

# Interfaith Insider

MARCH 2024



## Saint Patrick's day and it's origins

By Keegan McLean - Software Development

Saint Patrick's Day, celebrated annually on March 17th, is a vibrant and joyous occasion that honours the patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick. No matter your views on Saint Patrick himself the occasion is always a great excuse to celebrate and drink and party with friends and family.

Originating as a religious feast day, it has evolved into a global celebration of Irish culture, heritage, and identity.

The festivities typically include parades, wearing green attire, where in Canadian elementary schools not wearing green would mean you would get pinched, traditional Irish music and dance, and the consumption of Irish food and drinks, notably corned beef and cabbage, Irish soda bread, and of course, Guinness beer. Cities around the world, from Dublin to New York City, light up with green decorations and lively gatherings.

Legend has it that Saint Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity to the pagan Irish, thus making it a symbol of the holiday. The day also commemorates Saint Patrick's missionary work and his role in spreading Christianity throughout Ireland.

Beyond the revelry, Saint Patrick's Day serves as a reminder of the resilience and spirit of the Irish people, both at home and abroad. It's a day to celebrate Irish heritage, unity, and the enduring legacy of a man whose life and teachings continue to inspire millions worldwide. So whether you're Irish by birth or simply Irish at heart, Saint Patrick's Day offers an opportunity to join in the festivities and raise a toast to the Emerald Isle and an excuse to have a fun night out.

### INTERFAITH INTERFACE TOPICS

MB305 from 11 to 12

March 1

What is Chaitra Sukladi?

March 8

What is Ramadan?

March 15

Good Luck! (story of Saint Patrick's day)

March 22

What is Persian Nowruz?

# What Is Ramadan

IMAM IQBAL GORA

As the crescent moon heralds the arrival of Ramadan, 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide prepare to embark on a transformative journey of spiritual renewal. This sacred month holds profound significance within Islam, serving as a time for fasting, prayer, charity, establishing justice, and introspection.

At its core, Ramadan is a period of heightened devotion and connection with the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth. Fasting from dawn until dusk fosters a sense of mindfulness and discipline. Muslims physically fast from food and drink (yes, even water!), but are also encouraged to have a heightened awareness to 'spiritually fast' from negative actions and speech. 'Fasting of the tongue' as an example would mean acting on the Prophetic statement of "say that which is good or remain silent".

Fasting also fosters empathy for those less fortunate. It cultivates patience, gratitude, and generosity. Although it may seem counter-intuitive, fasting also has health benefits!

The fast ends at sunset and is broken with loved ones and strangers alike, strengthening bonds of kinship and solidarity.

For Muslim students, Ramadan means navigating the demands of academic life while also dedicating themselves to the spiritual practices of the month. Balancing coursework, exams, and extracurricular activities with fasting, prayer, and community obligations can be challenging, requiring careful time management and prioritization.

Those outside the Muslim faith can support Muslim students by providing accommodations for fasting and prayer, fostering a supportive environment, learning about Ramadan, and promoting understanding and respect for their religious observance.

Ramadan Mubarak!

ramadan  
begins march 10