

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

October 24, 2018

To all Local Spiritual Assemblies
and registered Bahá'í groups

Dearest Bahá'í Friends,

With the weeks separating us from this year's observances of the Twin Holy Birthdays growing short, we thought it timely to share with you some of the recent guidance of the Universal House of Justice pertaining to these occasions, particularly in view of the many inquiries we continue to receive requesting clarification of certain details.

As a result of the Supreme Body's full and worldwide implementation of the Badí' calendar, the Twin Holy Birthdays now and permanently fall on two successive days. The exact dates, however, will—in accordance with certain astronomical factors—shift from year to year. This year, the Birth of the Báb will be observed on November 9, with the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh following on November 10. As always, both of these Holy Days begin at sunset on the preceding day and end at sunset on the day itself.

We are often asked if, owing to the close relationship of these dates, it is possible to plan observances for the same day. The House of Justice has made it clear that the holding of separate and distinct observances of each of the Twin Holy Birthdays is required:

In relation to the Twin Holy Birthdays, the beloved Guardian, in a letter written on his behalf to a National Spiritual Assembly, advised that refraining from work and gathering for observances are required on both days. Therefore, holding the celebrations of the Twin Holy Days immediately before and after sunset on the same Gregorian date would not be in keeping with the spirit of the guidance set out above.

A special case exists with regard to the Bicentenary of the Birth of the Báb in 2019—just as it did for the Bicentenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Birth last year. The many public events being planned in celebration of the Bicentenary of the Báb's Birth may be scheduled on other dates in close proximity to the exact date of His Birth, which will be October 29. Such celebratory events would not, however, take the place of Bahá'í communities' obligation to arrange for local observances of each of the Twin Holy Birthdays, which should take place on the exact dates of October 29 and 30.

Please be assured of our best wishes as you undertake preparations for commemorating these precious days, on each of which “the whole world was illumined with the light of a new Manifestation of God.”

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Office of the Secretary