

The world is crying out for The Gospel

BY GREG TRAINOR
Catholic lay evangelist



My, how time flies when we are having fun! It is already 2010 and we are beginning another decade. We have just finished the decade after the “Decade of Evangelization.” Some of you will remember that is the name that we gave to the 1990’s, when we asked the Lord to use our efforts to evangelize the world so that, on Christmas Day in the year 2000, we would have a world that was more than 50% Christian. We’ve reached another significant milestone in time. I think that it is time to check our progress.

Some observations. On the back of this newsletter are charts with the updated research from my book, *Holy Spirit Evangelism*. The source of the data is the World Christian Database, a comprehensive project of researchers that provided the data for the *World Christian Encyclopedia*. These charts have been updated to include their projections for mid-2010 and long-term projections for 2025 and 2050. These charts are intended to give you a snapshot on the progress of world evangelism in our time.

The sobering reality is that we live in a world that is less Christian than it was in 1900. A greater percentage of the world was Christian in 1970 than in 2010. Projections show that we will reach the 1900 percentage some time between 2010 and 2025. But the sad reality is that there is a throng of humanity (4.6 billion) still awaiting conversion. Many of these are waiting to hear a first proclamation of the Gospel. Truly, much of the earth is crying out for the Gospel!

The chart entitled “World Christians by Denomination” shows the massive size of the Catholic Church. It is easy to see why we are often referred to as the “sleeping giant of evangelism.” If each Catholic were to ask God to use their life (words, actions, prayers) to reach one person with the Gospel each year, the entire world would be Christian in just a few short years. The words of Jesus ring true in our day: “Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.” (John 4:35) Pope John Paul II wrote so clearly about this very subject:

...it is clear that the peoples who have not yet received an initial proclamation of Christ constitute the majority of mankind. The results of missionary activity in modern times are certainly positive... Tertullian’s say-

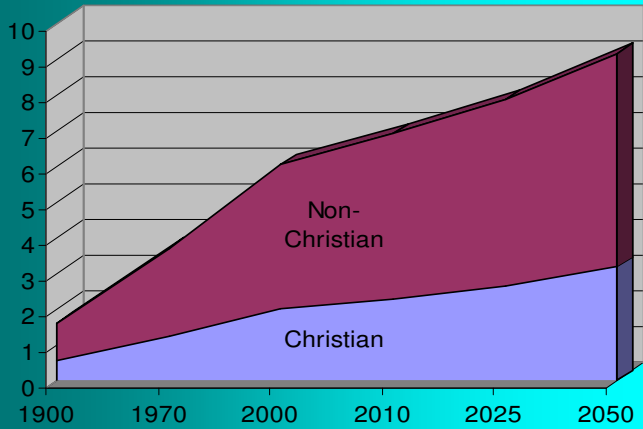
ing, that the Gospel has been proclaimed to all the earth and to all peoples, is still very far from being a reality.... All who believe in Christ should feel, as an integral part of their faith, an apostolic concern to pass on to others its light and joy. This concern must become, as it were, a hunger and thirst to make the Lord known, given the vastness of the non-Christian world. (*Encyclical Mission of the Redeemer*, 40)

Moving forward. I am still convinced that we are living in a time of grace and mercy, a time in which the Gospel is to be proclaimed among the nations in the power of the Holy Spirit to reap a massive harvest of souls for the kingdom. We must not grow slack in our zeal to bring the Gospel to the world!

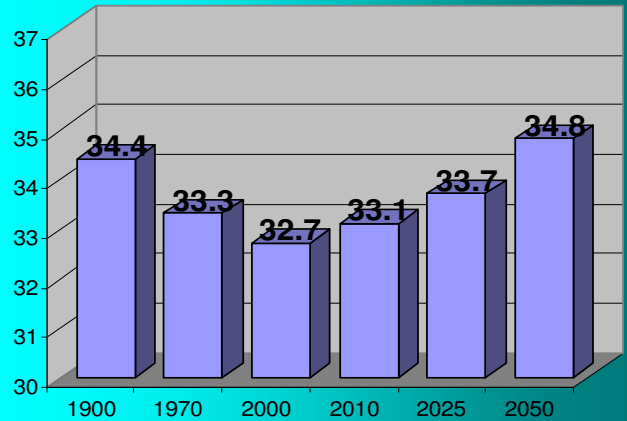
The call to evangelize the world demands a personal response. Give God permission to use you to spread the Gospel to the world around you. Please know that your partnership with our ministry is a practical way in which you are helping to evangelize the world. Through your support in prayers and finances, you are helping to reach the world with the Gospel, call the lost to conversion, and bring the fire of Pentecost to the Church.

You have an important decision to make: will you give God permission to use your life for the spreading of the Gospel? If you give God this permission, he will use you to reap a harvest of souls in our day. There will be people that will reign in heaven with God forever instead of suffering in Hell because you said “yes.” Please notice that I am not asking you if you feel qualified or adequately prepared to share the Gospel. I am simply asking this: are you willing? If so, God will use you. If you are willing, God is able to use you.

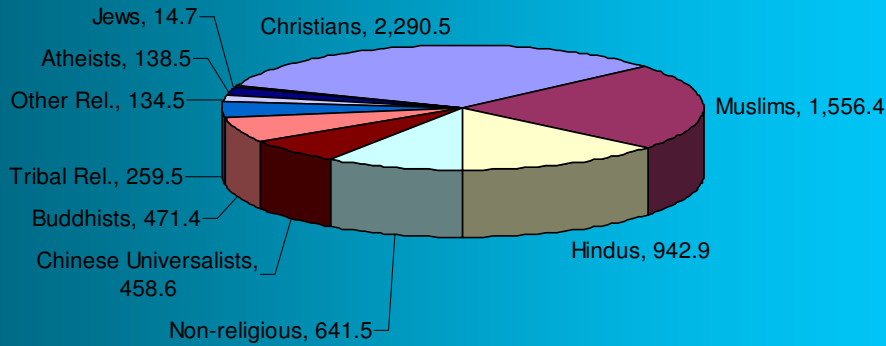
World Population (billions)



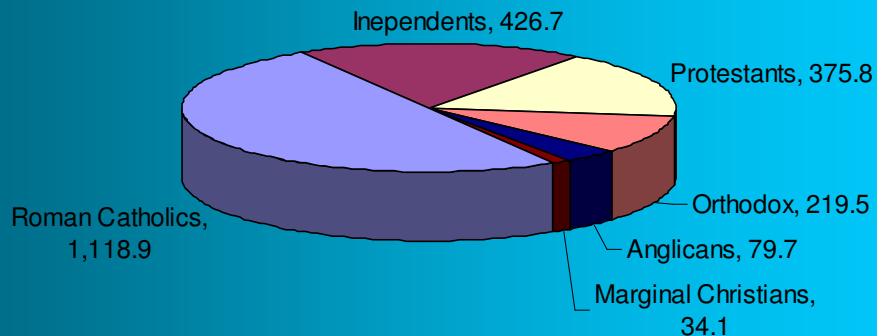
Christian Percentage of World Population



World Population by Religion (millions)



World Christians by Denomination (millions)



The above charts are excerpts from Greg Trainor's book, *Holy Spirit Evangelism*. The data source is the World Christian Database, available by subscription, online, internet. These figures reflect mid-2010 projected totals.

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