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St. John's University: The Language Connection

St. Patrick's Day by Editorial Staff

People usually celebrate holidays by annually gathering with their families and eating special foods. They celebrate to honor major events and/or great people in their heritage. One example is St. Patrick's Day. This day is for (mostly) people from Irish heritage and connects to the saint's and the Irish people's history. Like many holidays, this one has its symbols and traditions. The most famous is the St. Patrick's Day parade in NYC which is considered the oldest and largest non-military parade in the world, which has seen changes in the recent years.

To understand why people celebrate St. Patrick's Day, you need to understand a little about the history of it. St. Patrick was born in Roman Britain. He was made a slave and brought to Ireland. After he escaped, he went back as a free man in 432 as a missionary. He invited many people to the Christian religion. Patrick became a bishop and some time after his death on March 17th 461, he was made patron saint of Ireland.

There are many traditions and symbols related to the holiday and Irish heritage. One tradition is eating corned beef and cabbage. When Irish-Americans first came to the United States, they wanted to eat bacon because they ate it in Ireland and they missed the food from their homeland; however, bacon was very expensive at the time, so they changed to corned beef and now that is a typical meal at the holiday. Green is the usual color of this holiday and many of the symbols are green such as shamrocks and leprechauns. The shamrock is found in Ireland and is a leaf with three parts that was used by St. Patrick to explain the Trinity in Christianity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Another green symbol is the leprechaun. Leprechauns are traditionally tricksters in Irish storytelling.

Though these symbols are seen in the decorations for the holiday, one way to celebrate is the parade which is used as a major means of honoring and memorializing remarkable people and events, like St. Patrick. The first parade took place in NYC on March 17th 1762.

The parade usually starts at 11:00 am and lasts for five hours as it travels along the route starting at Fifth Avenue and 55th Street and ending at 79th Street. There are about 150,000 people celebrating in the parade and 2 million people watching it in NYC.

The parade has been an important part of the holiday in NYC, but it has had its problems. Recently there has been a controversy about homosexuals and people with different gender identities having a special spot holding banners expressing their identities in the parade. Since St. Patrick was a religious man, some people who run the parade or walk in it don't want the parade to include beliefs that go against their religion. The former chairman of the parade committee Dunlevy was strongly against LGBT groups marching separately in the parade. Therefore, these groups stopped participating in the parade. However, in March 2015, the more supportive chairman Leahy allowed them to participate by marching under their own banners.

The Exotic Pet by Mustafa Khalifah



When you hear the word “pet” what do you think of? Of course you think about lovely animals like dogs, cats, birds and fish. But, what about if you heard the word “exotic pet”?

Commonly, some rodents, reptiles, and amphibians have become pets. Sometimes any unique or wild-looking pet (including common domestic animals like the ferret and the fancy rat) is called an exotic pet.

Specifically, “Exotic” refers to a species which is not native to the owner’s location, and “pet” is a companion animal living with people.

Why do people choose these kinds of pets? Some people want to be more special than others or they hate to own some things most people have. It is hard to own these kinds of pets because they have different ways to be taken care of and ways to feed

them. These pets also need special veterinarians to them healthy.

Another reason that makes these pets special is they are not legal in many places. Here in the U.S there are some states that don’t allow people to keep these animals as a pet because it is dangerous to you or your neighbor.

Why judge people? by Saleh Aljurbua



When I was a child, my mother told me “don’t judge a book by its cover; open the book and read what is inside.” As I got older, I understood what she meant. It was rumored that an old man was sitting with his 25 year old son on a train. The young man was sitting next to the window looking curious and happy. He looked out the window and shouted, “Dad, look at all the trees behind us!” the old man smiled and admired his son. There was a couple sitting next to them listening to the

conversation between the father and son. The couple felt a little uncomfortable and though the young man was acting like a child. Suddenly the young man shouted again. “Dad! Look at the pond, the animals. Look at the clouds moving with the train.” The couple continued judging the young man. Then it started raining. The raindrops fell on the hands of the young man, who was filled with happiness and shouted again, “Dad! It’s raining; the water is touching me. Look dad!” At this moment the couple

could not help themselves and asked the old man “Why don’t you visit the doctor with your son?” the old man said, “We are coming from the hospital where my son got his vision for the first time in his life.”

People should learn from this story. At the same time people need to remember to not only look at the outside; people need to look on the inside. People need to respect and understand others are different from them and try not to make any judgments at all.

Proverbs by Arwa Alnamlah and Wasmiah Alajmi

Time is money! What could you infer from these few words, which is known as a proverb? Basically a proverb is a term that explains a common situation or belief in a few words. Proverbs are universal as the same proverb exists in many languages. It is a brilliant method of description because it can lead you to a core meaning easily. In proverbs we can see that a small phrase that only has a few letters can be very powerful. With these three words, you can address a serious and complicated situation. Not only that, but in order to explain the value of time and money and the association between them would take volumes and volumes of explanation.

Most proverbs are very understandable from culture to culture, but understanding the meaning of certain proverbs,

depends on understanding the culture and society the people live in and the religion and traditions they practice. Since Arabs are closely knit and have strong family bonds, they have proverbs based on this topic. "Relatives are scorpions" is a proverb that ironically describes how despite our closeness to our relatives, they could cause a lot of problems for us. Though this is an Arab saying, most cultures can identify with the difficulties families cause.

A proverb that needs more explanation to those outside of the culture is "the end is musk." This is the proverb to sum up the article with. It means that a mission or task was ended nicely and harmoniously. Musk is very valuable to Muslims; they use it for religious purposes as a

method of cleanliness and it is an example of luxury because it is mostly used on large special occasions such as weddings and holidays, so this proverb indicates a good end to an occasion or task.

Proverbs sum up common ideas and they express our feelings accurately, which is why they are so useful in and between most cultures.



Easter by Marwah Khalifah

Easter is most important Christian holiday. Many Christians celebrate Jesus Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. Easter doesn't fall on a set date every year, as most holidays do.

Christian churches celebrate Easter on the first Sunday following the full moon after the vernal equinox on March 21.

Easter for Christian people begins on Good Friday, which honors the day of Jesus's crucifixion and then Holy Saturday, which focuses on the change from the crucifixion and resurrection.

Easter accompanied by religious ceremonies and prayers especially for the occasion, family meetings and social celebrations.

For people with strong Christian beliefs, the cross that Jesus was crucified on and his resurrection are important symbols of the period around Easter. Other symbols of Easter include real eggs or eggs made from many different things, nests, lambs and rabbits or hares. Sometimes these symbols are put together, for example, in candy rabbits with nests full of eggs. Eggs, rabbits, hares and young animals are thought to show the new birth of nature in the spring. Many people organized spring festivals including eggs and new baby animals which may be how people have Easter eggs that they still hunt for and eat.



Religious Discrimination by Abdullah Bin Taleb

The big problem at this time which is almost all over the world is the religious discrimination.

As we can see, the one reason of any war is the religious discrimination. For example, in Syria now thousands of people have been killed because of religious discrimination. I remember this last week when I see a lot of people demonstrating in front of Trump Tower because of what Trump has said about Muslims This is a kind of religious discrimination.

That makes me talk about religious discrimination which is very dangerous and has made people kill each other because all of them believe they have the

true belief and they each think their belief is the truth. That means all of them have reasons to justify their views. In my opinion, everybody must respect what the people believe or others' convictions even if they are totally different from their own.

All in all, if we want to live in peaceful and good life, we must to respect each other.



Editorial Staff

Saleh Aljurbua is also from Saudi Arabia and is a faculty member at the Institute of Public Administration. He was appointed to continue his education in St. John's LLM in Business Law. He just started studying English at St. John's and hopes to be able to start his major by spring of next year.

Wasmiah Alajmi a Saudi Arabian, graduated from high school in 2013. She studied one year at the University of Dammam, then she got a scholarship to study Respiratory Therapy in the U.S. She might change her major to Actuarial Science, but she is still reading about it. She has an independent, assertive, helpful personality, and she likes to read about health in general and psychology. She hopes that she can change a lot of things in Arabic society and make

people think in more logical ways rather than traditional ones.

Arwa Alnamlah is studying English at St. John's University. She has been in The U.S.A for two years. She is graduated with her bachelor degree in Psychology from King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. She intends to earn her masters degree in Psychology from St. John's University in New York City. She worked as a psychologist for six months. Her favorite hobbies are reading novels and riding a bicycle

Enas Asiri recently graduated from King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah. She took her bachelor degree in Human Resource Management. She plans to study for her master in Finance. She likes to travel and visit new places. Although this is the third time visiting New York, it's her first

time studying here. Her goal in life is to make the world a better place to live in.

Marwah Khalifah is studying English at St. John's University. Although this is her first trip to New York, she has also visited Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. In fact, she studied in Seattle, Washington in 2014. She is from Saudi Arabia. She graduated with her bachelor degree in law in 2013. She plans to study here for her master in law. Her favorite hobbies are reading and cooking.

Mustafa Khalifah is studying English at St. John's University. He is from Saudi Arabia and this is his first trip to N.Y. He is recent graduate from high school - May 2015. He came to U.S to study chemistry.

He hopes to complete his university after he finishes his course of English as the second language.

Abdullah Bin Taleb after graduating from King Saud University with a bachelor's degree, he practiced law for two years. Then he decided to come to the United States to complete his study with a Master's degree in law from St. John's University. He is currently studying English at St. John's Language Connection.

Genie Smiddy is a language educator at St. John's Language Connection.



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