginning of spring and she is now at the height of her power and fertility. For some Pagans the Summer Solstice marks the marriage of the God and Goddess and see their union as the force that creates the harvest's fruits.

This is a time to celebrate growth and life but for Pagans, who see balance in the world and are deeply aware of the ongoing shifting of the seasons it is also time to acknowledge that the sun will now begin to decline once more towards winter.

June 22 *Lailat al Qadr* Islam Lailat al Qadr, the Night of Power, marks the night in which the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by Allah.

Muslims regard this as the most important event in history, and the Qur'an says that this night is better than a thousand months (97:3), and that on this night the angels descend to earth.

This is a time that Muslims spend in study and prayer. Some will spend the whole night in prayer or in reciting the Qur'an.

Lailat al Qadr is a good time to ask for forgiveness.

"Whoever establishes the prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's rewards (not to show off) then all his past sins will be forgiven."

Hadith, Bukhari Vol 1, Book 2:34

Lailat al Qadr takes place during Ramadan. The date of 27 Ramadan for this day is a traditional date, as the Prophet Muhammad did not mention when the Night of Power would be, although it was suggested it was in the last 10 days of the month. Because of this, many Muslims will treat the last 10 days of the month of Ramadan as a particularly good time for prayer and reading the Qur'an.



June 23 *Feast of the Sacred Heart* The first feast of the Sacred Heart was celebrated on August 31, 1670, in Rennes, France, through the efforts of Fr. Jean Eudes (1602-1680). From Rennes, the devotion spread, but it took the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690) for the devotion to become universal.

In all of these visions, in which Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary, the Sacred Heart of Jesus played a central role. The "great apparition," which took place on June 16, 1675, during the octave of the Feast of Corpus Christi, is the source of the modern Feast of the Sacred Heart. In that vision, Christ asked St. Margaret Mary to request that the Feast of the Sacred Heart be celebrated on the Friday after the octave (or eighth day) of the Feast of Corpus Christi, in reparation for the ingratitude of men for the sacrifice that Christ had made for them.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus represents not simply His physical heart but His love for all mankind.

The devotion became quite popular after St. Margaret Mary's death in 1690, but, because the Church initially had doubts about the validity of St. Margaret Mary's visions, it wasn't until 1765 that the feast was celebrated officially in France. Almost 100 years later, in 1856, Pope Pius IX, at the request of the French bishops, extended the feast to the universal Church. It is celebrated on the day requested by our Lord-the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi, or 19 days after Pentecost Sunday.

June 26 *Eid al Fitr* Islam The first Eid was celebrated in 624 CE by the Prophet Muhammad with his friends and relatives after the victory of the battle of Jang-e-Badar.

Muslims are not only celebrating the end of fasting, but thanking Allah for the help and strength that he gave them throughout the previous month to help them practice self-control.

The festival begins when the first sight of the new moon is seen in the sky. Muslims in most countries rely on news of an official sighting, rather than looking at the sky themselves.

The celebratory atmosphere is increased by everyone wearing best or new clothes, and decorating their homes. There are special services out of doors and in mosques, processions through the streets, and of course, a special celebratory meal - eaten during daytime, the first daytime meal Muslims will have had in a month. Eid is also a time of forgiveness, and making amends.

June 29 The Feast of Saints Peter and Paul Christian On June 29 the Church celebrates the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul. As early as the year 258, there is evidence of an already lengthy tradition of celebrating the solemnities of both Saint Peter and Saint Paul on the same day. Together, the two saints are the founders of the See of Rome, through their preaching, ministry and martyrdom there.

Peter, who was named Simon, was a fisherman of Galilee and was introduced to the Lord Jesus by his brother Andrew, also a fisherman. Jesus gave him the name Cephas (Petrus in Latin), which means 'Rock,' because he was to become the rock upon which Christ would build His Church.

Peter was a bold follower of the Lord. He was the first to recognize that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and eagerly pledged his fidelity until death. In his boldness, he also made many mistakes, however, such as losing faith when walking on water with Christ and betraying the Lord on the night of His passion.

Yet despite his human weaknesses, Peter was chosen to shepherd God's flock. The Acts of the Apostles illustrates his role as head of the Church after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. Peter led the Apostles as the first Pope and ensured that the disciples kept the true faith.

St. Peter spent his last years in Rome, leading the Church through persecution and eventually being martyred in the year 64. He was crucified upside-down at his own request, because he claimed he was not worthy to die as his Lord.

He was buried on Vatican hill, and St. Peter's Basilica is built over his tomb.

St. Paul was the Apostle of the Gentiles. His letters are included in the writings of the New Testament, and through them we learn much about his life and the faith of the early Church.

Before receiving the name Paul, he was Saul, a Jewish Pharisee who zealously persecuted Christians in Jerusalem. Scripture records that Saul was present at the martyrdom of St. Stephen.

Saul's conversion took place as he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christian community there. As he was traveling along the road, he was suddenly surrounded by a great light from heaven. He was blinded and fell off his horse. He then heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He answered: "Who are you, Lord?" Christ said: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

Saul continued to Damascus, where he was baptized and his sight was restored. He took the name Paul and spent the remainder of his life preaching the Gospel tirelessly to the Gentiles of the Mediterranean world. Paul was imprisoned and taken to Rome, where he was beheaded in the year 67.

He is buried in Rome in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

In a sermon in the year 395, St. Augustine of Hippo said of Sts. Peter and Paul: "Both apostles share the same feast day, for these two were one; and even though they suffered on different days, they were as one. Peter went first, and Paul followed. And so we celebrate this day made holy for us by the apostles' blood. Let us embrace what they believed, their life, their labors, their sufferings, their preaching, and their confession of faith."



Sources for this newsletter: native-americans-online.com, plainshumanities.unl.edu, bbc.co.uk, corjesusacratissimum.org, sharefaith.com, timeanddate.com, catholic.org, thoughtco.com, catholicnewsagency.com All photographs are from the subscription service Shutterstock unless otherwise noted.