



VOICES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

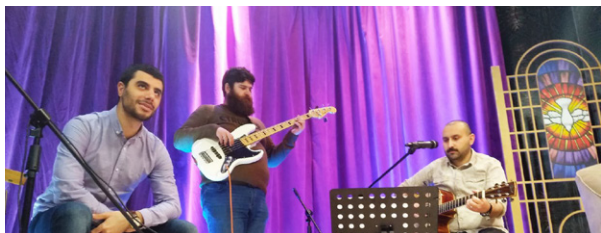
QUIET FAITH

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, even close relatives, criticise or exclude you. 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 Armenians and Greeks are different from each other, while Turkish Christians have their own customs. Churches even use different words for "Christmas";



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

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.

We also haven't forgotten our brothers and sisters in the earthquake region, who are a long way from getting their lives back the way it was before disaster hit. In their celebrations this Christmas, we will see how people can still be grateful after they lose all their earthly possessions – and as a channel, we will continue to amplify their voices.

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 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.

Please join us in praying for SAT-7 viewers in Türkiye, especially those who feel silenced and isolated at this time.