

IAW Assembly November 2006

We begin in the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful and we greet you with a greeting of Peace.

The Altrincham Grammar School Islamic Society is proud to present Islam Awareness Week for the **fourth** year running.

This years Islam Awareness Week is about 'One World',

We seem to overlook the many similarities that bring us together and make us all 'One'. That same 'One' being such common values as truth, justice and equality as well as the need for peace and a concern for the environment.

'One World' reminds us of the global village that we inhabit, that the world's concerns and problems are ours to both share and solve together. The things that we have in common are more significant than the differences that people think exist between us.

God Says in the Qur'an: "O humanity! We have created you from a single male and female and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another" (49:13)

What is interesting but unknown about Muslim communities in Britain is that they are the most diverse in the world. Communities from Africa, Asia, the Far East, Eastern Europe and the Middle East contribute to the expression of Islam in today's multicultural Britain.

More importantly, they contribute to, and live alongside, all the other communities and people that are part of today's multicultural Britain; making it a perfect example of '**One World**'.

Malcolm X, On returning from Hajj (Muslim pilgrimage) told his followers how he had marvelled at the spectacle of seeing "white, black, brown, red, and yellow people, blue eyes and blond hair...all together, brothers!

He also said "true Islam taught me that it takes all of the religious, political, economic, psychological, and racial ingredients, or characteristics, to make the Human Family and the Human Society complete".

So, here we all are, on plant Earth, with nowhere else to go. By 2050 there will be around 9 billion people living in our world. It seems pretty obvious that, if we want to live in peace together and in harmony with our environment, we are all going to have to learn how to get along.

There is really only one race – the human race. Although we all look different, talk differently and think differently, we know that scientifically we are all related to each other. Surely you would want to look out for you're relatives!

Our planet is in trouble. It does sometimes feel as if its too late, but we must not despair. We can all do something to help slow down or even reverse some of the damage that has been done.

God says in the Qur'an: "And the earth – We have spread it out wide, and placed on it mountains firm, and caused (life) of every kind to grow on it in a balanced manner" (15:19)

The earth has plenty of natural resources for the world's living beings to share in: water, gas, minerals. But that does not mean we should waste them and pollute the environment at the same time. They are not just for us but for the future generations too. Let's think about what we buy, where it's coming from and what damage is being done to get it here. There are often environmentally friendly alternatives to the many products that we buy and the actions we take.

The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said: "The world is beautiful and green and verily God, be He exalted has made you His custodians over it, and He sees how you acquit (conduct) yourselves."

There is an awful lot of rubbish around. In fact each household in Britain produces about a tonne of rubbish every year. We need to think about what we do with our rubbish and make the most of the facilities for recycling.

God says in the Qur'an: "O children of Adam, beautify yourselves for every act of worship, and eat and drink (freely), but do not waste, for God does not love those who waste." (7:31)

Another part of becoming a united and peaceful society is everyone getting along well. We mentioned how we always pick out the differences between us instead of highlighting the many similarities and things we have in common. This week is also anti-bullying week.

A child or young person can be bullied for no particular reason. Sometimes personal characteristics (such as height, weight, or hair colour) are targeted. Children who are timid and unassertive are more vulnerable to being bullied, so assertiveness training can help some children. Having friends, especially friends you can trust, is an important protective factor against being bullied in the peer group. Some bullying is done because a child or young person belongs to a certain group – for example religious or race.

This week let's all start working towards the goal of 'One World', preventing the harm of the environment and of our fellow human beings. Let's unite to make this world a better place.

We have an exhibition outside the hall which we would like you all to have a look at. A brief video will be played which gives you some insight into the context of the exhibition.

There are also leaflets available to take and read. Please remember our emphasis on recycling and instead of disposing of them once you've read them – hand them onto a friend.

Thank you for listening to the Islamic Societies assembly. We hope you have taken something positive away from it. If you wish to learn more about the society or about Islam, please visit us in T4 at lunchtimes or visit our website, www.isoc.co.nr