



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

ENGLAND AND WALES

Interreligious Dialogue: Islam

Information sheet for Eid at the end of Ramadan 2012

ʿID AL-FITR 1433 H. / 2012 A.D.

This information sheet is part of a series which gives suggestions for bidding prayers at the major festivals of other religions, along with a short text of explanation for use in parish newsletters. In acknowledging these festivals, and praying for those who celebrate them, Catholics can express their connectedness to all people of faith, as well as the respect which the Church holds for their spiritual wealth.

The Islamic festival of *Eid-ul-Fitr* marks the completion of the month of Ramadan, in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. It falls on 19 August this year. Below you will find a bidding prayer, and a short paragraph for inclusion in parish newsletters, alongside a summary version.

Bidding prayer

We pray for our Muslim brothers and sisters, who celebrate the completion of their holy month of Ramadan all over the world today, and for all of us, that we may find the time and the discipline to use every opportunity to deepen our faith, and to remember God's will for our lives.

Background

At least 3% of the population of the UK is Muslim, with some estimates going up to 3.5%. Muslims believe in the importance of living a life according to the Qur'an, which includes declaring the Muslim faith (The oneness of God and the Prophethood of Muhammad), almsgiving, praying five times a day, and making the pilgrimage to Mecca if it is physically and financially possible. Fasting from sunset to sundown during the month of Ramadan is also a part of this – Ramadan is the month in which, Muslims believe, various significant occasions took place including the revelation of the Qur'an in its entirety to Prophet Muhammad. It is marked by fasting, increased prayer, thinking of others and caring for those in need as well as listening to and reciting the Qur'an.

The act of fasting is also seen as an act of solidarity with the poor, bringing with it a particular focus on any help that can be given to them. It is also a month that Muslims see as an opportunity to give up any negative habits they might have acquired over the year, concentrating on their relationship with God and a lifestyle that is in accordance with His will.

Eid-ul-Fitr is on the first day of the following month in the Islamic calendar, and celebrates the blessings Ramadan has brought. It is marked by communal prayer, the wearing of new clothes, exchanging cards and gifts, sharing food and visiting friends and family. *Eid-ul-Fitr* is one of the two main festivals in Islam, alongside *Eid-ul-Adha*, which celebrates Abraham's obedience to God through his sacrifice.

Online

For further information and resources on interreligious dialogue, go to:
www.cbcew.org.uk/other-religions

The section is under development, so it is worth looking back at it occasionally – or have a look at the Bishops' Conference blog, which is updated regularly with news and events on interreligious dialogue:

www.churchestogetherconnect.org/profiles/blog/list?user=3az6hic4byfdp

For Newsletters

Muslims around the world celebrate *Eid-ul-Fitr* today, the festival (Eid) that celebrates the many blessings that Muslims believe come from the fasting throughout their holy month of Ramadan. According to Islam the Qur'an was revealed in its entirety to Prophet Muhammad in this month, and Muslims are guided to fast throughout it from sunrise to sunset, to reflect on their lives and build stronger bonds with God, discovering His will for them.