



Reflections
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1

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God's Spirit Is Moving Across the Earth
More Than Dreams-Stories of Conversions

Blessings to All:

By: Richard Pickard

Peace be with you

Each star in the heavens is very special to Our Heavenly Father. He created them out of love to shine a small light upon the eyes of His children. To add wonder to us who see these lights and wonder how they came into being.

God leaves clues for us to show us His love for us. Imagine a world in black and white? How dull. But with color, the things that He created jumps out at us and says, "See, I love you and provide color to help you see beauty."

He also lets us see ourselves from time to time, as we are. These times are very special times for us. As we spend this time, we begin to see the reality of who we are. And thenbang....God steps in and says to us.."***My child, no matter what you think you see who you are.....is not what I see in my eyes. You are special to me. You are a light to me, like the lights in heaven are for you. I take joy in seeing you...My creation, who I love more than all of My creations. You are so special, that Jesus, my son, agreed to become one of you and to take all your mistakes upon Himself....so that, you become My child again...pure and holy and innocent in My eyes"***.

God's love is moving mightily across the face of the earth testifying to the salvation in Jesus Christ and that we are special to Him.

Within the last few months I have seen and heard of a greater number of conversion stories of Muslims to Christianity than ever before. Our website <https://catholicfamilynewsletter.com> since the end of November 2019 is being accessed by a growing number of people from Iran. Correspondingly, a large number of Cubans are also accessing our web pages. People are hungry for the Truth and God is moving mightily in countries that need to know about salvation

through Jesus Christ. This phenomenon is not unique. It is being reported by a great number of others in the Jesus movement. Let me share just one example of this movement. A Jewish friend of mine who is a professor at a Texas University, has a Christian ministry to students and gives talks across the country about Jesus Christ. He has shared with me recently stories of many Iranians coming to his talks about Jesus and their conversion from Islam to Christianity. This is a new and growing phenomenon within his ministry. Other ministries are reporting this also. Why would this be taking place and at this time? I believe it is because God loves all peoples and wants them to know His Son, Jesus Christ.

To change from the religion of Islam to Christianity can be dangerous!

Any apostate from Islam is, in theory, punishable by death if they do not recant. This is based upon the prophet Muhammad's saying, as quoted in the *Hadith* (Islamic tradition), "Whoever changes his religion, kill him."

Some Muslims are convinced that everyone who leaves Islam should be killed. In Saudi Arabia and Iran, this is enshrined in law. In other countries like Egypt, Pakistan and Malaysia the majority of supporters for Sharia law also support death sentences for apostates.

The articles in this issue of '*International Catholic Family Newsletter*' are boldly stating this same fact of the conversion of many Iranians to Christianity in ever growing numbers. In Acts 2:17 we see a promise..." ***It will come to pass in the last days, God says, that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.***"

The growing numbers worldwide of conversions from Islam to Christianity is a fact. Even with the threat of death, the message of Jesus Christ is moving souls to the Truth. Most of us are not in the forefront in this worldwide movement. But we can support those who are with our prayers. Each night before you go to sleep, please pray for those who are missionaries and those carrying the word of the Gospel to others. They need our prayers.



Muslims Are Converting to Christianity in Record Numbers

How are so many conversions taking place in oppressive countries where proselytizing can bring a death sentence?

By: [Patti Armstrong](#)

“We are in a time of the first ever mass conversions of Muslims,” Father Mitch Pacwa SJ told me in a phone interview. “God is doing a mighty work among them.”



Fr. Pacwa hosting a show on EWTN.

Pacwa is a host for EWTN radio and TV, a frequent pilgrim guide to the Holy Land and is fluent in 13 languages including Arabic. He is considered an expert on the Middle East and produced the DVD *Christianity & Islam: Are We at War?* and co-authored *Inside Islam: A Guide for Catholics*.

Pacwa said he began hearing talk of conversions to Christianity around 2005 on Al Jazeera Television, the Arabic news satellite TV channel with 80 bureaus around the world. “They were reporting on the mass conversions of Muslims—as many as 6-8 million—in sub-Saharan, Africa, and they have repeated the warning every year,” he said. “I’ve confirmed it with Africans I know who have told me again and again about conversions in places like Nigeria, Uganda, Mali ... that’s why Boko Haram has become so active. They are actually

quite scared and trying to terrorize. But the very act of terrorizing people has ended up with people becoming more disgusted with Islam.”

Bad Public Relations

The violence of Islamic terrorists has made for bad PR, according to Pacwa. For instance, he recalled hearing someone on African TV say: “Al-Qaida attacks Americans by blowing up our embassies but we Africans are the ones that die in the attacks.” He suspects that Islam is at the beginning of a collapse, likening increased terrorism to the supernova stage where stars burn brightest just before they burn out.

Pacwa gave recent examples of heinousness retribution for rejecting Islam. “Not long ago I read about a boy who was a slave that snuck out to pray on Good Friday and was crucified for it,” he said. “I also heard about two Filipino maids that were caught with the New Testament and beheaded.”

Americans caught practicing Christianity in Muslim countries are usually expelled but according to Pacwa, it’s much different for citizens. “Fridays after the noon prayers is the day they cut off hands and heads from thieves, adulterers—women only—and people who commit blasphemy, and that would include converting to Christianity.”

Conversions Spreading

Yet, despite such risks, Pacwa said that mass conversions are happening even in very fundamentalist countries. There is rapidly growing number of conversions especially on the edges of the Muslim world in the western and southern parts of Africa, he said. “Africa is now growing predominantly Christian despite crackdowns,” Pacwa said.

Some of the noteworthy countries he mentioned include Iran, reported to have 3 million Christians, and Indonesia with reports of 2 million a year converting.

“In Mongolia, the president opened the country to Christians and there’s even an archbishop,” Pacwa said. “They built a Catholic school there too. If I was younger, I would have gone.” He said that the desire for a Western education was the impetus to open up the country to the Catholic Church.

Mongolia now has around 1,000 Catholics and three churches. "It has gone from a mission in 1991-2003 to a prefect apostolic which means they have a bishop, although it is not yet formally a diocese," Pacwa said. "They have had their first native Mongolian ordained a priest and there are three Mongolian seminarians."

There are even conversions happening in many strict Muslim countries, according to Pacwa. He did not want to go on record with particulars for fear of increased retribution. Mass conversions are also being reported among refugees that are filling up the Christian churches left empty by Europeans. Many wonder if those are authentic conversions or just a response to improving their chances for amnesty, but time will tell.

Signs of this conversion are showing up in the U.S. too, Pacwa said. "I was about to celebrate Mass at a Maronite church in San Diego and I said hi to a man who introduced himself as Achmad. I asked if he was a Christian. He said: 'Yes, I was recently baptized.' He said he was from Morocco. Christians do *not* have the name Ahmad—that's a form of Mohammad."

Source of Conversions

How are so many conversions taking place in oppressive countries where proselytizing can bring a death sentence? "A large number of Muslims are receiving visions of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary that has led them to convert," Pacwa said. "Many of these stories can be seen online."



Another big source of conversions, according to Pacwa, is through Father Peter (Butros) Zakariam, a Coptic Orthodox priest exiled from Egypt known as the most wanted man in the Muslim world. **He does a TV show every Friday, which is broadcast to 60 million Arabs, and a six-hour internet discussion show every Tuesday and Thursday.**

There are also many videos on the internet of him boldly proclaiming Christianity and denouncing Islam.

“The Muslims have a price on his head—\$60 million,” Pacwa said. “He’s in hiding but moves around. He keeps producing these TV shows and attacks Islam because he is brilliant in his knowledge of the Quran and he is fearless.”



Christians in Iran hold a New Year's service

Converts from Islam to Christianity under pressure

As it is written, “Out of the fiery furnace comes forth faith as pure as gold (1 Peter 1.7), and that is nowhere more evident than among the persecuted

¹Christians of Iran, now home to the fastest growing and largest network of churches in the world.



According to a recently released two-hour film documentary – *Sheep Among Wolves Part II* – all is not what it seems in the Islamic Republic 40 years after the revolution that swept the Ayatollahs to power. The mosques are empty and many disillusioned with a faith that rules by terror are having

encounters with the God of the Bible. *The Jewish Messiah is appearing to them in dreams and visions – even in person* – and disciples forced to meet and worship in secret are rapidly multiplying to such an extent that the authorities are having to admit their presence.



Iran's Intelligence Minister, Mahmoud Alavi, is quoted as saying that mass conversions "*are happening right under our eyes*".

In a country whose rulers have vowed to destroy Israel, these new Iranian believers are falling in love with the Jewish people and praying for them. ***And in a land where women are brutally oppressed, most of the leaders of this amazing move of God are women!***

Even restrained estimates put the figure of practicing Christians at half-a-million, which in itself is a thousand-fold increase of believers since 1979. Other sources suggest there are more like a million who have bowed the knee to Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, almost all of whom come from a Muslim background.

¹ <https://www.dw.com/en/what-its-like-to-be-a-christian-in-iran/a-19002952>

Produced by Frontier Alliance International Studios with some voices disguised for their protection, the film says the gospel is spreading like wildfire in one of the world's most dangerous places for Christians. It's a church with no property, no denominational leanings, no bank accounts, no assets and no centralized leadership. But it's a church that knows suffering and even martyrdom. *Disciples know they will be raped, beaten or killed if caught*, but they are prepared to offer their bodies as living sacrifices for their faith in Jesus.

One Iranian refugee who came to the West shocked her husband by asking to go back, having discovered that lethargy and indifference was a greater threat to her faith than persecution. Islam means absolute submission, and the filmmakers suggest that Christianity's requirement for total obedience to God's word is a catalyst in the rapid spread of true Christian faith throughout the Islamic state.

At the core of these new Christians' faith is that all roads lead to Jerusalem, which means that they are praying for Israel in light of the troubles prophesied in the Bible for the Jewish state as foretold in the Bible in the days approaching the return to Jerusalem of the Messiah.

The Persian people (as many Iranians still prefer to be called) have been a blessing to Israel in the past. King Cyrus freed the exiles so they could return to their land and rebuild the Temple. And as Queen Esther saved her people from the threat of extermination, so Iranian Christians may well stand in the gap for the Jewish people today, so that what Satan has meant for evil, God can



turn for good. The narrators pose the thought that, as Haman (who was behind the above historic plot) was hanged on the gallows he had erected for Mordecai, the Jew, the spirit of Islam would soon suffer the same fate.



Christ Church, Jerusalem, headquarters in Israel since 1849 of the Church's Ministry among Jewish people (CMJ) founded in Britain 210 years ago, is also featured in the film. I suspect this is because of their crucial role, through hosting conferences for example, in encouraging reconciliation and a deepening of bonds between Jewish believers and their counterparts in other Middle Eastern countries including Iran. More Iranians have become Christians in the last two decades than in the previous 13 centuries put together since Islam came to the region. And because it is seen as a strategic gateway nation that currently controls no less than five capitals in the region, we could see a domino effect of the move of God there with its growing church impacting nations across the Islamic world.

"Iran is a totalitarian state, a surveillance state, and a police state that tries to protect the population from anything outside of the Shiite or Islamic culture," according to katholisch.de, the website of the Catholic Church in Germany.



Women protesting in Iran over abuse of women

More Than Dreams: Muslims Coming to Christ Through Dreams and Visions

Perspectives Issue: 01-2007

"In the last days," says God, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." (Joel 2:28)

For decades, a well-documented phenomenon has been occurring in the Muslim world—men and women who, without knowledge of the gospel, or contact among Christians in their community, have experienced dreams and visions of Jesus Christ. The reports of these supernatural occurrences often come from "closed countries" where there is no preaching of the good news and where converting to Christianity can invoke the death sentence. But these are more than just dreams. Setting them apart is the intense reality of the experience and the surrender of one's heart and mind to Christ in the wake of the dream. A common denominator appears to be that the dreams come to those who are seeking—as best they can—to know and please God.

Beginning in 2002, a group of people interested in this phenomenon took initial steps in bringing it to the attention of a worldwide audience through a series of video programs. Numerous on-site interviews were conducted with former Muslims who had experienced a dream or vision of Jesus resulting in their conversion to Christianity. From the outset, the producers endeavored to represent a global cross-section of Islam in the series, and for that reason, stories were sought in Arabic-speaking countries, Muslim areas throughout Africa and Asia and the secular Muslim nation of Turkey.

The project's goal was to create versions of these stories in multiple languages, and, in league with ministry partners around the world, disseminate the product globally both to evangelize unbelievers and encourage those who have already

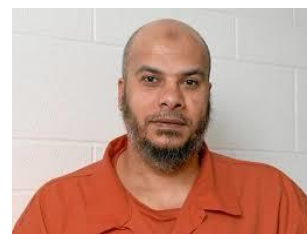


Throughout the Muslim world men and women without knowledge of the gospel or contact among Christians have experienced dreams and visions of Jesus Christ.

experienced a dream or vision of Jesus that they are not alone. The following five stories were put together into the video series called *More Than Dreams*:²



1. **1, Khalil.** In September 2004, production began in high-definition video on the first of five stories. It was the remarkable account of Khalil, a radical Egyptian terrorist who was changed from a murderous "Saul" to a forgiving "Paul." He set out to discredit the Bible but could not; and although he despised Christians and Jews, his heart was changed forever when the savior appeared to him in a dream that penetrated his soul.



2. **Khosrow.** Later that same month, production began on the story of Khosrow, who, as a teenager in Iran, despaired of life itself. That is, until he experienced a vision of Jesus Christ. In the vision, Christ extended his hand toward Khosrow, inviting him to take hold and promising him that his "life would change forever." Khosrow took Jesus' hand and, as he describes it, "waves of electricity flowed through my body over and over again. I wept for the first time since I was a child and joy filled my heart."



3. **3. Dini.** Dini also came to faith in Christ as a teenager in her native Indonesia. Feeling let down by family, friends and society and drifting into rebellion, Dini nonetheless yearned to know God and please him. On the night of Lailatur Qodar, when Muslims around the world make individualized prayers to Allah, Dini experienced a vision of Jesus Christ, who appeared before her and told her to follow him. Dini was hesitant. As a Muslim, she realized that following Christ would make her a



² Photos shown are examples of the people. Real photos are not shown for security reasons.

Christian. But she overcame her fear and committed her life to Christ that same night. Peace filled her heart, even as persecution began.



4. **Mohammed.** Mohammed of northern Nigeria did not have just one dream of Jesus Christ—he had seven! Son of a prominent Fulani herdsman, Mohammed had studied the Qur’an in depth at several Muslim schools and was preparing to leave for advanced studies in Saudi Arabia when he experienced the series of dreams that convinced him of the deep love and lordship of Jesus Christ. Although his father tried to kill him in the wake of his

conversion, Mohammed survived the various attempts on his life and persevered in his Christian walk, eventually leading his father to faith in Christ.

5.

Ali. Ali grew up in an area of Turkey heavily influenced by communist ideology. As a boy, he talked to a god he surmised must be there, as evidenced by the beauty of the natural world around him. Married at a young age, he became an alcoholic. Desperate for a solution to his addiction, Ali went to Saudi Arabia to work in construction, reasoning that he would have to quit drinking because alcohol was forbidden there. To his dismay, friends showed him where to buy liquor on the night of his arrival. Not willing to give up easily, Ali made the pilgrimage to Mecca in hopes that God would free him of his addiction to alcohol and lead him in the way of a true and better Muslim. While sleeping a stone’s throw from the Ka’aba, Ali experienced a dream of Jesus Christ that changed him.

More Than Dreams Video Programs

The distribution strategy of *More Than Dreams* involves a multi-pronged approach in which each of the five stories will be dubbed into different languages in order to reach the largest target audience possible. It is estimated that Islam numbers over one billion followers worldwide. Through satellite broadcasts and massive “home video” distribution on VCD, DVD and VHS, **it is hoped that More Than Dreams will reach millions of Muslims.** The producers are allowing distribution

partners to use the programs and even make copies for evangelistic purposes without royalty payments. The website www.morethandreams.tv provides more information on the series as well as on partnership opportunities.

The language conversion strategy is to first dub all five stories into the five original languages featured in *More Than Dreams*: Arabic, Farsi, Bahasa Indonesia, Hausa and Turkish. At the same time, they are planning on dubbing them into several other languages commonly spoken by Muslims: French, English, Urdu, Bengali, Kyble Berber and Russian. After this, depending on factors such as funding availability and distribution partner interest, they hope to put the series into many other languages, including a variety of Central Asian languages, Mandarin Chinese, German, Fulani, Bahasa Malaysia, Swahili and Tagalog.

Complimenting the audio-visual approach, the producers have designed an Arabic-language website to handle follow-up inquiries. This site was designed in such a way that it can also serve as a template for *More Than Dreams* follow-up websites in other languages.

To date, the entire series has aired several times in Arabic on satellite TV across the Middle East and North Africa. It is also currently airing in Farsi on a satellite channel broadcasting to Iran and the Iranian Diaspora in Europe. Broadcasts are planned for other language versions as they are completed.



However, due to the nature of *More Than Dreams*, the producers are putting more emphasis on physical distribution in DVD and VCD format than on broadcast of the series. In fact, they have set a goal of distributing ten million copies directly and through partnerships in the next three to five years. The first major distribution occurred mid-2006 in Europe. An Arabic-language version of the product was developed. It featured three of the five stories, a ministry segment featuring a

Muslim Background Believer (MBB) explaining how to accept Christ and how to walk with him and an Arabic Bible in electronic format. Partnering organizations handed out thousands of copies to Arabs attending the Germany 2006 World Cup matches involving Saudi Arabia and Tunisia. They distributed many more copies as well to Arabs and North African residents in Europe as well as to North Africans traveling by ferry between Europe and North Africa. A few months later, the same content was packaged on two VCDs and duplicated for distribution in North Africa.



More Than Dreams producers are beginning to receive many email reports of the ministry impact of the series. One American was able to lead an Indonesian girl to Christ by asking her to listen to the audio of the Dini story through an Internet telephone. Many Arabic-speakers have written to share how they too have had dreams or visions of Christ and were encouraged

to see these types of experiences featured on television. Middle Eastern Christians have written to express appreciation for the project. A believer in Jordan wrote that he loves watching it because it strengthens his faith and gives him inner peace. Another Middle Eastern believer wrote, "I want [a DVD copy of] this film because there are many things said in the programs that can touch my friends' hearts and souls and maybe by seeing it they will accept Jesus in their lives."



Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." This joining of one to Christ may or may not embody a physical death, but it is always a death to one's self-interest. One-sixth of the world's population is bound by ignorance and separated from God. Yet in their zeal to know and serve the only god they know, many of the world's Muslims put practitioners of other world religions—including Christians—to shame. How can we, as followers of Jesus

Christ, ignore their plight? As the Apostle Paul wrote, "*How are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?*" (Romans 10:14)

See the videos at <http://morethan dreams.org/>. Copy and paste to your browser. See how Jesus is changing lives.

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Our mission statement is to motivate people to pray and to be Christian examples in their work, home and with others, for those needing the Light in a world of Darkness.

<https://www.catholicfamilynewsletter.com>



Pray the Rosary Daily
to Save Souls.



Come to Me, All those who are weary and burdened