

Christian calendar for 2009

All dates are shown using the Gregorian (Western) calendar.

Thursday 1 January

Circumcision

Marks the day when Jesus was circumcised.

Festival of St Basil the Great

St Basil is one of the great fathers of the Orthodox Church.

Sunday 4 January

Epiphany (Catholic Church in England and Wales)

The Catholic Church in England and Wales moves this festival to the nearest Sunday if it falls on a Saturday or Monday.

Tuesday 6 January

Christmas Day (Armenian Orthodox)

Armenian Christians celebrate Christ's birth at Epiphany, except for Armenians in the Holy Land, who celebrate Christmas on January 19th.

Theophany

Orthodox churches mark the baptism of Jesus on this day.

Epiphany

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Wednesday 7 January

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Most Orthodox churches use the Julian rather than the Gregorian version of the Western calendar. As a result, they celebrate Christmas 13 days later than other Christian churches.

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Baptism of the Lord

Commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan by John the Baptist.
Occurs on the first Sunday after Epiphany. Catholics and Episcopalians celebrate this holy day, but Eastern Christianity celebrates the baptism of Jesus at Epiphany.

First Sunday after Epiphany

Epiphany takes place on the 6th of January, but most Christians celebrate it on the first Sunday after that date.

Tuesday 13 January

St Hilary's Day

According to tradition, "St. Hilary's is the coldest day of the year." St. Hilary was a fourth century Bishop of Poitiers.

Sunday 18 January

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St Thomas Aquinas

Doctor of the Church and patron saint of students and theologians.

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Candlemas

This is often called The Presentation of Christ in the Temple and commemorates the day Mary took Jesus to the Temple at Jerusalem to present him to God.
Coincides with Groundhog Day (USA)

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Our Lady of Lourdes

Marks the day in 1858 when St Bernadette had her first vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Saturday 14 February

St Valentine's Day

Now more a secular festival than a religious one. There are at least three different saints named Valentine.

Tuesday 24 February

Shrove Tuesday

Also called Pancake Day and Mardi Gras. The British name of "Pancake Day" comes from the tradition of making pancakes to use up all the food that could not be eaten during Lent.

Wednesday 25 February

Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent for Western Christian churches. Lent is the season marking the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.

Sunday 1 March

St David's Day

Saint David, or Dewi Sant as he's called in the Welsh language, is the patron saint of Wales.

Monday 2 March

Clean Monday - Beginning of Lent (Orthodox)

The start of the "Great Lent" for Orthodox Christians. This day is called Clean Monday, and occurs seven weeks before the Orthodox Easter

Thursday 5 March

St Piran's Day

Piran is regarded as the patron saint of Cornwall and tin miners. He was born in Ireland. The Cornish flag may have been inspired by the legend that Piran discovered the process for smelting tin: black rock with a white cross of pure metal.

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St Patrick's Day

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland.

Thursday 19 March

St Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. Not the same as Mothers' Day in the USA.

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Annunciation

Marks the angel Gabriel's message to the Virgin Mary that she would give birth to the incarnation of Christ. It also celebrates the incarnation itself as the date falls 9 months before Christmas.

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Palm Sunday

The sixth and last Sunday of Lent. Marks the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the start of Holy Week.

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Christians remember Maundy Thursday as the day of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the ceremony known as the Eucharist.

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Good Friday

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The seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and the birth of the Christian Church.

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The first Sunday after Pentecost. Christians meditate on the nature of God as "Three in one".

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St Peter's Day (Catholic Church in England and Wales)

The Catholic Church in England and Wales moves this festival to the nearest Sunday if it falls on a Saturday or Monday.

Monday 29 June

St Peter's Day

Observed by Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran churches. One of the oldest saints' days.

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St Swithin's Day

Swithin (or Swithun) was a Saxon bishop in the 9th century. Legend has it that the weather on his feast day, 15 July, will determine the weather for the next 40 days.

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Transfiguration

Orthodox Christian feast commemorating the sudden emanation of radiance from the person of Jesus that occurred on the mountain.

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Dormition of the Theotokos

An Orthodox festival that commemorates the death, resurrection, and glorification of Christ's mother. Dormition means "falling asleep".

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Nativity of the Theotokos

Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary

Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Roman Catholics celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary.

Feast of the Birth of Mary

Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches celebrate the birth of Mary, mother of Jesus.

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A feast day in honour of the archangel Michael. Michael is one of only two angels mentioned by name in the Bible (the other being Gabriel.)

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All Saints' Day (also known as All Hallows' Day or Hallowmas) is when Anglicans and Roman Catholics honour all saints, known and unknown, of the Christian church. Orthodox churches celebrate it on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

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Patron saint of girls, martyred at the age of 13.

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Anglicans and Catholics celebrate St Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus.

Saturday 28 January

St Thomas Aquinas

Doctor of the Church and patron saint of students and theologians.

Thursday 2 February

Candlemas

This is often called The Presentation of Christ in the Temple and commemorates the day Mary took Jesus to the Temple at Jerusalem to present him to God.

Coincides with Groundhog Day (USA)

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Our Lady of Lourdes

Marks the day in 1858 when St Bernadette had her first vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Tuesday 14 February

St Valentine's Day

Now more a secular festival than a religious one. There are at least three different saints named Valentine.

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Shrove Tuesday

Also called Pancake Day and Mardi Gras. The British name of "Pancake Day" comes from the tradition of making pancakes to use up all the food that could not be eaten during Lent.

Wednesday 22 February

Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent for Western Christian churches. Lent is the season marking the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.

Monday 27 February

Clean Monday - Beginning of Lent (Orthodox)

The start of the "Great Lent" for Orthodox Christians. This day is called Clean Monday, and occurs seven weeks before the Orthodox Easter

Thursday 1 March

St David's Day

Saint David, or Dewi Sant as he's called in the Welsh language, is the patron saint of Wales.

Monday 5 March

St Piran's Day

Piran is regarded as the patron saint of Cornwall and tin miners. He was born in Ireland. The Cornish flag may have been inspired by the legend that Piran discovered the process for smelting tin: black rock with a white cross of pure metal.

Saturday 17 March

St Patrick's Day

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland.

Sunday 18 March

Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. Not the same as Mothers' Day in the USA.

Monday 19 March

St Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Sunday 25 March

Annunciation

Marks the angel Gabriel's message to the Virgin Mary that she would give birth to the incarnation of Christ. It also celebrates the incarnation itself as the date falls 9 months before Christmas.

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Palm Sunday

The sixth and last Sunday of Lent. Marks the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the start of Holy Week.

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Maundy Thursday

Christians remember Maundy Thursday as the day of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the ceremony known as the Eucharist.

Friday 6 April

Good Friday

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter. It commemorates the execution of Jesus by crucifixion.

Sunday 8 April

Easter Sunday (Western)

Christians celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ - his return from death after the Crucifixion. The most important Christian festival. Most years Orthodox Christians celebrate Easter on a different date.

Sunday 15 April

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Ascension Day

Ascension Day marks the last earthly appearance of Christ after his resurrection. Christians believe Christ ascended into heaven. It is celebrated 40 days after Easter.

Sunday 20 May

Ascension Day (Catholic Church in England and Wales)

Ascension Day is normally celebrated 40 days after Easter. The Catholic Church in England and Wales celebrates it on the following Sunday instead.

Sunday 27 May

Pentecost - Whitsun

The seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and the birth of the Christian Church.

Sunday 3 June

Trinity Sunday

The first Sunday after Pentecost. Christians meditate on the nature of God as "Three in one".

Thursday 7 June

Corpus Christi

Roman Catholic festival celebrating the "real presence of Christ in the Eucharist". The festival falls on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

Sunday 10 June

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Corpus Christi falls on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. The Catholic Church in England and Wales celebrates it on the following Sunday instead.

All Saints' Day (Orthodox)

This day honours all saints, known and unknown, of the Christian church. Western churches celebrate All Saints Day on November 1.

Friday 29 June

St Peter's Day

Observed by Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran churches. One of the oldest saints' days.

Sunday 15 July

St Swithin's Day

Swithin (or Swithun) was a Saxon bishop in the 9th century. Legend has it that the weather on his feast day, 15 July, will determine the weather for the next 40 days.

Monday 6 August

Transfiguration

Orthodox Christian feast commemorating the sudden emanation of radiance from the person of Jesus that occurred on the mountain.

Wednesday 15 August

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

A largely Roman Catholic festival celebrating their belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken body and soul into heaven.

Dormition of the Theotokos

An Orthodox festival that commemorates the death, resurrection, and glorification of Christ's mother. Dormition means "falling asleep".

Saturday 8 September

Nativity of the Theotokos

Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary

Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Roman Catholics celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary.

Feast of the Birth of Mary

Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches celebrate the birth of Mary, mother of Jesus.

Saturday 29 September

Michaelmas/ St Michael's Day

A feast day in honour of the archangel Michael. Michael is one of only two angels mentioned by name in the Bible (the other being Gabriel.)

Saturday 13 October

St Edward's Day

Edward the Confessor was King of England 1042 - 1066. He built Westminster Abbey where there is a shrine to him - and where the saint is also celebrated on January 5 each year, the anniversary of his death.

Wednesday 31 October

Hallowe'en (All Hallows' Eve)

The night before All Saints' Day (All Hallows' Day). Its origins date back over 2000 years to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. It was celebrated as a Christian festival by the 8th Century.

Thursday 1 November

All Saints' Day (Hallowmas, All Hallows')

All Saints' Day (also known as All Hallows' Day or Hallowmas) is when Anglicans and Roman Catholics honour all saints, known and unknown, of the Christian church. Orthodox churches celebrate it on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

Friday 2 November

All Souls' Day

All Souls' Day is an opportunity for Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic churches to commemorate the faithful departed. They remember and pray for the souls of people who are in Purgatory. All Souls' Day is celebrated on 3 November if the 2nd is a Sunday.

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Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, Greece and Russia. The flag of Scotland is the Cross of St. Andrew. St Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was originally a fisherman and became the first Apostle.

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The beginning of the ecclesiastical year on the Sunday closest to November 30. Advent is the season before Christmas - In Western Christendom, four Sundays

are included. In Eastern Christendom, the season is longer and begins in the middle of November

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Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Celebrated by Roman Catholics who remember Mary's conception as being without sin, therefore, immaculate.

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St Lucy's Day

Saint Lucy's Day or the Feast of St. Lucy is marked by Catholics and Orthodox Christians and also celebrated by members of the Lutheran Church.

Monday 24 December

Christmas Eve

The day before Christmas Day

Tuesday 25 December

Christmas Day

The day when Western Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Wednesday 26 December

St Stephen's Day

St Stephen, the first Christian martyr, is celebrated on this day by Roman Catholics. The day is also called the Feast of Stephen.

Christian calendar for 2013

Tuesday 1 January

Circumcision

Marks the day when Jesus was circumcised.

Festival of St Basil the Great

St Basil is one of the great fathers of the Orthodox Church.

Sunday 6 January

Epiphany

Celebrates the visit of the wise men (the magi) to the infant Jesus. In the East, where it originated, the Epiphany celebrates the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. (Catholics and Episcopalians celebrate this separately: see Baptism of the Lord) Also known as Dia de los Reyes (Three Kings Day).

Christmas Day (Armenian Orthodox)

Armenian Christians celebrate Christ's birth at Epiphany, except for Armenians in the Holy Land, who celebrate Christmas on January 19th.

Theophany

Orthodox churches mark the baptism of Jesus on this day.

Monday 7 January

Christmas Day (Orthodox)

Most Orthodox churches use the Julian rather than the Gregorian version of the Western calendar. As a result, they celebrate Christmas 13 days later than other Christian churches.

Sunday 13 January

St Hilary's Day

According to tradition, "St. Hilary's is the coldest day of the year." St. Hilary was a fourth century Bishop of Poitiers.

Baptism of the Lord

Commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. Occurs on the first Sunday after Epiphany. Catholics and Episcopalians celebrate this holy day, but Eastern Christianity celebrates the baptism of Jesus at Epiphany.

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