

# World Mission News

**USA:** Hispanics are the fastest growing ethnic group in the USA. 40 million strong and deeply religious, they are traditionally Catholic. But they are more open to other faiths the longer they are in the US. While 72% first-generation are Catholic, only 52% of the third-generation remains so. The percentage of Protestants increases from 20 to 33% among the respective groups.

<Newsweek, 3/21/05>

**France:** France, "post-Christian" Europe's most secular country, is reconnecting with its Christian roots. After a century of disillusion with Marxism, evolution, socialism, materialism, hedonism, etc., the French people are searching to fill the "God-shaped void." Bible sales are at historical high. A Bible with life application notes for seekers sold record 80,000 copies in one month. Even secular bookstores and major supermarket chains now sell Bibles. Evangelicals grow from 50,000 to 350,000 since 1950 with some 200,000 Pentecostals. A revival comes to the 40 million mostly nominal Catholics (2/3 of population) through employing evangelical materials and teachers in parish churches, schools and seminaries. Number of groups using the Alpha course rose from 5 in 1998 to 303 in 2004. The number of converts among Muslims may be 5,000 including leaders and growing rapidly.

<Christianity Today, March/05>

**Iran:** After the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, half of the 250,000 Christians left the country. Recently, people disappointed in Islam and its broken promises of answers to life's questions have believed in Christ in the thousands including some children of officials and Mullahs. A leader of the Ministry of Education complained that 50 youths secretly join a church daily. In the face of arrest of pastors and forced to go underground in many cases, the church has grown rapidly to far more than the pre-1979 figures. New

believers are not expelled immediately from their families like in most Islamic nations. Rather, relatives often follow their lead into the new faith.

<Open Door/ FridayFax, 2/11/05>

**Myanmar:** Many Shan-Tai men crossing from Myanmar to Thailand to find work often end up in prison. One such man got a Shan tract and wrote to the church listed on the tract requesting more information. After studying the Bible and lessons sent him, he trusted in Christ and began sharing his faith with other Shan-Tai prisoners. Now 70 men in that prison have believed and 25 want to be baptized.

<East Asia Insight, www.us.omf.org, Spring/05>

**Tsunami:** Asia Harvest has responded to the tsunami relief effort in Aceh, Indonesia in three stages. Initial stage: search and rescue and emergency aid by medical teams and a new boat to search along the coast. 2nd stage: temporary shelter, food, medical care, and emotional help (more than just throwing bottle water from a truck, but praying with mothers who lost families and nourishing them). 3rd stage: difficult yet crucial rehabilitation with long-term economic and spiritual aid.

<Asia Harvest, www.asiaharvest.org, 2/05>

**Ukraine:** When Ukraine gained independence in 1991, it had 250,000 evangelical Christians. Today there are 3 million. The recent election of President Yushchenko has given them more freedom. He is working to eliminate the Ministry of Religion that has been oppressing churches. There is even unity between evangelicals and the predominant but nominal and previously antagonistic members of the Orthodox Church. Evangelicals are planning to take the gospel into Russia and other former USSR republics.

<www.crosswalk.com, 2/4/05>

**Philippines:** SEND International is providing the Filipino government curriculum development, training, etc to instill higher standard of value in public school students. The program plus many church-sponsored follow-up efforts has resulted in children coming to Christ and gospel openings to the parents accompanying them.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 2/16/05>

**Ethiopia:** Since early 90s a retired American pastor at the invitation of a consortium of 20 plus denominations in Ethiopia has trained young leaders to evangelize their nation and plant churches in remote villages. 60,000 people have become Christians in a western region near Sudan and observers have noticed reduction of crime, AIDS infection and alcoholism. The pastor is campaigning now to plant 1,000 churches in that region.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 2/23/05>

**Bodouin:** For years, native workers visiting Bodouin tents are met with indifference to the gospel seen as irrelevant to their lives. Recently they have set up veterinary clinics to care for the animals that are vital to the nomadic livelihood. The trust developed in these clinics has produced fruits.

<www.crosswalk.com, 3/9/05>

**Nepal:** The Nepali Church has grown from 29 believers in 1959 to about 500,000 in 3,000 congregations today. This growth testifies to the Holy Spirit's blessing of courageous, sacrificial witness and faithfulness. The Nepali Christians faced intense persecution from the Hindu Kingdom through the 80s. Even the new constitution in 1990 granting religious freedom forbids one to convert others from one religion to another. The Maoist rebels now controlling some 40% of the territory also cause much difficulty.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 3/16/05>