

World Mission News

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USA: Since its release on February 25, the Mel Gibson-directed film, "**The Passion of the Christ**," has been seen by millions causing global media response and heated discussions. The fear of arousing anti-Semitism by some was shown unnecessary. Rather it has become an extraordinary help to Christian evangelism. A large church in Illinois, USA reported gaining 2,500 new members in the few days after its release. After seeing the film, a 20-year-old Arizona man confessed to half-dozen burglaries saying he felt guilty, and a man in Texas confessed to killing a woman after talking to a spiritual adviser.

<Dallas Morning News, 3/30/04>

Jesus Film: After more than 5 billion individual viewings in 236 countries in 848 languages, "**The Jesus Film**" has been released as a new 25th anniversary deluxe edition. In addition to the Christian bookstores, the release is aimed at the mass-market music and video stores. The film depicts a biblical account of the life of Jesus filmed in the Holy Land. Virtually every word of Jesus is taken from the Bible.

<Dallas Morning News, 3/20/04>

Internet: Leading people to Christ on the internet is becoming more common and many new churches have resulted. After getting information from a friend on the East Coast, a Christian couple in Texas met this new couple in their house, where, three weeks later, 12 people attended a new church. A regional conference in North Carolina last year began a movement training next generation of church planters.

<www.house2house.tv/FridayFax, 3/5/04>

India: Bihar, a State in northern India with 87 million souls was known as the "missionaries' graveyard." Since 1998 the scene has changed drastically when an agency started training evangelists in oral communication. They use storytelling, drama, songs, poems, art, images, etc instead of the traditional tracts and Bible studies. It resulted in one pastor planting 30 new churches, another 20, others 15, 17 - unheard of in Bihar. Now they

have trained 1,000 such church planters for the area.

<www.dawnministries.org/FridayFax, 3/5/04>

Iraq: Four Southern Baptist missionaries working on water purification project were killed last March near Mosul, Iraq in a drive-by shooting. Another missionary in the car was critically injured. A Southern Baptist spokesman said they were "aware of the dangers of working in Iraq" but wished "to express the love of Christ by serving people who are in great need." In the last year and a half, four other Southern Baptist missionaries were killed - three in Yemen and one in the Philippines.

<Agape Press/www.crosswalk.com, 3/17/04>

Iraq: Christians are in Iraq to provide relief, and more than 900,000 Bibles in Arabic have already been sent in, The Los Angeles Times reports. These Bibles have been met with surprising enthusiasm, and there is a request for 50,000 additional Picture Bibles for the Kurdish people in the north. A mission agency president says while there are extreme dangers in many parts of the world, there are also numerous opportunities for many professionals.

<ASSIST News Service/www.crosswalk.com, 3/29/04>

USA: A 49,000-square foot, \$15.5-million casino closed in 1997 less than a year after it opened in California. USA reopened its doors to 1,300 worshipers as a church last February. The church started in the area in 2002 and has grown to 700 plus membership. The pastor of the church believes "The Bible teaches us that we are to take back what the devil has stolen," and that "God orchestrated" the \$2 million purchase with an initial \$12 million tag.

<IPC Prayer Alert/www.ipcprayer.org, 2/11/04>

China: Chinese authorities are engaging in a severe crackdown against North Korean refugees and the aid workers who help them, deporting the refugees and imprisoning the workers. In the last decade, an estimated 300,000 North Koreans have fled from their brutal Communist dictatorship into China.

Christians are harshly persecuted in North Korea for not yielding to the cult of worshipping the "Dear Leader." China wants to "destroy the network" that helps the North Koreans thus eliminating the refugee problem.

<Christianity Today, April/04>

Cambodia: Last March FEBC celebrated their first anniversary of FM broadcast in Pnom Penh, Cambodia. Though the building license was obtained in 1998, it took four years to finish the project as they refused to engage in giving any bribe during the process. Due to the flatness of the land, the 5,000-watt station, with signal covering an area of 150 Km in diameter, can reach a potential audience of 4 million.

<Far East Broadcasting Co, www.febchk.org, 12/03>

Nepal: The Gospel For Asia Bible Society recently published a new Nepali New Testament, also available on CD-ROM. This is the first indigenous translation by 35 Nepali Bible scholars, pastors and teachers. The CD version includes background material on each book of the Bible and a 20-minute salvation message. A 740-page illustrated Bible dictionary was also released featuring hundreds of maps and illustrations. This is of great help to the pastors.

<Send!, www.gfa.org, 1-3/04>

USA: Three years ago, Boulder, Colorado, USA was known for its liberal politics and lifestyle, anti-Christian media, and bastion of occultism. Then a Christian leader conference on spiritual and social transformation followed up on the city's social problems and was shocked by some information gathered. They then set up a monthly meeting with the key political and social leaders to pinpoint problem areas (homeless, youth crime, aids, schools, etc) and offer financial and manpower assistance. Today, media call the churches "friends of the city," city officials see churches as the main supporters of social projects, and a number of well-known people have become Christians.

<FridayFax, 4/2/04>