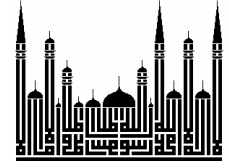




بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



Vol. 15, No. 1

Shaaban 1428 H

September 2007

MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (MANAL)

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF MANAL

Dear Brothers and Sisters:



**In the Name of Allah,
the Most Merciful,
the Most Beneficent**

Alhamdulillah, Allah (SWT) has blessed us with yet another Ramadan, where there is a continuum of blessings and where the reward for good deeds is multiplied. On behalf of the Executive Committee, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you a blessed **Ramadan, and to pray that Allah accepts our fasting.**

We have the following reminders to share with you:

Zakat Ul-Fitr:

Zakat UL-FITR is an obligatory act of worship and it must be paid before Eid Prayer. It is preferable, and appreciated, if this were paid in advance such that it may reach those who deserve it before Eid day. The amount of Zakat UL-FITR this year is \$10.00 per person. MANAL has made arrangements to distribute your Zakat. It may be paid in cash or by cheque to any member of the Executive Committee.

Annual Contribution:

The budget required to keep the Mosque in operation and to execute the necessary maintenance is estimated to be around \$35,000.00 per year. Alhamdulillah, the brothers and sisters have been generous with their contributions to cover the cost and to enable the Association to continue serving the members of the Muslim community.

We would like to remind our brothers and sisters to make their annual contribution to the Islamic Center. Although this is an absolutely voluntary act of charity, without it we cannot keep the Mosque in operation. It is expected that each able, willing, and earning member will contribute about \$800.00. This donation will include the membership fee of \$20.00 per family. The annual donation for the 2007 calendar year/tax year should be paid by December 31, 2007. A tax receipt will be issued by February 2008.

For all matters, please make your cheque payable to the Muslim Association of Newfoundland & Labrador.

Membership of the Association (MANAL):

The Muslim Association of Newfoundland & Labrador is inviting all of you to become registered members of the Association. The Association is a non-profit organization, run by volunteers and provides the platform to represent and serve the Muslim community in Newfoundland & Labrador.

- A membership form can be obtained from the MANAL website: www.manal.ca
- Insha' Allah Ramadan will begin at sunset on September 12, 2007.
- Insha' Allah Eid is expected to be on Saturday, October 13, 2007.
- Insha' Allah, the Community will celebrate the Eid Dinner on the Evening of the Eid day.



Executive Committee: (Visit us at www.manal.ca)



Message from MANAL President

Assalamu Alikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu.

Western scholars who study Islam visit Muslim countries and say that there are different brands of Islam. Recently, they added terms like “Radical Islam”, “Militant Islam”, and “Political Islam”. Muslims don’t agree with this classification. We believe that there is one Islam. Islam consists of a set of beliefs (Aqeeda) and a set of laws (Shariah). The Shariah (Islamic Law) embody a number of laws which regulate human life on earth, but more importantly it embodies the criteria to be used for devising laws and rules that govern new situations. There are two reasons for the confusion of western scholars and others: the confusion between cultural and Islamic practices, and the confusion created by the adoption of a different school of thought.



There is one Islam, but there are many different Muslim cultural groups. Muslims living in Morocco have social traditions which are different from those that exist in China, India, or Indonesia. There is nothing wrong with having different eating and celebrating habits in different parts of the Muslim world. When Islam came more than fourteen hundreds years ago, it did not change the local habits of new Muslims if did not contravene Islamic beliefs and concepts. Similarly, the different schools of thought provide flexibility in applying Islamic law. These schools of thought are based on *Ijtihad* and their contents should continue to develop and evolve so that they would be able to meet the needs of Muslims everywhere and at all times.

As the Muslim community in Newfoundland grows, and becomes more diversified we are facing the challenge that every other large community is facing. How can we remain united as Muslims, while we celebrate our lives as people coming from diverse backgrounds and cultures? Islam stresses the need for unity. In fact, it is a major sin to break away from or to contribute to the breaking of a Muslim community.

Quran say: “Hold tightly to the rope of Allah and do not break away from each other”[3: 103]

But it also encourages people to maintain their diverse social characteristics. We need to understand where to draw the line. Usually, people are more comfortable socializing with their friends who share a common background, but that should not impact negatively on our activities as the single community of Muslims in Newfoundland. They are more comfortable talking their own language, but when others who do not speak the language are present, we are commanded by the Prophet to speak a language that all present would understand. The Mosque should be our focus. We can use the Mosque for our cultural and social events. The Mosque is available for each and every Muslim and Muslim group in the community. Halaqas conducted in the Mosque will have more value and will earn more reward from Allah. We should learn more about the different Muslim countries and we should learn how to share our activities with each other.

Islam mandates unity but celebrate diversity and supports individuality: unity in matters of belief (Aqeeda); diversity in secondary practices based on different types of Fiqh; and individuality that encourages creativity in our lives as human beings

Dr. Mahmoud Haddara
President MANAL

Welcome Ramadan, the Month of Mercy and Fasting in Islam

Muslims and the Month of Ramadan

On the 13th of Sep, 2007, more than 2.1 billion Muslims in the globe will welcome the month of Ramadan. Newfoundland and Labrador's Muslim families and students will join their brothers and sisters all over the world in fasting during the blessed month of Ramadan, May Allah enable all of us to help us fulfill our prescribed obligationsAmeen

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic Lunar calendar. Fasting Muslims are promised a great reward from Allah. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said in a Hadeeth Qudisi "Allah said 'Except fasting, it is for me and I reward my servants for it'" Ramadan is the fourth pillar of Islam along with bearing witness that there is no deity except Allah and Mohamed is the servant and the last messenger of Allah, establishing prayers, paying poor-dues (Zakat), and performing pilgrimage to Mekka (by Muslims who are physically and financially able).

Preparation for Ramadan:

In the month of Sha'aban, the prophet (PBUH) said (Oh, Allah, save the month of Sha'aban for us and enable us to live until the month of Ramadan). A Muslim is recommended to follow the prophet (PBUH). We should all ask Allah to give us the opportunity to fast during the days and pray during the nights of Ramadan, and to enrich our spirituality by reciting Quran. Children should be prepared by allowing them to fast a few hours at first and increasing the fasting time for them each year until they reach the age of puberty, when they have to fast the whole day.

Mechanics of Fasting

Muslims who have reached puberty and are of sound mind are commanded to fast. They must abstain from food, drink, and intimate relations with their spouses from dawn to sunset. Exceptions are made for some groups, such as the sick, the elderly, pregnant women, and the travelers. Those who are able, however, must make up for the missed days when the reason for the exception expires.

Ramadan is the Month of Quran

*(Oh you who believe, observing the fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so you may become (Al-Muttaqun) the pious. [Quran: 2:183]
(Verily, We have sent it (the Qur'an) down in the Night of Al-Qadar (Decree) [Qur'an: 97: 1]*

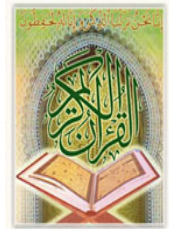
In the month of Ramadan, the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received the first of the revelations of Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. A Muslim is advised to reflect on the meaning of the verses while reciting the Quran. A Muslim is advised also, to memorize the verses of the Quran. The Prophet (PBUH) said (On the Day of Judgment, in paradise, a Muslim will be asked to recite the Quran as he/she used to recite it in this life and be elevated during which. his/her higher level in paradise ends at his/her recitation). It is a great encouragement for all to recite Quran.

Ramadan's Reward is Multiplied

The prophet (PBUH) said that the reward of performing congregational prayers in Ramadan is equivalent to the reward of seventy congregational prayers performed in another month. And the reward of voluntary (Nafle, sunnah) prayer in Ramadan is equivalent to the reward of a congregational prayer in another month.



In the Name of Allah,
the Most Gracious,
the Most Merciful



Fulfilling Our Duties in Ramadan

Ramadan is considered a training period for Muslims to be able to fulfill their duties during the rest of the year. These duties can be arranged in hierarchical order as follows:

- *Duties towards Allah:* These are the most basic duties, other duties are built upon them. They include obeying Allah and observing Him in all activities.
- *Duties towards oneself:* Ramadan is an opportunity where individuals should adjust their habits and try to promote habits that involve body care and healthy activities, such as eating healthy food, exercising, and sleeping early.
- *Duties towards families:* The family is the building block of society and it is a sacred institution in Islam. Therefore, Islam pays special care when it comes to the relationship between the husband and wife; the parents and the children; and siblings with each other. Love, mercy and kindness should be prevalent in a family atmosphere. Ramadan is an opportunity to strengthen family ties and traditions.
- *Duties towards work and educational Institutes:* The prophet (PBUH) said, “Allah loves those who excel in what they do”

Muslim workers and students have the opportunity to show the meaning of real Islam and to introduce it to co-workers, colleagues, and friends by applying the Islamic behavior. Islamic behavior should be presented to the other by acting according to Islam. To excel in what we do, to be punctual, to be respectful to others are among the most basic commands that Islam require us to fulfill.

“Ramadan to Ramadan and Jumm’ah to Jumm’ah and the five obligatory prayers cover the minor sins when the greatest sins are avoided,” said the Prophet (PBUH).

Abdelsalam N. A. Abugharara
President MSA



The Pillars are the Foundation

First, I would like to take advantage of the opportunity of the beginning of the month of Ramadan, the fourth pillar of Islam, to congratulate the Muslim community and wish them very blessed days throughout this holy month.

In this article I will be sharing with you a well-known tradition of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). He said that: “Islam is built upon five pillars: the testimony that there is no deity but God and Mohammed (PBUH) is his messenger, the observance of prayer, the paying of the charity, the fast of Ramadan, and the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca for those who can afford it).” (Bukhari and Muslim) In the above tradition the Prophet has compared Islam to a building that is built upon pillars and said that the structure of Islam is raised upon the five fundamental tenets.

Indeed, one should stop here and think about the deep meaning conveyed in this tradition. Let me present an analogy between the pillars of Islam and those which are used to establish a building. If you want to construct a building, definitely, the first thing that you should do (after owning the land of course) is to build the pillars. The question here is that, how many of these pillars should be built? How deep should they go underground? What kind of material should be used for building them? What is the effect of the ambient conditions? ...etc.

In fact, you will not be building an infinite number of pillars; otherwise, you will end-up having no building. If you want to build a high rise in an area known to be subjected to wind having high speed, then the pillars have to be deep and strong. After completing the building, it has to be furnished and decorated to your taste. No matter how different the building is, each building requires pillars which will support it.

The Muslim character is similar to a building that needs pillars to support it. These are the five pillars mentioned in the tradition. The more a person understands these pillars, the more committed he/she will be to them, and the stronger these pillars will be. However, having these pillars is only a foundation upon which we have to build the Muslim character.

It is important to keep a balance between the effort that goes into establishing the pillars and the effort that goes into finishing the building. For instance, some Muslims insist on going to Hajj year after year while their relatives or neighbors are starving or their friends suffer financial crises! The same applies in the case of voluntary prayers. I still remember my freshman year at the university where some of my classmates used to skip the midterm exams in Ramadan, or do poorly in the exams they attend. They used to justify this saying that they were reciting Qur'an and praying all nightlong so that they did not have time to study!

In fact, those who limit the practice of Islam to the rituals behave in the same way as a person who establishes a large number of pillars which support no structure at all. I am well aware that those who behave this way are doing it with a good intention, but this reflects a misunderstanding of the meaning of Islam. They should be reminded that Islam is a holistic way of life which embraces excellence in all human activities. They should understand that there is a difference between acts of worship and worship. Acts of worship are the rituals that we perform when we pray, and fast, but worship has a much wider meaning. Worship involves all aspects of human life.

If you refer to the Qur'an you will find that wherever the word Iman (faith) is mentioned, it is always followed by “good deeds”. In fact, Islam teaches us that these two terms are “twins” that complement each other. God says what it means: “*And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or*



female, and is a (true) believer (in the Oneness of God (Muslim)) such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a speck on the back of a date-stone, will be done to them.” (4:124)

And in another verse He says: *“This is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of your (good) deeds which you used to do (in the life of the world).”* (43:71)

To summarize, Islam is a religion of life where each and every good deed is considered worship and the believer is highly rewarded for doing them. Indeed, Islam teaches us that life is a test, and that all human beings will be accountable before God on the Day of Judgment. God says what it means: *“whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it”* (99:6-7). Subsequently, it must be said that nobody else but oneself can define our own construction upon the five pillars of Islam. So let us exploit the opportunity of this blessed month of Ramadan and work hard to strengthen our pillars and then get them ready to build upon them the best structure ever. Let us get prepared for the Hereafter and use every moment of this life to build our own construction through racing for doing all good deeds that we can afford. A good deed can be as little as a smile on your face when meeting people or as major a feat as exercising high professionalism and commitment towards the development of our society and all humankind. Last but not least, nothing better than ending with this recitation (translation) from the holy Qur’an:

“Verily! Those who live in awe for fear of their Lord; And those who believe in the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of their Lord, And those who join not anyone (in worship) as partners with their Lord; And those who give that (their charity) which they give (and also do other good deeds) with their hearts full of fear (whether their alms and charities, etc., have been accepted or not), because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning). It is these who race for the good deeds, and they are foremost in them. And We tax not any person except according to his capacity, and with Us is a Record which speaks the truth, and they will not be wronged.” (23:56-61)

May everyone be blessed to use these days as a preparation for the great month of Ramadan, and may our good deeds ascend to God while we are in the very best spiritual state. Amen.

Khalid El-Darymli

St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador



MANAL News

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Assalamu Alikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu.

Study about the maternity health and care needs of St. John's Muslim women



In this qualitative study we documented the maternity health and care needs of immigrant Muslim women living in St. John's. We also described their barriers to accessing and utilizing local maternity health services. During the interviews we learned that Muslim women experienced discrimination, insensitivity and lack of knowledge about their religious and cultural practices. Health information which the cultural and religious specificity labor and delivery, and postbirth gaps between existing maternity emotional support, and culturally information. This gap was further cultural adjustments associated with



Because maternity health care meet the needs of mainstream flexibility to meet the needs of recommended several changes directed at decision makers and health professionals. These changes include improving access to culturally and linguistically appropriate maternity and health related information, developing the diversity responsiveness of health care providers and the organizations where they work and establishing social support networks and partnerships with immigrant communities. Interested individuals can access the study through Maternal & Child Health Journal (ISSN 1092-7875) or writing to reitman@mun.ca.

We would like to express our gratitude to all Muslim women who participated in this study and those who helped with recruitment.

Sylvia Reitmanova, ECE, MD, MScMed
Diana Gustafson, RN, BA, MEd, PhD
Division of Community Health & Humanities
Faculty of Medicine
Memorial University of Newfoundland



MSA welcomes new Muslim students at MUN



MSA plans to arrange Iftar-Taraweeh in Ramadan on-campus

Muslim Students Association (MSA) is the sole organization of Muslim students at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). All Muslim students (Brothers and Sisters) hold the membership of the association upon enrolment. With sincere support from community and MUN authorities, MSA is organizing different religious as well as extra- and co-curricular activities year round. In recognition of the contributions made

last year, MSA obtained “Society of the Year 2004” award from MUN. Another achievement that MSA made is the acquirement of the on-campus prayer room where the daily prayers are now being held on a regular basis. Alhamdulillah.

MSA provides Bus-ride from the Campus (Chemistry-Physics building) to the Mosque for Friday Jumm’ah prayers, *Eid* programs and other social and special events. Seminars, workshops and lectures pertaining to various religious issues as well as inter-faith dialogues with other religious groups are arranged at different times throughout the year. The Islam Awareness Week organized annually, offers exposure on Islamic views regarding various socio-cultural matters to general audiences. Activities like indoor and outdoor sports, *Quran halaka*, information sessions for non-Muslims, fund-rising drives, etc., are also arranged regularly or as and when required. Additionally, MSA regularly participates in different programs conducted by MANAL that address issues of religious interests.

InshaAllah, the holy month of Ramadan will begin on 13th of September this year. MSA, with assistance from the community and MSA members, will arrange on-campus *Iftar* on a daily basis, as it did in earlier years (in Rooms EA 4065, US 3013 AND UC 2001 as shown in the schedule circulated by e-mail to all). All Muslim Brothers and Sisters are cordially invited. Dinner will be served following the *Magrib* prayer. The *Isha* and *Taraweeh* prayers will also be arranged in the same rooms later on.

MSA is taking this opportunity to welcome all new and returning Muslim students at MUN in Fall 2007. MSA is requesting all members to actively participate in every event and also to come up with new ideas. Programs, schedules, announcements and other important information are often being sent to the members through e-mails. To include your name in the MSA e-mail list, if you are not receiving any, please send your address to msamun@mun.ca. Additional information about MSA, including the contact details of the Executives, can be found at : www.mun.ca/msa.

Jazhakum Allah Khairan.

Executives,
MSA-MUN





CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Month of Ramadan 1428 AH

We Are Special!

Do you know why we are special?

There are some trees which are very special. They grow in gardens, as well as in other places. Three of these trees were planted in a garden. These are a Palm, a Grape, and an Olive tree.

The Palm tree said to the two other trees, "I am very tall. I am very strong. . The hot climate does not hurt me. My fruits (dates)' are some of the healthiest fruits ever. I am a special tree because of that. But what makes me more special is something else."

"Do you know what makes me special?" The Palm tree asked.

The Grape tree said, "Yes I know!"

"Really?" the Palm tree replied with happiness.

"I know that I am not tall, like you! But I am spread wide around, very green, and have sweet fruit.

There is something else which makes me special, like my friend the Palm tree," the Grape tree said.

"We are two friends and special," the Palm tree and the Grape tree said together.

Do you know why we are special?

"Wait a minute!" the Olive tree interrupted.

"You said that you are special. I think I know what you are talking about," the Olive tree said.

"I am green too. I have a strong trunk. I produce oil. My oil is the healthiest oil ever. But I have something else which makes me special like you, friends!" the Olive tree said.

They smiled and said together: "We are three friends..... and special!"

"Do you know other trees that are like us, special, so they will be our friends?" the Palm tree asked her friends.

“One moment, please”, the Olive tree and the Grape tree said while they were thinking.

“Got it!” the Grape tree said with a big smile. “I know a tree which can be a new friend to us. It is special, like us, too. It is the Fig tree.”

“Yes, that is right,” the Palm tree commented.

“I got a new friend too!” the Olive tree said while shaking her trunk.

It is the Pomegranate tree.

Do you know why we are special?

Then, they started saying together,

“We are five.....We are special

Mentioned in the Quran.....Makes us special

We are trees.....We are special

Mentioned in the Quran.....Makes us special”

Abdelsalam N. A. Abugharara
President MSA

