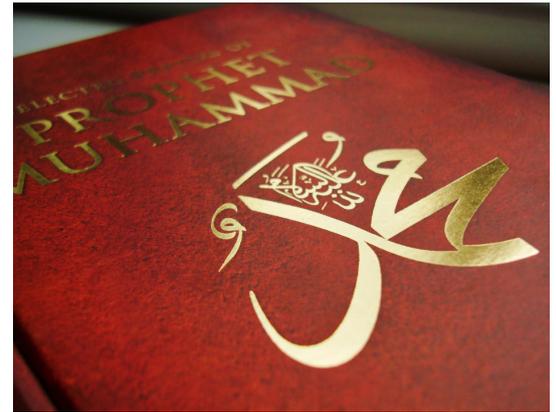


# Cultural Fact Sheet

# ISLAMIC FAITH

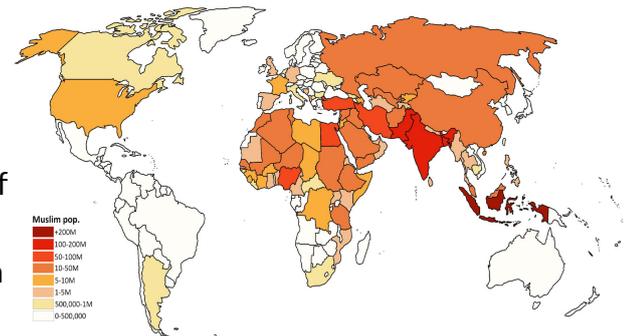
## What is Islam

- Islam is a religion
- Followers of Islam are called Muslims
- The word of Islam means voluntary "Submission" or "Surrender" to the Will of God-Allah
- "Islam" derives from the word "salam", meaning peace in Arabic



## Population of Muslims

- Islam is the world's fastest growing religion
- 1.6 billion people globally identify as Muslim
- Muslims are the world's second largest religious group
- In the Australian 2011 census, 476,291 people or 2.2% of the population were Muslims
- Muslims are the fourth largest religious group in Australia



## Different Islamic Sects

- The majority of Australian Muslims belong to the Sunni denomination
- This is followed by the Shia denomination
- And a small Sufi minority

## Sunni Muslims

- Sunni Muslims make up the majority (84%-90%) of Muslims all over the world
- *Sunni* means "tradition"
- The division between Shia and Sunni dates back to the death of the Prophet Muhammad, in 632 A.D. and the question of who was to take over the leadership of the Muslim nation



# ISLAMIC FAITH

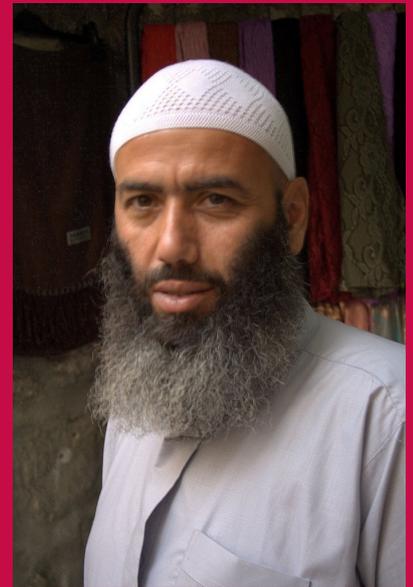
## Islamic Values

- Shahada (Testify)
- Salah (Prayer)
- Seyam (Fasting)
- Zakat (Charity)
- Hajj (Pilgrimage)



## The Declaration of Faith

- Is the statement, "La ilaha illa Allah wa Muhammad Rasul-ullah" meaning: "There is no deity worthy of being worshipped except God (Allah), and Muhammad is the Messenger (Prophet of God)"
- The Declaration of Faith is more than just a statement; it must be shown with one's actions
- To convert to the faith of Islam, a person has to say this statement



## Daily Prayer

- Prayer is a method by which a Muslim connects to God and gathers spiritual strength and peace of mind. Muslims perform five formal prayers a day



## Zakah

- Is a type of charity
- It is the duty of the wealthy to help the poor and needy
- Wealth is a blessing from God, and certain responsibilities are required in return

## Fast of Ramadan

- Once each year, Muslims are commanded to fast for an entire month from dawn to sunset
- It is a period of intense spiritual devotion and prayer
- No food, drink or sex is allowed until after sunset
- It is a time to practice self-control and sympathise with those in the world who have little to eat

## The Hajj Pilgrimage to Mecca

- Every Muslim strives once in a lifetime to make the pilgrimage to the sacred sites in Mecca, in present-day Saudi Arabia
- It is the most intense spiritual experience for a Muslim
- Typically, 2-3 million people perform Hajj every year

## Ahkam

- The five categories of "ahkam" are legal and moral regulations related to the behaviour of humans in their relationship with Allah
  1. Wajeb or Fardh (Required, Obligatory)
  2. Mandoob (Recommended)
  3. Mubah (Permitted but Morally Indifferent)
  4. Makrooh (Discouraged or Abominable)
  5. Haram (Forbidden or Prohibited)

## Islamic Dress

- Promotes modesty and seeks to minimise vice and immorality in society
- Obeying this dress code is a form of obedience to Allah
- Men must always be covered in loose and unrevealing clothing from the navel to the knee
- Women must cover their hair and body in loose and unrevealing clothing when in public
- Some women also choose to cover their face and hands

# ISLAMIC FAITH



# ISLAMIC FAITH

## The Elderly

- Serving one's parents is a duty second to prayer
- It is the right of the elderly to expect care from their children
- It is considered despicable to express any irritation when, through no fault of their own, the old become difficult

## Health & Illness

- Health and wellness is considered a blessing from God
- Illness is accepted as Allah's Will
- Illness is not seen as punishment but rather as a test and a purification of sins
- To seek a cure or treatment for illness is certainly not forbidden in Islam. In fact it is a Sun-nah
- In some Muslim cultures reading the Quran may accompany any treatment
- Traditional herbal medicine may also be used by some Islamic cultures

## Death & Dying

- When a person is terminally ill, they are never alone - the family takes turns to sit with the person and read the Quran
- They should offer the dying person hope and kindness, and encourage the dying person to say the "shahada", confirming that there is no God but Allah
- Crying may be discouraged as it is seen as a dissatisfaction with Allah's Will
- As soon as death has occurred, those present should:
  - Say "Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un" ("Verily we belong to Allah, and truly to Him shall we return")
  - Close the deceased's eyes and lower jaw, and cover the body with a clean sheet
  - Make "dua" (supplication) to Allah to forgive the sins of the deceased
- Routine autopsies are not acceptable in Islam as they are seen as a desecration of the body
- The body should be buried as soon as possible
- Local Islamic community organisations can support families in organising the funeral arrangements

