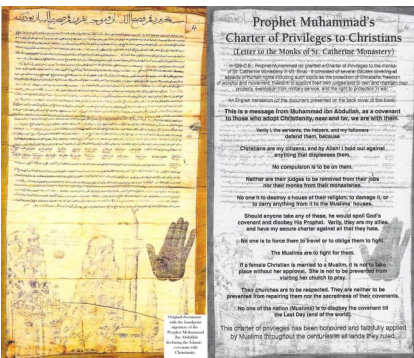


Quarterly Newsletter



Charter of Madina: the Inspiration



628 CE Charter created by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) & observed by Caliphs

The Marrakech Declaration: A testimony to the Greatness of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) advocated for freedom and the protection of the rights of all citizens when drafting the first ever constitution in 632 AD. This constitution gives insight into the commitment of the Prophet to Peace and Justice, and in laying the foundations of a democratic state—this bears testimony that he was an ingenious leader who set the precedent for the formation of democracies almost a thousand years later.

The articles of the Charter of Medina include many principles of contractual citizenship, such as: freedom of religion, freedom of movement, of property, the principle of general solidarity, the principle of mutual defense, and the principle of justice and equality before the law. Therefore, The goals of the Charter of Medina is a suitable framework for national constitutions in the Muslim majority countries, and is compatible with the United Nations charter and its annexes, such as a declaration of human rights, while taking into consideration the public order.

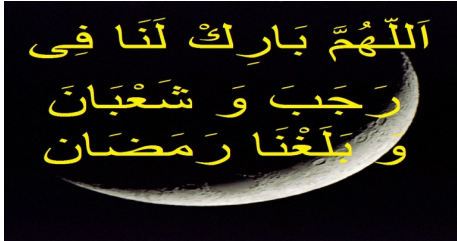
In his address the King of Morocco, Mohammed VI, said that co-existence and cultural diversity is celebrated in Islam. Moroccan history is full of rich examples of celebrating multi-ethnicity. Examples include Moroccans protected some Jews from the tyranny of Nazism. The great grandfather of King Mohammed VI donated the land on which the church in Tangier is built. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), himself and the early Muslim community was religiously persecuted at the time of advent of Islam. **Islam has therefore enshrined the rights of religious minorities, and promoted religious tolerance and cultural diversity.**

Hundreds of Muslim scholars met at a summit in Marrakech from January 25 to 27 to discuss the rights of religious minorities living in Muslim-majority countries. The summit named “Religious Minorities in Muslim Countries: The Legal Framework and Call for Action” issued a declaration to protect religious minorities in the Muslim world based on the principles of the Charter of Medina, the first Muslim constitution. Around 300 Muslim scholars, government officials, experts and religious leaders who advocate for the protection of non-Muslim minorities attended the conference. This conference came at a time marked by a surge of terrorist attacks, hate crimes, and the increasing violations to the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries, namely in the Middle East where minorities flee extremism, the statement noted.

Organizers have chosen Morocco to hold this summit due to its moderate position, appreciation of cultural diversity and its advances in human rights. This summit presents an opportunity to prove that “violations of religious minorities’ rights are totally at odds with the spirit of peace, moderation and togetherness that have always prevailed among various components of majority Muslim countries,” the statement stressed. **Peace**, amongst the faith groups more than 1400 years ago was achieved in Medina, not through the might of arms but through **"tolerance, love, and belief in co-existence"**, said the Minister of Religious Affairs of Pakistan. "God has determined that we live side by side with other faiths in many nations," said the Mufti of Russia.

Courtesy: Royal Moroccan Ministry of Endowments & samkudoos@yahoo.groups.com

In Preparation for Ramadan: Welcoming Rajab & Shaban



“Rajab is a great month of Allah unmatched by any other month in respect and significance (accorded to it); war with the infidels during this month is prohibited. Verily, Rajab is Allah’s month, Shaban my month; and Ramadan the month of my Ummah– whosoever fasts a day in the month of Rajab will be granted the great reward of Ridwan , angel in heaven; the wrath of Allah shall be distanced and a door of hell shall be closed.” Hadith



“Verily Allah inspects [his creation] in the Night of Sha‘ban and so forgives all of His creation except the polytheist and the one bent on hatred.”[12]



Rajab: Shahrullah

Rajab marks the beginning of the spiritual season of every believer ending with the fasting month of Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr. The basic meaning of the word Rajab conveys the idea of “honor and veneration”. Also it means “to get oneself ready and make preparation”, for the coming months. Rajab also has the following names:

- The Bountiful month of Allah: meaning that Divine Mercy comes pouring down and Allah grants generous favors and rewards to His servants.
- The Purifying month: because it purifies the person fasting in it of sins and offences.
- The Removal of Arrowheads: so called because as soon as the new moon had been sighted the Arabs of the Jahiliyyah who were engaged in perpetual fighting would lay down their weapons & remove their arrowheads as a mark of respect for this sacred month.

The first Friday night is called Lailatul Raghayb, Night of Wishes. IIT will honor this night on 14th April with special prayers. It is recorded that Allah says, “Rajab is my month. In this month I will grant forgiveness to those who ask it from Me, I will fulfill his need if he pleads with me.”

Lailatul Mi‘raj is also celebrated on 27th night of Rajab– 4th April 2016. It is the night in which Allah honored His Prophet (SAW) with a visit to the heavens & beyond and bestowed on the believers the gift of Salah. This opened our direct contact with Allah & established the most unique and revered relationship between the Creator and His creation. Please join us.

Shaban: Shahri

Shaban holds the unique position of being in the center between Rajab and Ramadan. It immediately follows the auspicious Mi‘raj which opened our doors to a 24/7 Lifeline with Allah. Once this link is established, believers have a greater insight & understanding of their relationship with Allah & their commitment to his ordinances. In Mi‘raj we have Allah’s promise of forgiveness, His reward of paradise, and His commitment to granting us help and support whenever we plead to Him for it. Once armed with this, Allah offers us another golden opportunity in the month of Shaban.

It is this month, Shaban, about which the Beloved Prophet (SAW) has mentioned” Shaban is my month. Many people are unmindful of this great and blessed month in which the deeds of humanity are presented to the Creator of the Worlds. And I desire that my deeds reach my Lord while I am in saum (fasting).”

During the month of Shaban, the 15th night is known as Lailatul Barat, Nisfus Shaban or Shabe Barat. Although the entire month of Shaban is the month to achieve blessings, the night between the 14th day and 15th day is of great importance. It is on this night that the plan of a human being is designed. Death, life, wealth, respect, disgrace and all other aspects of life is prepared on this night. It is also the Night of Records when the record of deeds is closed for the previous year and a new one is opened.

Mark Your Calendar: Depending on moon sighting IIT will celebrate Shabe Barat on **Saturday 21st of May 2016** after Maghrib Salah with the 3 Yaseens, followed by Big Night program. It is recommended to fast 13th, 14th & 15th of Shaban.

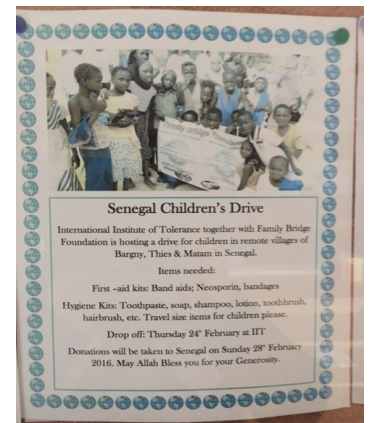
IIT Updates

- In January IIT hosted foreign Speakers in the celebration of Mouloud-un-Nabi
- On 20th January IIT celebrated the Life & Teachings of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani.
- On 4th Tuesday of every month IIT co-chairs the LA Faith Council at the Dept. of Children & Family at the Torrance Office.
- On Fri 12th February IIT held a Syrian Food Drive with Islamic Relief USA after Jumah Prayer. It was a great success. Thank you for your wonderful contributions.
- On 7th of February & 6th of March, IIT held its monthly Ladies Mouloud. This is a potluck event. Next Mouloud April 3rd.
- On 11th March IIT attended the MLK DREAM Committee Meeting planning .
- On 17th & 18th March Athia presented Islam to the World Religion Classes of Bishop Montgomery H.S. in Torrance by invitation.
- On 21st March Athia Carrim presented Islam at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Palos Verdes as IIT's Initiative expands.
- On 22nd March Imam gave a prayer at DCFS Prayer for Children Meeting.
- On 23rd March Athia gave the invocation & a talk on Islam to the Torrance City Council.
- On 28th March IIT attended the Visions for Unity Awards at Torrance Memorial Hosp.



Senegal Children's Drive

In the Month of February 2016, the Honorary Council General of Senegal, Ms. Mam Mbye, expressed her concerns about the plight of children in remote villages of Senegal who do not have ready access to medical help. These children faced illnesses that can easily be avoided like infections from minor cuts, insect bites, and little accidents because they do not have first-aid items. Also because of poverty, these communities are unable to buy basic hygiene items. IIT seized this opportunity to help and began a drive together with Family Bridge Foundation for children of the villages of Bargny, Thiess and Matam in Senegal. Fortunately, the students of Bishop Montgomery's High school World Religions classes also joined us in the drive. Items such as band-aid, Neosporin, bandages, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, and shampoo were some of the items donated. A special thank you to all members for their generous contributions. Mam flew with the items to Senegal to ensure its proper distribution at these villages. May Allah reward everyone for their generosity. Ameen.



IIT Services

IIT offers a variety of programs, religious, educational, and social, to advance the well-being of our community. These programs include Jumah Salah/ Friday Khutbah, daily congregational prayers, Taraweeh, observance of all Big Nights, Nazira classes, **Saturday Islamic classes**, Adult Qur'an reading classes, Professional Counseling, and fortnightly Qadri Khatam and Zikr. , Funeral rites and arrangement, performance of Marriage, Darud Nariya every Thursday night after Isha prayer, Spiritual nights, and participation by invitation of the community to various events. **Professional Tajweed classes offered Tues/Wed afternoons.**

Community Billboard

- IIT's **Feed the Homeless Program** is in constant need of volunteers and donations. Please make your contributions for this Outreach Endeavor.
- For all your Tax contact Mohamed Jalloh at E-Tax Resolutions at (310) 502-2174
- For all Real Estate needs please contact Ameena Haseeb at 310-972-0387.
- For Commercial & Domestic cleaning needs contact Nadeem Mughal at (310) 634-7670

Attention Amazon Shoppers!

When you begin to shop at Amazon, instead of going to amazon.com go to smile.amazon.com; then select IIT as your charitable organization so your computer will remember it. Amazon will donate 0.5% of purchase to IIT. Another

Please offer your CAR as DONATION to IIT. We have needy families that can use them, Here is an opportunity to ease the hardship



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The International Institute of Tolerance was founded on the principle of Justice and Equity. Its services are religious and charitable, and grounded in the Islamic faith. One of the principle aims of the Institute is to integrate Muslim Americans into our pluralistic American society. The Institution is focused on working in harmony with other faith groups and civic organizations to enhance our collective futures. The Institute provides religious, educational, and social services to advance justice and promote compassion. Outside its religious services, the Institute's charitable intent can be found in its outreach program. This is the essence of the Islamic value system which drives the Institute's role and functions.

“Love all and hate none. Mere talk of Peace will avail you naught. Mere talk of Religion & God will not take you far. Be a blazing fire of Truth, a beautiful blossom of Love, and be a soothing balm of Peace. With your spiritual light dispel the darkness of Ignorance, dissolve the clouds of discord and war and spread Goodwill, Peace and Harmony among the people. Never seek any help or charity of favors from anyone except God.” Khaja Gharib Nawaz



Mes-

Those who are true lovers of Allah give away both of the world for the sake of their Beloved then feel they have done nothing worthy.

Remembering A Luminary in Islam: The Saint of India: Khaja Moinuddin Chisti (RA)

Syed Moinuddin Chishti (1141 - 1236) also known as **Gharib Nawaz** (*Benefactor of the Poor*), was an imam, Islamic scholar and philosopher from South Asia, who introduced and established the [Chishti Order](#) of [Sufism](#) in the Indian subcontinent.

The Chishti Order was founded by Abu Ishaq Shami (“the Syrian”) in Chisht some 95 miles east of Herat in present-day western Afghanistan. Khaja Moinuddin Chishti established the order in India, in the city of Ajmer in Rajasthan.

The central principles that became characteristics of the Chishti order in India are based on his teachings and practices. They lay stress on renunciation of material goods; strict regime of self-discipline and personal prayer; participation in samā' as a legitimate means to spiritual transformation; reliance on either cultivation or unsolicited offerings as means of basic subsistence; independence from rulers and the state, including rejection of monetary and land grants; generosity to others, particularly, through sharing of

food and wealth, and tolerance and respect for religious differences.

He, in other words, interpreted religion in terms of human service and exhorted his disciples "to develop river-like generosity, sun-like affection and earth-like hospitality." The highest form of devotion, according to him, was "to redress the misery of those in distress – to fulfill the needs of the helpless and to feed the hungry." It was during the reign of Akbar (1556–1605) that Ajmer emerged as one of the most important centers of pilgrimage in India. The Mughal Emperor undertook a journey on foot to Ajmer. He authored several books including *Anīs al-Arwāh* and *Dalīl al-Ārifīn*, both of which deal with the Islamic code of living.

Amidst the bigotry and hatred so prevalent today, it is the teachings and actions of this luminary that commands our attention and respect. By making love for all humanity his creed, he created a following who carry on works of goodwill throughout the world. Khaja Gharib Nawaz has devotees all over the world who commemorate his life in almost every city today. IIT will also observe his life on Thursday, 14th April 2016.