

WFWP Ireland - Breaking Ramadan Fast the ladies from Muslim Assoc. Ireland

Doris McCann
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WFWP Ireland shared these details with us about their latest activity in cooperation with the Sisters of Faith for Peace (SFP):

We were invited by the ladies from the Muslim Association Ireland/ Tallaght Mosque in Dublin, to join them one evening for their fast-breaking meal during Ramadan, called Iftar.

We joined them on Tuesday, 14 June 2016, from 8.45 pm, as Iftar is only taking place after sunset. This meant a late night for all of us due to the long days at this time of year in Ireland.

It was a wonderful diverse group of women from Jewish, Christian, Muslim and other faith backgrounds.

We were really looking forward to this special occasion with our Muslim sisters. They would not have eaten or drunk anything since before sun rise that day.

The evening began with a warm welcome to the Mosque by Hibah and her team, who also showed us briefly around the Mosque. Hibah is a member of the Mosque as well as the SFP.

Doris McCann then addressed everybody and briefly spoke about how the fundamental message of Ramadan is really a universal message as it is not just about physical fasting but on a deeper level about our re-committment and alignment with God.

Many faiths share this beautiful virtue and understanding of submitting to God, Allah, Hashem, Heavenly Parents, The One... There are many names across our different faith traditions.

We can surely all think of different rituals that we abide by in our faith traditions in order to show our commitment to God, and focus our hearts and minds on the beautiful values which are at the core of all our faiths.

We really feel it is unfortunate that our modern society seems to be moving away from an understanding of a sense of humility to our creator, to this power greater than ourselves, and it is a message that is needed in the world today!

After this, Hibah explained in greater detail about Ramadan, including showing us a short video.

We could understand clearly how the essence of this tradition is one of submission to God, self-purification, self-discipline and sacrifice for others. Besides that, even from a physical viewpoint, science has shown that regular fasting is actually healthy for us.

We were also given a little prayer card with a brief prayer in Arabic and English, and Hibah read out more detailed prayers in Arabic that are recited during Iftar. We could follow along through the English translation on the screen. We then had an opportunity for Q&A which raised many interesting points.



At 10pm, it was time for the Muslim sisters to break their fast. It is tradition to initially just drink some water and have some dates, figs, or fruit pieces. While breaking their own fast, the Muslim women also went around our group and offered these for us to join in. They also observed their own prayers, and the rest of us really appreciated in silent observation to be so involved.

After that, we went downstairs to the restaurant where the ladies had prepared a rich buffet of delicious dishes which included kosher and vegetarian dishes as well as halal of course, so there was something for everybody. We really enjoyed this meal and each other, and in no time the atmosphere was very joyful and chatty as we forgot about the differences between each other and just met as friends.

One Jewish lady had also observed a strict fast of no food or water on this day, in preparation of this occasion and in solidarity with our Muslim friends.

One thing that strikes many of us often and the more we learn about each other, from the different faith groups, is the obvious similarity between our faiths and their traditions. Especially the Abrahamic religions clearly come from a shared tradition. But it is through conscious effort that we come to realise this connection, and break down the stereo types.

It was just incredibly encouraging to have this experience and we hope and pray that our small efforts may create ripples and multiply!

Thank you so much again to all our friends from the Tallaght Mosque in Dublin for hosting this evening, to our Jewish friends who assisted with the preparation of the kosher food, and to everybody who came and participated!

Reported by Doris McCann
WFWP Ireland President