

Welcome to IECRC's 5th Annual *Milad Shareef* Conference
**RESPECTING CULTURAL VALUES:
A CRITERION FOR WORLD PEACE**



**May 25, 2008
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In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Prayers and Peace upon His Noble Messenger ﷺ



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Welcome to IECRC's
5th Annual Milad
Shareef Conference

RESPECTING CULTURAL VALUES: A CRITERION FOR WORLD PEACE A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER



Culture is the identity of every nation. It is the sum total of the shared values, emotions, and expressions of a people. Our global world today is a rich collection of ancient and modern cultures. educational, charitable and cultural centers of other civilizations. It may be deduced that the non-profit organizations working in the field of education, health and social welfare all fall into this category. One can also refer to the word *Sawamiah* used in verse 40 of Chapter *Al-Hajj* of the Holy Quran, which stipulates that all establishments of other civilizations must be protected.

According to the Islamic tradition, the cultural diversity that comprises the world today is a blessing and by Divine Design. Its purpose is to interact and acquaint ourselves with one another. This interaction allows for increased understanding and subsequent enrichment which in turn contributes towards the promotion of peaceful relations between various communities.

It is the mandate of every religion to protect culture and promote cultural norms. Islam stresses co-existence. The Holy Quran clearly exhorts Muslims to protect the Christian church, the Jewish synagogue, and places of worship of all other peoples as much as they defend their own mosques. This is clear evidence of the emphasis that Islam has laid on tolerance and co-existence with other religions and civilizations. Islam also commands its followers to ensure the protection of all

Whenever Christian scholars came to visit with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) for a dialog, he (peace be upon him) arranged their stay in *Masjid-e-Nabawi* (the blessed mosque of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, in the holy city of Medina). On such occasions, the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) not only held talks there, but also allowed the Christians to perform their religious rituals within the mosque.

However, one of the greatest problems in the world today is that we have stopped respecting cultures. We have adopted an "us versus them" approach. The modern world is facing serious challenges due to this single reason leading to class wars and unrest in the world.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad

(Peace Be Upon Him) respected every culture. While he established an Islamic state in the Holy city of Madinah, he (peace be upon him) did not denigrate the cultural identities of any religion. On the contrary, he promoted the various Arab tribes. He protected synagogues and churches and directed his followers to pay respect to them. Whenever the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) went out of the Holy City of Madinah with his noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them all), he did not trespass on the lands that belonged to the Jews and Christians. He (peace be upon him) did not allow the horses to even step foot on those lands that had agricultural crops on them. But he (peace be upon him) commanded his noble companions to protect these lands. In this way he laid the foundations for international law and peace. It is chilling to see that behaviors today are so antithetical to the teachings of this great final Prophet of God who is a Prophet for all of humanity. Peace Be Upon Him.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) practically proved the motto of the Peace Culture which is to "Live and let others live." "Peace for all" was not just a slogan but

he proved it with his pristine teachings, stellar example and kind and forgiving nature that made everyone around him fall in love with his personality, and even his enemies were in awe of him (peace be upon him).

In the society that he created he adopted many techniques to transfer his knowledge to the people. He sent out delegations of His Companions who reflected the culture of peace and respect they had learnt from him. When the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) met people, he would stand up out of respect for them.

He created an Administration Culture which centered on truth and honesty. Honesty is the best policy for the government, the legislature, and judiciary. The culture of Islam is that of balance of power and it negates any

MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

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authoritarian school of thought and promotes a culture of tolerance and peace. In this culture, contrary to popular belief, Allah Almighty and the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) have given tremendous amount of respect to women and children in the context of human rights. In this culture the use of force is prohibited. "Might is right" is not a component. The teaching of Islam is that everyone is equal. Modern culture includes language, ideas, beliefs, norms, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, ceremonies and symbols. Islam has incorporated these into its fold. Islamic principles teach to take what is good and leave out that which is not good. It is a dynamic body with its foundation anchored on a core firm set of values—the crucial recipe for any religion, culture, institution or individual to survive—the ability to adapt and include.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) practically proved the motto of the Peace Culture which is to "Live and let others live."

Today's IECRC Conference is a bridge between the West and the East, a bridge among nations. The valuable research articles and presentations being made here will be a source of learning and eliminating many stereotypes. Conferences such as this are instrumental in the transformation of international cultural norms.

It is time we let go of the wars of the battlefield and psycho warfare and make working for humanity the aim of our lives. For social and world change it is imperative that the differences between the major

world cultures and religions are put on the backburner and the similarities are highlighted. The world is our home and we are all brothers and sisters. All Prophets of God (peace be upon them all) have brought the same message of forgiveness, purification, tolerance, peace, and love. It behooves us to increase our intercultural communication and understanding so that we can make the world a better place for our children.

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri

Dr. Qadri is the Founding Director of the IECRC. He is the recipient of many international awards such as the prestigious "Ambassador for Peace" Award presented by the Universal Peace Foundation and Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace in Canada. Please see the section on Speaker Biographies for more details. He can be reached at ahmedq19@yahoo.com. □

REDEFINING MULTICULTURALISM: FROM TOLERANCE TO UNDERSTANDING

For many, communication with persons from diverse cultures can be challenging. One of the challenges is learning new customs and traditions and second important challenge is identifying fears, prejudices, and stereotypes that not only guide our social interactions and contribute to misinformation about members of various cultural groups, but also help to perpetuate various social inequities. Cultural views are like rivers—they may be nourishing and they may be poisonous. It is nourishing when its general principles are of such a nature, as productivity, that even after centuries of its existence we can still derive from it the imperatives for our actions, and the principles for understanding the world. Thus, potent cultural views continually help us to explain the world and to live in it satisfactorily. Under the auspices of empiricism and other similar philosophies, we have created, in the past, a deficient matrix for interacting with other beings. The time has come to create a new philosophy, which corrects these deficiencies and provides a framework for unity and symbiosis. We cannot stereotype oth-

ers based on our own acculturation, values, traditions and religious beliefs. For our times we do require a philosophy which would be global and universal, holistic and healing, generous and humane, morally responsible and intellectually coherent.

'Multiculturalism' is a word most Americans use freely - often very proudly - when describing their country. We have achieved multiculturalism: we are a nation of nations - home to virtually every people on earth. We fulfill the definition of pluralism: we have numerous distinct ethnic, religious and cultural groups. Americans generally believe such a condition is desirable and socially beneficial. This, however, will only take us so far. Already - it's proving not to be enough. To make our experiment of multiculturalism succeed, we must redefine it so that our primary descriptor is not 'tolerance' but understanding and harmony. This understanding will happen in part through interfaith dialogues like at IECRC Conference on intercultural communication, and most importantly, like the ones in homes, community centers and

places of worship. The objective of genuine dialogue is not necessarily to find agreement, but more importantly mutual respect and understanding. Let us hope that the 21st century becomes one where people of all faiths realize that we have much in common and that by working together we can be a major-if not unstoppable force for peace, non-violence and world harmony.

Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda

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LOVING THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions, modes of behavior and ways of life based on respect for life, and practice of non-violence through education and spiritual practices; full respect for all human rights; and, adopting the principles of tolerance, co-operation, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations. In today's testing times that is filled with challenges and tribulations there is more than ever an urgent need to follow a role model who can help us establish peace, tolerance, and harmony among our inner selves and among today's global society with different backgrounds and cultures.

God Almighty has sent the Holy Prophets and Messengers (peace be upon them) such as Prophet Abraham, Prophet Jacob, Prophet Isaac, Prophet Moses, Prophet Jesus and finally Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them all) to different nations to achieve the same purpose i.e. to recognize our Creator and seek His pleasure by serving humanity. We can receive this Divine solution and implement it in our lives only if we open up our hearts and minds to love, respect and honor of these pure personalities.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as a final Messenger, has taught us code and ethics of life through a set of instructions called, Islam (Peace), in the form of the Holy Quran and His (peace be upon him) noble character, that we should adopt in our lives. There are several verses of the Holy Quran and Sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) about the necessity of Loving and respecting the Holy Prophets and specially the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). As the Holy Quran says:

"And he speaks not of his own desire, That is not but the revelation that is revealed to him" [An-Najm:3-4]

Loving the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is our belief (*Iman*), in fact it is the core of our belief (*Iman*). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has said, "No one among you can be a true Muslim (*Mu'min*) until he loves me more than his parents, children and anyone else."

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet (peace

be upon him) has said, "Teach your children three things: Loving their Master (peace be upon him), loving the family of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and Recitation of the Holy Quran."

Allah's Love for the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him):

It's not only that believers are instructed to Love the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) but Allah (Most Glorified and Exalted) who is The Lord of the Universe has chosen the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) as His beloved one. This is seen in various verses of the Holy Quran such as, in At-Tauba-61: "And those who hurt the Messenger, for them is the painful torment." Also, in Al-Fatha-10: "Those who swear allegiance to you, swear allegiance to Allah. The Hand of Allah is over their hands." Also as mentioned in An-Nisa-80: "Whosoever obeys the Messenger, has indeed obeyed Allah."

This way of expression of the love for the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) is not expressed anywhere else in Quran, that it's not said that whoever obeys Allah Almighty has obeyed the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) but instead He (Most Glorified and Exalted) included His obedience into the obedience of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and then has given good news for those who obey the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), "O beloved! Say you, 'O people! If you love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.'"

Love of the Noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

In Sahih Bukhari it is narrated that once Hadhrat Umer (may Allah be pleased with him) said that he loved the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) more than anything except his life. Then the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "By the Lord who has my life in His hands you cannot be true believer (*Mu'min*) unless you love me more than even your life." Then Hadhrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "now I love you more than even my life."

Once a person came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and asked when would be the Day of Judgment. The Holy

Prophet (peace be upon him) replied to him, "What have you prepared for it?" He said, "Ya Rasool Allah (peace be upon him), I have not done much extra prayers and nor have given much charity. But yes, for sure, I love Allah Almighty and His Messenger, peace be upon him." Then, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) replied that "You will be with whom you love on the day of Judgment."

Animal's Love for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

In an example of how animals used to love the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), at the time of the Last Pilgrimage 100 camels were sacrificed and out of them 63 camels were slaughtered by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). When groups of 5 and 6 camels were brought forward, they each used to push one another extending their necks, eager to be sacrificed by the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him). Glory be to Allah, instead of fearing being slaughtered and running away, these animals wanted to benefit from the honor of being touched by the blessed hands of The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Paying Respect, a pre-condition for Love:

Love for someone cannot be achieved without having the respect for that person in the heart. Allah The Exalted has taught us how to respect the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him).

In Al-Maida-12: "and believe in My Messengers and pay them respect." Also, mentioned in Al-Fat'h, "So you can believe in Allah Almighty and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and pay respect to His Messenger (peace be upon him)." In Al-Nur-63: "Make not the summoning of the Messenger among yourselves, like one calls the other among you." The ones that do not pay the proper respect to the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) are the hypocrites as mentioned in Al-Munafiqoon-8: "whereas the honor is for Allah, and His Messenger and Muslims, but the hypocrites know not." These people may follow Islamic Law (*Shariah*) and apparently do all forms of religious and charity work but are rejected due to the sickness of their hearts that stops them from respecting the Holy

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LOVING THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

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Prophet (peace be upon him) and the ones that are associated with him (peace be upon him).

Respect by the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

Now let us see how the Companions of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to show respect. Hadhrat Usama (May Allah be pleased with him) narrates that I came to the gathering of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and saw that the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) were sitting around him (peace be upon him) such that if there were birds perched on their heads, they would not even stir out of respect for that sitting.

Once Hadhrat Bilal (May Allah be pleased with him) brought out the water that was used by The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) for ablution. The companions (May Allah be pleased with them) scrambled to get even a drop of that water and whoever did not get a drop of that blessed water touched the wet hands of the other companion and rubbed it on his face.

Hadhrat Ubaida (May Allah be pleased with him) used to say that having a blessed hair of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is of much more value than the whole world.

Warnings for those who do not pay proper respect to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

Allah (Most Glorified and Exalted) has given warnings to those who do not give proper respect to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). "O believers! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Communicator of unseen (the Prophet) and speak not aloud in presence of him as you shout to one another, lest your works become vain while you are unaware." [Al-Hujarat: 2] Also, it is mentioned in the Holy Quran that "Undoubtedly, those who annoy Allah and His Messenger, Allah's curse is upon them in the world and in the Hereafter and Allah has kept prepared for them a degrading torment." [Al-Ahzab: 57]

Hadhrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates a Hadith about it, that, once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) holding his blessed hair in his hand, said, "whoever disrespects even a hair of mine, Heavens would be forbidden on him."

Examples of the affection of righteous ones (Saliheen) with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him):

The personalities who loved the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and showed respect and honor just like they were in His

*If you are loyal to
Muhammad
(peace be upon him),
We are yours
This universe is nothing,
the Tablet and
the Pen are yours*

(Peace be upon him) presence, they have achieved success in this life and hereafter. A few such personalities are like the blessed light of the family of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Hadhrat Imam Zain ul Abideen (May Allah be pleased with him) who, on his return from Karbala recited a Qaseeda:

"Ya Rahmatal LilAlameen Adrik LiZainil Abideen, Mahboosin Aidiz Zalimeena fi Maukibil Mutradham"

O Mercy of all the worlds, help Zainil Abideen who is confined and surrounded by the transgressors.

Similarly, Hadhrat Imam Abu Hanifa (May Allah be pleased with him) says in one of his Qaseeda:

"Ya Syed AsSadaate J'ituka Qasida, Arju Ridaka Wah-Tame BiHimaka"

O the Leader of the Leaders! I came to you with pure intention to give myself into your protection.

Hadhrat Imam Busairi (may Allah have mercy on him) says:

"Ya Akramal Khalqi Ma Li Mun Alooze Bihi, Siwaaka 'inda Huloolil Hadithil-Amami"

O the most respected among all of the creation, there is no one except you that I can seek refuge in, in times of calamities.

Hadhrat Maulana Jami (may Allah have mercy on him) says:

"Zi Mahjoori bar amed jane alam, TarHam Ya Rasool Allah sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam! TarHam"

This world cannot live without you, O Prophet of Allah have mercy on us; have mercy on us.

Hadhrat Haji Imdadullah Sahib Mahaji Makki (may Allah have mercy on him) wrote:

"Jahaz Ummat Ka Haq Ne Kar Dia Hai Aap ke Haathon, Tum Ab Chaho Dubao Ya Taraao Ya Rasool Allah sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam"

Allah The Exalted has appointed you the captain of the ship of the Ummah, now, O Prophet of Allah, it's up to you that you let it sink or take it ashore.

This shows how the renowned scholars and Awliya Kiram (May Allah's Mercy bestow upon them) use to love the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and used to ask him for help and guidance which in real sense (Haqiqah) is from Allah Most Glorified and Exalted, and is according to the Hadith that, "Allah Almighty is the One Who gives and I (peace be upon him) am the one who distributes."

Also the great Sufi Saint and Poet Hadhrat Allama Iqbal (may Allah have Mercy on him) has said:

*Ki Muhammad se wafa toonay to ham teray hain
Ye jahan cheez hai kiya lauho qalam tere hain*

If you are loyal to Muhammad (peace be upon him), We are yours
This universe is nothing, the Tablet and the Pen are yours.

May Allah Most Glorified and Exalted give us capability (taufeeq) to understand His blessings and specially the biggest blessing i.e. the personality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), so we can follow and spread the true message of peace just like our ancestors like Hadhrat Syedena Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (May Allah be pleased with him), Hadhrat Data Ganj Baksh (may Allah have mercy on him), Hadhrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti (may Allah have mercy on him), Hadhrat Khawaja Naqshband (may Allah have mercy on him), Hadhrat Khawaja Suhurward (may Allah have mercy on him) and Hadhrat Syedena Imam Ahmed Kabir Rifai (may Allah have mercy on him) have done before and served humanity.

Ayyaz Yousaf Qadri

Mr. Ayyaz Yousaf Qadri is the Managing Director of the IECRC and one of its foundational members. He, along with his wife and many committed volunteers, provides many community services in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. He can be reached at ayyazy@yahoo.com. □

MUSLIMS IN AMERICA: ISLAMIC CULTURAL ASSIMILATION OR ISLAMIC MULTICULTURALISM?

To a lay person, culture quite often means different things. In the United States, to many, culture may mean partaking in elite activities such as listening to classical music and museum-caliber art. As such, one is a “cultured” person. In the corporate context, it means the particular manner in which a group of people behave and interact with each other and carry out policies at their place of employment. Then there is Popular or Pop-culture, which generally means that which is commonly observed by the masses. Culture may be expressed in diverse ways. Quite often, culture is expressed through folk dance, music, dress, chanting or singing, and through observance of religious rituals.

Etymologically, the word *culture* has been derived from its Latin, *cultura*, stemming from *colere*, meaning “to cultivate.” Based on its root meaning, one may conclude that culture is really what makes a people rich, that its expression describes the deep roots of a people. It is for this reason why one may say “such and such a culture is very rich.”

Academically, culture has been defined as the patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. That culture is manifested in music, literature, lifestyle, painting and sculpture, theater and film and similar things. [A *Vocabulary of Culture and Society*] Cultural Anthropologists generally define culture as a universal human capacity to classify, codify, and communicate their expressions symbolically.

As one can observe, wrapping our hands around the concept of culture is not an easy task, because culture means so many different things to so many different people. The definition of culture to one group is not necessarily the same to another. That which holds value in a culture is known as a cultural value. Each cultural group has their own set of cultural values that define them. However, that which is valued in one culture is not necessarily valued in another.

Misunderstandings and misconceptions between cultural groups occur when one group tries to impose its values over the other. The greatest challenge occurs when

diverse groups attempt to work together when values are different. Religion on the other hand is unifying in the sense that despite the cultural differences, it is supposed to unite people based on universal values such as truth, honesty, respect, modesty, noble character, love, and belief. The Latin etymological root of the word “religion” is *religio*, which means to tie, to constrain, to restrain, or even, to Divinely constrain. Thus, religion ties us to a set of common values that unite diverse cultures, despite their differences.

Granted that religion has common values, the manner in which these values are expressed or practiced may vary depending on the culture. For example, the expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) in some cultures is through talking about his life, his character, his family, his teachings; whereas in other cultures it is by decorating their homes with lights, flags, singing, weeping, celebrating and so forth, in addition to the former.

The value of *modesty* through its practice or expression of the *hijab* (head scarf or veil) is also diverse, and quite often one culture accuses the other of not being modest enough or too strict. The practice of Sufism, *Tasawwuf*, spirituality, mysticism, *Ihsaan*, or beautification of actions varies from culture to culture and its diverse names are testimonial enough to its diverse intellectual understanding and practice. The point that I am trying to make here is that the practice of religious values, based on interpretation and expression, vary and will vary from culture to culture.

One of the struggles of the American Muslim community, which comprises both, American-born and immigrant Muslims, is the definition of the *American Islamic Culture*. Is there truly a single American Islamic Culture? The answer to that question is *yes* and *no*. Yes, when the core values of the religion are the acceptable practice of all its members in a diverse society such as the United States; and no, when these accepted values are practiced by various cultures in their own manner of expression. Thus values like respect, modesty, noble character, and love are all values that de-

fine the American Islamic Culture, but the interpretation and expression of these values in their own cultural manner define the Islamic Culture as practiced by Americans, as practiced by Arabs, as practiced by people from the Sub-continent, or by Fijians, Indonesians, Africans, and so forth. The point being made here is that one group of Muslims cannot enforce a single brand of Islamic Culture as practiced in the United States over other adherents of the faith. That which unites us, are the core values of Islam, but that which makes us diverse, vibrant, dynamic, and a rich community is the mode in which we express these values. Note that I have not used the phrase “that which divides us” because cultural diversity is an asset to the American Muslim community and not a defect. If we as Muslims in the United States can understand this concept, we will begin to put aside the minor differences that draw us apart.

To accommodate and respect the cultural expression of common values requires tolerance and empathy for others. The religion teaches us to have a good opinion of Allah and of His creation, which serves as an immunity to cultural misinterpretation. If we always try to interpret actions of others in a positive light and give them the benefit of the doubt as our Beloved Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) asked us to give, then we might avoid conflict.

Recently I read a posting by a Muslim convert in a blog with the title “Marry a Muslim... Heck No!” in which the poster argues that Muslims are racists in that they will not marry their daughters to him because he does not make six figures and that he belongs to a different culture, and that he is better off marrying a Christian or a Jew. What most probably was an attempt by the fathers involved to maintain the same social status of their daughters and an attempt to reduce causes for cross-cultural conflict after marriage, was interpreted as racism by the other. This does not negate the fact that racism is a problem among some Muslims, but this is not the norm. The convert’s argument was

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that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said “marry for the sake of a person’s religion” over other reasons, while the parents’ of the girls argued that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) encouraged marriage among your own social and cultural class *first*. This sort of exchange is a result of the rubbing of different cultures. Both are correct in their understanding, but with patience, deeper introspection, and discussion, the truth is found somewhere between the two.

A phrase that one often hears from American-born or -raised Muslims is, “No... that is not Islam, it is *culture*... we must separate Islam from *culture*.” Or something such as, “that is just *cultural baggage*. That’s not Islam.” On the other hand, you may come across immigrant Muslims saying, “They are new to Islam, they still have a lot to learn.” Would it not have been better if the former said, “The core Islamic values are this because the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) said such and such, and that which you see is a cultural expression of that value, your cultural expression of the same value may be in this or that way”? There, that didn’t sound offensive at all. It would have also been better if the latter said “Their understanding of Islam is in the context of their culture, which is not necessarily incorrect.”

So, does cultural expression or custom have any place in the way we practice the religion? There is something in Islamic Jurisprudence known as *‘Urf* –the reasonable and customary practice of sound people. It is a legal basis for rulings in the *Shariah* (the Islamic law) typically in matters of *ijtihad* (interpreting new matters) or *ra’iy* (juristic opinions). For a ruling to occur using *‘Urf*, it must adhere to stringent conditions such that *‘Urf* must represent common and recurrent phenomenon, it must be in existence at the time a transaction or contract is drawn, it cannot contravene a clear stipulation of an agreement, and it must not violate a *nass* (a text such as the Qur’an and Hadith). There are two types of *‘Urf*: *‘urf as-sahih* – valid customs that are followed by a large group of people and don’t contravene principles of the *shariah*—and *‘urf al-fasid*, which are disapproved customs that are repugnant and violate the principles of the *shariah*.

Rulings derived by way of *‘Urf* are not necessarily written in stone and are subject to change based on the time and place. When the early Muslims spread over the continents and met new cultures with customs unknown to them, such customs made inroads into the religion by employing valid methods to

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derive laws. The point here is that every cultural practice is not necessarily acceptable in the religion, but those practices that are not in violation of the principles of the religion are valid and should not be dismissed as culture baggage because Islam has recognized customary practice and has gone so far as to insert it in the *shariah* as long as the aforementioned principles are not violated. This also does not mean that there aren’t any customs in practice today by a *few* Muslims; customs such as female genital mutilation, indiscriminate declarations of divorce, etc that are neither encouraged nor sanctioned by the *shariah*. Although some Muslims practice it, it is categorically condemned by the vast majority of the Muslims *ummah* (nation).

While the *melting pot* has been successful in assimilating many who have categorically decided not to maintain deep cultural roots, it still struggles and often clashes when rich cultural values are hurled against its concept. It has been proven that close-knit families with strong cultural and religious ties will unlikely lose their daughters and sons to the melting pot that has no regard for culture and all it expresses.

To summarize, culture is a complex concept. Cultural values differ greatly between cultures, but those that are based universally in religion are widely accepted. Cultural expression of religious values is where most misunderstandings occur but they do have value. Diverse expression of cultural values is a good thing because it keeps the tree of the Muslim *Ummah* alive and vibrant in the fruitful production of

ideas and its flowering creates beauty and attraction for the *Ummah*. It also serves as an aid to spiritual introspection as it often enables us to dive deeply in to our innermost spiritual cores to express the treasure of *iman* (belief) in a manner familiar to us. It’s a means to loving and reaching our Creator, *Al-Musawwir* (The Fashioner), *Al-Mughni* (The Enricher). Not to mention that hidden behind the outward expression of culture, which is often easily dismissed, are deep pearls of wisdom from spiritual luminaries such as Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti, Hazrat Fared ud-Din Ganj Shakar, Hazrat Mualana Rum, Hazrat Shams Tabrez, Hazrat Ali Hajwari Data Sahib, Hazrat Nizamuddin Awliyah (may Allah shower His Mercy on all of them), to name just a few, who once lived (and continue to live) among these cultures, whose contribution to the spread of Islam to vast expanses of the Muslim lands remain unquestionable, who embraced culture and used it to benefit the *Deen*.

There is a cultural divide between Immigrant and American Muslims. For Islam to prosper in this country, this divide must be bridged. I don’t believe that shedding ones culture is the only solution, nor is the ignoring of the contribution that culture can make to the Muslim Community in the US such, but rather the solution lies in the acceptance of each of our differences, and by looking forward as a vibrant and diverse multicultural community, ready for the challenges ahead of us. This debate between an assimilated American Islamic Culture vs. an Islamic Multiculture where respect for the cultural values of all are maintained, must continue and deserves further study. I am hopeful that this article will spark some debate on this important issue in the same spirit of differences of opinion among matters of Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*).

May Allah keep our hearts united and our spirits alive, by the rank of His Beloved *Sahib ul-Jamaal, Sayyiduna wa Maulana Hazrat Muhammad (sall-Allahu alayhe wasallam)* – *Ameen!*

Sharaaz Khan Qadri

Mr. Qadri is the Director of IECRC Sacramento Chapter where he along with his wife and family offer many community services for individuals and families. He can be reached at sharaaz2001@yahoo.com. □

BALANCING PERSONAL RELIGIOUS PRACTICE WITH THE INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS OF OTHERS

As a trainer and facilitator in the intercultural field, a common way that I engage the interest of audience members is by asking for their own examples and stories that are relevant to the topic at hand. At a recent group facilitation session I was leading, a female supervisor had shared a situation where she had found another female from a culture different from hers, praying in the stairwell of her company's back hallway. Concerned for her employee's safety since she was in a darkly lit back exit area, and unaware at the time of the implications of her suggestion at the time, the supervisor kindly asked her to move into another room, offering her own office space, as an accommodation. The employee agreed, but the next day – was found in the same place, performing her prayers. Why did this happen?

For people who may be aware of this particular culture's customs – seeing someone pray in a public, open space would be perfectly acceptable. But, for this supervisor – and for many individuals in leadership roles – exposure to such traditions different from their own, causes a misunderstanding of the situation. Unfortunately, these misunderstandings can add up, possibly causing a strained relationship, and perhaps even graver consequences. So, what can we do in these situations?

Recently, there was an unfortunate and serious case in my community of a lawsuit that occurred from a company leader who did not understand the indirect communication style of his Asian employees. My initial reaction to this scenario was sadness – knowing that this outcome could have been prevented by having cultural awareness through a basic understanding of the cultures and approaches of those in your daily life.

As a person who has been brought up with understandings of faith, I am in the humble yet critical position of being able to explain the concepts of religious practice from my own personal experience to my workshop attendees. The benefit of

my role as facilitator is that I am able to safely introduce ideas and understandings that may possibly conflict with others, and yet – I am still seen in an expert role. Despite all of this, a challenge I face that is common with many others who follow a spiritual path is to be able to express, explain – and even justify, in some cases – to others, my choice of behaviors and beliefs on an everyday basis. Many a time, the less difficult approach to take would be to avoid the topic all together. But then – how much understanding can come from a lack of dialogue and attention?

Discussing matters of faith is no easy feat – public school systems in many countries ensure that teachers avoid the topic of religion in order not to offend the parents and children within their institutions. The disadvantage of this approach is that rather than having an equal, even forum for research and discussion in a classroom – children are exposed to biased and incomplete versions of commentary on faith-based behavior and practice. Growing up, these misguided opinions may turn into anxiety, prejudices, and avoidance of the “other”. All in all, the potential of the person and anyone whom she or he comes in contact with, would be at a loss.

To address the issues and questions above, here are some recommendations for increasing intercultural awareness about your own religious practice:

Recognize the intention of the person asking questions. Many times – what may be perceived as offensive or ignorant questions are actually earnest attempts to understand you and your practice of faith. Of course, be aware that the approaches of others can be negative, but – be a detective and discern these individuals from those who have good intent.

Be open to expressing your understanding of faith through analogy. Faith-based experiences can sometimes best be explained through analogy to others' experiences, commonly-known stories, and the other person's vocabulary and expressions. Rather than trying to find difference, estab-

lish similarities amongst the approaches and how each is effective.

Choose the appropriate time to explain. Sometimes, reacting within a highly emotional situation may only cause more difficulty. However, not facing a said misconception of your faith by another person may make it difficult for you to prevent misunderstanding later. Rather than either of these options, it would be wise to choose an appropriate time and be purposeful in discussing your point of view, to clarify the misconception and have a “teachable moment.”

Share. Many a time, our colleagues and friends are curious and would like to learn more, but are polite and may not want to feel they are intruding by asking. Instead, begin the conversation yourself about a community event, family gathering, or experiences that you had, and you will then be able to share more ideas develop understanding of your faith, with them.

Realize the cost or benefit within a situation. In some instances – it is simply better not to engage in a discussion about matters of faith, especially if you know it may harm you, your family, or your working relationship. Seek guidance from others as to how to approach the issue, and decide if you want to remain in that situation or take yourself out from it. Know that this is a reasonable course of action and that there will be other opportunities for others' learning later on.

It is my hope that by bringing forth this discussion about personal religious practice and practical methods of how to help create awareness, that community members will be able to safely, confidently, and peacefully achieve the understanding of faith by others in their lives.

Farzana Nayani

Ms. Farzana Nayani is Education and Training Consultant for the University of British Columbia Center for Intercultural Communication. She is reachable at farzana.nayani@gmail.com

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CONFERENCE GUEST SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri

*Department of Political Science
Karachi University, Pakistan
(via Remote Message)*

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri is the Founding Director of the Islamic Educational and Cultural Research Center. IECRC is a non-profit, non-political, 501(c)(3) *Ahle Sunnah wal Jama'ah* organization. Founded in 2002, IECRC provides community services in Northern California (specifically the Bay Area and Sacramento) and British Columbia (specifically Surrey), Canada.

Dr. Qadri is a renowned scholar from Pakistan who taught at its local colleges as well as the University of Karachi, Pakistan for over 20 years. He has expertise both in modern education as well as traditional Islamic Sciences having completed the *Dars-e-Nizami*, an 18 year traditional Islamic course from Pakistan. He has also studied with scholars from Al-Azhar University, Cairo. Dr. Qadri holds certification in Intercultural Communication from the Center for Intercultural Studies, University of British Columbia, Canada.

Dr. Qadri is a gold medalist from Karachi University, and has received gold medals from the Intellectual Forum of Pakistan, and the Karachi University Teachers' Society. Dr. Qadri is also the recipient of many prestigious international awards such as the Ambassador for Peace Award presented by the Universal Peace Foundation and Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace in Canada, the National Education Award presented by the Pakistan Education Forum, and the Award for Research in Social Sciences presented in Dubai.

Dr. Qadri's goal at the IECRC is to foster and promote the light, love, and message of peace of our beloved Leader, Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace of Allah Almighty be upon Him, His Blessed Family and Noble Companions) and carry on the legacy of the Saints of our tradition of unconditional service to humanity, creating a culture of world peace and tolerance.

Dr. Qadri lives in Surrey, British Columbia,

Canada. He can be reached via email at ahmedq19@yahoo.com.

Prof. Neelam Canto-Lugo

*Department of English
Yuba College, Marysville, CA*

Prof. Neelam Canto-Lugo was born in Simla, the former British summer capital of India. She obtained her higher education at Punjab University, University of California at Davis, the Goethe Institute, Germany, California State University, San Diego and California State University, Sacramento. She received her Masters in Communication Studies.

Ms. Canto-Lugo has been teaching at Yuba College in Marysville, California since 1973 where in addition to a host of other classes she teaches Intercultural and Multicultural Communication. She is the co-founder of a faculty group that presents nationwide cultural and diversity workshops. She directs "Crossing Borders -Building Bridges," lectures and presentations at Yuba about a variety of cultures and cross-cultural issues.

Ms. Canto-Lugo can be reached at ncanto@yccd.edu.

Ms. Farzana Nayani

*Education and Training Consultant, UBC
Los Angeles, CA*

Farzana Nayani hails from Vancouver, Canada. She completed her BA and BEd degrees at University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada and an MA in Intercultural Communication at the University of Hawai'i. Farzana is a consulting facilitator with UBC's Center for Intercultural Communication and currently lives in Los Angeles managing entrepreneur training and cultural education programs for both the corporate and public sector. Ms. Nayani has co-authored a chapter on cross-cultural training in the Handbook of Cross-Cultural Management (2008) and has spent extensive time in South and Southeast Asia coordinating programs serving the community. She can be reached at farzana.nayani@gmail.com.

Mr. Charan Gill

*Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS)
Surrey, British Columbia, Canada*

Mr. Gill was born in Hong Kong and received his BA and MA from Punjab University, India. He moved on to receive his Bachelors and Masters in Social Work from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Charan Gill is the founding president of the Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) Society which was established in 1987. For the past 12 years he has been working as the CEO of this Society. Under his leadership, the Society has effectively addressed the socio-economic needs of the community at large. For over 32 years, he has worked directly with immigrants, youth, seniors and the working poor.

Furthermore, he also established the Deol Agricultural Society, Canadian Anti-Racism Society and the Rainbow Community Health Co-operative (RCHC). Through these organizations PICS is able to assist newcomers, immigrants, seniors, women, children, youth and anyone else requiring assistance. He has devoted his life to working towards the betterment of his community because he believes that all people have the right to exercise their democratic rights and to live a happy and healthy life.

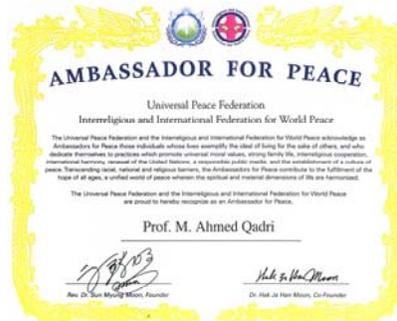
Mr. Gill has received the following awards for his continuous community work: the Mewa Singh Lopoke Award in 2007, the GOPIO International Community Service Award in 2007, the Humanitarian Award by Pakistani Canadian Cultural Association (PCCA) in 2006, the Operation Remembrance Award by RCMP in 2006, United Way's honoured VanDusen Community Service Award in 2002, the Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002, the prestigious Order of BC in 1999 and the BC Human Rights Award by MOSAIC in 1983.

Mr. Gill lives in BC, Canada and can be reached at charan.gill@pics.bc.ca. □

IECRC WISHES ALL ITS CONFERENCE ATTENDEES THE BLESSINGS OF THE BLESSED BIRTH OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD. (PEACE BE UPON HIM, HIS PURE FAMILY AND NOBLE COMPANIONS)

IECRC FOUNDER DR. MOHAMMAD AHMED QADRI RECEIVES PEACE AWARD

IECRC Founding Director Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri received the prestigious "Ambassador for Peace" award presented by the Universal Peace Foundation and Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace in Canada in February 2008. This was in appreciation and recognition of the phenomenal work that Dr. Qadri has done in his career of peace building and acting as a bridge for the various cultural groups in his community. He was conferred with this laurel of honor for his brilliant monograph Peace & Tolerance in Islam pub-



lished by IECRCNA press. The event was covered by many newspapers in his home country of Pakistan. Dr. Qadri con-



tinues his relentless peace efforts through such Conferences and other social work both in his resident country of Canada and the United States. □

IECRC PEACE CONFERENCE IN THE SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

Silicon Valley Muslims host peace conference

By Lisa Fernandez
Mercury News

Article Launched: 05/20/2008 11:27:13 AM PDT

The Islamic Educational and Cultural Research Center is hosting its fifth annual conference at a Newark restaurant on Sunday to promote its core mission of "love, tolerance, peace and harmony."

Organizer Sharaaz Khan, Qadri said the goal of the conference is to promote interaction between diverse communities and educate others about the Islamic tradition of "unity,

peace, love, harmony and tolerance at a global level," Khan said.

"As part of a global community, it is essential that the individual consciousness of people grows into a joint social order," Qadri said. "World peace can only be achieved when respect for the 'other' becomes the norm."

Some of the conference speakers include: Mohammad Ahmed Qadri speaking remotely from the University of Karachi, Pakistan; Derryl Maclean, associate professor from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia; Neelam Canto-Lugo, professor at Yuba College.

The Hayward-based IECRC is a 6-year-old non-profit formed after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 with the mission to promote spirituality through education, research and counseling.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED in attending the conference, it will be held at Mehran Restaurant, 5774 Mowry School Road in Newark from 3 to 10 p.m. Admission is free and a complimentary dinner will be served. Childcare is available. Click on www.maulud.org for details.

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URS SHAREEF AND QAWWALI (MEHFIL-E-SAMAA) IN SACRAMENTO



The Islamic Educational and Cultural Research Center (IECRC) held a spiritual gathering on July 21, 2007 in honor and remembrance of two great Saints of the Indian Subcontinent – Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti famous as “Gharib Nawaz” and Hazrat Badshah Mian Qadri, may God be well pleased with them both. The occasion was commemorated in two parts. The first was an Urs celebration held on French Road in Sacramento, California and the second was a Qawwali musical evening held at the Cosumnes River College in the same city. The gatherings were attended by devotees from Sacramento, Yuba City and as far as the San Francisco Bay Area.

The tradition of Urs in the Islamic world is one of remembering a very pious person who devoted his or her life in the love of God and the service of humanity. Although the memorial of an ordinary individual is a solemn occasion, the memorial of a Saint or Friend (Wali) of God is a joyous one as it marks the return of the pious soul home, i.e. the Realm of Divine Beatitude. It is a day of prayer, gratitude and feeding people. It is an occasion to remember the exemplary life of and a day to be inspired by the Saint, learning from his or her life and teachings.

Hazrat Badshah Mian Qadri (d. 2000 CE, may God be well pleased with him), the spiritual inspiration for the founding of IECRC, was a simple and exceptionally pious man immersed in the love of God and loved by all. He rests in Karachi, Pakistan and his blessed mausoleum is a place of visitation by people from far and near who seek their needs to be fulfilled by God through his intercession. In the Islamic tradition the Saints of God even

after passing away from this world are considered to be aware of the pleas of the oppressed and the down-trodden and that they pray on their behalf if called upon. A booklet written by Mr. Sharaaz Khan Qadri, Director of the IECRC branch in Sacramento was released on this occasion that details the life history, and miracles of this great personality (available at <http://tinyurl.com/6cpqlu>). Mr. Qadri also gave a very informative talk on the occasion on this blessed personality to whom the gathering was dedicated. Children and women also participated by presenting their heartfelt odes to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him, His Blessed Family, and Noble Companions). There were ongoing refreshments and dinner served at the end of this commemoration on French Road in Sacramento. The entire event was free of charge for the public and organized by some very dedicated volunteers of IECRC in Sacramento who spend night and day working hard to spread the true message of Islam - one of love, piety, tolerance, unity, and peace. It is one of the goals of the IECRC to make known to the world this traditional essence of Islam which seems to have become buried in the modern day misguidance of violence, resulting simply due to being unaware of the pristine history of the Saints of Islam and the need to follow in their footsteps.

The great Saint Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (d. approx. 1229 CE, may God be well pleased with him) famous as “Gharib Nawaz” rests in Ajmer which is the holiest city in Rajasthan, India. His title “Gharib Nawaz” means the one who is very kind to the poor. This name suits him very well. From infancy and even today after 900 years, he is the champion of the needs of the poor. He is visited by throngs of people of all religions and social and economic strata. The life and mission of Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddeen Chishti (may God have mercy on him) have been of an exceptional character as compared with any other Saints in India. His simple teachings penetrated even the stoniest of hearts; his affectionate look silenced his fiercest of enemies. His matchless piety and blessings knew no comparison and his "Spiritual Power" amazed and defied his bitterest adversaries who came in order to harm him, but were inspired instead to follow

him and become his devotees for the rest of their lives. He taught the message of Universal Love and Peace as brought by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). He chose the way of non-compulsion in the true spirit of the Holy Quran. His teachings were later reinforced by succeeding Chishti Saints, who became religious pioneers in national integration in the country. They fulfilled the objectives of bringing together the various castes, communities and races, elevating humanity from the swamp of materialistic concerns, which is leading mankind to destruction even today. It was at the spiritual command of Hazrat Khwaja Gharib Nawaz that Hazrat Badshah Mian Qadri (may God be well pleased with them both) migrated from India, his birthplace, to Pakistan soon after its formation from where this spiritual legacy has arrived into North America through Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri, the Founding and Executive Director of IECRC and the son of the respected Hazrat Badshah Mian Qadri (may God have mercy on him).



One of the tools that Hazrat Khwaja Gharib Nawaz (may God have mercy on him) used in order to spiritually uplift the people of India and to quench their spiritual thirst was Islamic spiritual music called Samaa, more famous in the Indian Subcontinent as Qawwali. The same tradition was revived by the IECRC in North America during the second part of this day of commemoration at the Cosumnes River College where a gathering of Qawwali was recited by Mr. Mohammad Shan and his entourage for the spiritual benefit of the audience. The therapeutic effects of Qawwali were always generally known by the Muslim world through the Sufi Saints, and indigenous doctors of South Asia often tell mentally disturbed individuals to attend Qawwali sessions. □

CWCC'S 3RD ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (CANADA): THE ROLE OF WOMEN AS PEACEMAKERS



The Role of Women as Peacemaker was the theme of CWCC's 3rd annual women's conference held at Kwantlen University College, Surrey, British Columbia, Canada on March 29, 2008.

About 400 women from diverse cultures including South Asian, Arab, Caucasian, Pakistani, Fijian, Chinese and African cultures attended the conference. The goal of the conference was to celebrate the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and to focus the attention on the intellectual and spiritual achievement and contributions of great women as sources of support, guidance, healing, and peace.

This year's conference included a host of diverse speeches and presentations as well as many notable guest speakers like Dr. Saiqa Syeda, Dr Malek B. Moosa, renowned family doctor and social worker in Surrey, Syeda Zille Humma Qadri, Chairperson of the IERC Women's committee, California, Samar Al-Hajj, CWCC member and an expert in telecommunications management, Fatima Sharaaz, chairperson IECRC, Sacramento, USA, Radhia Benalia of AICP, and Nadia Nadeem, an IT professional inspired insightful dialogues among participants and promoted thoughts and ideas about the role of women as peace maker in the contemporary world. Anum Iqbal and Fariha Iqbal showed a very powerful PowerPoint presentation on history of Naat, praise of the Prophet (p.b.u.h). A group of women from AICP, led by sister Nada recited wonderful traditional Nasheed in praise of the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h), showing Muslim culture. The whole evening was a classic example of diverse Muslim culture with modern approach.

Dr. Saiqa Syeda, founding Director of Canadian Women Counselling Center said that "we are celebrating the diversity of Islam and intercultural communication

within communities living in Canada as a valuable lesson we learned from the life of the Prophet (p.b.u.h)", she further declared in her speech, "*The concept of peace and tolerance in Islam*", that "peace emanates from goodness showered on others without any prejudice or stereo types. We first need to understand and respect other people's perception, and from this understanding emerges tolerance between cultures. Women and men should work together for this great cause." She explained how women could balance between spirituality and modern day life. Syeda also spoke



about need of a moderate society with humanitarian values and traditions. Women, from all walks of life play a vital role in effectively negotiating peace and rebuilding societies with treasured Islamic beliefs, spirituality and tolerance. The strong links between violent conflicts and poverty emphasizes the enormously relevant role of women in promoting the lives of others, providing substantial support, encouraging higher level of education, reducing poverty, preventing the risk of violent conflicts, and building lasting peace.

Dr. Moosa Malek spoke on the concept of the spiritual healing in Islam- A comparative study with modern day medical treatments. She shared her patient's success stories, which medically lost hope but came back to life again through spirituality. Syeda Humma spoke on the concept of Moulud in the early Islam and modern day Muslim world - A comparative study. She also discussed the role of women in character building with reference to the life of the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h). She urged to respect humanity and cultures. In this regard, she suggested establishing interfaith relationship and intercultural communication.



Sister Fatima Sharaaz spoke on the role of women in medieval period of Islam and covered some of the saint women and women rulers. Fatima added that no matter what role a women plays in her life (mother, wife, daughter or sister), she is a source of guidance and light for others. Fatima also shed light on the status of women according to the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h). Samar Al-Hajj said that during the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic era), women were abusively wronged, exploited even buried alive. With the emergence of Islam, Prophet Mohammed (SAW) adopted the values and teaching of the Holy Qur'an to elevate the status of Muslim women and promote their lives. His exemplary relationship with his beloved wife Syeda Khadijah and his precious daughter Syeda Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with them both) showed Muslims the true value of Muslim women and paved the way for a new way of treating women with respect and dignity. Radhia Benalia spoke about the concept of moderation in Islam and how important it is to transmit this message of peace, love and tolerance to humanity at large. Radhia specifically spoke about the women's role in spreading peace in the contemporary world. Dr. Syeda ended the conference by summarizing all the speeches. She called for a broad participation of women in peace building and in society reconstructions to address key educational, social and economical issues and acknowledge the importance of women's voice in making a difference at all levels. Free dinner was served at the end and awards were presented to speakers and conference contributors as a token of appreciation.

Contributed by **Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda**

Dr. Syeda is the CEO of CWCC and can be reached at cwcc04@yahoo.ca □

IECRC's 3RD ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (CALIFORNIA): BREAKING STEREOTYPES, HIGHLIGHTING THE HIGH STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM



Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda delivered a comprehensive and academic Powerpoint presentation on *Famous Muslim Women: A historical, spiritual, social and cultural perspective*. She inspired the audience which consisted of both the old and the young through her knowledgeable narrations of the great women of Islamic history of the by-gone era - how they were scholars, warriors and women of great courage and patience. She emphasized the educational imperative for women and the need to return to



The Islamic Educational and Cultural Research Center (IECRC), held its 3rd Annual Women's Conference on March 16, 2008 at the elegant Mehran Restaurant in the city of Newark, California. The Conference was attended by over 300 women who came from far and near to attend this great *Milad Shareef* gathering dedicated to the following great female personalities:

Hazrat Umme Hani (may Allah be well pleased with her), the dear cousin of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him, His Family and Companions) who was also known as *Fakhita* which means dove, the bird of peace. She was a great transmitter of Hadeeth literature and was dearly loved and trusted by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him and His Family). She is also famous as "Hind".

Hazrat Syeda Sakina (may Allah be well pleased with her), the precious great-grand-daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him and His Family) who witnessed the somber battle of Karbala at a very tender age and suffered its aftermath.

Syeda Zille Humma Qadri, IECRC's Women's Committee Chairperson began the Conference with a welcome address. Sister Fatima Sharaaz Qadri, Women's Committee Chairperson of IECRC's Sacramento Chapter conducted the first session. Sister Fatima informed the audience of the great creation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the miracles related to His Blessed Birth. She eloquently invited guests to present their knowledge and spirituality to an eager audience.



the pristine teachings of Islam through connection with its Divine Text - The Holy Quran.

Dr. Malek B. Moosa of Vancouver, Canada delivered her inspiring speech explaining the need to connect with the Divine Source of all healing energies in order to remove the pervasive modern ailments of depression and anxiety. She shared with an eager audience how reciting some specific Blessed Names of Allah Almighty has brought healing to her patients even with terminally ill diseases such as cancer. She praised the audio CD by Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri, the Founding Director of the IECRC: "*Allah ke Namon se Ilaj Kijie*" or "Heal Yourself with the Blessed Names of Allah Almighty".

Ms. Benazir Bath of the Islamic Center of Yuba City highlighted the difference in the social condition of women not just in pre-Islamic Arabia but also around the world. She explained how with the advent of Islam over 1400 years ago, women were bestowed their God-given birthrights, rights which the West received only recently such as the right to suffrage and property. Ms. Fatima Mirza of the SABA Center eloquently presented a similar message on the role of women in Islam.

Ms. Floretta Kukoyi of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, San Francisco emphasized the importance of "staying connected with our roots". She said that we should take the best from our home countries and the best from this country (the United States) and be the best we can.

Syeda Zille Humma Qadri of the IECRC USA delivered a moving speech on the two great personalities to whom the Conference was dedicated. She informed the audience of the piety and great status of Hazrat Syeda Sakina (may Allah be well pleased with her) who despite being only five years of age never missed her prayers. And for whom Allah Almighty sent the Leader of the Women in Paradise, Hazrat Syeda Fatima Zahra (may Allah be well pleased with her) to protect her when once she had become lost. Syeda Zille Humma also talked of the great reverence and respect the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) had for Hazrat Umme Hani (may Allah be well pleased with her). She emphasized the importance of loving the Blessed Family of the Holy Prophet (*Ahle Bayt*), may Allah Almighty be well pleased with them.

Nine year old Abdullah Muhammad Ayyaz, oldest son of Syeda Zille Humma Qadri eloquently presented on the love for and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). The Holy Quran was recited by Hafiza Nadia Bath of Yuba City who memorized the entire Holy Quran at the tender age of 14. There were many beautiful religious poetry (*Hamid, Naat and Manqabat*) recitations by women and children in Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic, Farsi & English. There was also an IECRC Powerpoint presentation detailing to the audience the history and services of the IECRC.

The event was free and open to the public attended by women from around the Greater Bay Area and beyond. □

IECRC'S 2ND ANNUAL WOMEN'S NAAT SHAREEF GATHERING SACRAMENTO

Saturday, June 21, 2008

2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Smedberg Jr High School

8239 Kingsbridge Drive, Sacramento, CA 95829

Sister Fatima Sharaaz Qadri @ 916-687-7547, Sister Bushra S. Qadri @ 916-689-5235, Syeda Zille Humma Qadri @ 510-648-9525

IECRC'S 1ST ANNUAL WOMEN'S NAAT SHAREEF GATHERING IN SACRAMENTO



The Islamic Educational and Cultural Research Center (IECRC), held its first Women's Naat Shareef Mehfil (gathering) on May 5, 2007 at 1:00 PM at the IECRC Center at 7392 French Road (Unit #2), Sacramento, CA 95828.

The term *Naat Shareef* refers to the practice and *Sunnah* (way) of the great Sahabi (Companion of the Prophet - peace be upon him) Hazrat Hassaan bin Thabit (radi allahu anhu) when he used to praise the Beloved of Allah during the most bitter times when words of hatred and enmity were hurled against the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him and his noble family) by those who opposed his message. History has also recorded the famous event when the young girls of Medina from the bani an-Najjar came out into the outskirts of the city and recited the famous (*Tala al-Badru alyna*) when the Beloved of Allah (peace be upon him) emerged on the horizon.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is believed by Muslims to be the final Prophet of Almighty God sent as a "Mercy to all the worlds" culminating the Divine Message of upholding truth and fighting evil both at the spiritual and social levels. Muslims believe in and love all the Prophets of God including Prophets Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jesus, and Moses (peace be upon them all). The Pure Mother Mary (may God have mercy on her) is one of the four perfect women in Islam.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) was born in Arabia at a time when it was steeped in the depths of oppression and shackles of abuse, especially of women. The Holy Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) arrival heralded a new era - one in which women were to be considered the equal and committed partners of men in the Path to God with the recognition that at the spiritual level, all humans, both men and women, have been created from a single soul [The Holy Quran, 4:1]. There is an entire chapter dedicated to women's rights in the Holy Quran, believed by Muslims to be the last Divine Text from God confirming the previous original heavenly books such as the Torah and the Bible.

IECRC's 1st Women's Naat Shareef Mehfil (Gathering) 2007 was dedicated to the eminent Mother of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him): Hazrat Bibi Amina (may God be well pleased with her). Hadrat Amina (may God be well pleased with her) is that tender, loving soul and noble personality who bore the Best of

Creation and Most Beloved of Allah, Sayyiduna Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him and his family). As the words of the Prophet of Allah testify to her true noble nature, "Each of my ancestors were protected by Allah (Most High) from relations our of wedlock. Allah (Most High) didn't transfer my existence from womb to womb, except that they were the purest. If given two families, Allah selected the best of them." Hazrat Bibi Amina (radi Allah anhu) was from the most noble tribe of the Quraysh.

Those who presented their *naat* recitations were Syeda Zille Huma Qadri, Syeda Shagufta Ahmad Qadri, Sr. Mumtaz all from the IECRC Center - Bay Area; Sr. Naila of Woodland, Sr. Yasmin and ensemble of Yuba City, Sr. Sultana Chishti of San Francisco, Sr. Atiya and ensemble and Sr. Farnaz Bi Qadri of Sacramento. The recitations were in Urdu, English, Farsi, Arabic, and Punjabi. The *Naat* recitations focussed on the poetic contributions composed by the great Awliyah (Saints) of Islam from various parts of the Muslim world. There was much young talent on display in the children's performances which are a part and parcel of all IECRC events. Attendance was from Sacramento, its surrounding areas, the Bay Area and beyond.

Sister Fatima Sharaaz Qadri, Chairperson of the IECRC's Women's Committee in Sacramento thanked all the guests and dedicated volunteers who made this token of love and honor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) a great community success. □

Report extracted from www.maulud.org



THE CAMEL OF HEAVEN



IECRC's Youth Wing



Once Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) came home and Hadhrat Fatimah (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with her) asked him to take some weaved cotton she made and sell it to get some wheat to prepare food for Hadhrat Imam Hassan and Hadhrat Imam Hussain (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with them both).

Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) took the cotton to the market and sold it for six dinars. As he was going to buy some wheat, a needy person came and asked for some money in the name of Allah The Exalted. Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) gave all his money to him.

After a short time, a person with a female camel appeared and asked Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) that if he wanted to purchase the camel. Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) said that he did not have the money. The man said, that he

will let him borrow it and he handed over the string of the camel to Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him). Right after this, another person came by and bought that camel for 300 dinar from Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him). After that Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) looked for the first person but could not find him. Then Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) came home and found the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was sitting with Hadhrat Fatima (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with her) in his house. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) smiled and said, "Ali, do you want to tell the story of the Camel or I should?" Hadhrat Ali (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) said, "Hazoor, you can tell us about it."

Then the Holy Prophet (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with him) said, "the first person was Hadhrat Jibreel (peace be upon him) and the second one was Hadhrat Israfeel (peace be upon him) and

the camel was from Heavens and this was the Camel that Hadhrat Fatimah (may Allah Almighty be well pleased with her) would ride in heavens. Allah The Exalted liked your giving to the needy one and in return He (Most Glorified and Exalted) rewarded you in this world as well through the trade of the Camel."

Moral:

This teaches us that the pious personalities keep themselves hungry by feeding others and Allah The Exalted gives reward for good deeds in this world and in Hereafter. Also, our Beloved Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) has the knowledge of unseen and nothing is hidden from him (Peace Be Upon Him).

Muhammad Abdullah Ayyaz

The above piece was taken from Jame Al Muajizat and translated by Mr. Muhammad Abdullah Ayyaz who is a 4th grader and an active IECRC youth member. □

THE POWER OF FAITH

Being a Muslim is a very beautiful thing to be, but some people in society today don't realize that. I'm writing this article to reach out to others that may be dealing with the same experiences I go through because of some people being cruelly racial and stereotypical. Being a Muslim means following the path of our beautiful Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him), the path he engraved for the continuing generations of Muslims. He was the most kind and sincere person you'd ever meet, and that is what all Muslims want to be like. We want to be respectful, we want to be polite, and we are not like what society thinks of us today. I've had people call me a terrorist, ignore me and call me rude names, and more, and it really brought me down. It hurt my feelings that all people are believing these days is what they hear from the media and from their very own homes. It shames me to know that this

type of racism is still occurring out there.

One issue that stirs me up the most is that young Muslim girls these days are not following the Qu'ran. They are wearing inappropriate clothing that they should not be wearing. One of my close Muslim friends had told me "her mom said it was okay to wear shorts" and other revealing clothing. I was shocked to realize their parents were mostly at fault here. Her mother had told her it said in the Qu'ran itself that girls and women at any age could wear shorts and other inappropriate clothing. When seeing that girls these days are disobeying the ethics of Islam, it makes me want to be a better Muslim myself knowing I choose not to do what they do. It makes me want to get up and focus on the mistakes that I can improve on as being a Muslim. It makes me feel good inside knowing I am not like those other girls who deny their religion, I

want to try my best to be a better Muslim.

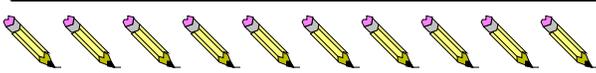
If you're feeling this way, neglecting Islam because of what society is saying, you shouldn't, because it is a gift for us everyday being a Muslim. We are **lucky** to be Muslims, following the path of our Beloved Prophet (may peace be upon him). I used to be negative and depressed about what people said to me about my religion, but now I'm positive because what they say doesn't matter. Like my wise Khala once told me, this life is nothing compared to the life in the hereafter. So you should keep your head up and stay true to your religion because even if things get difficult, you can always turn to Allah (swt) and He will always be there.

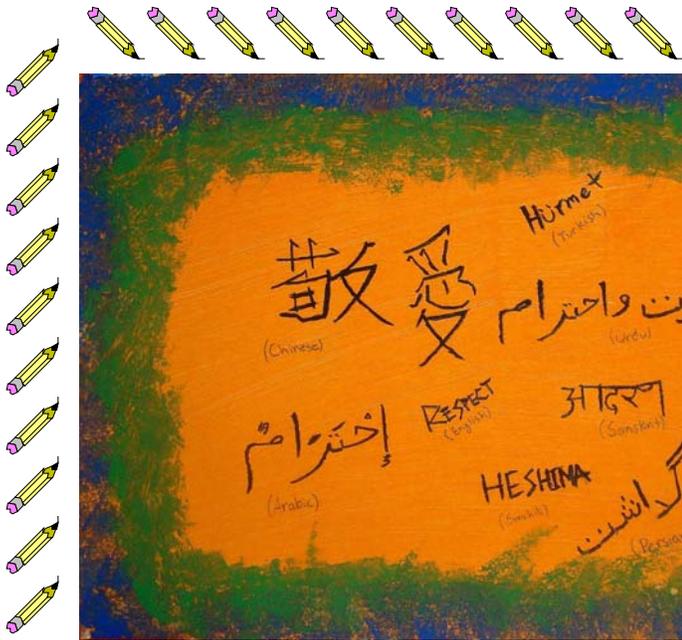
Noorain Chaudhry

Ms. Chaudhry is an 8th grader and an active youth member of the IECRC. □

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Thank you for your support.





Mr. Yaseen Khan is an 8th grader and an active youth member of the IECRC. The above painting is his expression of the theme of this year's Conference:
Respecting Cultural Values: A Criterion for World Peace

COMMUNITY NEWS

Condolences: "To Allah we belong and unto Him is our return."

Please do *Isaal-e-Sawab* for the following people:

Father of Safia Behn, Liaqat Khan, Illam Taj Khan, Mehr Ali bin Sardaraan, Brother Fakhir (nephew of Sister Fatima Mirza), Brother Abdul Sattar Rydhan, Brother Kaleemullah, Brother Irfan Ahmed (Cisco)
 May Allah have mercy on their souls. Ameen.

Prayers:

Baby Alina, Abdullah Sai, Abdul Karim Khan, Ma'sooma Azim, Umar Shah, Kashif Saif, Aisha Khan, Shireen Khan, Nayaab Khan, Mu'aaz Ali Khan, Iqbal Khan, Muhammad Bilal, Tehzeeb Khan, Jamshed Khala, Parween Behn, Rumana Mehboob, Rabia Haq, Sister Frozan, Sister Rana Faiz, Syed Masood (cancer), Fatima Inji (cancer), Sister Shaheen, Haroon, Khalid, Fatima and family (South Africa)
 May Allah, The Most Exalted, by the Wa-seela Mubarak (Blessed Rank) of His Beloved Prophet ﷺ grant them all speedy recovery. Ameen!

Births: Baby girl to Jasmine Bath (Jawairia Bath), Baby girl to Fouzia & Rizwan (Mariam), Baby Boy to Farnaz Bi (Adil ud din). May Allah protect them from all harm and increase them in everything good. Ameen!

Weddings: Naveed Agboatwala with Saadia Yousaf, Tafeen Khan with Yusuf Husri, and Majid Khan with Humaira Khan. Congratulations to all!

Acknowledgements: Ms. Lisa Fernandez (San Jose Mercury News), Mr. Todd Brown (Fremont Argus), Brother Mustafa and Sister Mary Ahmed (Landmark Signs), Sister Rana Faiz (Hamrahi Radio), Brother Shahid Hussain (Pakistan Link), Brother Rocky Ali Bakhsh (US FijiTimes), Brother Ahmed Shareef, Brother Muhammad Shaan, Brother Naveed Rehmani, Brother Munawwar, Sister Layla and Brother Ahmed Ali, Sister Mumtaz Begum, Sister Ashiyana Riaz, Brother Walli and Sister Hamidah Mohammad, Brother Naeem and Sister Zohra Fatany, Sister Qudsiya & Yadish Khan, Sister Munawwar, Brother Noor Alam Bakhsh, Sister Batoolan Mohammad Bakhsh, Sister Benazir Bath, Sister Trina Noor, Sister Ashreen Ali, Sister Romana & Mahira Mehboob. A very special thanks to the women of our community for their great support: Sister Tajwar, Sister Rana Sartaj, Sister Aysha Ali, Sister Saira Khan, Sister Asma Zuberi, and Sister Sameena Amjad,. Thank You all! May Allah, The Most Exalted, grant you all multifold rewards for all your contributions both in this world and the Next. Ameen!

IECRC Needs Your Support:

Following is a list of items that IECRC needs immediately to continue its much needed community services. Kindly donate to the best of your ability. Your donations go towards perpetual charity (*Sadaqa Jariya*) and you can even donate in the name of your beloved deceased ancestors who will receive the reward of your donations *insha Allah*:

EQUIPMENT:

- * Video Cameras (\$5000)
- * CD Duplicators (\$5500)

PUBLICATIONS:

- * Reprinting of the Holy Qur'an with Translation and explanation
- * Booklets
- * Audio CDs

CONFERENCE: (Cost \$9000)

- * Mehfil Samaa(Qawwali)
- * Publishing/Printing
- * Langar (Dinner/Food)
- * Hall Rental Costs

ZIKR/CLASS/FRIDAY PRAYER HALL:

- * Audio Speakers
- * Audio system
- * Weekly Zikr Hall Rent
- * Carpets

OTHER:

- * Center/Masjid Fund

May Allah Almighty reward you for any amount that you choose to contribute. It is your intention that counts. Ameen! Thank you for your continued support.

IECRC COMMUNITY SERVICES

MONTHLY GYAARHWEEN SHAREEF GATHERINGS AT MEHRAN



Each month the IECRC conducts a spiritual gathering in remembrance of the Crown of the Saints, Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him) in order to learn about and be inspired by his life, contributions and spiritual benefits (*faiz*). This gathering is conducted at the elegant Mehran Restaurant in Newark, California, is free of charge, and is open to the entire family.

This first gathering of its kind was conducted on April 21, 2008 commemorating the 11th of Rabiuth Thani, the day that Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him) moved on to the Realm of Divine Beatitude. This very special evening was graced by Qari Syed Sadaqat Ali of Pakistan who upon having returned from a visit to the Qadri *Astana Shareef* in Surrey, Canada of Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri (Founding Director of IECRC), moved the hearts and welled the tears of the audience with his fragrant and reverberating recitations of the Holy Quran, *Naat Shareef* in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) and *Manqabat Shareef* in praise of Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him). For further information about this monthly event, please call Mr. Ayyaz Yousaf Qadri (Managing Director of IECRC) at 408-833-5092.

MONTHLY WOMEN'S GYAARHWEEN SHAREEF GATHERINGS



Conducted on the 11th of every month of the Islamic Hijri calendar, this auspicious, spiritual gathering commemorates Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him): his life, contributions and spiritual benefits and includes a *Khatm* of the Holy Quran for his blessed soul. For the Bay Area gatherings please call Syeda Zille Humma Qadri at 510-648-9525 and for the Sacramento gatherings please call Sister Fatima Sharaaz Qadri 916-687-7547.

Conducted on the 11th of every month of the Islamic Hijri calendar, this auspicious, spiritual gathering commemorates Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him): his life, contributions and spiritual benefits and includes a *Khatm* of the Holy Quran for his blessed soul. For the Bay Area gatherings please call Syeda Zille Humma Qadri at 510-648-9525 and for the Sacramento gatherings please call Sister Fatima Sharaaz Qadri 916-687-7547.

CHILDREN'S GYAARHWEEN SHAREEF GATHERINGS



Conducted on the Monday following the 11th of every month of the Islamic Hijri calendar, this auspicious, spiritual gathering commemorates Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him) and is conducted for children by children. This is a training session led by Syeda Zille Humma Qadri for the children. For more information please contact Sister Ashiyana Riaz Qadri at 510-584-7866.

Conducted on the Monday following the 11th of every month of the Islamic Hijri calendar, this auspicious, spiritual gathering commemorates Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (may Allah be well pleased with him) and is conducted for children by children. This is a training session led by Syeda Zille Humma Qadri for the children. For more information please contact Sister Ashiyana Riaz Qadri at 510-584-7866.

MONTHLY CHATI SHAREEF GATHERINGS



This spiritual gathering is conducted in Sacramento to commemorate the life and teachings of Sultan-ul-Hind, Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti Ajmeri (may Allah have mercy on him). It is for the entire family and includes the group recitation of the *Khatm-e-Khwajgaan*. For further information please contact Mr. Sharaaz Khan Qadri (IECRC Sacramento Director) at 916-687-7547.

This spiritual gathering is conducted in Sacramento to commemorate the life and teachings of Sultan-ul-Hind, Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti Ajmeri (may Allah have mercy on him). It is for the entire family and includes the group recitation of the *Khatm-e-Khwajgaan*. For further information please contact Mr. Sharaaz Khan Qadri (IECRC Sacramento Director) at 916-687-7547.

CHILDREN'S PART-TIME QURAN SCHOOL



Children at the IECRC Sacramento Center get together 3 days a week for 2 hours to learn how to recite the Holy Quran from Maulana Amin Nomani who has already graduated two shining students: Ms. Nisma Shaanawaz and Ms. Fareeha Khan. Children are also preparing to start memorizing the Holy Quran. For more information please contact Mr. Sharaaz Khan Qadri at 916-687-7547.

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Thank you for your support.

IECRC COMMUNITY SERVICES AT A GLANCE

The IECRC is a non-profit, non-political, 501(c)(3), grassroots, community service organization which began in 2002. Its mission is to promote Spirituality through Education, Research, and Counseling, based on the centuries old Islamic traditional values of the *Awliyah* (Saints of the Islamic Tradition) of Love, Tolerance, Peace and Harmony.

IECRC Services in North America:

- Classes on *Hanafi Fiqh* for men, women, and children (SF Bay Area, and Sacramento, CA)
- Classes on *Tafseer ul-Quran* and *Seerat ul-Awliyah Allah* (California-wide and BC, Canada)
- Classes for the Medical Community about Caring for Muslims and Hospice Care, and so forth.
- Classes on the Holy *Qur'an* and Islamic studies for children and adults (SF Bay Area, and Sacramento, CA)
- *Hifz ul-Quran* School (coming soon, *insha-Allah*)
- Weekly spiritual gatherings of remembrance
- Weekly free counseling services (and by appointment as needed)
- Monthly commemorations of Sh. Abdul Qadir Jilani (*ra*) – Separate sessions for men/women/children
- In home *Milad Shareef*, *Gyaarhween Shareef*, *Quran Khwani* gatherings for women
- Monthly commemorations of Sh. Moinuddin Chishti (*ra*) – Sacramento, CA
- Annual international conferences on relevant and pertinent issues – Separate Women's Conferences
- Collaboration with US/Canadian Universities to preserve/promote Islamic religious and cultural heritage
- Reprinting and distribution of Holy *Qur'an* with English/Urdu translation and commentary
- Translation of traditional texts into English; publication of research articles, monographs, and newsletters
- Reference Library with authentic traditional texts in Urdu, English, and Arabic
- Ongoing publication of audio CDs and cassettes on different topics
- Programming on National and International Television
- Online Services (Maulud.org, HopetoHeal.org, Sunnibooks.com)

For our Family Services, please contact: 408-833-5092 or 916-687-7547.

For our Women's and Children's Services, please contact 510-648-9525 or 916-687-7547.

WEEKLY *DHIKR* GATHERINGS AND COUNSELING SESSIONS

IECRC conducts regular *Dhikr* (spiritual gatherings of remembrance of Allah and His Blessings) sessions at the following locations:

Bay Area: 37270 Niles Blvd, Fremont CA 94536 (This gathering is conducted by Mr. Ayyaz Yousaf Qadri every Sunday at 5pm. Please call 408-833-5092 for more details.) - THIS IS THE NEW LOCATION AS OF JUNE 8, 2008!

Sacramento: 7392 French Road, Unit #2, Sacramento, CA 95828 (This gathering is conducted by Mr. Sharaaz Khan Qadri every other Saturday at 5:30pm. Please call 916-687-7547 for more details.)

The evening comprises of Quran Recitation, *Naat-e-Rasool* (poetry in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), Educational Talk on different Islamic topics, *Dhikr* (collective recitation of Allah's Beautiful Names), *Salaam* (salutation) on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, *Fatiha* (recitation of the Holy Quran over food), Dinner (the continuing tradition of *Langar-e-Qadria*). This spiritual gathering is a comprehensive solution to modern man's many ailments of stress, depression and anxiety. As Allah Almighty says in His Glorious Quran: "*Only in the remembrance of Allah is the solace of hearts.*" [13:28]

Individual counseling and healing is also offered at these sessions. The Spiritual Counseling and Healing Center is unique in that services are provided free of charge to all people, irrespective of their color, creed, race, and religion. The center serves people who come from all over the USA and abroad. Services are provided for all types of ailments that range from benign aches and pains to severe conditions such as cancer and psychological ailments. Alhamdulillah, by the Mercy and Power of Allah Almighty, patients with depression, migraine, hyperactivity and other serious illnesses have received benefit through our center. This *Sunnah* (practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) of Spiritual Healing in Islam is conducted through the recitation of the Holy Quran and *du'as* (prayers). There are many cases that IECRC has seen related to this dying *Sunnah* of "*Ruqya*", which can be found on the IECRC Web site (www.iecrcna.org).

IECRC PUBLICATIONS

The following are IECRC publications by Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri and his research staff:

1. **Blessings on the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ**: The Meaning, Relevance & Importance of Sending Blessings and Greetings on the Best of Creation ﷺ
2. **Reviving Love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ**: The Solution to the Contemporary Muslim Condition
3. **Living in the Abode of Peace and Purification** (co-authored by Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda)
4. **Islamic Treatment of Jinn, Magic & The Evil Eye** (co-authored by Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda)
5. **Quranic Therapy: Heal Yourself Part 1**
6. **Quranic Therapy: Heal Yourself Part 2**
7. **Ramadan: The Month of Patience, Empathy & Self-Purification**
8. **Peace & Tolerance in Islam**
9. **The Muslim World: Hope in the New Millennium**
10. **The Science of Dreams**
11. **The Spirit of Islam: A Glance into the External and Spiritual Dimensions of Islamic Practice** (Sharaaz Khan Qadri)
12. **Spiritual Healing in Islam** (Case Studies)
13. **In the Footsteps of the Beloved ﷺ** (A Brief Biography of Hazrat Badshah Mian Qadri, may Allah have mercy on him)
14. **A Brief Biography of the Great Sufi Saint Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti Ajmeri Ghareeb Nawaz (may Allah be pleased with him)** including an exposition on **Music in Islam vis-à-vis Samaa / Qawwali**
15. **A Spiritual Journey through Islam**

IECRC VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

The following are IECRC video productions featuring Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri:

1. **The Truth** (5 VCDs)
2. **Learn Islamic History Through Quiz Show** (4 VCDs)
3. **Khuwab**

Please donate online by visiting:
www.iecrcna.org/donate.html

Checks also accepted.
Thank you for your support!

IECRC AUDIO PRODUCTIONS

The following are English and Urdu speeches by Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri, Founding Director of IECRC:

English Speeches

1. Love of the Holy Prophet ﷺ
2. The Islamic Culture
3. The Concept of Spiritual Healing
4. Quranic Therapy - Heal Yourself
5. Heal Yourself in the Light of Quran & Sunnah
6. The Philosophy of Love with Allah in Tasawwuf/The Necessity of a Spiritual Guide
7. What is Tasawwuf: An Answer by Hadrat Ali bin Uthman al-Hujwari (may Allah be pleased with him) known as Hazrat Data Ganj Buksh
8. The Concept of Jinn in the Light of Quran and Sunnah
9. Islam and Soul Orientation (Dr. Manzooruddin Ahmed)
10. The Importance of Seerah - NEW!
11. The Importance of Quran - NEW!

Urdu Speeches

1. *Ishq-e-Mustafa ﷺ aur Munafiqat*
2. *Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi ka Jawaz / Madina-e-Munawarra ke Naam*
3. *Durood-o-Salam Maulana Qasim Nanotvi Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband aur Maulana Mohammad Zakarya Tableeghi Jamaat ki Nazar Mein*
4. *Durood-o-Salam Ki Fazeelat*
5. *Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ Tareekh key Ainey Mein*
6. *Allama Iqbal (rahmatullah alayh) ka Hadrat Bilal (radiallaahu anhu) ko Salam*
7. *Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ Sawal/Jawab*
8. *Allama Iqbal ka Shikwa aur Jawab-e-Shikwa (side A) / Allama Iqba aur Ishq-e-Mustafa ﷺ (side B)*
9. *Karamat-e-Awliya*
10. *Ey Iman Walo – CDs 1 & 2 (Dr. Mohammad Abdullah Qadri)*
11. *Allah Kay Naamon Se Apna Ilaj Kijiye – Dr. M.A. Qadri*
12. *Hazrat Rabia Basri (may Allah have mercy on her) - NEW!*
13. *Nafs-e-Mutmainna - NEW!*
14. *Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (may Allah have mercy on him) - NEW!*
15. *Hazrat Baba Farid (may Allah have mercy on him) - NEW!*
16. *Zikr-e-Imam Husain (may Allah be pleased with him) - NEW!*

Naats:

1. *Zikr Allah (Arabic)*
2. *Allah-hi-Allah - Sufiana Kalam recited by Zahid Chaudry Qadri (Punjabi)*
3. *Yaadey Madinah - Naat recited by Syed Mansoor Shah (Urdu)*
4. *Zikr-e-Rasool ﷺ - Naat recited by Naveed Iqbal Rahmani (Urdu)*
5. *Guldasta-e-Naat - recited by various Naat reciters (Urdu)*
6. *Naat-e-Rasool ﷺ - Rana Ali and Ghazali Siddiqui (Urdu / Farsi)*
7. *Arabic Qasa'id - Shaykh Hisham Kabbani and His Ensemble*
8. *Hamd-o-Naat - Mehdi Hassan (Urdu)*
9. *Aqeedat Kay Phool - A collection of Hamd and Naat from Various Reciters (Urdu)*
10. *Hamd and Naat - Imani Rasheed (English)*
11. *Tuhfa-e-Madinah - Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri (Urdu Naats) - NEW!*
12. *Darbar-e-Mustafa ﷺ - Arif Mehmood - NEW!*

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