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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?

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.”

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. (Here is a [video of a Muslim Indonesian family that converted](#), explaining that they now pray to Allah as Father, Son—Jesus is called Isa—and Holy Spirit.)

“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 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.”

To learn more about Father Zakariam go [here](#).