



January 6, 2024 - 3 Kings Day

For many, Christmas is over on December 26th for others, the Christmas season isn't over for 11 more days!

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the three kings (also known as the three wise men) who traveled to Bethlehem to greet baby Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Although the birth of Jesus is celebrated on December 25, the storied 3 Kings didn't actually reach him until twelve days later. For this reason, Three Kings Day is traditionally celebrated 12 days after Christmas Day.

This is also why some consider it **unlucky** to take your tree down before January 6.

The holiday is primarily celebrated in Spain, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, but these communities have shared the tradition all over the world. The holiday is observed with parades, feasts, and parties as people honor the moment the three kings arrived at the birthplace of baby Jesus.

Mexico and other Latin countries celebrate the day by adding figurines of the 3 Wise Men to the nativity on Jan 5. The next day these wise men will have left gifts next to children's shoes.

If you would like to celebrate this year, here are a few traditions to consider; set out snacks, gather with family or give gifts.

In some countries—Mexico in particular—it's customary to make "**rosca del rey**", a sweet bread that represents the kings' crowns.



This traditional brioche-like loaf is often decorated with sugar paste and candied fruit and shaped into a ring. Similar to the King's Cake custom at Mardi Gras, there is often a small baby figurine inside one of the slices.

Tradition has it the person who finds the baby in their slice must offer tamales to the group or family on February 2, or Candlemas Day. This recipe is widely popular on 3 Kings Day. This is known as Atole. This drink is accompanied with the Rosca de Reyes (bread). [Click here](#) for Atole recipe.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday January 15, 2024

Ceremonies commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday have been held since his assassination in Memphis, TN, on April 4, 1968. This observance allows us to honor and celebrate the birth and life of one of the most influential civil rights leaders in American history.



Dr. King's birthday became an approved federal holiday in 1983 when President Ronald Reagan signed it into law. However, King's birthday was not honored nationally until 1986 and it wasn't until 2000 that all states honored the holiday.

MLK Day is observed each year on the third Monday in January due to the Uniform Monday Holiday Act which former President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law in 1968. This law allowed for federal holidays, such as this one, to be commemorated on a Monday to allow for long weekends.

This year the 15th is a Monday so we are observing on the actual anniversary of Dr. King's birth!

Dr. King dedicated his life to speaking out against injustice, inequality, poverty and war. According to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, MLK Day is the only federal holiday that is a "designated day of service" to encourage all Americans to volunteer and improve their communities. He founded the Civil Rights Movement in 1954 in an effort to eradicate racial segregation, discrimination, intolerance, and brutality.

Local Activities to celebrate MLK Day

Jan 9- 2-3:30 pm Scott Event Center Ballroom at Scott Air Force Base- Panel discussion in Honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday Observance

Jan 12- 10 am St Louis History Museum - MLK Community Celebration - [click here](#) to learn more
Jan 14- 2-3:30 pm Farrell Auditorium St. Louis Art Museum - Boldly Embrace a Legacy of Greatness - [click here](#) to learn more

Jan 15 -930 am - Annual Mid St. Louis County MLK Jr Weekend Celebration - Parade Begins at Normandy High School to Barack Obama Elementary where the program takes place -[click here](#) to learn more

JANUARY
**HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**
PREVENTION MONTH



The History Behind the Month began more than 20 years ago, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 enshrined the United States' commitment to combating human trafficking domestically and internationally.

In 2010, by presidential proclamation, President Obama declared January "National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month" and every year since, each president has followed this tradition. During this month, we celebrate the efforts of foreign governments, international organizations, anti-trafficking entities, law enforcement officials, survivor advocates, communities of faith, businesses, and private citizens all around the world to raise awareness about human trafficking.

"Since human trafficking disproportionately impacts racial and ethnic minorities, women and girls, LGBTQI+ individuals, vulnerable migrants, and other historically marginalized and under-served communities, our mission to combat human trafficking must always be connected to our broader efforts to advance equity and justice across our society."

Human trafficking, includes both forced labor and sex trafficking. There are estimated to be more than 27.6 million people — adults and children — subjected to human trafficking around the world. Traffickers often take advantage of instability caused by natural disasters, conflict, or a pandemic to exploit others. Many countries have worked to implement the "3P" paradigm of preventing the crime, protecting victims, and prosecuting traffickers, through the passage and implementation of national anti-trafficking laws.