



VOICES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

QUIET FAITH

Written by Gülsüm from SAT-7 TÜRK

Although it is not illegal to be Christian in Türkiye, believers often face pressure from within their communities.

This is especially the case for those who convert to Christianity from another religion. When you change religion in a predominantly non-Christian country, people around you criticise or exclude you. Even close relatives can ostracise family members who turn to Christ. Changing religion is perceived as a betrayal to both family and country. For this reason, there are many Christians in Türkiye who hide their faith from their families and communities. Unfortunately, this is something we hear a lot from people in local churches. SAT-7 viewers also write to us and ask for prayer about pressure from their families.

Christmas can therefore be an especially lonely time for many Turkish Christians. In Türkiye, Christmas is celebrated among families and in local churches. Special clothes are bought for the children for the occasion. People go to church and cook special meals. We pray together. Everyone is in a spirit of festive joy.

It is also an opportunity to celebrate the different cultures in the country; the customs of



On the set of SAT-7 TÜRK programme, Let's Talk

Armenians and Greeks are different from each other, while Turkish Christians have their own customs. Churches even use different words for "Christmas"; some call it "Noel", while others say "Doğuş". But these differences do not separate us; we are grateful for the cultural richness in Türkiye. At SAT-7 TÜRK, we always try to reflect this richness on our screens. Although from different cultures, we celebrate the birth of Jesus with one heart, united by our faith in Him.

For those who have to keep their faith quiet this Christmas – and throughout the year – SAT-7 TÜRK's programmes and viewer support are a lifeline, and help people to feel connected to the Body of Christ. We produce programmes specifically for women, children and youth. We broadcast sermons from pastors and priests of local churches. We highlight the Christian history in Türkiye and so inform the non-Christians here about this heritage. And people are responding every day. There are many people from different faiths writing to us from different parts of Türkiye. And we pray for them all.

I would like to share with you the prayer request of one of our viewers, who asked us to pray with him for a world where everyone can live out their faith freely. Please join us in praying for SAT-7 viewers in Türkiye, especially those who feel silenced and isolated at this time.