

# *purpose*

## take action!

**Honor International Human Rights Day by writing the newly-elected President of the United States. Urge him/her to make the United States a better global citizen by adhering to two global initiatives/treaties that we have either violated or obstructed. They include: the Kyoto Treaty and the International Criminal Court. Call AFSC (413.584.8975) if you'd like more information.**

*"The future depends on what we do in the present."*

—Gandhi

- ✎ In honor of Kwanzaa, draw a picture that represents your purpose in the upper portion of this calendar. Nia (Purpose) is the fifth principle of Kwanzaa. What makes you glad to be who you are?
- ✎ Ask a person in your life about purpose.
- ✎ Post the International Declaration of Human Rights and the Bill of Rights in your school, community of faith or home. Copies available from AFSC or on line at [www.WesternMassAFSC.org](http://www.WesternMassAFSC.org).
- ✎ Reflect on what you will take from this calendar into 2005.

# D d I e C c I e E m M b B e R r E

DOMINGO LUNES MARTES MIÉRCOLES JUEVES VIERNES SÁBADO

<p><b>Getting Sensitive to Language</b> The way we assume that others celebrate certain holidays can also reveal religious and cultural bias. Often, at this time of year, people greet or bid farewell with Merry Christmas. While this gesture is made with friendly intent, it can marginalize the cultural traditions of those of us who do not celebrate Christmas. Similarly, "Happy New Year" for January 1st reflects only one of many New Year celebrations.</p>		<p>(1955) Rosa Parks will not relinquish her seat so that a white person can sit down and is arrested. This sparks the 381-day Montgomery Bus Boycott which succeeds in ending segregation on buses. "People say that I was just tired that day and my feet hurt, and that's why I refused to give up my seat. I don't know how that story got started. People, a whole people, were tired. Tired enough to start to do something, tired enough to organize." —<i>Freedom in the Air!</i>, the character of Rosa Parks</p>		<p>The Northampton Human Rights Commission meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month, from 7pm to 9pm, in the Hearing Room, on the second floor of Northampton City Hall. Information: 413.587.1249</p>		<p>Get Real and Create Equality (GRACE) is a weekly, peer-led drop-in group (ages 12–18) which focuses on social justice and conflict resolution. It meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at the Franklin Community Action Coalition's Youth Program. Information: Jen, 413.774.7028</p>																	
<p>World AIDS Day</p>		<p>1</p>		<p>2</p>		<p>3</p>		<p>4</p>															
<p>Heads Up: Arise for Social Justice, a Springfield low-income rights, anti-oppression membership organization holds an annual event December 10th, International Human Rights Day. Information: 413.734.4948 <a href="http://www.angelfire.com/ma4/arise/">www.angelfire.com/ma4/arise/</a></p>	<p><i>No snowflake in an avalanche ever feels responsible.</i> —Chinese proverb</p>	<p>Hanukkah (Jewish). Begins at sundown.</p>	<p>Hanukkah (Jewish). An eight-day celebration marking the struggle for religious freedom and victory over tyranny.  Feast of the Virgin (Catholic). A contemporary celebration of a vision of the Virgin Mary.  Rohatsu (Buddhism, Zen tradition). Day of Buddha's enlightenment.</p>	<p>On December 8, 2000, citizens of Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, India and the U.S. issue the Cochabamba (Bolivia) Declaration asserting that access to water is a fundamental human right and that water must not be commodified, privatized or traded for commercial purposes.</p>	<p>International Human Rights Day Information: <a href="http://www.un.org/rights/">www.un.org/rights/</a>  From the International Declaration of Human Rights: Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.</p>		<p>5</p>		<p>6</p>		<p>7</p>		<p>8</p>		<p>9</p>		<p>10</p>		<p>11</p>				
<p>Since the days following September 11, 2001, 680 people from 44 countries who are Muslim and/or of Arab descent have been held at a U.S. prison in Guantanamo Bay. The prisoners, some as young as 13 years old, have never been charged. In the summer of 2003 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), monitors of the prison, denounced U.S. authorities for the intolerable psychological cruelty inflicted on the prisoners. The ICRC has noted that there have been 35 attempts at suicide involving 27 inmates.</p>		<p><i>"Since the 1960s we have seen the failure of the melting pot ideology. This ideology suggested that different historical, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds could be subordinated to a larger ideology or social amalgam which is 'America.'"</i> —Edward Said (1935–2003), Palestinian scholar and author</p>		<p>(1791) U.S. Bill of Rights ratified (Amendments 1–10 of the Constitution)</p>		<p>In 1980, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee formed to defend the civil rights of Arab Americans and to support a balanced U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. It is currently handling over 2,000 cases each year.</p>		<p><i>"Many people have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose."</i> —Helen Keller (1880–1968), author, activist concerned with socialism, women's rights and more</p>		<p>12</p>		<p>13</p>		<p>14</p>		<p>15</p>		<p>16</p>		<p>17</p>			
<p><i>"If the 21st century wishes to free itself from the cycle of violence, acts of terror and war, and avoid repetition of the experience of the 20th century... there is no other way except by understanding and putting into practice every human right for all mankind, irrespective of race, gender, faith, nationality or social status."</i> —Shirin Ebadi, (1947), Iranian judge, human rights activist, 2003 Nobel Peace Prize recipient</p>		<p>The Massachusetts Justice Project offers legal help with civil issues such as housing and government benefits. It also has a farm worker unit. Information: 413.533.2660</p>		<p>Birthday, Yaju Dharmarajah (1973), local activist and organizer with the Service Employees International Union Local 509</p>		<p><i>"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?"</i> —Rabbi Hillel (c. 60 BC–c. 9 AD), Jewish scholar and teacher</p>		<p>Christmas (Christian). Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.</p>		<p>19</p>		<p>20</p>		<p>21</p>		<p>22</p>		<p>23</p>		<p>24</p>		<p>25</p>	
<p>The first principle is Umoja (Unity): to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community and nation.</p>		<p>Kujichagulia (self-determination): to define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.</p>		<p>Ujima (collective work and responsibility): to build and maintain community together, sharing in each other's struggles and joys.</p>		<p>Ujamaa (cooperative economics): to share resources, like a family, to help each other.</p>		<p>Nia (purpose): to pursue our goals and strive with dignity for these goals until their fruition.</p>		<p>Kuumba (creativity): to do always as much as we can, in the way that we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.</p>		<p>26</p>		<p>27</p>		<p>28</p>		<p>29</p>		<p>30</p>		<p>31</p>	
<p>Kwanzaa (African American) begins. It is a unique holiday in the United States that celebrates and pays tribute to the cultural roots of Americans of African ancestry. Kwanzaa means "the first fruits of the harvest" in Kiswahili, an East African language. It is celebrated from December 26 through January 1. These celebrations are based on seven fundamental principles referred to as the Nguzo Saba.</p>																							

*"Take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the oppressed. Silence comforts the tormentor, never the tormented."*

—Elie Wiesel, (1928)  
1986 Nobel Peace Prize recipient,  
Holocaust survivor,  
author, human rights activist