

December 2011

December 4-5 **Ashura-** *Islamic*

An Islamic, optional, one-day fast. The Shia observance is based on the martyrdom of Prophet Muhammad's Grandson, Hossein, martyred on this date in 683/684 AD at the battle of Kerbala. Sunni observance is recognition of Moses fasting in gratitude to Allah/God for liberation from oppression.

December 8 **Bodhi Day-** *Buddhist*

Buddhist celebration of the time Prince Gautama took his place under the Bodhi tree and vowed to remain there until he attained supreme enlightenment.

December 8 **Feast of the Immaculate Conception-** *Christian (Catholic)*

Celebrates the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Takes place nine months before the celebration of Nativity of Mary on September 8.

December 20-21 **Hanukkah-** *Jewish*

Feast of Lights/Dedication commemorates the Maccabean recapture and rededication of the Jerusalem Temple in 165-164 b.c.e. Special readings, and praise songs focus on liberty and freedom, and lighting the eighth candle Menorah.

December 25 **Christmas-** *Christian*

Christmas Day celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ with prayers, exchanging of gifts, and family parties. Christmas Fast is the Orthodox Christian fasting period in preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus Christ.