News from SAT-7
June 2025

INSIGHT

NEW NORTH AFRICAN PROGRAMMING

Local believers inspire productions in Tunisia and Morocco

CHRISTIAN MEDIA
FOR THE MIDDLE EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA

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Front cover image: Marwan, one of the young presenters on new Moroccan children's program, *Children of Light*

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All viewer names have been changed to protect their identities, and all images used with viewer stories are representative.

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Insight is produced twice a year by the SAT-7 International Office.

PURSUING THE IMPOSSIBLE

In Matthew 19:26, Jesus encourages His disciples to believe that something which is impossible with humans is possible with God. At SAT-7, we have experienced many situations over the years that have seemed impossible, and yet time and time again, God has shown us that nothing is impossible with Him. And we believe that God wants us, as His followers, to take risks in the pursuit of the impossible: not for its own sake, but so that He may be known in the most challenging situations.

In this edition of *Insight* you will see several examples of this risk-taking, some of which began as distant dreams many years ago and are now a firm reality, others that are just beginning to come true.

Across the page, you can read about how SAT-7 PARS is starting, in a very small way, to film inside Iran, something that has not been considered possible for many years.

When SAT-7's North African programming was started by one pioneering couple around 14 years ago, we could never have imagined that today we would have a growing team of program-makers across the region who are working together to share the love of Christ with their communities in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and beyond (pages 8–11).

And this year, SAT-7 TÜRK is marking ten years on Türkiye's national satellite – described on page 12 by the channel's new Executive Director as like "walking on water".

SAT-7 viewers, too, are experiencing miracles in their lives. Mirna from Egypt told us that after receiving a power from God that she has never felt before, while "many struggles and addictions in my life were hard to stop; now, I can easily say no". You can read her story, along with those of other SAT-7 viewers, on pages 6–7.

So, as you read this edition of *Insight*, I hope you are inspired by what can happen when courageous people step forward in faith. Please join me in praying that we will continue to see more of the impossible becoming possible right across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Rita

Rita El-Mounayer
SAT-7 CEO

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO FILM INSIDE IRAN

For many years, it has not been possible for SAT-7's Persian channel to produce programs inside Iran. But a unique opportunity has opened up, enabling a simple baking program to be filmed in Tehran and shared on social media.

The program, *Baking with Sahar*, is presented by a chef in her home, filmed in a low-key style for SAT-7 PARS' *Church4Family* Instagram page. There are also plans to broadcast it on the satellite channel this year.

"By engaging with individuals inside the country, we aimed to challenge the prevailing notion that such collaboration is impossible," said Reza Jafari, SAT-7 PARS Multimedia Senior Manager.

SAT-7 PARS programs are produced at its studios in Limassol, Cyprus and London, UK, as well as by production partners in Europe, the US and Canada. *Baking with Sahar* marks a careful return to in-country production, with hopes that it may be possible to do more in the future. But producing explicitly Christian content inside Iran remains a distant aspiration because of ongoing pressure on believers in the country.

Practical support

The idea for a baking program came in response to the sharp devaluation of the Iranian currency and a significant rise in the cost of groceries, making store-bought pastries and baked goods unaffordable for many. *Baking with Sahar* equips people with skills and ideas to make their own sweet treats and breads as well as healthy alternatives at home.

"We saw this as an opportunity to support those in need by creating a practical, educational program that addresses everyday challenges while also serving as both informative and entertaining content," Reza added.

SAT-7 PARS has been developing its presence and content on social media through specific brands tailored to different demographics, and it has seen significant growth in engagement. Video views across YouTube, Facebook and Instagram in 2024 topped 8 million, a 22 per cent increase on the previous year.

Baking with Sahar presenter

Videos on SAT-7 PARS' social media pages attracted over 8 million views in 2024!

SAT-7 NEWS

GROWING TOGETHER THROUGH LOSS, WAR AND TRAUMA

For Arab children living through war and other traumatic events, interactive SAT-7 KIDS show *We Grow Together* is providing a safe and nurturing space for spiritual growth. Blending Bible-based discussions, live music, prayer and testimonies, this live program helps young viewers to navigate difficult experiences with faith and wisdom.

Shady, one of the program's presenters, shared live on air about the loss of his father when he was just 13. "I asked God… why did he have to die in an accident? Why did You let this happen?" The support and wisdom of his friends helped Shady through his journey of grief. "They helped me to pray more and find ways to overcome the trauma. One of the ways is to write a diary in which I tell my father what happened in my day." Now, as a SAT-7 KIDS presenter, Shady is sharing his experience with young viewers to help them find hope in their own challenges. "When something happens to you, pray and ask God to help you get back up again, because God loves us and wants us to be joyful," he said.

CLICK HERE FOR SHADY'S STORY

As well as using personal testimonies, *We Grow Together* explores Bible stories to guide and encourage young viewers. While discussing the story of Peter walking on water, the presenters highlighted the importance of relying on Jesus in moments of doubt and fear. In another episode, they considered the story of Jairus' daughter, concluding that we must trust God even when all hope seems lost.

"I always watch *We Grow Together*," said Amanda, a teenage girl from Lebanon, "This program is wonderful and shares the word of God in a simple and easy way. We actually do grow together and continue on our path knowing that Jesus is with us."

SUPPORTING SUDANESE VIEWERS THROUGH TWO YEARS OF WAR

Sudan's civil war has created what has been described by the UN as the "world's largest humanitarian crisis". Tens of thousands of people have been killed; over 12 million people are displaced; and half the country – around 25 million people – are facing acute hunger. Sudan's two million Christians are facing the added pressure of increased persecution, with Christian communities being targeted by religious extremists on both sides of the battle, and reports of believers being abducted and killed. Churches and other Christian-owned buildings have been forcibly occupied.

SAT-7 ARABIC's *You Are Not Alone* spoke to Pastor Sabt Adam shortly after the second anniversary of the war in April. His family sought refuge in another country, but he said, "I chose to stay in Sudan, because as a church pastor I wanted to stay with those from my congregation who couldn't leave."

SAT-7 has been supporting the Church in Sudan through its Christ-centred programming and ongoing Viewer Support services. In the run-up to Easter, SAT-7 ARABIC broadcast a short series made by Sudanese Christians called *Light of The Resurrection,* featuring uplifting teaching and worship. Salam, a Sunday School teacher, told us how she is using SAT-7 materials with children in camps for displaced people. "Because of the war and losing most of my resources, I use your videos and hymns. I edit or adapt them slightly to suit the children's age and circumstances. May God bless your hard work."

> "Please pray for us and for the war in Sudan to end.
> Fatima, SAT-7 viewer

CLICK HERE FOR A VIDEO OF VOICES FROM SUDAN

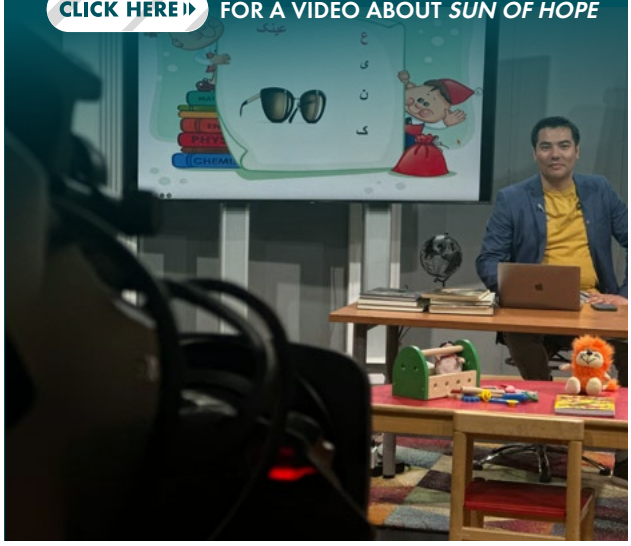
AFGHAN EDUCATION PROGRAM AIRS

Afghan children who cannot go to school now have the opportunity to learn at home as new Dari educational program *Sun of Hope* airs on SAT-7 PARS.

The first season is providing engaging and dynamic lessons in basic literacy skills. A second season has also been produced and will introduce essential numeracy skills.

As well as teaching foundational subjects, *Sun of Hope* is providing life lessons based on Christian values and offering young Afghans hope for the future.

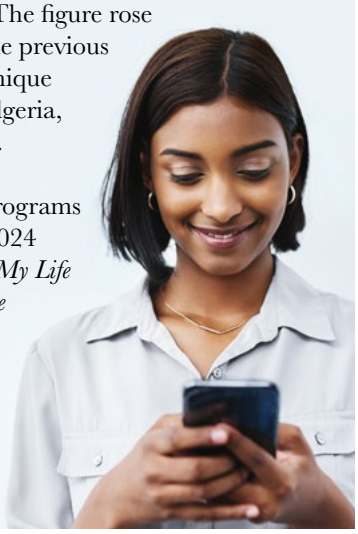
CLICK HERE » FOR A VIDEO ABOUT *SUN OF HOPE*



GROWING AUDIENCE ON SAT-7 PLUS

SAT-7's on-demand video streaming service, SAT-7 PLUS, is continuing to grow and develop, with the number of unique users reaching almost 1.3 million in 2024. The figure rose nine per cent from the previous year with the most unique users coming from Algeria, Iran, Iraq and Egypt.

The most watched programs on SAT-7 PLUS in 2024 included *The Chosen*, *My Life Journey* and *Voice of the Church*.



POPE FRANCIS' FINAL MESSAGE OF PEACE TO GAZA'S CHRISTIANS

Following the death of Pope Francis in April, Gaza's Christians recounted his final phone conversation with them, in which he called for peace and justice in the Holy Land.

Fr Gabriel Romanelli of the Holy Family Catholic Church in Gaza described on SAT-7 ARABIC program *You Are Not Alone* how Pope Francis called the Christians sheltering there every evening.

"The last time he called us was Easter Eve just before we started mass. He thanked us for our prayers for him and told us that he prayed for us and blessed us," Fr Romanelli said. "It was a short call, but he said he wanted us to know that he is with us and prays for us and works for peace and justice in the region... He called for the end of the war and the release of hostages and for human aid to get into Gaza, because the situation here is catastrophic."

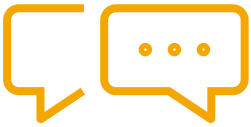
Following his death on 21 April, the Vatican released a short video that showed the Pope's close relationship with Gaza's small Christian community. The Holy Family Catholic Church has been sheltering around 1,000 Christians throughout the war, as well as some Muslims from the local neighbourhood, including children with special needs.

Fr Romanelli said that the Pope's phone calls were welcomed by everyone there. "He always thanked us and encouraged us to serve everyone in need. He would ask how we were and how the children were. He asked us to protect the children, the aged and the sick.

"In these difficult times his calls were comforting and hopeful. He asked for peace for all. He asked for human dignity… He knew our names. He would call every day for a year and a half. Even after he came out of hospital, he called."

SAT-7 covered the funeral of Pope Francis and the conclave to elect the new pontiff, Pope Leo XIV. Several programs marked Pope Francis' impact in the MENA over many years, highlighting the visits he made to different countries at key times and the relationships he established with leaders from various Christian denominations and other religious figures.

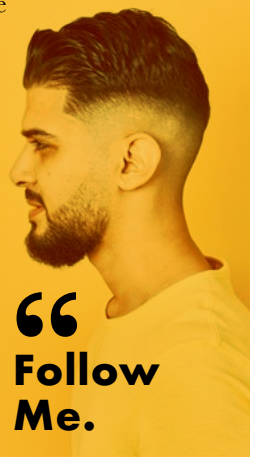
LIVES CHANGED



SAT-7 PARS' VIEWER SUPPORT TEAM HAD 12,114 SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE FROM IRAN, AFGHANISTAN AND TAJIKISTAN IN 2024

"I became a Christian through your satellite channel, because there are few believers here and I don't personally know any Christians," Raham from Iran told SAT-7 PARS. He started watching the channel around 15 years ago and became convinced of the truth of Christianity. Raham's new faith was reinforced by a dream in which Jesus called him to "follow Me". "After that, many blessings came into my life," Raham said. "I overcame all the problems I had one by one."

Over time, Raham's wife and children also came to faith in Christ. But he lacked Christian fellowship and support. "I got in touch with your channel to make some Christian friends and also to be filled by the peace of the Lord," Raham said. "I would be grateful if you could pray for my wife, my daughter and my son, that their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ may grow stronger."



EXPERIENCING GOD'S POWER

"If I feel hungry for God, why can I never find Him? Does this mean that God has rejected me?" asked Mirna, a young schoolteacher from Egypt.

"I've been trying to know God better, but I feel like I keep starting over," she explained to SAT-7's Viewer Support team. "Spiritually, I feel like I'm going round in circles and returning to square one. I've tried many times to have a relationship with God, but I have failed."

The Viewer Support team sympathised with Mirna's frustration and affirmed her desire for a relationship with the Lord. Over the course of several conversations, they prayed with Mirna and encouraged her to cultivate an active prayer life and meditate on God's Word. The team sent Mirna worship songs and Bible verses to encourage her.

"Thank you so much. I will start taking these steps, but please pray for my perseverance," she said. "I've been trying to commit to spending time with the Lord, even when I'm at work or on public transport, or when I'm alone, I talk to Him."

Mirna is now reaping the rewards of her growing connection with her heavenly Father. "I want to testify that I am truly experiencing a power from God that I have never felt before," she said. "Many struggles and addictions in my life were hard to stop; now, I can easily say no. Sometimes I feel like I can't continue, but God always sends me messages or people that encourage me. When I reach a dark place, I feel His light in the darkness telling me to keep going."

CLICK HERE FOR MIRNA'S STORY

QUESTIONS LEAD TO FAITH

"Is Christ a prophet?" "Is there hell?" "Will God forgive me for all the sins I commit?"

These were some of the burning questions that prompted Khalil, a man in his thirties from Morocco, to respond to a SAT-7 ARABIC social media campaign about the fear of death.

The Viewer Support team encouraged Khalil's pursuit of the truth and had several conversations with him, helping him to work through his questions about Christianity. They explained the Gospel to him and sent him a link to the Bible, which he started reading.

"I want to be on the path of truth," said Khalil in a later conversation. "I have started reading the Gospel, and indeed, it seems flawless so far, especially Matthew's writings... I feel comfortable with this Christian faith."

The final piece of the puzzle for Khalil was a spiritual dream. "One night, God spoke to me while I was asleep and showed me the path of truth," he said. "I haven't told anyone about this except you. I realised that Jesus is the incarnate God."

SAT-7 ARABIC'S VIEWER SUPPORT TEAM HAD 31,394 CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE THROUGH MESSAGING CAMPAIGNS IN 2024

"YOUR SATELLITE MINISTRY BREAKS OUR LONELINESS"

Over the last 20 years, SAT-7 has helped Taim from Syria find faith in Christ and stand firm in the face of opposition.

"You were the reason I came to know the love of Jesus Christ," he said. Taim shared how he loved watching the Jesus film and worship programs on SAT-7 when he was a teenager. "What wonderful memories! The songs take me to another world full of peace, love and joy."

Taim has continued to grow in faith and found strength through SAT-7's programs. "We who have left other backgrounds are truly blessed by your channel," he said. "Thanks to you, we are encouraged and empowered to grow in our faith in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

"Your satellite ministry breaks our loneliness, comforts our distress and encourages us to stand firm on Christ in a context that rejects us and schemes against us because we once belonged to it. You are a blessing to millions!"

SERVING THE CHURCH IN NORTH AFRICA

SAT-7 EXPANDS LOCAL-LANGUAGE CHRISTIAN PROGRAMMING ACROSS THE REGION

"We need to open our eyes and hearts and minds more to serve the least served. The need in North Africa for Christian programs, worship and discipleship is great."

This is how Rami Al-Halaseh, SAT-7 Arabic Channels Executive Director, reflected on his visit to the North African countries of Morocco and Tunisia last year.

He travelled there with Andrew Gamal, Audio Studio Manager at SAT-7 Egypt, and they spent time with SAT-7 production partners, meeting with church leaders and local Christians to explore ideas for new North African productions.

They met believers who had come to faith in Christ through watching SAT-7. One man shared how he had found the channel "by accident" while adjusting his satellite dish and had heard about Jesus as a friend. The program prompted him to find out more, and he went on to put his faith in Christ. He now runs a bookshop in Morocco that sells Bibles and other Christian literature.

"It was touching to our hearts to hear from them how much they appreciate the work and service of SAT-7," Rami said. "I asked, how can we serve the area further? "How can we strengthen our relationship, and how can we serve the needs of the Church?"

Christians are a small minority in North Africa, but the Church is growing, and SAT-7 receives thousands of messages from people there. Last year, Morocco and Algeria were in the top three Arab countries for most contacts with SAT-7.

What became clear from the meetings and conversations that Rami and Andrew had was the need for more Christian programming in the local languages of North Africa – Arabic variants and the Berber languages, Tamazight – programming that involves local believers to ensure cultural relevance, and that provides foundational biblical teaching and indigenous worship.

Supporting local productions

SAT-7 is responding to these needs with a raft of new programs from North Africa in collaboration with partners in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria. These include a children's program, produced in Morocco in Tamazight (see page 9), and two new shows for women.

The team behind SAT-7's North Africa productions

Devotional and teaching programs include *The Throne of Grace* and *The Word of Life* from Tunisia, while *Ask Me and I Will Answer You* from Morocco delves into stories from Jesus' life – depicted through drama segments – to unpack core Christian beliefs in response to commonly asked questions. *My Church* is continuing to support home worship amid widespread church closures in Algeria. (*Continues opposite*)

On the set of *The Throne of Grace*

The team is also recording worship songs in Tamazight and Moroccan Arabic to support authentic North African praise music.

Longer term, SAT-7 wants to train and equip more local producers across the region so that they can make their own programs. Andrew Gamal has travelled to Tunisia several times over the last year to assist SAT-7 partners with the new productions, and he was struck by the enthusiasm and unity of local Christians in support of the work, with people helping in all sorts of ways, such as cleaning floors and preparing food for the crew.

"People here are hungry for the Word of God. We want a team from North Africa – not a team from outside going there – to shoot episodes in different languages from different countries," he said. "We want to teach them how to use the cameras and do the editing. They need more stories from their own people in their own languages."

CLICK HERE FOR A VIDEO

"When I am alone and there's no one from the church to fellowship with me, I go to SAT-7. It reminds me that I am not alone, and there are believers who remind me of the word of God."
Omayma from Tunisia

YOUNG MOROCCANS TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN NEW PROGRAM

Young Moroccan Christians are using their creative skills in a new program for North African children in Tamazight.

Children of Light provides foundational Christian teaching alongside fun activities, education, and life skills such as cookery and finances. Young Moroccan Christians present a story or drama to introduce the theme at the beginning, and they share a Bible verse to wrap up the episode.

Children of Light presenter, Kawthar

Marwan, another young presenter on *Children of Light*

The program aims to support Christian families in raising their children in the faith, as well as to introduce others to the teachings of Jesus. Christians are a very small minority in Morocco, so investing in the next generation is vital for the future of the Church in the country.

"It is wonderful to see young Moroccan believers wanting to appear on screen and explain their faith to their peers in such creative and vibrant ways," said Rami al-Halaseh, SAT-7 Arabic Channels Executive Director. "I was so encouraged by the enthusiasm of the Moroccan Church, and impressed by how well-organised they are."

PLEASE PRAY
Give thanks for the creativity and commitment of the North African production team. Pray that there will be much fruit from the new programs and that the Church in the region will continue to grow.

A RICH CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

Today Christians in North Africa – from Libya in the east to Morocco in the west – are a small minority in a sometimes hostile environment. But in the first Christian centuries the region had a large and influential Church, producing some of the faith's greatest thinkers.

Then...

By the late 2nd century AD the Church in the Roman colony of "Africa" was widespread and organised. It enjoyed huge growth in the 3rd century but faced periods of persecution until the early 6th century.

North African Christians rose to the many challenges they faced during this time, developing a strong and robust faith. They asserted their independence from outside control and were committed to the unity and purity of the Church.

Some of the most notable leaders of the early Church came from North Africa: the forthright apologist Tertullian (c.155–c.220) the courageous martyr-bishop Cyprian (200–258) and the great theologian Augustine of Hippo (354–430). Their teaching helped the Church to stand firm against paganism and various early heresies.

SAT-7 is producing a new program, *Devotions from the History of the Church in North Africa,* this year in Tunisia. It aims to reconnect viewers with the region's early church fathers. By exploring the lives and teachings of inspiring leaders like Augustine, Cyprian and Tertullian, the program will address key spiritual questions about faith, prayer, grace, forgiveness and the search for truth.

The ruins of a church building in Chemtou, Tunisia

DID YOU KNOW?

The African councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397) published the first complete lists of the 27 New Testament books in the Western Church.

...and now

Arab invaders overran North Africa in the late 7th century. The once-thriving Church dwindled to the point of extinction by the later Middle Ages. In modern times, however, Christianity was reintroduced to the region, and today there are believers in each country, many from the Berber or Amazigh community who are indigenous to North Africa. Algeria has the largest number of Christians.

Today's North African Church has vibrant faith and deep commitment. Believers meet mostly in house churches and often spend several days together at someone's home for worship and fellowship. In Morocco, the churches are working together to establish an alliance and achieve recognition from the authorities.

But these Christians also face serious pressures, from within and outside. The mainly young Church in Tunisia has been left scattered following divisions and leadership failures. After a period of rapid growth in Algeria, all but one of the country's Protestant Churches have been closed by the authorities since 2017.

LOCAL BELIEVERS INSPIRE NEW PRODUCTION

Raouth and Wajih

Wajih from Tunisia first learnt about Jesus ten years ago through watching SAT-7. He had been intrigued about Jesus for some time, and as he watched the programs, Wajih learnt about who Jesus is and came to faith in Him.

His wife Raouth was resistant to Wajih's faith, and her opposition continued for two years. But unknown to Wajih, Raouth started watching SAT-7 and reading the Bible in secret. On the day that he came to be baptised, Raouth declared that she too had come to faith in Jesus and joined Wajih in the baptism ceremony! Today, they lead a church of 30 people in their home.

Rami Al-Halaseh, SAT-7 Arabic Channels Executive Director, and Andrew Gamal, Audio Studio Manager at SAT-7 Egypt, met Wajih and Raouth during their visit to Tunisia last year, and the couple shared ideas for programming that they felt would support local believers in their discipleship and worship. One of those ideas has since become a reality: a special production broadcast during Ramadan called *Evening Gatherings*.

Andrew explained why this was an important production for North African Christians: **"Ramadan is as much a community celebration as it is a religious festival. Significantly, it is when the majority of special television productions are broadcast. When families break their fast in the evening, they sit together eating and watching TV. People are also more open spiritually during this period, so it is a good opportunity to show what Christians believe and how they worship."**

The program aired on SAT-7 ARABIC every evening during the 30-day festival in March as a celebration of Christian fellowship, featuring worship, testimonies, prayers and biblical discussions. Filmed with local believers in Tunisia in a traditional living-room setting, *Evening Gatherings* also featured segments from Algeria and Morocco to highlight the unity of the Church across North Africa.

Through each episode, the group explored the Sermon on the Mount, discussing topics including fasting, prayer and persecution, while sharing their own experiences and faith journeys.

One episode brought encouragement to believers facing persecution. Reflecting on Jesus' words in Matthew 5:10-12, Pastor Kamal said, "We want to defend all those in pain and the forgotten... People can say bad things about you and that you worship in a strange way. No, it's not strange… Rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven. Let's rejoice because our compensation is from the Lord."

Evening Gatherings aired on SAT-7 ARABIC during the 30 days of Ramadan

The program was filmed in a traditional living-room setting

Filming *Homemade*, SAT-7 TÜRK's popular and long-running women's program

SAT-7 TÜRK'S NEW DIRECTOR ON THE CHANNEL'S GROWING MINISTRY

"WE WALK ON WATER EVERY DAY"

WORDS OF ÜMIT TEYMUR, SAT-7 TÜRK EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As SAT-7 TÜRK celebrates its 10th anniversary on Türkiye's national satellite, new Executive Director Ümit Teymur shares how the ministry has grown and his hopes for the next decade.

Ümit joined SAT-7 TÜRK 12 years ago when the channel was broadcasting online, initially as a presenter. He was promoted to Audience Relations and Digital Media Manager in 2019, before being appointed as Executive Director at the end of last year.

How would you describe the significance of SAT-7 TÜRK broadcasting on Turkish television for ten years?
This is not just a broadcasting activity for us but also a deep calling and a great privilege. We work to be the voice of Christians in Türkiye, to correct misconceptions about Christianity with love and truth and to show the love of Christ to those who do not yet know Him.

Although this path is sometimes full of uncertainties and trials, we walk on water every day, because we move forward not in our own strength but in our faith in Christ. Just as Peter was able to walk on water when he kept his eyes on Jesus, we continue to walk without taking our eyes off our calling.

What made you want to work with SAT-7 TÜRK, and how has being a part of this ministry impacted your own faith journey?
When I found out that there was a Christian TV channel, I was very excited! I thought that this was impossible in Türkiye, but when I was invited by the leaders (who were members of our church), I felt that I could be part of this miracle. I thought of what God could do through this ministry, and I wanted to get involved immediately.

Over my 12 years with SAT-7 TÜRK, we have experienced God's faithfulness and grace many times, and we have seen how God is able to do "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20).

How has the ministry of SAT-7 TÜRK developed?
SAT-7 TÜRK's ministry has grown significantly in terms of both content and impact. We started out with limited resources, but over time our program diversity has increased, our technical capacity has strengthened, and we have established a more professional structure. But the most important aspect has been the spiritual growth.

Our relationships with Christian communities have deepened, and our inter-church collaboration has strengthened. Also, seeing that we touched the lives of our viewers and hearing that their relationship with God was renewed thanks to these broadcasts was our greatest reward.

> **"Our goal is to provide a media service that carries hope, spreads love and deepens faith.**
> **Ümit Teymur**

What challenges have you faced and how have you been able to overcome them?
Our difficulties have been multidimensional. We encountered technical impossibilities, limited human resources and misunderstanding of Christianity in some circles. People found it strange to have a Christian TV channel in Türkiye. But we did not give up, because we wholeheartedly believe that this service is carried out not by human hands but by God's call.

The support of praying people, loyal viewers, the churches and our SAT-7 colleagues enabled us to overcome these difficulties. Our common vision and trust within the team kept us on our feet, and over time we saw how every challenge matured us a little more and deepened our service. People's perspective on us began to change; questions were replaced by trust.

What are your hopes and prayers for the next decade?
Our greatest hope and prayer is that SAT-7 TÜRK will continue to represent the Christian faith in Türkiye in an accurate, loving and understandable way. Our greatest desire is for people to overcome prejudices about Christianity and get to know who Christ is.

We also want to reach out more to viewers who do not have a church, to ensure that no Christian feels isolated or forgotten. We want the unity among different churches to keep growing and for this channel to be a platform for all Christian communities. Our goal is to provide a media service that carries hope, spreads love and deepens faith.

CLICK HERE FOR A VIDEO ABOUT SAT-7 TÜRK'S PLANS FOR 2025

DID YOU KNOW?

This year marks the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which issued the first universally binding statement by a church body of the full deity of Christ. The ancient city of Nicaea lies within the city of İznik in modern Türkiye. Events to mark the occasion are providing SAT-7 TÜRK with opportunities to highlight the country's Christian heritage. The council's teaching was later expressed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, which forms SAT-7's basis of faith.

SAT-7 TÜRK THROUGH THE YEARS

The origins of SAT-7 TÜRK date from around 2000, when a consortium of churches, individuals and agencies in Türkiye began considering, in consultation with SAT-7, the possibility of a Christian television channel.

2003 – Launch of the TÜRK-7 channel with support from SAT-7

2004 – First pilot programs produced

2006 – TÜRK-7 programs begin broadcasting on SAT-7 ARABIC, and later move to SAT-7 PARS

2008 – Online broadcasts of TURK-7 programs begin

2010 – TÜRK-7 merges with SAT-7 and becomes SAT-7 TÜRK

2012 – 24/7 web TV service begins

2015 – SAT-7 TÜRK starts broadcasting 24/7 on national satellite Türksat

2021 – *Words of Hope*, SAT-7 TÜRK's longest-running program, broadcasts its 1,000th episode

2023 – SAT-7 TÜRK highlights the response of the Church to the country's disastrous earthquake

2024 – Premier of *Yakamoz*, SAT-7 TÜRK's first feature film, which wins several awards

THE POWER OF STORIES

BY RITA EL-MOUNAYER, SAT-7 CEO

Jesus was undoubtedly a great storyteller. His parables captivated the attention of large crowds as he used metaphors and illustrations from people's everyday experience to teach important spiritual truths.

In Matthew 13, we are told that the crowd was so large that Jesus got into a boat and addressed the people gathered on the shore. In this chapter, we hear some of Jesus' most well-known stories, and verse 34 says, "...he did not say anything to them without using a parable."

The MENA has a long tradition of oral storytelling, and we see this enduring love of stories in the popularity of drama and film in the region today. Stories are powerful because they get people's undivided attention, they are memorable, and they engage the emotions in a way that pure facts and information often do not.

SAT-7 too, as a media ministry, utilises storytelling in a variety of creative ways to engage viewers and gently point them to the love of God. And we are increasingly seeing how powerful dramas and films are opening up opportunities for us to reach wider audiences, as numerous SAT-7 productions have been taken up by other media outlets or shown at international festivals. Sharing our content in this way means taking our message to different viewers, people who would never think of tuning in to SAT-7 to watch a live church service or Bible teaching program.

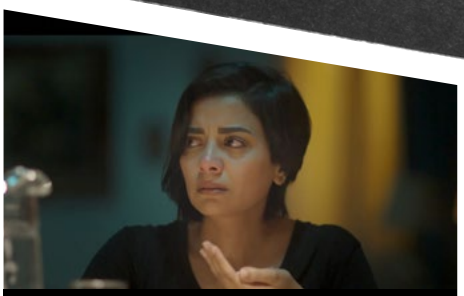
Reaching different audiences

SAT-7 ARABIC's drama series *For Your Eyes Only* is being shown on two other networks this year: LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International) and Alsumaria TV, an Iraqi satellite television channel. The 30-episode drama, which was made as part of the *Lebanon, Our Story* project, was shown on SAT-7 last year. Research conducted by IPSOS found that over 3.2 million people watched it! Now, many millions more will have the opportunity to see *For Your Eyes Only* and be impacted by its powerful message of hope in the face of adversity.

This is just one example from the last year. SAT-7's first feature-length film, *Toxic*, is available on the in-flight playlists of five major Middle Eastern airlines, bringing its powerful message of forgiveness to millions of travellers. *Perhaps God Sees Me*, an award-winning SAT-7 film about overcoming mental health issues and finding self-worth, was shown at the Cairo Opera House in January. And SAT-7 TÜRK's historical feature film, *Yakamoz*, which highlights an important piece of Türkiye's Christian heritage, has been shown in Turkish cinemas and at several festivals, picking up five awards.

But as we celebrate the success of various SAT-7 productions, we must remember that many people among the large crowds who heard Jesus' parables did not understand His message, only those with eyes to see and ears to hear. And so we must pray for those watching SAT-7's content, whether on our own channels or through other platforms, that the Holy Spirit will open their hearts to the message and stir them to respond.

CLICK HERE FOR A VIDEO ABOUT THE POWER OF STORIES



Perhaps God Sees Me

For Your Eyes Only

After watching *For Your Eyes Only* on SAT-7 ARABIC:

67% of viewers said they learned about humanity

55% felt inspired to accept those different from them

Research conducted by INFOPRO in 2024

Yakamoz

SOWING HOPE THROUGH STORYTELLING

Juliana Sfeir was honoured to represent SAT-7 at the Jubilee of the World of Communications, held by the Vatican in January. It was a prestigious gathering of 200 professional communicators from organisations around the world.

Highlighting the conference's theme of hope, the late Pope Francis encouraged the participants to consider the impact of their messages: "Let us ask ourselves: what do we do to sow hope in the midst of all the despair that surrounds and challenges us?

"Christian communication is about showing that the kingdom of God is near. It is present here and now, like a miracle that can be experienced by every person and every culture," he said.

The conference addressed some of today's most pressing communication challenges, including polarisation and misinformation, and explored ways to communicate truthfully and effectively.

Juliana, SAT-7 ARABIC's Public Engagement Manager, was invited to participate on a panel about "Shifting narratives and storytelling: best practices". She presented the work of SAT-7, focusing on the three-year project *Lebanon, Our Story*.

A highlight of the event for Juliana was the opportunity for a private audience with the Pope, an experience now all the more significant following his death in April.

SAT-7's Juliana Sfeir meeting Pope Francis

CLICK HERE FOR A VIDEO WITH JULIANA

"I had no idea just how much this event would really shape my spiritual and my professional perspectives," Juliana said. "Seeing the appreciation for SAT-7's role in sharing the Good News through innovative and impactful media was really encouraging."

HIGH-PROFILE VISIT TO SAT-7'S EGYPT STUDIO

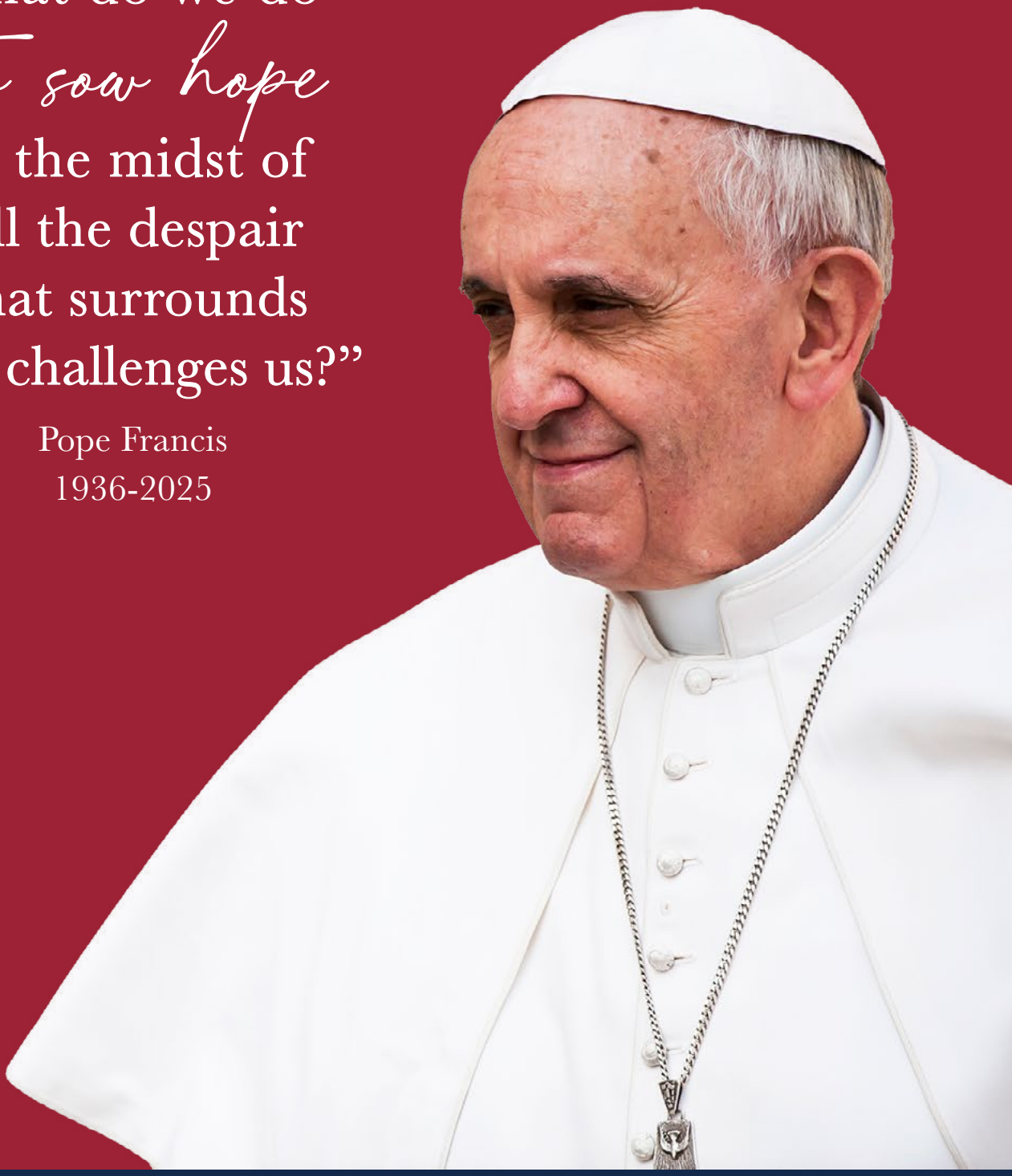
In May, SAT-7's Egypt studio welcomed a delegation of guests from Denmark and Sweden, including five Members of Parliament and representatives from LM International and Centre for Church-based Development (CKU).

They met with the leaders of SAT-7's Youth for an Enabling Society (YES) and Gender Equality and FoRB projects and enjoyed a live recording of the latter's *Today Not Tomorrow* program. The full-packed schedule also included meetings with Egyptian MPs and European diplomats and visits to Cairo's "Garbage City", churches and other Christian sites.

Kurt Johansen, Executive Director of SAT-7 Europe and Asia, said, "It was an honour to welcome these influential guests in Egypt, and we appreciated them taking the time to learn about the work of SAT-7, especially in the important area of Freedom of Religion or Belief."

"Let us ask ourselves: what do we do *to sow hope* in the midst of all the despair that surrounds and challenges us?"

Pope Francis
1936-2025



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