To: Adventist Heritage

Reaching Out Through Refugee and Immigrant Ministries

An estimated 3 million registered refugees have come to North America in the last 35 years. Many have gone through horrendous experiences of wars or religious persecution in countries where it is difficult to send missionaries due to government restrictions. Many are from very primitive and needy backgrounds and are overwhelmed with all the new surroundings, foods, customs, languages and laws that confront them in their amazing, and often unfriendly or even hostile new country.

Refugee and Immigrant Ministries, under the leadership of Terri Saelee, is brimful of growth potential for churches. Research has shown that the most fruitful field for evangelism is displaced people groups such as refugees and asylees. A couple of refugee pastors of other denominations were baptized recently and their plans are to bring their entire small congregations into the Adventist Church. One of them, even before being baptized, converted 120 families in his home country! "Don’t miss the divine appointments to welcome these guests," says Saelee, "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2).

For ideas on how you can reach out, go to the Refugee and Immigrant Ministries website and click on "Get Involved!" Refugees may need help such as finding a home, appropriate clothing, learning American or Canadian ways, finding qualified counseling and much more. Churches could take them a welcome basket, offer assistance, and invite them to church (they may need transportation). Click here for more suggestions.

ADRA President Outlines Agency’s Future

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International must adapt to the changing development requirements to remain a leader in the humanitarian community and continue to be a vital voice of compassion for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. More

New Committee Continues Review of Adventist Publishing Work in North America

The Seventh-day Adventist Church continues to examine its publishing operations in North America, with a new committee meeting last month to study the issue.

Last month’s launch of a General Conference subcommittee comes nearly two years after another publishing commission examined the efficiency of the world church’s two historic publishing houses: the Nampa, Idaho-based Pacific Press Publishing Association and the Hagerstown, Maryland-based Review and Herald Publishing Association. More

Adventists in the News

Howard school draws a crowd with magnetic exhibit at Port Discovery

Baltimore Sun, April 20

Dangerous trends in religious freedom

Mormon Times, April 19

Vegetarians ‘have lower heart risk’

Bakwell Today, April 18

Sunday mail stops in Adventist community

UPI.com, April 18

Calling all Prayer Warriors

If you would like to be one of 100 000 prayer warriors for NAD’s 2011 NET

Upcoming Events:

Construyendo un hogar feliz

April 16-24, 8:00-9:30 p.m. ET, and 8:00-9:30 p.m. PT - Adly Campos, on Esperanza TV

The Creation Evolution Debate

May 4–8, Handbills and handouts

Family Ministries - Church Growth Webinar

May 10 at 8 p.m. EST, Register and more

Non-profit Leadership Certification Program

May 15–19 Basic Curriculum Link. More

Adventist Single Adult Ministries Day

May 21 More

Women’s Emphasis Day:

June 11 More

PSI’s International Conference on Philanthropy

June 21–24 More

ASI Convention

August 3–6 in Sacramento, CA. More

Festival of the Laity

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June 21–24 More

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August 3–6 in Sacramento, CA. More

Festival of the Laity
Take Action

Personally

- Pray erfully study the Great Commission and the inspired counsels on the "heaven-sent opportunity" to read out to "The Stranger in Our Midst"—people from other nations.
- Get acquainted with refugees and immigrants near your church. "It is acquaintance that awakens sympathy, and sympathy is the spring of effective ministry." Education p. 262.
- Check the "Restaurant" and "Grocery" sections of your local phone directory to see what ethnic foods are available in your area.
- Pray that God will guide you to the people He has sent here for you to introduce to Him.
- Talk to people you meet in local grocery and department stores and apartment complexes who look like they may be from another country. If they are fluent in English, ask if they are bilingual, then ask what languages they speak. If they are not fluent in English, ask if they know another language. Be a friend. Ask what it is like being in this country. Ask what is hard about life in this country. Learn a greeting in their language. Learn how to say "Thank you" in their language. Exchange contact information if they seem comfortable. Stay in touch. Invite them to your home for a meal. Ask about their culture. Ask about family—here and abroad. Imagine what life must be like for them. Show that you care. Ask if there is anything they need. Meet that need to the best of your ability. Invite them to church. Offer to take them. (They may not have transportation.) Use the phrases you learn in their language to greet others who speak the same language.
- As God leads, share with the church what you are learning and doing. Ask them to pray with you for the unreached refugees and immigrants in your area. As your refugee/immigrant friends begin coming to church with you, introduce them to your friends at church. These connections are crucial. Remember the following counsel, and let God lead.

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."—MH 143.

With your Friends

- Contact a local College or University and find out if they have foreign exchange students and, if so, from which countries. Imagine yourself in their situation, often with no transportation, and few, if any, American friends. Be a friend. Invite them to join you for special events and holidays. Provide transportation. Take them shopping. Ask them about their country.
- When you find refugees, immigrants, or visitors from other cultures, tell your church about them. Ask your church to pray for a way to reach out to them.
- Help children with homework.
- Play with the children and find and plan constructive and educational activities for them. (Take a child by the hand, and you take the parent by the heart.)
- Provide music lessons for the children. Help them find an instrument.
- Offer to help them learn to drive, study for their citizenship test, etc.
- Picture yourself in their situation, and ask God for wisdom to anticipate their needs.
- Ask them what their needs are.

As a Church

- Pray for that God will lead you to some of His "guests" from other countries.
- Watch for unexpected guests at your church who seem shy and may not be fluent in English. Get to know them. Ask where they are from, how long they have been in America, and where they live. Be creative. Use "sign language" or paper and pencil. Find a way to communicate. (Where there is a will, there is a way!)
- Visit the guests from other countries who visit your church (even if you are not the pastor). Their hearts will be warmed to know someone cares.
- Invite them to give a special music, read a scripture, or pray in their language. Involve them.
- If no refugees or immigrants are visiting your church, go out and find them!
- Invite them to your community services center.
- When a few refugees begin to come to church:
  - Provide transportation to those who would like to attend but cannot.
  - Provide Bibles, Sabbath School lessons, and other materials in their language. (See refugeeministries.org for resources, or contact Terri Saelee, coordinator of Adventist Refugee and Immigrant Ministries in the North American Division).
  - Provide a room for them to study the Sabbath School lesson together in their language.
  - Ask what they need. Prayerfully find ways to help. Remember God has a special love for refugees and often works unusual miracles in their behalf. (See the book of Exodus.)
  - Help their children to be able to attend Adventist schools.
  - Tell your local conference, and North American Division Refugee and Immigrant Ministries about them so you can receive updates and additional resources as they become available.

  - As the group grows:
    - Ap point, or ask them to appoint, a representative of their group to be on their church board. Give the representative some time at each board meeting to give an update of the progress, needs, and challenges the group is facing.
    - Keep dialogue open with the representative as well and other members as their group grows and the needs change.
    - Expedite membership transfers to show your eagerness to have them in your church.
    - Invite an Adventist pastor to speak to them in their own language and help them organize their group to function more effectively. (Contact ARIM for details.)
    - Watch for the time when they will need a time and place to conduct full worship services in their language. Facilitate their search.
    - Spawn a church plant. Enjoy the fellowship of these precious, gentle brothers and sisters in Christ, but don't discourage them from launching out on their own as a separate and distinct congregation so that they can more effectively reach unreached people of their language group.

As a Conference

- Research refugee demographics in your conference.
- Identify refugee and immigrant populations in your conference.
- Identify volunteers who may already be working with refugees.
- Establish a refugee advisory to meet quarterly.
- Contact Terri Saelee for more information Terri.Saelee@nad.adventist.org or 608-443-6575.

If there are no Refugees in Your Area . . .

- Pray for refugees and let us at ARIM (Adventist Refugee and Immigrant Ministries) know that you are praying
That God will put refugees in touch with caring Adventists near their homes.
That God will impress our members, who live near refugees, to reach out unselfishly to our refugee brothers and sisters.

- Sponsor refugee children to attend an Adventist School.
- Help sponsor trained refugee pastors to organize refugee congregations where refugees can worship in a language they can understand, and be trained to reach out to other refugees who have not yet heard the Everlasting Gospel.
- Donate to provide funds to print and send Bible Studies, Sabbath School lessons quarterlies and other materials in refugee languages to isolated refugees who are interested.
- Volunteer or donate to set up a website as a resource to a refugee language group and those who are reaching out to them.
- Assist with updating this website.

Updated: Feb 18, 2011

Additional links on this topic:

Resources for Reaching Muslims

ADRA President Outlines Agency’s Future

Friday, April 15, 2011

For more information, contact:

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Twitter: www.twitter.com/ADRAi
Facebook: www.facebook.com/joinADRA

SILVER SPRING, Md. - “The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International must adapt to the changing development requirements to remain a leader in the humanitarian community and continue to be a vital voice of compassion for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It has to develop and implement conceptually sound and innovative strategies to position itself as a strong and agile aid agency,” said Dr. Rudi Maier, president and executive director of ADRA, as he presented his vision of the agency’s future to its board of directors at a recent meeting.

Addressing the recent realignment of the agency’s international headquarters in Silver Spring, MD, Maier continued, “That the financial future of many aid agencies, including ADRA, are closely tied to the availability of public and government funding. I believe that by our recent actions we have positioned ourselves to be a stronger and more responsible humanitarian aid agency that is prepared for a new direction in development funding.”

Addressing the issue of ADRA’s relationship to the church, Maier clearly stated, “being a part of the Adventist church has given us purpose and direction and has enhanced our global infrastructure.” He continued, “As a faith-based organization, ADRA has deep and compelling reasons for serving the poor and marginalized. The concept of compassion, service, and commitment is based on our biblical understanding of ministry and it forms our deep-seated foundation which empowers us, as humanitarian workers, to respond to a hurting world.”

Maier expressed his desire for ADRA to embrace its heritage by focusing on health and healthy living, stewardship of the earth, education, social reform, and the use of technology. Maier outlined how these priorities will enhance ADRA’s portfolios such as food security, child and family health, agriculture, civil society, and the environment issues. “Since these are foundational issues, not just for the Adventist church, but equally important to the field of development, ADRA must focus on them to stay competitive in the future.”

Acknowledging a trend that will help shape the success of ADRA’s future Maier spoke of purposefully incorporating technology into development work. “Technology in development is a must. By embracing this aspect of professional development, ADRA will reach a far higher level of understanding and competency in the field of development.”

Providing insight into the practical approach of how to achieve his vision of a modern ADRA, he said, “It is easy to philosophize and even theologize on the issues of development. But what is far more important is to develop a solid practical application.”

Maier went on to provide concrete steps to accomplish his vision:

- Coordinate and strengthen relationships between members of ADRA’s global network of more than 120 offices through the newly created office of vice president for network relations.
- Realign and refocus ADRA’s programs sector to become more competitive in obtaining public funds by searching, strategically, for new areas of engagement.
- Ensure that ADRA continues and builds upon its reputation of being good stewards of the funds entrusted to us by private and public donors.

In order to prepare a context for the future of ADRA’s mission Maier plans to
New committee continues review of Adventist publishing work in North America

Pacific Press, Review and Herald focus of study; denomination’s world HQ buys property from R&H

15 Apr 2011, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States
Ann Gencer

The Seventh-day Adventist Church continues to examine its publishing operations in North America, with a new committee meeting last month to study the issue.

Last month’s launch of a General Conference subcommittee comes nearly two years after another publishing commission examined the efficiency of the world church’s two historic publishing houses: the Nampa, Idaho-based Pacific Press Publishing Association and the Hagerstown, Maryland-based Review and Herald Publishing Association.

The subcommittee is part of the General Conference-North American Division Publishing Strategic Planning Committee -- led by General Conference President Ted N. C. Wilson and North American Division President Daniel R. Jackson, and formed late last summer at Wilson’s request.

“Mrs. Congress commissioned... to look at the publishing houses -- how they’re making it financially -- and then looking at ways and means of... and the North American Division could assist them,” Jackson said. “There are major issues confronting both presses in terms of the future. ...How much can the North American Division do to strengthen and help them grow? I think probably a great deal.”

Indeed, said Mark Thomas, Review and Herald’s president and a committee member, “If we work together, we can maximize our efficiencies. ...Since we have the same goals, we shouldn’t be working crossways with each other but in tandem.”

The new committee represents an effort to do just that. It also seeks to include the associations in the North American region’s ongoing strategic planning process. The committee first met late last year and consists of General Conference and North American Division administrators, publishing professionals and other world church officers, Jackson said.

One of its subgroups, which convened in March, is specifically looking at the North American region’s relationship with the world-church-owned publishing houses. The group is expected to share its recommendations for facilitating that relationship at the committee’s next meeting, said Ken Denslow, Jackson’s assistant.

“I do believe that this latest committee -- one of the great strengths that it’s already bringing out -- is a positive renewal of thinking and planning in North America for more utilization of literature in the churches,” said Pacific Press President Dale Galusha, who serves on the committee.

“This new spark and energy of more people talking about the role that literature plays in the life of the local church is very positive,” he said.

Thomas had a similarly optimistic outlook.

“When this group is done, we think that they will be helping us move forward in a better way,” he said.

“This will allow us to maybe do some new marketing techniques, some newer ways to promote our products in more efficient ways to reach the world in today’s digital format.”

Future of publishing

For the North American region, the discussion stems in part from a desire to involve lay church members more in literature ministry, without returning to “the publishing ministry of yesteryear,” Jackson said.

Electronic publishing is also an area of interest for the future, he said.

“We’re wanting to intensify the connection with the work of the Gospel. ...We want to pursue that in collaboration with the press,” he said. “We have wonderful materials and materials that could give people hope.”

“From our perspective, that’s what it’s about. It’s not about, ‘Let’s go out and do a bunch of orders with the presses so that they can survive,’” Jackson said. “The press must be the servant of the mission. The mission must never be the servant of the press.”

The publishing commission that preceded the new strategic planning committee reported its findings to the world church’s Executive Committee two years ago this month, during the 2009 Spring Meeting. At the time, the report indicated that the two houses faced several financial challenges, including a surplus printing capacity in North America and a declining door-to-door Literature Evangelism program in the United States.

The commission went on to highlight several issues for further study, including the cost of producing in-house versus the external printing market; the current marketing and distribution system, which primarily involves Adventist bookstores; and the “question of how many publishing entities are needed in the life of the church,” said Lowell Cooper, a General Conference vice president and Pacific Press board president. Cooper, who co-chaired the commission, is now a committee member.

Cooper said the issues the commission identified were passed on to the boards of both publishing houses.

In response, the Pacific Press board “has been dealing with certain aspects of the report at each board meeting,” Cooper said. The publishing house also invited Review and Herald to a joint meeting. Review and Herald has not officially responded to the invitation.

Although that invitation was issued two years ago, Thomas said, before he became president in June 2010, leadership from both organizations already meet annually -- most recently in February -- to discuss marketing. Additionally, vice presidents for editorial, marketing and manufacturing from both houses were already meeting, he said.

“We welcome any type of working together,” Thomas said.

One joint effort -- inspired by a commission recommendation to pursue the convergence of media to advertise their products, Galusha said -- involved a first-time, camp-meeting-like sale in 2010 that brought together the use of print, television and the Internet. They plan to repeat the event, Galusha said.

Incorporated in 1861, Review and Herald is the church’s oldest publishing house, printing books and magazines, including Adventist Review and Adventist Life. Pacific Press, founded in 1875, also prints books and magazines and is the lead printer for the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, the church’s lesson quarterly.
The historic publishers are two of the now 63 publishing houses in the denomination worldwide.

While Pacific Press has seen its net worth increase over the past decade -- along with a consistent operating gain of 5 to 6 percent for the past two decades, according to Galusha -- Review and Herald has struggled in recent years. In September, the association underwent a major reorganization and staff cuts in an effort to stem its losses, which were projected at $2.4 million in 2010 and have been a problem for several years.

**Selling assets**

In December, the association sold nearly 47 acres of its Hagerstown campus to the General Conference world headquarters for $11.6 million to help pay off a bank loan, said Robert E. Lemon, world church treasurer. The purchase served in part to avoid losing money on valuable land, Lemon said.

"We have no intention of keeping the land," Lemon said. "We just were not willing to have a fire sale from one of our institutions and sell it at less than market value. ...It's a raw piece of land in a spot that's very desirable, next to a shopping center that has a wish to expand."

He added that the General Conference could hold on to the land for two to three years, until it finds a better time to sell.

Review and Herald has received 80 percent of the money, Lemon said, with the rest to follow once the title is transferred over to the world headquarters. The association also must have the land subdivided, he said, a process that could take four to eight months.

Thomas said the "drastic" changes the organization made last September to correct the years of loss "are starting to make an impact on our bottom line."

"Our first markers are looking good," he said, while also cautioning that it's early yet. "We're budgeting to come from quite a big loss to a positive bottom line in 2011 and then grow in 2012 and 2013 -- and keep on growing."

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**ANN World News Bulletin** is a review of news issued by the Communication department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church World Headquarters and released as part of the service of Adventist News Network. For reproduction requirements, click here. The opinions expressed by Commentary authors and sources in ANN news stories do not necessarily reflect those of Adventist News Network© and/or the Seventh-day Adventist© Church.
Howard school draws a crowd with magnetic exhibit at Port Discovery

Young students show their experiments during museum’s STEM week

April 19, 2011 | By Joe Burris, The Baltimore Sun

Magnets are virtually everywhere. Just ask 6-year-old Madelyn Julien of Owings Mills, who can demonstrate how to use a magnet to separate iron filings from breakfast cereal.

The first-grader is among several students from Crossroads Adventist School in Howard County who are presenting an interactive exhibit, "Fun With Magnets," this week at Baltimore's Port Discovery Children's Museum.

The exhibit is part of Port Discovery's STEM Week, which each spring celebrates school courses and programs that focus on science, technology, engineering and math. Port Discovery officials say that it provides a STEM-based, hands-on environment to help both students and educators develop skills and gain confidence in science and technology fields.

Pre-K through first-grade students from Crossroads, an Ellicott City-based, Seventh-day Adventist school, occupied stations inside the museum's Maryland Public Television Studio on Tuesday and drew crowds as they demonstrated the properties of objects that most families have stuck to their refrigerators.

"I first learned about magnets a long time ago, in kindergarten," said Madelyn, who glided a magnet over a packet of cereal flakes and water and drew small black iron filings from the flakes. She has learned that some metals are good for the body.

"This cereal has 100 percent iron, and that means that it's good," she said.

In addition to showing how magnets attract metals, the students demonstrate how to extract magnetic filings from money, and show how magnets work in toys and how the Earth is one giant magnet. They even have an exhibit about a car that runs on magnetic-based fuel. The students will be at the museum showing off their displays again on Wednesday.

For many of the exhibits, the students used neodymium magnets, and they're quick to point out that neodymiums are powerful magnets.

"They know that the power of magnets works through any kind of surface," said Princess Connor-Hawk, the student's pre-k/Kindergarten teacher.

She said that the exhibit grew from a group science fair project at the school last year, the school's second year hosting a science fair. Connor-Hawk said that one of the students' parents brought the project to Port Discovery's attention.

Nadia Kennedy of Woodstock, the parent of a student, helped students Ethan and Gabriella Tucker of Elkridge demonstrate how filings can be extracted from a dollar bill that is placed in water. "That is how we know that the money is real and not counterfeit," she said.

Connor-Hawk said she knew little about magnets before "Fun with Magnets," and that she and her students experimented with what they had learned through research in making the project.

"I think generally, magnets are just one of those things that grabs you as a child," said Connor-Hawk. "It's an attention-grabber. This has excited their interests. I've given my students the materials on magnets with the intent of teaching them one thing, and they've ended up showing me other things that they can do with it."

joseph.burris@baltsun.com
Michael De Groote, Deseret News

PROVO, Utah — People across the world are suffering from persecution. "And why are they suffering?" John Graz said. "Are they dangerous for their country? Are they bad people? No, most of the time they are good people. But they are suffering, they are discriminated against, they are excluded only because of their religion."

Graz is the public affairs and religious liberty director for the Seventh-day Adventist world church and is secretary general for the International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA). He carries the message of religious freedom across the world — speaking in conferences and with politicians, religious leaders and scholars. He spoke recently at BYU at the 22nd annual conference of the LDS International Society about the global challenges and trends affecting religious freedom.

Religious intolerance does not spare any group — Muslims, Christians and other religious groups, Graz said. Even people who belong to majority religions in their countries experience problems.

A 2009 study by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, found that 70 percent of the world's population live in countries where they have no religious freedom or a lot of restrictions. The same study found that religious freedom is protected in a majority of countries. "This is good news," Graz said. "But we can lose it. We need to send a strong message that we love religious freedom. We want to keep it."

But religious freedom is being more frequently challenged across the world. "This is not good news," Graz said.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes freedom of religion as a basic human right. In Article 18 it says, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance."

But even though such a statement puts advocates of religious freedom in a strong moral position, Graz is seeing a shift. "It would be impossible today at the United Nations to have such an article accepted by the majority."

Why?

The "freedom to change his religion" would not be allowed. "You would have, at once, 55 to 60 countries say, 'No! We cannot accept that,'" Graz said.

There are three trends that challenge religious freedom, according to Graz.

1. Governments want to control religion more.

This is the direct approach. Governments are passing more laws that discriminate. For example, Graz referred to the Pakistan blasphemy laws. On the face of them, laws like this are promoted to protect religion, but they end up, Graz said, being used most often by strong and secure religious majorities to persecute religious minorities.

2. Governments are partnering with religion against minority religions.

The outward goal looks like governments and religion working in unity to build up the nation — but the quid pro quo for the religion is a little help from the government to stop religious dissenters and pesky competition from religious minorities. And if minority religions are left out of the partnership, they are seen as with more suspicion.

3. Religions see proselytism as an attack.

Prospeytism is seen as dangerous for religious peace. Graz said Christian leaders see religious freedom as a cover for proselytism. But those very same churches will also proselytize. "They want to marginalize part of Christianity because they feel threatened," Graz said.

There is an increased sensitivity about what people are saying about their religions. The different religions all feel like they are being attacked. Islam feels it is under attack, Graz said, so it proposed a U.N. resolution on defamation of religion. Western Christianity feels under attack, so, for
example, the Swiss vote to ban Muslim minarets.

Graz told the gathering of religious liberty experts at BYU there were things that can be done to reverse the trends. "Be responsible in our writing and speaking," Graz said: Think before we do something. Ask what will be the outcome.

He recommended entering interreligious dialog. "You need to meet people from other religions, including Muslims, Jews and Hindus. We need to be proactive. We can't promote religious freedom if we have no contact with religious leaders."

Around the world he said religious people should get involved in the community — particularly if they are members of a minority religion. "The way they will look at you will be different than if you are isolated in your corner," Graz said.

"People are afraid about religion. When they see people who are dedicated to their religion, they are afraid they may become fanatics which will lead to religious war again," Graz said.

But history shows that religious freedom is the antidote to these conflicts, not the cause. "It took centuries of misunderstanding, tensions and war to have religious freedom," Graz said.

"From time to time, courageous people — heroes of freedom — stood for religious freedom and sometime they gave their life," Graz said. "And we should never, never forget them."

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Twitter: twitter.com/degroote
"Veggie diet cuts heart attack risk by a third," according to the Daily Express, which today reported that vegetarians are a third less likely to suffer heart problems, diabetes or stroke than meat eaters.

The results come from a small study that looked at how different dietary patterns related to the prevalence of metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of disorders, including raised blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, which increase the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. The research was conducted in 773 members of the Seventh-day Adventist faith, a Christian denomination that places emphasis on staying healthy and limiting intake of meat. The researchers found that 35% of participants who considered themselves vegetarian were less likely to have metabolic syndrome or its associated risk factors than non-vegetarians.

This relatively small study is of limited value due to both its size and the fact that it assessed a very specific group of people who may not be representative of the population as a whole. Also, it only looked at people at one point in time, meaning that we cannot tell if their past behaviours influenced the prevalence of metabolic syndrome.

It has long been recognised that there may be health benefits from following a diet low in saturated fats and high in vegetables, fruit and unsaturated fats such as nut and seed oils. These health benefits include a reduction in the risk of obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes. This study does not change current healthy eating advice.

Where did the story come from?
The study was carried out by researchers from the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, Loma Linda University and the School of Public Health, Loma Linda, California. Funding was provided by the US National Institutes of Health. The study was published in the peer-reviewed medical journal Diabetes Care.

The news stories have, in general, not considered the numerous limitations of this cross-sectional study, including the fact that the study examined a very select population that may not reflect the behaviours or health of the general British population. Additionally, it is not clear where the 36% reduction in the risk of metabolic syndrome in vegetarians quoted in the newspapers came from. The study quoted an odds ratio of 0.44 for metabolic syndrome in vegetarians relative to non-vegetarians, which equates to vegetarian participants having a 56% lower chance of metabolic syndrome than their non-vegetarian counterparts.

What kind of research was this?
This was a cross-sectional survey of participants taking part in The Adventist Health Study 2, an ongoing research project studying followers of the Seventh-day Adventist religious denomination. People who follow this Christian belief system have been studied in dietary research because many adhere to special dietary habits, for example not consuming meat. Their religion also places emphasis on looking after health, particularly through avoiding habits such as smoking and drinking. Their tendency to avoid certain unhealthy lifestyle choices means that researchers can potentially discount the influence of these behaviours when performing analyses.

In this study researchers surveyed the dietary patterns of 773 participants (average age 60 years) and assessed how their diets related to their risk of metabolic syndrome or their risk of having its individual composite risk factors (for example, cholesterol, blood pressure and high BMI). Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of disorders associated with an increased risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Studies with a cross-sectional design (which look at factors at only a single point in time) can give us proportions only, but cannot demonstrate changes or cause and effect relationships because the participants were not followed over time. Also, this particular cross-sectional study took a sub-sample of people taking part in another study, the Adventist Health Study 2, in which all of the participants were Seventh-day Adventists who are known to have different lifestyle and dietary habits from the general population. The selection and inclusion criteria used when enrolling people to The Adventist Health Study 2 may mean they are not representative of the general population.

What did the research involve?
The Adventist Health Study 2 included 96,000 people from the US and Canada, all of whom...
Vegetarians 'have lower heart risk' - Health - Bakewell Today

http://www.bakewelltoday.co.uk/news/health/vegetarians_have_lower_he...
LOMA LINDA, Calif., April 18 (UPI) -- The U.S. Postal Service says it has discontinued Sunday mail deliveries in Loma Linda, a predominantly Seventh-day Adventist community in Southern California.

Loma Linda residents said they were unhappy about the end of Sunday postal delivery in the city, where church doctrine observes Saturday as the Sabbath, God's day of rest, The Press-Enterprise in Riverside reported.

"Nobody works on Saturday," Galina Rudenko insisted.

Rudenko wasn't the only Loma Linda resident to object: There were complaints lodged and petitions circulated but the Postal Service was unmoved, ending Sunday delivery in the city after 81 years.

Letter carrier supervisor Duane Hubbard cited the Postal Service's computer software as a factor, saying it only understands Monday through Saturday and the Loma Linda station is unable to communicate with it Sundays.

"It's like we're on an island here on Sundays," Hubbard said.

It also costs more for Sunday delivery because they have to pay letter carriers more to work on that day, he said.

But for the city's Seventh-day Adventists, who like those of the Jewish faith observe a Saturday Sabbath, it comes down to tradition.

"It's been this way for 70 years that I know of," 81-year-old Forrest Greenman said. "I know of no reason they should change it now."

# A Collection of Holiday Sermons

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