

## How does the Charity Fast-a-Thon work?

**Breakfast:** On Wednesday, September 1st of this year, you'll wake up for an early breakfast before dawn - around 3:45 AM. You should drink lots of fluids, and eat foods that are nourishing and filling like oatmeal with a banana or granola.

**Fasting:** Stop eating at 4:45 AM, and for the rest of the daylight hours, don't eat or drink anything. If you have a filling breakfast with plenty of fluids, you should be fine for the rest of the fast. If you get tired in the afternoon and have time, take a short nap.

**Compassion:** If fasting seems difficult, think of the 33 million people in America and 850 million people around the world who are hungry on a daily basis. Also, 1 billion Muslims are fasting throughout this month. You can do it for 12 hours!

### **Breaking the Fast = IFTAR**

At sunset, your work is done! Come to the Union Ballroom at 7:00 p.m. to break your fast with delicious international cuisine. Bring your saved lunch money to donate to Life for Relief and Development. 100% of the donations will be given to help the flood victims in Pakistan. In

the Muslim tradition, the fast will end with the evening call to prayer, the Athan. We will break our fasts with drinks, fruit, and dates, the fruit of the palm tree. Then we will eat a full meal provided by the Muslim Student Association. During dinner, we will have speakers who will teach us about Fasting, Hunger, and Charity.

**Ramadan:** The Month of Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. It is a full month of fasting for Muslims during the daylight hours. It is either 29 or 30 days long.

### **Why Muslims Fast:**

Muslims fast because they believe that God has commanded them to do so. The Qur'an says:

*"O You who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, just as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may be conscious of God."* (2:183)

Muslims think about the benefits of fasting, including: developing self-control over hunger, thirst and sexual urges; training to be a good moral person; gaining sympathy for the less fortunate; and testing their sincerity to the

Creator. No one polices the fasters, so fasting is a very private test of obedience to God.

### **Sawm = Fasting**

What? "Sawm" is the word for a fast that begins at dawn and ends at sunset. Muslims wake up before dawn, eat Sahoor (breakfast before fasting). During the daylight hours, fasters refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and sex. In addition, they try to be on their best behavior during Ramadan and treat others as well as possible, as sins like gossiping would defeat the purpose of fasting.

Who is required to fast? Fasting throughout the month of Ramadan is required of all Muslims who have attained puberty. Those who are pregnant, nursing, ill, or traveling may choose to postpone their fasts. During the month, Muslims may conduct their business as usual. At sunset, Muslims hear the call to evening prayers and quickly break their fasts by eating dates and drinking water or milk. Next, they perform their evening prayers, thanking God for all their blessings. Afterwards, they eat a full meal.

### **Eid al Fitr:**

The first day of the next Lunar month is a major holiday called Eid al Fitr, the Festival of the Fast-Breaking.

### **Charity:**

Muslims must pay charity to the poor of the society as a religious obligation. Charity is especially important during Ramadan, a month of being especially conscious of God and our blessings and thinking of the needs of others.

### **Fellowship:**

Ramadan is a time of unity and community spirit for Muslims. Relatives, friends, and neighbors make a special effort to share meals together and unite to feed the poor. So, this year, be proactive and join MSU's Muslim Student Association and spend one day fasting and learn about hunger.

**Together we can make a positive change in the world around us!**