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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	February . . . . .	5
	About (2016-02-28 22:44) . . . . .	5
1.2	April . . . . .	5
	Christmas Celebrations (2016-04-14 20:27) . . . . .	5
	Easter Celebration (2016-04-14 21:27) . . . . .	6
	Ramadan (2016-04-14 22:52) . . . . .	6
	Passover (2016-04-14 23:33) . . . . .	7
	Hanukkah (2016-04-14 23:59) . . . . .	7



# 1. 2016

## 1.1 February

### About (2016-02-28 22:44)

My name is Cullen Landis and I am a student at Florida State University and will discuss the different religions holidays and their celebrations, history and traditions over time.

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## 1.2 April

### Christmas Celebrations (2016-04-14 20:27)

The most common religion in the world is Christianity and the most well known holiday is Christmas. This is the celebration of the birth of the Son of God, Jesus. He was born to a virgin mother, Mary. The celebrations of Christmas do not vary from country to country as much as other religious holidays do. The holiday is celebrated on December 25 every year and is usually started off by attending church and honoring the birth of Jesus. Pope Julius I set the date likely because he wanted to counter the pagan holiday, Saturnalia. The traditions of the holiday entail giving of gifts like the Wiseman brought to Jesus when he was born. This manner of celebration has been criticized highly because it takes away the focus of the holiday of Jesus and places it on the want of material possessions. Another common tradition of Christmas is to decorate a Christmas tree and place a star or angel on the top. This star represents the star that guided the Wiseman to Jesus' manger.

Christmas was not brought to America until the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was celebrated in a very raucous manner. Finally a group of upper class citizens thought that the riots and rowdy actions of the holiday needed to stop so they focused it more towards a celebration of family and bringing joy to others. History.com Staff. "History of Christmas." *History.com*. A &E Television Networks, 2009. Web. 14 Apr. 2016.

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## **Easter Celebration (2016-04-14 21:27)**

Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and is the most celebrated Christian holiday. It has no specific date because it falls between March 22 and April 25 every year. This holiday is not only one specific date though; it is an entire season, called lent. Lent is the time of the year that Christians give up or give back to reflect upon life and the sacrifice that Jesus made. The forty days of lent represent the time that Jesus walked around before his teachings began to reflect essentially meditate.

Easter, like Christmas, picked up materialistic traditions that incorporate bunnies, eggs and other items. It takes away from the real celebration and focuses the attention on pagan items. A focus recently has tried to take away these items and bring the attention back onto the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

History.com Staff. "Easter." *History.com*. A &E Television Networks, 2009. Web. 14 Apr. 2016.

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## **Ramadan (2016-04-14 22:52)**

Ramadan is comparable to the Christian season of lent because of the devotion to the faith for a prolonged period. It is a month that the followers of Islam fast to follow the Five Pillars. With one of the Pillars being to fast, it can almost not even be described as a holiday but as an obligation to the faith. Ramadan is the 9<sup>th</sup> month in the Islamic calendar and is when Muhammad was believed to "receive the revelations for the Quran." This is a personal sacrifice more than a celebration because Muslims devote their month to abstain from impure thoughts and actions, which include food. Thus they do not eat from dawn to dusk. This opens the eyes of Muslims and forces them to reminisce of what it is like to not have food and be hungry. Some are, obviously, exempt from fasting due to health, age or other factors but they are expected to feed the poor and abstain from impurities as well. This is a different holiday than those of Christianity because there is no material gifts exchanged and is actually the opposite by refraining from thinking of those in any fashion. History.com Staff. "Ramadan." *History.com*. A &E Television Networks, 2010. Web. 14 Apr. 2016.

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## **Passover (2016-04-14 23:33)**

Passover is a Jewish tradition that reminds Jews of Moses' freeing of Egypt. Moses left Egypt and lived in the desert for 40 years and then was summoned by God to head back and free them from the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh did not free them and God released a series of ten plagues. The final stage was the killing of the first-born male sons of every non-Israelite's home. The term Passover was coined because those who were Jewish marked above their door with lambs blood so the angel of death would "Passover."

The time of Passover is now celebrated in the households of Jews and with friends. They abstain from risen bread and eat matzo bread instead. This is done because the Israelites did not have time to let the bread rise or because it was lighter when they left the town. Passover is a celebrated Jewish event that is also very similar to lent because of the devotion of time and abstinence from certain items.

History.com Staff. "Passover." *History.com*. A & E Television Networks, 2009. Web. 14 Apr. 2016.

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## **Hanukkah (2016-04-14 23:59)**

Hanukkah is the celebration of when the Jews drove Syrians out of Jerusalem. The holiday is a full week in the month of December that reminds Jews that they rebuilt the altar and menorah of the Second Temple and were ordered to keep the 8 candles burning. According to legend, there was only enough oil to let the candles burn for one full day but they kept burning for a full eight days.

To continue the tradition each Jewish family will light the candles of the menorah over a period of eight nights at sundown. Hanukkah has grown substantially in North America, much like Christianity, recently. Gifts are exchanged over the eight days and different scriptures are recited. Games are also played such as spinning the dreidel. This is another holiday that has been changed from a celebration of a holy event to focus upon the material items exchanged. Hanukkah is the second largest holiday of the Jewish religion, following Passover, and is widely celebrated amongst Jewish followers worldwide.

History.com Staff. "Hanukkah." *History.com*. A & E Television Networks, 2009. Web. 14 Apr. 2016.







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