

A photograph of a long, ornate corridor in a temple, featuring a checkered floor and intricate arches. The corridor is lined with tall, carved pillars and has a series of arches overhead. The floor is made of light and dark tiles in a diamond pattern. Sunlight filters through the arches, creating a warm, golden glow. The architecture is highly detailed with carvings and patterns.

# *Spiritual Riches*

Bidding prayers for religions on their major festivals

# Mahavir Jayanti

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## Jainism

The Jain festival of Mahavir Jayanti is a celebration of the life of the most recent teacher of Jainism, Mahavira.

### *Bidding Prayer*

We pray for all Jains on the festival of Mahavir Jayanti (pronounced Ma-ha-weir ya-yan-tea), the birth anniversary of the most recent teacher of Jainism, Lord Mahavir. As Jains celebrate his message of non-violence, we also pray for all who are working and yearning for peace.

### *For Newsletters*

Jainism is a religion that focuses on non-violence as its core value. Overcoming earthly desires and attachments is highly valued, and believed to lead to an unselfish lifestyle that does as little harm as possible. This is reflected in the teachings of Lord Mahavir, which are followed by the 25,000 Jains in Great Britain.

### *Background*

Lord Mahavir, whom Jains revere as the twenty-fourth and last Thirthankara of this era, lived in the 6th century BC. The Thirtankaras are teachers of the Jain faith (or dharma, way of life) who are venerated for having overcome earthly desires and attachments.

Jains believe that every person has the potential to achieve such freedom, and aim to end the cycle of rebirth they believe every being undergoes. As Jains believe that every being has a soul, including animals and plants, Jainism's central principle is non-violence, which includes strict vegetarianism.

In addition to this principle, Jains follow the principles of truthfulness, of taking nothing that is not freely given, of chastity, and of not being dominated by material desires (non-attachment). More resources and information on Jainism are available on the following website: [jainpedia.org](http://jainpedia.org)



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*These leaflets offer suggestions for bidding prayers at the major festivals of non-Christian religions, along with a short text of explanation for use in parish newsletters, and some background information. In acknowledging these festivals, and praying for those who celebrate them, Catholics can express their connectedness to all people of faith, as well as the respect which the Church holds for their spiritual wealth.*