Diwali (Also transliterated as Dipavali)

It is the Hindu festival of lights, held on the final day of the Hindu calendar. The following day, marking the beginning of a new year, is called Annakut. The Hindu calendar is a lunar calendar, with most years consisting of 12 lunar cycles and an extra month inserted approximately every seven years to resynchronize the calendar with the seasons. Diwali falls in the Gregorian month of October/November and always on a new moon day. Since the precise moment of the new moon falls on different Gregorian dates depending on geographical location, the date of Diwali also depends on one’s location.

Scientists were rated as great heretics by the church, but they were truly religious men because of their faith in the orderliness of the universe.

Albert Einstein

All Souls’ Day
The day set apart in the Roman Catholic Church for the commemoration of the faithful departed. The celebration is based on the doctrine that the souls of the faithful are believed to be in purgatory because they have died with the guilt of lesser sins on their souls, and that they may be helped by prayer and by the sacrifice of the Mass. The feast falls on 2 November, or on the 3rd if the 2nd is a Sunday or a festival of the first class. The day is celebrated after All Saints’ Day, a feast in commemoration of all the members of the church who are believed to be in heaven.

Until he extends his circle of compassion to include all living things, man will not himself find peace.

Albert Schweitzer
**Eid al-Fitr**
Feast of the end of the month of fasting. Literally 'celebration of the breaking of the fast'.

**Ramazan Bayrami**
(To November 5)

**Bhai Duj**
The fifth and final day of Diwali Festival. This is a festival when brothers and sisters present each other with gifts.

**Feast of Saint Hubert of Liège**
Honours Saint Hubert, patron saint of hunters and victims of hydrophobia. This day officially opens hunting season in Belgium.

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**Eid al-Fitr**
One of the two major canonical festivals of Islam, Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting. It is celebrated for three consecutive days during the first three days of Shawwal, the 10th month of the Islamic calendar. As in Islam’s other holy festival, Eid al-Adha, it is distinguished by the performance of communal prayer (salat) at daybreak on its first day. It is a time of official receptions and private visits, when friends greet one another, presents are given, new clothes are worn, and the graves of relatives are visited.

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**Hazan (‘Cantor’)**
Also spelt as chazan. A Jewish musician trained in the vocal arts who helps lead the synagogue in song-full prayer. During the early mediæval era, the duties of reading from the Torah and of reciting the prayers were included, as a rule, among the functions of the hazan. He acted sometimes as secretary to the congregation. The office of hazan increased in importance with the centuries. As public worship was developed, and as the knowledge of the Hebrew language declined, singing gradually superseded the didactic and hortatory element in the worship in the synagogue.
UK Guy Fawkes Day
(Bonfire Night)
Commemorates the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605, in which Guy Fawkes and others attempted to blow up the king and Parliament.

Tzadakah
The Hebrew term most commonly translated as 'charity', though it is based on a root meaning 'justice'. According to Maimonides, one of the most influential Rabbis, there are eight levels of tzadakah in Jewish tradition, ranging from publicly giving funds so that the donor and recipient both know who the other is, to providing the means by which a needy person can become self-sustaining. Giving to the poor is an obligation in Judaism, a duty that cannot be forsaken even by those who are themselves in need. According to Jewish law, those who can must give one-tenth of their (net) income.

Tithe
A custom dating back to Old Testament times and adopted by the Christian church whereby lay people contributed a 10th of their income for religious purposes, often under ecclesiastical or legal obligation. The money was used to support churches, and assist the poor. Tithing was also a prime source of subsidy for the construction of many magnificent cathedrals in Europe. Despite serious resistance, tithing became obligatory as Christianity spread across Europe. It was enjoined by ecclesiastical law from the 6th century and enforced in Europe by secular law from the 8th century. Today, the custom is scarcely practised.

Yunus Emre

No dialogue between the religions without investigation of the foundation of the religions.
Hans Künng

Come, let’s know each other, Let’s make things easy, Let’s love, Let’s be loved. This world will remain to no one.

Yunus Emre
Accord and Reconciliation Day
This day was formerly observed as the Day of the October Revolution, as the socialist revolution of 1917 took place on 25 October according to the old calendar. In many former Soviet Republics the day is still observed with changed names and contents.

Gau
A Gau (also spelled Ghau or Gao) is a Tibetan Buddhist amulet container or prayer box, usually made of metal and worn as jewellery. Because they are worn as jewellery, gaus are made of metal and are often ornamented with semi-precious stones, but they vary enormously in style according to the taste of the designer.

Ibn Rushd (b. 1126, d. 1198)
Spanish Muslim theologian, philosopher, Qur’an scholar, natural scientist, and physician, known in the West as Averroes. He is known particularly for his commentary on Aristotle, and for other works dealing with many aspects of philosophy and theology. One concerns ‘the convergence which exists between the religious law (shar’a) and philosophy (hikma)’. Another work considers the problem of predestination. One of his most famous writings, Tahfut al-tahfut (The Incoherence of the Incoherence), criticizes al-Ghazali’s work, The Incoherence of the Philosophers, and upholds the value of philosophy as a wisdom applied to God’s creation.

Compassion for others begins with kindness to ourselves.
Pema Chodron
**November 2005**

**DE** Berlin Wall Opening Day
The Berlin Wall was opened on this day in 1989.

**C** Iqbal Day
Honors famous Sufi scholar Muhammad Iqbal of Pakistan.

**UK** Lord Mayor’s Day
The annual installation of the Lord Mayor of the City of London.

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**Muhammad Iqbal (b. 9 November 1877, d. 21 April 1938)**
Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal was an important Indian Muslim poet, philosopher and thinker. He is credited with being a major force behind the creation of Pakistan and as such is revered in Pakistan with the title of Mufakkir-i-Pakistan (Philosopher of Pakistan). Along with Muhammad Ali Jinnah he is considered one of the pre-eminent founding fathers of Pakistan. Through this entire time, he was an avid writer of poetry and had gained fame for his works. As his popularity grew, he began to focus on helping Muslims develop individual thought.

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**Catechism**
A manual of religious instruction usually arranged in the form of questions and answers used to instruct the young, to win converts, and to testify to the faith. Although many religions give instruction in the faith by means of oral questions and answers, the written catechism is primarily a product of Christianity. Some early handbooks of instruction were prepared by the Church Fathers and many were prepared throughout mediaeval times. The term catechism, however, was evidently first used for written handbooks in the 16th century. The mediaeval catechisms concentrated upon the meaning of faith, hope, and charity.

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**Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**
"Peace at home, peace in the world."
Armistice Day
Anniversary of the official end of the World War I, on 11 November 1918.

Remembrance Day
This is a special day set aside to remember the fallen of the two World Wars and other conflicts.

Independence Day
On this day in 1918 Poland gained independence after 125 years of being partitioned between Prussia, Russia, and Austria.

Gansabhaet
A mediaeval festival still observed in Sursee. Also called ‘Beheading of the Goose’, this festival is believed to be a version of Martin’s Day.

Mortens Day
Early beginning of the Christmas season.

Fethullah Gülen (b. 1941)
Gülen, one of the most important Turkish Muslim scholars and activists of the 20th/21st century, seeks to inspire a new generation who are progressive, rational, with a deep sense of belief and love towards mankind. He inspires a movement of volunteers that have developed a range of activities for the realisation of this goal. These include the founding of hundreds of private high schools and several universities in more than fifty countries, and engaging in transnational media activities. He has given interfaith and intercultural dialogue particular emphasis since the 1990s and inspires initiatives across the world in this respect.

Ney
The ney, which is probably the oldest pitched instrument known to man, is an oblique rim blown reed flute with five finger holes in front and one thumb hole in the back. One of the principal instruments in Middle Eastern music, the ney has a range of two and a half octaves. The upper end is covered by a short brass cylinder which is anchored in the tiny space between the upper incisors of the player. Sound is produced when a stream of air is directed by the tongue toward the opening of the instrument. After the adoption of Islam by the Turks, ney became popular especially in religious music.

Listen to the reed flute, how it is complaining! “Ever since I was taken from the reed bed” it is saying, “men and women have lamented from my shrill cries, I want a heart torn by separation. So that I may explain my lamentation.”

Mevlana Jelaleddin Rumi
National Day of Mourning

Originally designated for the fallen German soldiers of World War I, the ceremony was reintroduced after World War II to cover the losses of the German nation in this war also.

Prince of Wales’ Birthday

Born on 14 November 1948, as Charles Philip Arthur George.

**Gurdwara**

It is the place of worship of the Sikhs. The key area of a gurdwara is a spacious room housing the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh scripture. The community gathers here to participate in devotional activity that typically includes recitation of scripture, singing of scripture to musical accompaniment, and its exegesis. Toward the closing of the devotional session, a supplication is made in which the Sikhs remember their history, seek divine blessings in dealing with their current problems, and reaffirm their vision of establishing a state in which Sikhs shall rule. The service ends with a hymn read from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which is interpreted to be the divine reply to the congregation’s supplication.

**Ashoka**

Ashoka the Great (also Asoka; reigned 273 BCE - 232 BCE) was the son of Bindusara, who ruled the Mauryan empire. Ashoka reigned over most of the Indian subcontinent. While the early part of Ashoka’s reign was apparently quite bloodthirsty, he later became a follower of the Buddha’s teaching. The remaining portion of Ashoka’s reign had an official policy of non-violence, ahimsa. He is acclaimed for constructing hospitals for animals and renovating major roads throughout India. Ashoka had many edicts carved on rocks throughout the empire to guide his people and encourage and promote tolerance and good morals.

*All of us are born for a reason, but all of us don’t discover why. Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It’s what you do for others.*

Danny Thomas
November 2005

15 TUESDAY

13 Shawwal 1426
13 Cheshvan 5766

If men knew themselves, they would know God; and if they really knew God, they would be satisfied with Him and would think of Him alone.
Ibn Arabi

Ibn Arabi (b. 1165, Andalusia, d. 9 November 1240, Damascus) Born and raised in Islamic Spain, he travelled throughout Spain and North Africa, and met and studied under many spiritual teachers, his extraordinary spiritual gifts becoming apparent even in his adolescence. He spent his adult years, at the time of the incursions of Crusaders and the Mongols into the Muslim lands, teaching privately and without a mass following in the Middle East, and avoiding the display of visible ‘spiritual gifts’. He settled for a time in Konya and then in Damascus, where he died. His literary output was prolific and extremely influential after his death, best-known among them: Fusûs al-Hikam (Bezels of Wisdom) and Al-Futuhat Al-Makkiya (The Meccan Revelations).

16 WEDNESDAY

International Day for Tolerance
Adopted in 1996, by the UN.

Day of Prayer and Repentance
Buss- und Bettag (Day of Repentance and Prayer), is observed on the Wednesday before Totensonntag. A federal holiday in all German states, except predominantly Catholic Bavaria, since 1892.

If men knew themselves, they would know God; and if they really knew God, they would be satisfied with Him and would think of Him alone.
Ibn Arabi

God is able to create particles of matter of several sizes and figures and perhaps of different densities and forces, and thereby to vary the laws of nature, and make worlds of several sorts in several parts of the Universe.
Isaac Newton
### November 2005

**17 Thursday**

C 18 Shawwal 1426

H 18 Cheshvan 5766

#### Day of Freedom and Democracy
Commemorates the student demonstration against Nazi occupation in 1939, and the demonstration in 1989 that started the Velvet Revolution. The same day is also commemorated in Slovakia.

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**18 Friday**

16 Shawwal 1426

16 Cheshvan 5766

#### Independence Day LV
Anniversary of the proclamation of the republic on 18 November 2005.

#### Feast of the Dedication of the Basilicas of the Apostles Peter and Paul (Mainly in Rome)
Commemorates the consecration of Basilica of St Peter in Rome on 18 November 1626.

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**Ilm-i Hal**

Islamic manual containing doctrinal guidance (fiqh) on how Muslims are to conduct their life, prayer and social transactions. Recently published manuals in English have been entitled “Islamic Catechisms”, although strictly speaking the ilm-i hal is not the Islamic equivalent of a Christian catechism. Sections of the ilm-i hal include topics such as cleanliness, hygiene, prescribed prayer, alms-giving, fasting and others. Muslims are expected to have a basic understanding of the fiqh in order to be able to practise their religion on a day to day basis.

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**The Cathedral of Saint Stephan, Vienna**

The Cathedral of Saint Stephan in Vienna, is the seat of that city’s Catholic Archbishop. It was damaged by fire on 12 April 1945, and later renovated. The largest bell is called ‘Pummerin’ and hangs in the north tower. It is the largest in Austria and the second largest in Europe. It was recast in 1951 after being destroyed in the Second World War. The bell was a gift of the Province of Upper Austria. The cathedral is 107m long and 34m wide. It has four towers: the highest is the south tower at 136m, the north tower is not finished and is only 68m. On the left and on the right from the main entrance are the two ‘heath towers’, which are about 65m.

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**Qur’an 39:9**

Are those who know and those who do not know alike? Only the men of understanding are mindful.
**November 2005**

**19 Saturday**

- **MC National Day**
  Also known as ‘Prince Rainier’s Day’, this day celebrates the independence of the Principality of Monaco.

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**20 Sunday**

- **Christ the King Sunday**
  Honours Jesus as the lord of all creation.

- **Totensonntag**
  Sunday of the Dead. Last Sunday before Advent.

- **Feast of Saint Dasius**
  Honours St Dasius, Christian soldier-martyr.

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**Epitrachelion**

An ecclesiastical vestment worn by Roman Catholic deacons, priests, and bishops and by some Anglican, Lutheran, and other Protestant clergy. A band of silk 5 to 10cm wide and about 240cm long, it is the same colour as the major vestments worn for the occasion. The Roman Catholic deacon wears it over the left shoulder with ends joined under the right arm; priests and bishops wear it around the neck with ends hanging vertically, except that priests cross the ends in front when wearing an alb. It is generally considered the unique badge of the ordained ministry and is conferred at ordination.

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**Christ the King Sunday**

Christ the King is the last Sunday of the season of Pentecost and of the church year. A festival celebrated in the Roman Catholic church in honour of Jesus Christ as lord over all creation. Essentially a magnification of the Feast of the Ascension, it was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925. Originally, it was celebrated on the last Sunday in October, but in the revised liturgical calendar promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1969, it was moved to the last Sunday of Ordinary Time (immediately preceding Advent), where its theme of Christ’s dominion made it a fitting end to the liturgical year.

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*I see in Nature a magnificent structure... that must fill a thinking person with a feeling of humility...*

*Albert Einstein*
**21 MONDAY**

**November 2005**

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- Presentation of Our Lady at the Temple
- The Presentation refers to Mary’s being brought as a child to the temple in Jerusalem to be educated and to be dedicated to the service of the Temple.

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**22 TUESDAY**

**November 2005**

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- **Hallelujah**
  - Hebrew liturgical expression meaning ‘praise the Lord’. It appears in the Hebrew Bible in several psalms, usually at the beginning or end of the psalm or in both places. In ancient Judaism the hallelujah was probably chanted as an antiphon by the Levite choir. In the New Testament it appears only in Revelation 19, where it occurs four times. It was translated in the Septuagint (Jewish Greek version of the Bible made in the pre-Christian period) and became ‘alleluia’ in the Vulgate (4th-century Christian Latin version). The early Christians adopted the expression in their worship services.

- **Alhamdulillah**
  - Usually translated as, ‘All praise is due to Allah.’ Similar to the Hebrew ‘Halel luyah’. Whilst in everyday speech it is used to simply mean ‘Thank God!’, it actually has a more encompassing meaning. Alhamdulillah, in contrast to what is implied by ‘thank God’, means to praise God whatever the situation and is to be used whenever something good or bad befalls a Muslim. The phrase is first found in the second verse of the first surah (chapter) of the Qur’an. The root H-m-d, meaning ‘praise’, can also be found in the names Muhammad and Ahmad. Ilah, ‘God,’ is the Arabic cognate of the ancient Semitic name for God, El.
**Teachers' Day**

A day in honour of the efforts of teachers and the importance of education.

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**Mosquée de Paris, France**

 Constructed in 1926, the Mosque of Paris is the oldest mosque in France. Built by Arab artisans and three French architects, the funding for the mosque’s construction was given by the French Government to the French Arab community as a token of French appreciation for North African assistance during World War I. The architecture is Moorish and is inspired by the famous Alhambra in Spain. Inside the mosque lies a tomb for the first imam of the mosque—a man who during Hitler’s advance on the city of Paris hid over 200 Jews in the basement thereby saving them from death in concentration camps.

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**Hans Küng (b. 1928)**

He is an eminent Swiss theologian, formerly of the Roman Catholic Church. He has been President of the Foundation for a Global Ethic. In 1960 Küng was appointed professor of theology at Eberhard Karls University. In 1962 Pope John XXIII appointed him a peritus, an expert theological advisor to members of the Second Vatican Council. A persistent critic of papal authority, which he claims is man-made. In the 1990s Küng initiated the Global Ethic Project, which is an attempt at describing what the world religions have in common and at drawing up a minimal code of rules of behaviour everyone can accept.
November 2005

23 Shawwal 1426
23 Cheshvan 5766

FRIDAY

National day
Commemorates the founding session of the State National Antifascist Liberation Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina held in Mrkonjic’ Grad on 25 November 1943.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
A day designated by the UN in 1999.

Saturday

Day of Covenant
Day honouring the birth of Bahaullah.

Feast of Saint Catherine of Alexandria
Honours St Catherine, patron saint of philosophers, maidens, and mechanics.

Wednesday

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
On 17 December 1999 by resolution 54/134, the General Assembly of the United Nations designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and has invited governments, international organizations and NGOs to organize on that day activities designated to raise public awareness of the problem. Women’s activists have marked 25 November as a day against violence since 1981. The date came from the brutal 1961 assassination of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic.

Whoever has in his heart even so much as a rice grain of pride cannot enter into paradise.

Prophet Mohammed

Day of Covenant
Established by Abdul Baha Abbas, the son of Bahaullah (the Prophet and Founder of the Bahai faith), as a day of celebration in his honour instead of his birthday (23 May 1844) as that was also the same day that the Bab first declared his mission and should be remembered for that. Abdul Baha was appointed by his father to be the Centre of the Covenant, sole Interpreter of the Holy Writings, and Perfect Exemplar of the Bahai life. Abdul Baha carried the faith to the United States, Canada, and Europe on an extensive teaching tour in 1912. He died on 28 November 1921.

By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is the noblest; second, by imitation, which is the easiest; and third, by experience, which is the bitterest.

Confucius
First Sunday of Advent
The fourth Sunday before Christmas and the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in Western tradition.

The first principle of non-violent action is that of non-cooperation with everything humiliating.

Mahatma Gandhi

Advent
Advent is the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in the Western tradition. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is the Sunday nearest 30 November, and ends on Christmas Eve (24 Dec). If Christmas Eve is a Sunday, it is counted as the fourth Sunday of Advent, with Christmas Eve proper beginning at sundown. Advent is one of the few Christian festivals that can be observed in the home as well as at church. With its association with Christmas, Advent is a natural time to involve children in activities at home that directly connect with worship at church.

The Bahai Temple in Frankfurt
Located in Frankfurt, the temple was designed and constructed by architectural engineer Teuto Rocholl in Frankfurt am Main. The dome has a base of 48 metres in diameter. The height from the ground floor to the top is approximately 28 metres. Twenty-seven pillars (three times nine) form the boundary of the interior and support the dome. Between the ribs, 540 diamond-shaped (inset glass panel) windows, are arranged to allow the sunlight to stream into the interior.

Ascension of Abdul Baha
Anniversary of the death of Abdul Baha in 1921.

Zibelemärit (Only in Bern)
Traditional ‘onion market day’ in Bern, on the fourth Monday in November.
**Liberation Day**
On this day in 1944, at the end of World War II, liberation from German and Italian troops was proclaimed.

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**Urbi et Orbi**
The term Urbi et Orbi (‘for the city and for the world’) signifies that a papal document is addressed to the entire Catholic world. The Urbi et Orbi Message of Easter 1999 given by Pope John Paul II spoke out against human bloodshed, wars and the ‘diabolic spiral of revenge and senseless fratricidal conflicts.’ The statement continued to read ‘Peace is possible, peace is a duty, and peace is a prime responsibility of everyone! May the dawn of the third millennium see the coming of a new era in which respect for every man and woman and fraternal solidarity among peoples will…overcome the culture of hatred, of violence’.

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**Feast of Saint Andrew**
Saint Andrew, the Christian Apostle, brother of Saint Peter, was born at Bethsaida on the Lake of Galilee. He had been a disciple of John the Baptist and was one of the first to follow Jesus. In the gospel story he is referred to as one of the disciples more closely attached to Jesus. St Andrew is the patron of married men and for this reason girls with matrimonial aspirations turn to him with prayers that he might grant them at least some slight indication as to who will be their future mate. He was also the patron saint of Russia. His feast is observed on 30 November in both the Eastern and Western churches.

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**The joy of looking and comprehending is nature’s most beautiful gift.**
Albert Einstein

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**A good man is not a perfect man; a good man is an honest man, faithful, and unhesitatingly responsive to the voice of God in his life.**
John Fischer