

Baha'i New Year Begins Tomorrow

Members of the American Baha'i Community will join with millions of Baha'is around the world in observing Naw-Ruz, the Baha'i New Year on March 21. Naw-Ruz translated means New Day.

The Baha'i Faith, which originated in Iran (Persia) in 1844, has a calendar of its own. The Baha'i calendar is based on the solar year, consists of nineteen months each with nineteen days, with the New Year falling on the vernal equinox (March 21). The solar year is equalized by four (five in Leap Year) intercalary days preceding the last Baha'i month. The years, months and days are named after the attributes of God; i.e., Splendor, Beauty, Sovereignty, etc.

Prior to Naw-Ruz, Baha'is the world over observe a nineteen day period of fasting from sunrise to sunset to refresh and reinvigorate the spiritual forces latent in each individual. The Baha'i New Year coincides with the advent of Spring, a time which mankind naturally associates with renewal and rebirth.

On the Baha'i calendar, this is the year 127. The Baha'i era, or calendar, commenced with the year of the Bab's Declaration of His mission, which is the year 1844 A.D., according to the Christian calendar. The Bab was the Prophet-Herald of the Baha'i Faith and lived in Iran from 1819 to 1850. He was followed by the Prophet-Founder of the Baha'i Faith, Baha'u'llah (Glory of God) Who lived much of His life in the Holy Land until His Ascension in 1892.

In its 126 years, the Baha'i Faith has spread to 312 countries and territories, including 2,700 localities in the United States. This year the U.S. Baha'i Community will take an active part in the observance of International Education Year by holding several national and regional conferences devoted to education.