



# INTERCEDE

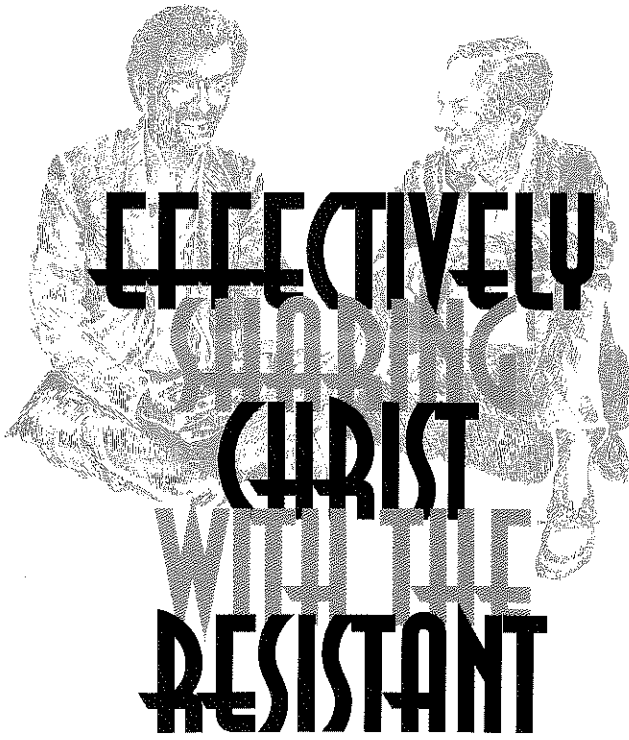
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# FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM

**“There is no shortcut to understanding the people. When you understand the people, you will often know what to say and do, and how. When people know that the Christians understand them, they infer that maybe the High God understands them too.”**

—George G. Hunter III



by Kimberly R.M. Hill

In the fifth century AD, a bishop named Patrick was called by God to minister among the Irish Celts. Because he understood them, Patrick realized that reaching the Celts with the gospel would require a remarkably different approach than the usual Roman method of evangelism. Thus, Patrick and his co-laborers developed a ministry based on hospitality and friendship. By the time of his death, Patrick had started a movement that not only saved the Celts, but has been credited with the saving of most of Europe.

The Celtic model of friendship evangelism is a very effective model for the 21st century. For the Muslim, it can be particularly effective because it is based on the important tenet of hospitality.

As we practice hospitality and friendship towards others, we can then point them to the One who is the ultimate Friend: Jesus Christ. He is the example for Patrick's model.

Jesus spent time with people, eating and drinking with them, getting to know and understand them.

*continued on page 4*

# Until All Have Heard



**Jim Bennett, Director**

Center for  
Ministry to Muslims

*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?  
(Romans 10:14)*

I believe you will enjoy and be challenged by the concepts set forth in our lead article and the campus report on page five on friendship evangelism. One priority of CMM is to find pastors and laypeople who will become friends of Muslims living in the United States. Even as I write this article, we are trying to find someone to befriend a Muslim exchange student from Uzbekistan.

While dreams, visions and other manifestations are a striking reminder of the sovereign move of the Holy Spirit across Muslim lands, still the general consensus among those who are engaged in sharing the gospel in Islamic contexts is that "friendship evangelism" is the most effective approach. Simply stated that means *becoming a friend* to the one with whom you wish to share the truth about Christ. In most cases where Muslims decide to become followers of Jesus, it is because *someone has taken the time* to build a bridge of friendship leading to credibility.

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A few days ago I spoke with a young Muslim man who accepted Christ in his Middle-Eastern country over a year ago. He was frightened that his family would learn of his conversion. After doing my best to give him good counsel, I learned he had been taught from childhood to distrust "Christians because they have corrupted their scripture and worship three gods."

What convinced him to be a serious inquirer? A Christian student at the Islamic university offered him genuine friendship. The young Muslim saw a

true Christian believer for the first time and was convinced to follow Jesus.

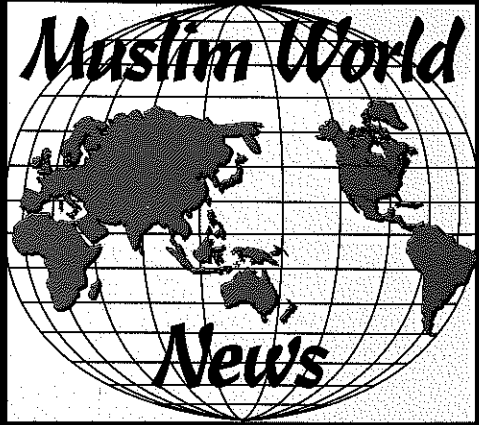
Yes, friendship evangelism is where the real "trench work" takes place in reaching Muslims with the gospel, but it is where the results are most often seen. My friend Suliman comes from a strong Muslim family. Upon learning of his conversion, his father tried to crush his forehead with a cement block. He was injured but spared and to this day prays compassionately for his father and family. Suliman's eyes light up and a huge smile breaks across his face when he speaks of a national pastor *who befriended him* when he was abandoned by everyone else.

In America opportunities for friendship evangelism among Muslims abound. University cities are full of Muslim students. Immigrant Muslims are in virtually all major cities and continue to trickle down to the small towns. Large numbers of them are in life transition situations and await someone to befriend them.

Recently a lady who works with international students on a large American university campus attended a seminary class I was teaching. In a discussion about the importance of patience in friendship evangelism efforts, she quoted a Muslim student, who said: *Americans are friendly people, but they don't make good friends.* While I don't entirely agree with this assessment, I believe the point is worth pondering. Since we know that Muslims are culturally relational people and are most likely to respond when they see a sustained credible reflection of Jesus in our lives, are we willing to invest the time to practice friendship evangelism?



# Muslim World



## Iran

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami is expected to declare his candidacy for a second term amid accusations that he has hindered reform by not standing up to the conservative clerics who hold ultimate power. Khatami has expressed his own frustrations, declaring recently that after three years as president, "I don't have sufficient powers to implement the constitution."

Khatami was swept into office in a landslide victory in Iran's 1997 general elections on the promise of establishing a civil society with greater freedoms.

—Newsroom

## Turkey

Fourteen months after the Istanbul Protestant Church filed for legal status as a religious foundation, Turkey's highest court overruled all previous appeals, giving a green light to establishing the first legally recognized Turkish evangelical church.

"This begins a new step in Turkey," commented Carolos Madrigal, pastor of the 50-member congregation in Istanbul and 15-member congregation in Izmir.

Over the past decade, some 20 convert Christian congregations in Turkey have been allowed to register their places of worship as "houses of prayer." Nevertheless, they have been subjected to repeated police harassment.

"This legal recognition should put a stop to that," according to the church's legal counsel. "This is the Supreme Court's final ruling. It cannot be appealed again or abrogated, and it must be upheld."

—Compass

## Kenya

Religious leaders in an inter-faith coalition pressing for constitutional reform blame the government for violence that left hundreds of Nairobi slum dwellers homeless or injured and four places of worship in ruins.

Anglican Archbishop David Gitari, who was injured while trying to quell the fighting, called on the government of President Daniel arap Moi to resign over increasing insecurity and mismanagement of national affairs.

Violence erupted when Muslims began to fence a plot next to a mosque in the Mukuru slum area and tried to evict traders who had occupied the area for several years. Muslims claim they own the deed to the land. The traders retaliated by burning down the mosque. Muslims, beginning the celebration of Ramadan, responded by destroying the traders' wares and kiosks.

—Newsroom

## Nigeria

Despite assurances that non-Muslims would not be affected by the implementation of Islamic law in nine northern states, some Christians contend that their ability to make a living or use public transportation has suffered. The resulting increase in sectarian tensions has triggered bloody clashes.

In Kano state, where Islamic law, or *Sharia*, officially became effective last November, news that businesses of non-Muslims may be affected has caused some entrepreneurs to leave. In Niger state, the committee to implement *Sharia* has clashed with non-Muslims over the sale of alcohol, resulting in several deaths. Alcohol is prohibited under Islamic law.

The Council of Ulamas, made up of Muslim clerics, warned German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke to stay away from the northern states. The warning came after the popular Protestant preacher led a series of meetings in Lagos in November that attracted more than 1 million people.

The Ulamas vowed to use all resources at their disposal to prevent a visit by Bonnke, whose visit in 1991 was marred by a two-day bloody riot that Muslims blame on the evangelist.

—Newsroom

## Kazakhstan

The Kazak New Testament has been completed for the first time in the Central Asian language of Kazak. The Bible League (South Holland, IL) released the second edition of the Kazak Holy Book, including the completed New Testament last fall. About 44,000 copies were produced in the first print run. Half of them were distributed in the first three weeks. Translation of the New Testament took 10 years.

—Pulse

## Bulgaria

"We have been looking to the West (for aid), but God is calling us to turn our eyes to the East—to the Muslims of Turkey and Central Asia." These words of an Eastern European pastor were an indication of what God was saying during a recent pastors' training seminar conducted by two CMM team members.

For some time God had been impressing Bulgarian pastors concerning the need to be more involved in reaching out to the thousands of Muslims in their country and beyond. The pastor who was chosen to coordinate this united outreach realized they needed specialized training. They called upon CMM to help equip them for this pioneer ministry.

Over 50 pastors and Christian workers attended the 4-day training seminar near Sofia, the capital city. Two participants from neighboring Romania also shared stirring reports of God's challenge to them to train and send missionaries, despite oppressive economic hardships.

Jumaa prayer partners pray regularly that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into the harvest. There is a deep sense that God is truly answering their prayers.

—CMM Report



# FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM

Through His friendship, people of every race and belief were drawn to Him; they knew He could meet every need.

The beauty of friendship evangelism is that it is universal: *everyone can practice it and, given time, almost everyone will respond to it.*


I stumbled upon this model of ministry quite by accident in graduate school. An extremely diverse school, my circle of friends represented more than a dozen different nationalities, and for many, English was not their first language. It was not surprising then that most of my friends had never encountered the gospel of Christ at any level. However, throughout the course of our 2 years together, after hundreds of lunches, afternoon teas, and dinner parties, all of my friends had heard the gospel in one form or another.

Most often they heard it in the form of my story: why I am who I am, how I got to be where I am, etc. My story, like most Christians' stories, is intimately tied to the hand of God and salvation through His Son. As a result of being open and genuine, many of my friends, including my Muslim friends, would come to me to share

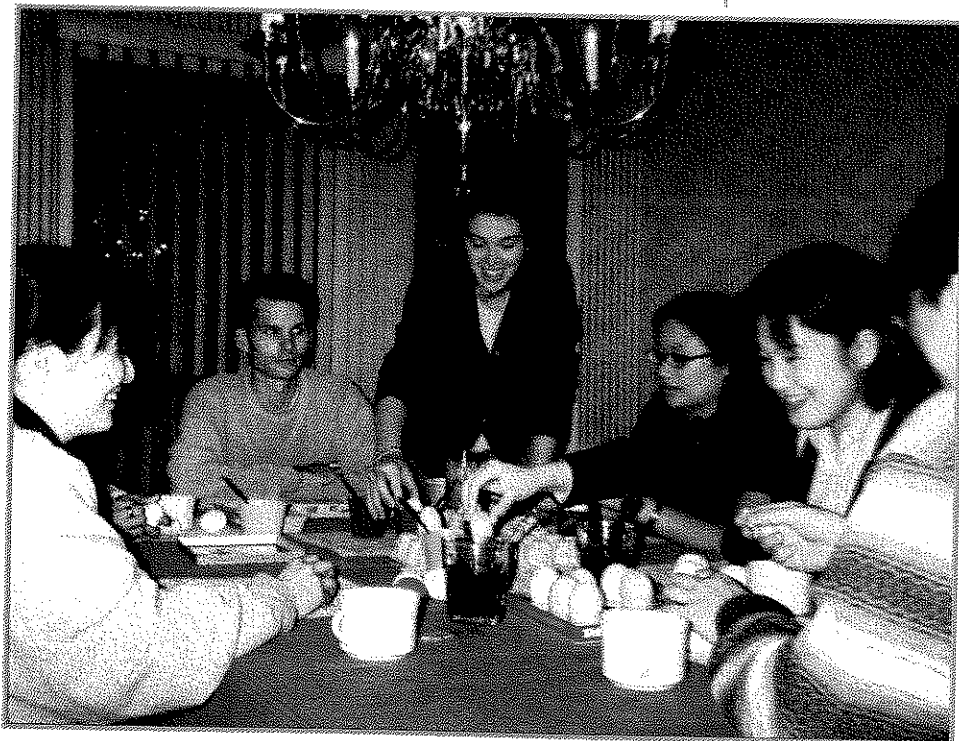


their burdens and often ask for prayer. In fact, even though we have graduated, they still do. The seeds of Christ's love have been planted and watered, and by faith I know that the Holy Spirit will bring them to fruition.

It's true that I have no numbers to share, and I cannot provide salvation statistics. But friendship evangelism isn't for those who are looking for statistics. It is, however, for those who genuinely desire to see their friends come to know Christ. It takes time, perseverance and prayer.

After 28 years of work, Patrick only saw conversions in about 30 Celtic tribes. Yet within 100 years, those 30 tribes changed all of Europe through hospitality and friendship. All that was required was willing hearts that understood the people to whom they ministered and had faith in a limitless God whom they loved. 

<sup>1</sup> The discussion of Patrick and his style of evangelism comes from George G. Hunter's *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West...Again*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.



# Friendship Evangelism Reaches International Students on U.S. College Campus

The American Friends Program (AFP) began at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., in the fall of 1998. The purpose of AFP is to help international students in their transition to the United States and provide them with opportunities to experience American culture. Services provided by AFP include airport pickups, host families, holiday events, cultural activities and more.

In the last three years over 150 volunteers from local churches have befriended more than 300 international students from at least 40 countries. Through unconditional friendship with these students, many volunteers and AFP staff have had the opportunity to share their faith with these foreign students. For some students it was the first time they had ever heard the gospel.

Because AFP is a program of Chi Alpha, a ministry that reaches out to students on secular college campuses, many international students also come to our Christian activities and Bible studies.


The majority of international students who come to the United States return to their homelands without ever making an American friend or being invited to an American home. This is very sad because when the students are here, they are open to those who offer them friendship. Through the American Friends Program we have had many accept Christ as Savior because of the testimonies, both spoken and unspoken, of those who befriend them while they are here in the States.

International students at Georgetown have been overwhelmed by the friendship and hospitality offered through AFP. In

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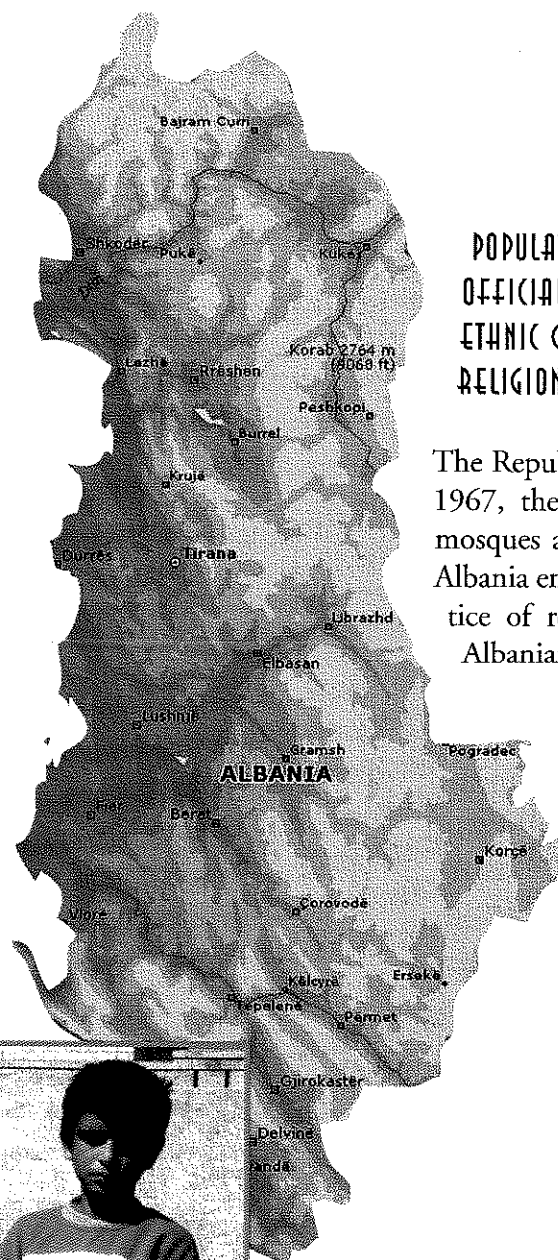


fact one student said he decided on Georgetown over other schools because of the opportunity to participate in the American Friends Program.

The success of AFP can be attributed to biblical principles found in both the Old and New Testaments. God hasn't changed His mind; His desire is for people of all nations to know and serve Him. AFP is one way God's will is being accomplished. 

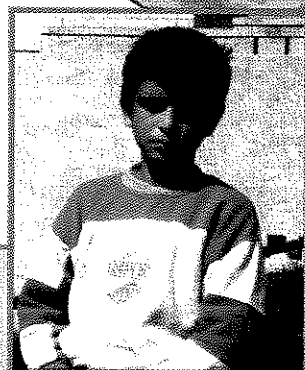
# COUNTRY PROFILE:

## ALBANIA



POPULATION:	3,490,435
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:	Albanian (official dialect: Tosk)
ETHNIC GROUPS:	Albanian 95%, Greeks 3%, Other 2%
RELIGIONS:	Muslim 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%

The Republic of Albania became a communist nation in the 1940s. In 1967, the atheistic government seized the property of all churches, mosques and synagogues. Finally, in 1991, the communist regime in Albania ended. The Albanian government once again legalized the practice of religion, and further safeguarded this practice in the 1998 Albanian Constitution.



### UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP: GHEG ALBANIAN

LOCATION:	North of the Shkumbin River
POPULATION:	332,700
RELIGION:	Nonreligious 50%, Hanafite Muslim 25%, Atheist 19%, Christian 4%
NUMBER HAVING HEARD THE GOSPEL:	173,800 (55%)
NUMBER YET TO HEAR THE GOSPEL:	142,200 (45%)

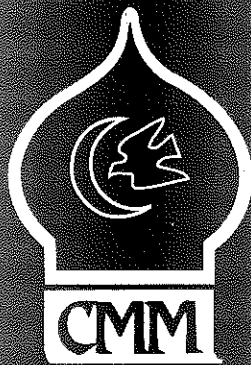
The Gheg comprise one of two people groups dominant in Albania. Prior to 1967, many of the Gheg professed to be Catholic. Today that number is almost nonexistent. Though most religious groups within Albania have amicable relationships, Muslim, Catholic and Albanian Orthodox leaders are pressuring the government to ban other religions and other Christian traditions—considered “non-Albanian”—from the country.

### PRAY THAT...

- God will grant His wisdom and favor to the missions agencies that are currently targeting the Gheg Albanians.
- Legislation restricting the preaching of the gospel will not be passed.
- God will use the small number of Gheg believers to share the gospel with their own people.

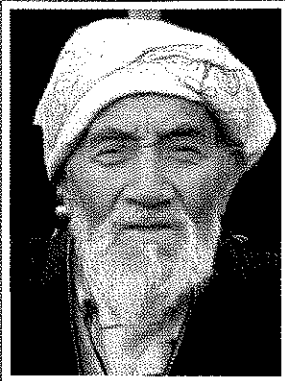
<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all statistics come from the CIA World Factbook 2000, US Department of State 2000 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom: Indonesia, and Bethany World Prayer Center's "The Unreached Peoples Prayer Profiles."





# Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims  
Around the World!



## Friday, May 4, 2001. Please pray

...throughout this month for the ongoing Institute of Islamic Studies at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio, Philippines. Pray for the safety and encouragement of each professor and student.

...for the many Muslims in limited-access countries who are risking their lives to make a commitment to Christ and are being baptized. Pray that the Holy Spirit will empower them to stand strong in the face of persecution. Pray especially for five who were baptized last summer in such a place.

...that the Holy Spirit will empower the joint efforts of workers among Muslims to turn the tide against the spread of Islam. Mosques are springing up throughout Europe with great expansion being evident in Germany.

...that more Western Christians will reach out in friendship to Muslims living among them.

## Friday, May 11, 2001. Please pray

...for the many who are hearing the gospel for the first time via satellites and are finding Christian sites on the Internet. Pray that the Holy Spirit may make the truth clear to them.

...for Christians in the Maluku islands who are being forced at gunpoint to convert to Islam. At least 5,000 people have been killed in sectarian violence the past two years. Thousands have fled to North Sulawesi to escape this threat.

...for the safety of a pastor who, during his imprisonment in Uzbekistan, led two dozen of his cell-mates to Christ. He has been released, but discrimination continues in the country.

...that those who oppress Christians in Turkmenistan will experience repentance and salvation.

## Friday, May 18, 2001. Please pray

...for the 56 out of 80 provinces in Turkey that still have no Christian witness. Pray for open doors and willing foreign and national believers to hear God's call to live and serve in remote areas.

...for Christian students in Egypt who are being targeted for kidnapping and conversion to Islam. Pray that this plan will be thwarted and Christian students will have discernment and courage to withstand.

...that God will strengthen and reveal himself to the many Muslims who feel so isolated from any Christian fellowship. Pray especially for N., the first Uzbek believer in her region.

...for the many Turkish fellowships that now have hope of being legally registered following the ruling of the Supreme Court. Pray that many more will be willing to take this bold step.

## Friday, May 25, 2001. Please pray

...that many more Christian Koreans can gain entrance to limited-access countries to spread the gospel. Pray specifically that God will send new teams into Northern China, Malaysia and Daghestan.

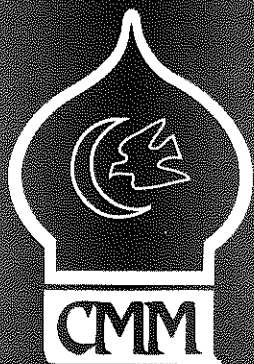
...for new workers to go to establish the first church among the 6-million Baluch of Pakistan.

...that God will raise up church-planting teams to bring the gospel to Muslims in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

...for the many students who will be involved in short-term missions trips to Muslim countries this summer. Pray that God will work in their hearts, causing them to feel a burden to become full-time missionaries to Muslims.

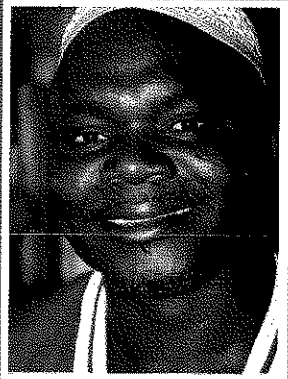


I urge, then, first of all  
that requests, prayers,  
intercession and  
thanksgiving be  
made for everyone.  
—(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)



# Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims  
Around the World!



## Friday, June 1, 2001. Please pray

...for two training programs for missionaries being held in Brazil next week. Pray that many workers will respond to the challenge concerning outreach to Muslims being made by a CMM team member. Praise God for the many Two-thirds world missionaries who are going to Muslim countries.

...for the Church in Pakistan, where Christians continue to be threatened, raped or imprisoned. Pray that God will change the government and provide strength and protection for the Church. ...that willing workers can get residence in Chechnya and rebuild homes for the battered Chechen people.

## Friday, June 8, 2001. Please pray

...for a pastor who is being denied access to his Bible and needs medical treatment in a Turkmenistan prison. Pray that God will minister to his family as well.

...for a breakthrough this year for efforts in West Malaysia. Pray that God will provide jobs for Filipinos and others who can represent Christ there.

...for the many who have received a gospel witness at Christian concerts held in limited-access countries. Pray that the information and courses they received will impact them and bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

## Friday, June 15, 2001. Please pray

...for the participants at an institute that has been established in Romania for training workers involved in ministry to Muslims. Pray God will anoint the CMM team member who will be teaching Islamics the next two weeks.

...that God will reveal himself through His Word, His messengers or through supernatural means to the many who are seeking to find reality in their lives.

...continually for those believers in Israel and the West Bank who have been affected by the ongoing violence and tension in that region. Pray that God will bring unity and peace.

## Friday, June 22, 2001. Please pray

...for the students at Elam College in England as they prepare for ministry among Persian-speaking people groups. They are actively pursuing ministry opportunities during the summer break.

...that workers among Muslim people groups will find culturally-appropriate means of making the gospel relevant to the lives of the people using redemptive analogies from the language and culture.

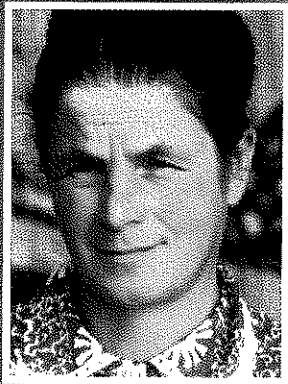
...for Suleman Masih, an evangelist in north Pakistan. He has been imprisoned for preaching in the streets. Propagation of the gospel is allowed by the constitution of Pakistan.

## Friday, June 29, 2001. Please pray

...for the outreach of the Nigerian Church among people groups of northern Nigeria. Pray that the leaders may continued to be united in purpose.

...for Christians in the Maluku islands who have watched as their homes and churches were burned and family members killed. Pray that the Lord will strengthen their hearts and encourage them with His comfort.

...for the Lord to open doors for preaching the gospel in many Kanuri and Fulani settlements in West Africa. Pray that He will remove the resistant forces and raise up workers for this harvest field.



*Urge, then, first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.*  
—(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)