



Cultural Calendar

Newsletter Issue 63: 30th July – 12th August 2021

- **30th July – International Day of Friendship:**



The International Day of Friendship was proclaimed in 2011 by the UN General Assembly with the idea that friendship between peoples, countries, cultures and individuals can inspire peace efforts and build bridges between communities.

The resolution places emphasis on involving young people, as future leaders, in community activities that include different cultures and promote international understanding and respect for diversity.

To mark the International Day of Friendship the UN encourages governments, international organisations and civil society groups to hold events, activities and initiatives that contribute to the efforts of the international community towards promoting a dialogue among civilizations, solidarity, mutual understanding and reconciliation.

- **1st August – Lammas (Christian):**



Lammas Day, also known as Loaf Mass Day, is a Christian holiday celebrated in some English-speaking countries in the Northern Hemisphere. The name originates from the word "loaf" in reference to bread and "Mass" in reference to the primary Christian liturgy celebrating Holy Communion. It is a festival in the liturgical calendar to mark the blessing of the First Fruits of harvest, with a loaf of bread being brought to the church for this purpose.

On Loaf Mass Day, it is customary to bring to a Christian church a loaf made from the new crop, which began to be harvested at Lammastide, which falls at the halfway point between the summer solstice and autumn September equinox. Christians also have church processions to bakeries, where those working therein are blessed by Christian clergy.

- **3rd August – Eid al-Mubahalah (Islam):**



According to Islamic sources, Eid al-Mubahalah (the event of Mubahala) was a meeting between the Islamic prophet Muhammad and a Christian delegation from Najran (present-day Saudi Arabia), where Muhammad called for invoking a curse to reveal who was lying about their religious differences.

The initial effort was to invite the Najrani Christians to Islam and acknowledgement of Muhammad as a prophet. During religious discussions of similarities and differences, the topic of the divinity of 'Īsā (Jesus) arose. The Christians refused to accept Muhammad's teachings about Christ and refused denying their beliefs. Muhammad suggested invoking a mubahala (prayer curse) regarding their refusal.

The Christians returned to the place they were staying. Their leader al-Sayyid, al-'Aqib advised them saying: "If he challenges us with his people, we accept the challenge for he is not a prophet; but if he challenges us with his family in particular we don't challenge him, for he is not going to put forward his family unless he is truthful."

The morning of 24th Dhul Hijjah, Muhammad emerged at the appointed time. He brought only selected members of his family. Tradition states the Christians were surprised when they saw Muhammad's family accompanying Muhammad and decided not to invoke a curse on Muhammad and the others. They instead asked for peace by offering Muhammad tribute in return for protection. x

- **9th August – Muharram - New Year (Islam):**



Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar. It's the Muslim version of January so, for many, it marks the beginning of something new. It's often referred to as the Islamic New Year, in the same way you'd talk about the Gregorian or Chinese New Year.

It is one of the four sacred months of the year when warfare is forbidden. It is held to be the second holiest month, after Ramaḍān.

- **12th August – International Youth Day:**



In 1999, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation made by the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth (Lisbon, 8-12 August 1998) that 12th August be declared International Youth Day. International Youth Day gives an opportunity to celebrate and mainstream young peoples' voices, actions and initiatives, as well as their meaningful, universal and equitable engagement. The commemoration will take the form of a podcast-style discussion that is hosted by youth for youth, together with independently organized commemorations around the world that recognize the importance of youth participation in political, economic and social life and processes.