

JANUARY

1

NEW YEAR'S DAY

This Seventh Day of Christmas brings us 2020. It is a traditional day for wassailing the apple trees.

5

TWELFTH NIGHT

It's the Eve of the Epiphany, and the last of the Midwinter gift bearers arrive: In Latin America, *los tres reyes magos* will deliver presents tonight. In Italy, that's the job of the kindly old witch known as *la befana*, who sweeps away Christmas each year.

6

EPIPHANY

Marks the arrival of the Magi at the stable in Bethlehem. The Magi brought gifts, and in many places, like Mexico, today is the big day for Christmas presents. Epiphany brings the traditional close of the Yuletide season, though in some traditions, it continues through to Candlemas at the start of February.

7

ST. DISTAFF'S DAY

First of the "Back to Work" holidays, this was the traditional day for women to return to their spinning after Christmas.

*Partly work and partly play,
Ye must on St. Distaff's Day.*



Christmas cactus bringing brightness to winter.

13

COPPERMAN'S DAY, PLOUGH MONDAY

The Monday after Epiphany brought Back to Work for the men, with a ceremonial ploughing of the ground. In Holland, it's Copperman's Day, when printers' apprentices got the day off to work on their own projects.

20

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

Honors the great civil rights leader.

25

BURNS NIGHT,

CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR BEGINS

Literary holiday celebrating the Scottish poet Robert Burns. Accompanied this year by the start of Lunar New Year: it's the Year of the Metal Rat.



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Our Christmas cactus continues to surprise us each winter, despite (or maybe thanks to) our neglecting it. Convivio Book of Days January 2020 © Convivio Bookworks