

# a message from your **muslim** neighbour

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## dear neighbour

May this message about **Fasting in Ramadan** find you in peace. The noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "*Whoever believes in Allah (The God) and the Last Day should be generous to his/her neighbour and treat him/her well.*"

## what is islam?

Islam is an Arabic word which means both peace and submission. Islam is therefore the achievement of peace through the voluntary submission to the Will of Allah. A Muslim is the one who accepts freely and willingly the supreme power of Allah and strives for total organisation of his/her life according to the revealed teachings of Allah. A Muslim also works towards the establishment of a just and peaceful society that would reflect the guidance of Allah.

## what is fasting in ramadan?

Muslims fast once each year during the month of *Ramadan*, the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar (for the year 1425H/2004, probably Friday 15 October to Saturday 13 November). During this month Muslims abstain from eating, drinking or having marital sexual relations from dawn to sunset. Fasting is exclusively private and a sure sign of faith since only Allah knows that a person is fasting. The main purpose of fasting as described by Allah is "*to attain piety*" (Quran 2:183). The noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said that: "*Whoever spends the month of Ramadan in complete faith and self-rectification, will have his/her previous sins forgiven.*" Fasting also teaches love, sincerity, patience, and develops empathy for those who are less fortunate.

Although *Ramadan* may appear to be a hard and difficult month, it is in fact an enjoyable time. A special atmosphere prevails in Muslim homes, mosques and communities. Muslims look forward to the coming of *Ramadan* with great expectation and feel a certain sadness when the month is over.

## what is taraweeh prayer?

Ramadan is also the month in which the Quran, the Word of Allah, was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, during Ramadan the Quran is read often and especially at night in the mosque as part of a special night-time prayer called *Taraweeh* which lasts for about 1 hour (for the year 1425H/2004 from 8-9pm; daylight-saving 9-10pm).

## what is eid-ul-fitr?

*Eid-ul-Fitr* (The Festival of Fast-Breaking) falls on the first day of *Shawwal*, the month after *Ramadan*. *Eid-ul-Fitr* literally means "return to the *fitr* or original nature". After fasting for one month we become closer to Allah and regain our primordial, natural status as Muslims, who submit to the Will of Allah. It is a day when Muslims assemble in peace and moral victory, celebrating with family and friends, and giving thanks to Allah for His great favours.

## how to get more info?

The Punchbowl Musallah, 25-29 Matthews Street, PO Box 678, Punchbowl NSW 2196

