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Sent: Friday, April 07, 2017 5:10 PM

To: 'recipients@lists.johnshopkins.edu'

Subject: Religious and Cultural Awareness: Observing Christian Holy Week, Passover/Pesach, Memorial Day for Jehovah's Witnesses, Vaisakhi and Festival of Ridvan

To the Johns Hopkins Medicine community

Dear Colleagues,

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the Department of Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy are continuing our education about the cultural and religious observances of our patients, faculty members, staff members and students to help us foster a climate of respect and a spirit of inclusion.

The Religious and Cultural Observances Toolkit provides general education and information about cultural and religious observances, and how they may affect interactions with colleagues, students, and patients and their family members.

Please take the time to become familiar with the following upcoming days of observation:



- Holy Week, **April 9–April 16**: Christian observance of Holy Week includes Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter. This week symbolizes the spiritual journey, which includes times of celebration, loss and dying, and redemption or hope. The dates of Holy Week differ between the Eastern and Western Christian traditions.



- Passover/Pesach, **April 10–April 18**: Passover, or Pesach in Hebrew, is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the story of the ancient Israelites' exodus from slavery in Egypt.



- Jehovah's Witnesses Observance of the Memorial of Jesus Christ's Death, **April 11**: Jehovah's Witnesses are Christian and as such recognize Jesus Christ as the son of God. Jehovah's Witnesses commemorate the memorial of Jesus' death.



- Vaisakhi, **Sunset April 13–Sunset April 14**: Vaisakhi is a celebration of spring. It marks the harvest of the rabi (rice, maize, sorghum, millet, soy beans, wheat and barley) crop in India. There is thanksgiving and hope in the celebration.



- Festival of Ridvan, **Sunset April 20–Sunset May 2**: The Festival of Ridvan commemorates the 12 days when Baha'u'llah, the prophet-founder, lived in paradise, which is called Ridvan. During this time, Baha'u'llah declared that he was the messenger of God for that time. This is the holiest of days in the Baha'i tradition.

Use these fact sheets as guides for supporting our patients, staff members, faculty members and students who may observe these days. Please keep in mind that they are intended to provide a general overview, and the information may not apply to all individuals in any given culture or faith. You can also access previous religious and cultural observations at hopkinsmedicine.org/diversity/observances.html.

Sincerely,

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