



## 124. Religions

W: Sarah, did you know that Christianity is the religion with the largest following in the world, but Islam is the fastest growing?

Sarah: actually I ignored it, but I know that some eight hundred fifty million people define themselves as secular, non-religious, agnostic or atheistic. That's a lot, and in the same time not that much out of seven billion inhabitants on Earth!

W: I didn't think Christianity would be more followed than Islam as in France for instance, the number of church-goers keeps falling. Even some strict Catholics consider that the church should evolve.

Sarah: we must state that the Pope's stance on contraception does little to burnish the image of the church.

W: and not to forget the vocation crisis! Can the vocation crisis be explained by the fact that priests have to take vows of celibacy and chastity?

Sarah: without doubt, knowing moreover that the Catholic Church has always been against the ordination of women into priesthood, and in France the need for priests is greater than ever.

W: what is really scary is also the fact that historically most of the wars were generated by religions. On this matter Tony Blair said that the nine-eleven attacks were 'no more a reflection of true Islam than the Crusades were a reflection of true Christianity'.

Sarah: well, I think that like any faith, Islam is a religion of peace, as are also Hinduism, Buddhism, or Shintoism.

W: Very true, unfortunately most people forget this fact...



GLOSSARY:

Religions: les religions	Celibacy : le célibat
To follow: suivre	Chastity: la chasteté
To grow: croître, grandir	Catholic Church: l'Eglise Catholique
To define oneself: se définir	The ordination: l'ordination
To fall/fell/fallen: tomber, chuter	Priesthood: la prêtrise
To consider: considérer	Nine-eleven attacks: les attaques du 11 septembre 2001
To evolve: évoluer	A reflection: un reflet
To state: noter	The Crusades: les croisades
To burnish: redorer	Faith: la foi
To take vows: faire vœu	Peace: la paix
To be against: être contre, s'opposer	Hinduism: l'Hindouisme
To generate: générer	Buddhism: le Bouddhisme
Christianity: le Christianisme	Shintoism: le Shintoism
Islam: l'Islam	A fact: un fait
Secular: laïque	Even: même
Non-religious: non croyant	Without doubt: sans doute
Agnostic: agnostique	Moreover: de plus
Atheistic: athée	Greater than ever: plus important que jamais
Church-goers: des pratiquants	Scary: effrayant
Strict Catholics: des Catholiques purs et durs	Historically: de tous temps
The Pope : le Pape	True : véritable, vrai
Stance : la position	Places of worship : les lieux de culte
Contraception : la contraception	Mosque : une mosquée
The vocation crisis : la crise des vocations	A temple : un temple
Priests : les prêtres	A synagogue : une synagogue