

World Mission News

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Irish: 15 years ago, 80% population attended Catholic Mass at least once a week. Today, 50% do. It may be largely due to secularization. Catholic charismatic renewal in the '70s marked a turning point. Many of them have joined evangelical churches. And in the '90s, sexual abuse scandals by priests rocked the Church. A 2006 survey showed 30,000 evangelicals tripling that of 1980, still <1% of total population. Foreigners from China and Nigeria attracted by steady economic growth account for much of the growth. 1/3 of evangelicals are immigrants.

<Christianity Today, April/07>

Turkmenistan: The sudden death of the president last December and the election of a popular new one have brought some hope to the Christians. Under the rule of the deceased autocrat since the fall of Soviet Union in 1991, all non-Muslim and non-Orthodox activity was banned and groups were raided and harassed regularly. Yet despite such persecution, the Protestant church has grown from virtually nonexistent in 1991 to about 5,000 Christians today.

<Christianity Today, April/07>

Myanmar: A leaked official document titled 'Program to Destroy the Christian Religion in Burma' states, 'The Christian religion is very gentle — identify and utilize its weakness.' Myanmar military rulers use Buddhism as political weapon against predominantly Christian minority ethnic groups, such as the Karen, Chin and Kachin. An estimated 500,000+ displaced persons take refuge in eastern border with Thailand. Another 140,000 live in nine refugee camps in Thailand.

<Christianity Today, April/07>

China: There are 43 million people in Jiangxi province, 1% are Christians.

<Far East Broadcasting, www.liangyou.net, 11-12/06>

Ghana: In 1957, Ghana became the 1st sub-Saharan nation to gain independence from (British) colonial rule. It's 22 million people have seen a degree of steady economic growth, stable democratic government and broad support from development partners. Today 64% of them claim to be Christians, but only 12% attend church regularly. Over the last 20 years, an agency has seen >1,072 churches planted and some 322,000 Bible studies completed.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 3/27/07>

Norway: An evangelist has reached many Muslims for Christ through the internet. While thousands from the Muslim world have responded to his Arabic webcast, surprisingly more than 30,000 Arabs in North America show interest in the gospel and being saved in the last 2 months. His gospel sharing is not through preaching but mostly people's life experiences of a miracle, the miracle of salvation. Last month 1,000 in Saudi Arabia responded.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 3/12/07>

Vision 2025: 'To see a Bible translation in progress in every language group that needs it by year 2025.' Vision 2025 plan of Wycliffe Bible Translators is making progress. 539 groups have work started and 160 million people now have some access to at least portions of the Word. Their new strategy is to broaden the worker base outside of North America and Europe though they can use them as well.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 2/21/07>

China: An official news media reported a recent poll estimating that 31.4% of 16 or older are religious, putting the number of believers at 400 million. In recent years, the official estimate has been only 100 million.

<International Herald Tribune, 3/4/07>

Short-term Missions : Trans World Radio is using a new website for recruiting the You Tube generation for short-term missions and internship, receiving enthusiastic response. They offer the younger generation a way of using radio wave or a computer click to ripple out into hearts half a world away. It seems the thinking is that one may not be into Bible translation, church planting, or pioneering, but one can be an accountant or a journalist and be a missionary as well.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 2/19/07>

Russia: Youth ministries are seeing new and unbelievable growth. Since the fall of Soviet Union, life has become more materialistic and less spiritual. But the new generation is really empty in their hearts and souls. They hunger for truth, something serious and real, as they lose hope in drugs and entertainment stuff. Now more youth than adults are baptized. At least 2,000 youth in one ministry join churches each year. To them the gospel is appropriate for daily living.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 3/12/07>

Ukraine: Forced into exile by Stalin to Siberia and other parts of Soviet Union, the Crimean Tatars of Ukraine, estimated to be 250,000, are going home. The Tatars are more secular and nominal Muslims. Some agencies have been connecting with Tatar neighbors through summer day camps, Sunday schools and special events. The Tatars may be the key to reach deeper into Muslims in Central Asia.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 3/12/07>

Obstacle: It was the most exciting advance ever in global evangelization in the last decade of 20th century. A church leader warned that apathy and lethargy in our churches might be the greatest obstacle for further advance.

<Mission Network News, www.mnn.gospelcom.net, 1/31/07>