

THEME

World Religions Day

World Religion Day is celebrated on the third Sunday of January every year. It was started in the USA by members of the Baha'i Faith in 1950 and is now a worldwide event, celebrated by people of all religions, and even people of no religion at all.

The Baha'i faith is one of the youngest world religions. It started in 1863 when a man known as Baha'u'llah – which means "The Glory of God" in Arabic – began to spread his teachings in Iran. He taught that human beings were all part of a single worldwide race and that everyone should work together for the benefit of humankind. Baha'is believe that there is one all-powerful God who created the world and everything in it. They say that God has spoken to many people throughout history and that his message has been understood in different ways to form the various religions of the world. Baha'is believe that God's prophets have included Abraham, Moses, Krishna, the Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad and Guru Nanak amongst many others. So according to the Baha'i faith, all religions are worshipping the same God.

The religions are different because different people understand God's message in different ways for many different reasons: their knowledge, their experiences, their personalities, their culture, their language – they are all trying to describe God's message in a way that they understand, and in a way that can be understood by the people around them. And because Baha'is believe that God is completely beyond the understanding of human beings anyway, they would say that no one person, or one religion, is ever going to have the whole



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Lord, we place these people and situations before you and ask you to help. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

RELATES TO US

What does this day mean for us?

World religion day is to raise awareness of the different world religions and beliefs in the world. We live in a multi faith society where the majority of people are Christian (72%). But what are the benefits of a multi faith society? It gives us the opportunity to learn from one another and build bridges between religions. It also allows us to experience new things like food and festivals. World religions day helps us learn about different religions as we journey though life with our own faith, whatever it might be.

SCRIPTURE

Religious pluralism is the belief that all religions are equal and have the right to co-exist.

John 14:2-3

2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

For the Catholic Church, there has been a move at reconciliation not only with Judaism, but also Islam. The [Second Vatican Council](#) states that salvation includes others who acknowledge the same creator, and explicitly lists Muslims among those. The official Catholic position is therefore that Jews, Muslims and Christians all acknowledge the same God, though Jews and Muslims have not yet received the gospel.

Key Questions and activities....

Is there a career that could link to this week's theme?

What is a multi-faith society?

What are the benefits of a multi-faith society?



Sacred time this week can link to the British Value of **mutual respect**. This is because this British Value is about having mutual respect for people with different faiths and beliefs to your own. Whatever you believe, you must respect the beliefs of others.

PRAYER

Make me strong in spirit
Courageous in action
Gentle of heart

Let me act in wisdom
Conquer my fear and doubt
Discover my own hidden gifts

Meet others with compassion
Be a source of healing energies
And face each day with hope and joy.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

DAILY BIBLE READING