

# Happy Mother's Day

Mother's Day is a celebration honoring mothers and motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society. It is celebrated on various days in many parts of the world, most commonly in March or May. Mother's Day is an American invention. It is not directly descended from the many celebrations of mothers and motherhood that have occurred throughout the world over thousands of years, such as the Greek cult "Cybele", the Roman festival "Hilaria", or the Christian celebration "Mothering Sunday".

The modern holiday of Mother's Day was first celebrated in 1908, when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother in America. She then began a campaign to make "Mother's Day" a recognized holiday in the United States. She specifically noted that "Mother's" should "be a singular possessive for each family to honor their mother, not a plural possessive common to all mothers in the world". Although she was successful in 1914, she was already disappointed with its commercialization by the 1920s. Jarvis was adopted by other countries and it is now celebrated all over the world. In this tradition, each person offers a gift, card, or remembrance toward their mothers, grandmothers, and/ or maternal figure on mother's day.



As the American holiday was adopted by other countries and cultures, the date was changed to fit already existing celebrations honoring motherhood. Nowadays, Mother's Day is celebrated on various dates around the world. Some examples are:



- Second Sunday of February
- 3<sup>rd</sup> of March
- 8<sup>th</sup> of March
- 21<sup>st</sup> of March
- Fourth Sunday of Lent (England, Ireland and Nigeria)
- First Sunday of May
- Second Sunday of May (Brazil, the USA and 81 other countries)
- Last Sunday of May
- Second Sunday of June

- Third Sunday of October
- Last Sunday of November
- 22<sup>nd</sup> of December



## Brazil

In Brazil, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of May. The first Mother's Day in Brazil was promoted by the "Associação Cristã de Moços de Porto Alegre" (Young Men's Christian Association of Porto Alegre) on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1918. In 1932, the then President Getúlio Vargas made the second Sunday of May the official date for Mother's Day. In 1947, Archbishop Jaime de Barros Câmara, Cardinal-Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, decided that this holiday would also be included in the official calendar of the Catholic Church.

Mother's Day is not an official holiday in Brazil, but it is widely observed and typically involves spending time with, and giving gifts to, one's mother. Because of this, it is considered one of the celebrations most related to consumerism in the country, second only to Christmas Day as the most commercially lucrative holiday.

## The USA

The current holiday was created by Anna Jarvis in Grafton, West Virginia in 1908 as a day to honor one's mother. Jarvis wanted to accomplish her mother's dream of making a celebration for all mothers, although the idea did not take off until she enlisted the services of wealthy Philadelphia merchant John Wanamaker, who celebrated it on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1910 in Bethany Temple Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, PA of which he was the founder. In a letter to the pastor, she said it was, "our first Mother's Day". Jarvis kept promoting the holiday until President Woodrow Wilson made the day an official national holiday in 1914. The holiday eventually became so highly commercialized that many, including its founder, Anna Jarvis, considered it a "Hallmark holiday," i.e. one with an overwhelming commercial purpose. Jarvis eventually ended up opposing the holiday she had helped to create. She died in 1948, regretting what had become of her holiday. In the United States, Mother's Day remains one of the biggest days for sales of flowers, greeting cards, and the like; Mother's Day is also the biggest holiday for long-distance telephone calls. Moreover, churchgoing is also popular on Mother's Day, yielding the highest church attendance after Christmas Eve and Easter. Many worshippers celebrate the day with carnations: colored if the mother is living and white if she is dead.

