

**Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP**

**Ahmadiyya Muslim Community**

**239 Barrington Street, Bibra Lake**

**Fasting in my Religion**

**25 May, 2019**

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Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen

I express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to join you here today at the annual Iftar dinner in observance of the holy month of Ramadan with Councillor Philip Eva JP, his wife Michele and Councillor Chontelle Sands and her partner Dave.

I acknowledge the Wadjuk People of the Nyungar Nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet and I pay respect to their Elders both past, present and emerging.

As we know, Ramadan is a holy month celebrated amongst Muslims across the world with the principles of generosity and hospitality. It is a month of fasting, developing self-control and kindness towards fellow beings and also a time of thanksgiving and charity.

Today's programme under the theme 'Fasting in my Religion' seeks to provide a perspective to understand the importance of fasting in multifarious faiths and how that enables the process of learning to continue and ultimately enrich each and every one of our lives.

It is a great honour to share in the tradition of 'breaking the bread' around the table and to reflect on long lasting friendships, appreciation for diversity, celebrating harmony and peace in the world.

It behoves each person in our community to appreciate, value, apply and promote each of the aforementioned values in a world that is increasingly more diverse, complex and challenging as each year passes.

Australia is one of the youngest nations in the world in one respect; however it has a rich and diverse culture that relates to its first nation people – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People that goes back over 60,000 years.

During this time the Aboriginal & Torres Islander People looked after Mother Earth knowing that they were custodians of the land and that those who followed in their footsteps would need to do the same.

Theirs was a nomadic lifestyle moving with the seasons – no permanent structures built – no monuments for the world to see.

In the last 230 years of European settlement, and now from people of the four corners of the earth who bring with them their cultures and faiths we have seen Australia become one of the most multi-cultural countries in the world.

Our lives have been enriched beyond comprehension and as we share our learnings of culture, history and faith it can only mean the development of a more harmonious relationship and strength going forward.

Our children and our grandchildren and those who follow in their footsteps will truly be reflective of a nation of people that results in lasting friendship, appreciation for diversity, celebrating harmony and peace in the world.

The strength of any nation is built around its people and their capacity to work together to create mutual benefits that flow throughout their community.

As I said earlier, Ramadan is a holy month celebrated amongst Muslims across the world with the principles of generosity and hospitality. It is a month of fasting, developing self-control and kindness towards fellow beings and also a time of thanksgiving and charity.

Other faith groups also have ‘fasting’ at certain times of the year including Christians during the season of Lent. Religions that also practice fasting include: Buddhism, Judaism, Taoism, Jainism and Hinduism.

Traditionally fasting has been and continues to be a widely used practice observed for the purpose of purifying the person or of atoning for sins and wrongdoing.

I thank the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community for their kind invitation to participate in the IFTA Dinner, an important time on the Muslim calendar and for bringing the wider community together to share in and gain further knowledge of this Muslim tradition.

Thank you.