

Day of the Leaders of the Bulgarian National Revival

The **Day of the Leaders of the Bulgarian National Revival** is an all-Bulgarian holiday, celebrating the work and the achievements of the Bulgarian enlighteners, literary men, revolutionaries and holy workers on the field of the national spirit, the strive to education and literacy. It is marked every year on November 1 with torch light processions and is an official holiday in the Republic of Bulgaria.

It has been celebrated for the first time in 1909 at the Festival in the city of Plovdiv. Revered as a saint patron of the holiday is St. John of Rila, the celestial protector of the Bulgarian people and state, who in the people's memory is a model of selflessness, modesty, for loving the fellow men and the Fatherland, to whom the reverence and respect remained intact during the centuries of Ottoman rule. On this day we pay tribute to many more enlighteners, who the people have elevated to the status of holiness.

In 1945 the communist regime abolishes the celebration. Thus, the communist rulers tend to undermine the significance of the spiritual leaders and their contribution to the development of the culture and historical memory in Bulgaria. After a long intermission, on October 28, 1992 with an Act of the National Assembly the tradition of celebration the Day of the Leaders has been re-established. The First of November is an official holiday and day-off for all educational institutions in Bulgaria.

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