**Reflection paper**

Your Name (First M. Last)

School or Institution Name (University at Place or Town, State)

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Growing up in America, a person gets a chance to meet people from different races, nationalities, and religion. I always had friends and neighbors from the Muslim, Hindu, and Jew communities. I have never felt any difference in their behavior on the basis of religious discrimination. I and my friends always have been really open-minded towards other people's faith and ideologies. One of my Best friends is Muslim, I haven't seen any character flaw in him and his family. Often I used to think my Muslim community is so misrepresented in the Media. After the Mosque terrorist attack in Australia, I felt extremely upset for the Muslim community and angry towards media for showing biases in reporting. This incident made me really curious about the mosques and the religious practices that take in them.

My friend took me to the Friday prayer in the mosque. Entering mosque was an intriguing, calming and spiritual experience. Different people from varying demographics were entering the mosque. Everyone was wearing modest clothes as a sign of respect. I participated in prayer and repeated all the steps behind the queue of men. Prayer consisted of different physical steps in the standing and sitting positions. I felt calm while doing those actions in union with the others. Muslims were also reciting different verses from their Holy book at different steps of the prayer. I was unable to understand them as they were in Arabic. Unlike the church, there was segregation in prayer hall for men and women. Few old men were sitting on chairs in prayer as they were unable to move due to health conditions. It was shocking for me that hoe every age group will give so much importance to some religious activity even in the condition of sickness. After completion of prayer, my friend took to the other areas of the mosque and it was a beautiful work of art with elongated ceilings and huge pillars. My friend also gave me a translation of the prayers upon my request that was recited in the prayer.

Understanding the meaning of prayers made me emotional as I found them close to my own faith in Christianity. This whole experience opened my eyes to the importance of faith. I used to go to church as a kid, and visiting a mosque made me realize how I miss that experience. Interacting with so many people made me realize how we all are so similar even with our different beliefs. I think everyone should experience religious diversity as broadens our perspectives about the world and the human community.