



**Australian Government**  
**Refugee Review Tribunal**

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# Country Advice

## Nepal

Nepal – NPL38240 – Mormons – Hindu extremists – National Defence Army

9 March 2011

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**1. What percentage of the population is Christian in Nepal? Does this differ between Kathmandu and rural areas?**

Several sources estimate the Christian population of Nepal is between one and two per cent of the total population.<sup>1</sup> This is consistent with the US Department of State (USDOS) 2010 report on religious freedom, which estimates Christians and “others” constitute one to three per cent of the population.<sup>2</sup> The USDOS report also notes that members of minority religious groups believe their numbers are significantly undercounted; the National Churches Fellowship of Nepal reported that almost 400 Christian churches operate in the Kathmandu Valley alone.<sup>3</sup>

No information was found regarding specific demographics of Christians in Nepal, or the concentration or otherwise of Christians in Nepal geographically. Given the mountainous nature of Nepal, it would be likely that numbers of Christians would be higher in metropolitan areas such as Kathmandu given the higher density of the general population, gradually declining as the population becomes less dense in rural and remote areas.

**2. What is the treatment of Christians in Nepal by members of other religious groups?**

In 2010, USDOS reported “[a]dherents of the country’s many religious groups generally coexisted peacefully and respected places of worship, although there were reports of societal abuses and discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief or practice. Those who converted to a different religious group occasionally face violence and were ostracised socially, but generally did not fear admitting their affiliations in public”.<sup>4</sup>

According to the USDOS, some Christian groups reported Hindu extremism increased in recent reporting periods, particularly after the 2006 parliamentary declaration of the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Pope appoints first Catholic bishop to Nepal’ 2007, Catholic Online website, source: *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 2 February [http://www.catholic.org/international/international\\_story.php?id=23009](http://www.catholic.org/international/international_story.php?id=23009) – Accessed 19 April 2007 – Attachment 1; ‘Easter rally calls Nepal gov’t to expand religious freedom’ 2007, Catholic Online website, source: *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 10 April

[http://www.catholic.org/international/international\\_story.php?id=23700](http://www.catholic.org/international/international_story.php?id=23700) – Accessed 24 April 2007 – Attachment 2

<sup>2</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section I – Attachment 3

<sup>3</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section I – Attachment 3

<sup>4</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section II – Attachment 3

country as a secular state, replacing what had previously been a Hindu Kingdom.<sup>5</sup> According to a 2009 report by Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), attacks on Christians by Hindu extremist groups in Nepal have included the bombing of a Christian orphanage in April 2007 and the murder of a Catholic priest in July 2008. CSW also made reference to the Nepal Defence Army (NDA), a Hindu extremist group targeting religious minorities who have accused Christians of threatening Hindu culture through religious conversion.<sup>6</sup>

According to an article in Christian publication *Compass Direct News*, Nepal Christian Society leaders received threats from the Unified National Liberation Front, an armed group demanding money for protection from religious communities.<sup>7</sup> Such threats, however, may be opportunistic and motivated by financial gain rather than being solely based on religious grounds.

Acts of violence by extremist religious groups are condemned by mainstream Hindu organisations. Following a 2009 bomb attack on a Catholic church in Kathmandu, Hindu and Muslim religious leaders united at the church in an act of solidarity with the local Christian community.<sup>8</sup> This act of unity was followed by Hindus, Muslims and Christians marching in Kathmandu in protest against the bombing.<sup>9</sup>

The USDOS notes groups of particular concern are the India-based Hindu political party Shiv Sena, locally known as Pashupati Sena, Shiv Sena Nepal, Nepal Shivsena, and the Hindu fundamentalist organization, Ranbir Sena. Acts of violence by these groups, however, have also been politically motivated and attacks are not exclusively directed at minority religious targets.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. Do the authorities respond adequately to sectarian problems/tensions?

The Nepal Police (NP), Armed Police Force (APF) and Nepal Army (NA) are widely reported to have been unsuccessful in establishing public security in Nepal. Nepalese authorities can be corrupt, and many accept bribes in exchange for charges being dropped.<sup>11</sup> Nepal is in a post-conflict transitional phase, and is characterised by weak law and order, impunity and discrimination.<sup>12</sup> As such, the capabilities of authorities to

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<sup>5</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section III – Attachment 3

<sup>6</sup> Christian Solidarity Worldwide 2009, *Nepal: Emerging threat of Hindu extremism*, October, Section 4.1 <http://dynamic.csw.org.uk/article.asp?t=report&id=116> – Accessed 19 February 2010 – Attachment 4

<sup>7</sup> ‘New Threats, Old Enmity Pummel Nepal’s Christians’ 2010, *Compass Direct News* <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/nepal/25596/> – Accessed 27 October 2010 – Attachment 5

<sup>8</sup> Bhandari, S. 2009, ‘Two dead, 14 injured in Nepal church blast: police’, Google News website, [Source: *Agence France-Presse*], 23 May <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jfl7xiIq0glqihUYMP8I0W5Q9eqQ> – Accessed 22 March 2010 – Attachment 6

<sup>9</sup> ‘Christians rally to protest church bombing’ 2009, *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 2 June <http://www.ucanews.com/2009/06/02/christians-rally-to-protest-church-bombing/> – Accessed 22 March 2010 – Attachment 7

<sup>10</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section III – Attachment 3

<sup>11</sup> Mehmood, Isha 2009, ‘Law and Order: Domestic Violence in Nepal, Part 1’, The Advocacy Project website, 20 July <http://advocacynet.org/wordpress-mu/imehmood/blog/2009/07/20/law-and-order-domestic-violence-in-nepal/> – Accessed 19 February 2010 – Attachment 8

<sup>12</sup> DIAC Country Information Service 2009, *Nepal: Country Information Report No. 09/58 – CIS Request No. NPL9770; Discrimination*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 3 August 2009), 5 August – Attachment 9

provide protection to any group of people may be inadequate, compromised by corruption, politicisation and inefficiency.

An article from *Compass Direct News* reported Christians in rural areas sometimes escape local discrimination and persecution by moving to larger districts.<sup>13</sup> A report on the website Breadsites.org supports the claim that Christians are provided greater protection in urban areas than in rural areas. It also states that levels of protection vary according to districts and the bias of officials, stating that if a regional government representative is anti-Christian, police are often less responsive.<sup>14</sup>

There are, however, positive examples of authorities responding to sectarian problems and tensions. In 2010, a Catholic Bishop told Catholic news organisation *Zenit* that he had written to the Home Minister of Nepal requesting authorities investigate threatening phone calls received by the clergy from extremist groups. The Bishop said authorities were responsive, police made arrests, and the leader of one group was forced into hiding.<sup>15</sup> Following the 2009 bombing of a Catholic church in Kathmandu by the National Defence Army (NDA)<sup>16</sup>, police arrested the NDA leader and an accomplice responsible for the attack. While charges were not laid regarding the bombing, the NDA leader was later tried and sentenced to two years' prison for weapons violations and possession of explosives.<sup>17</sup>

#### **4. Is there any record of Mormon activity (including proselytising missionaries) in Nepal? If so, how have they been treated?**

According to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) website, there are currently fewer than 100 Church members in Nepal,<sup>18</sup> while an article in *The Mormon Times* states there are 133 members.<sup>19</sup> The first missionaries to visit the country arrived in June 1994, and by July 1995, there were nearly 50 Church members in Nepal. Missionaries were subsequently prevented from actively seeking converts, but continued to serve in humanitarian projects in addition to supporting local members.<sup>20</sup> The article contained no information identifying those responsible for preventing missionaries from actively seeking converts.

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<sup>13</sup> 'New Threats, Old Enmity Pummel Nepal's Christians' 2010, *Compass Direct News* <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/nepal/25596/> – Accessed 27 October 2010 – Attachment 5

<sup>14</sup> Fox, G. 2010, 'Miracles in the Hindu Kingdom' 5 October, Breadsites.org website <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:Rpwclmtrm9cJ:www.hvk.org/articles/0605/87.html+miracles+in+the+hindu+kingdom&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=au> – Accessed 27 October 2010 – Attachment 10

<sup>15</sup> 'Interview With Bishop Anthony Francis Sharma' 2010, *Zenit* website, 21 March <http://www.zenit.org/article-28710?!=english> – Accessed 29 October 2010 – Attachment 11

<sup>16</sup> Bhandari, S. 2009, 'Two dead, 14 injured in Nepal church blast: police', Google News website, source: *Agence France-Presse*, 23 May <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jfl7xiIg0glqihUYMP8I0W5Q9eqQ> – Accessed 22 March 2010 – Attachment 6

<sup>17</sup> US Department of State 2010, *2009 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Nepal*, 11 March, Section 2.c – Attachment 12

<sup>18</sup> 'Country Information: Nepal' 2010, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website, 29 January <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/58625/Country-information-Nepal.html> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 13

<sup>19</sup> Toone, T. 2010, 'Bishnu Adhikari: The humble humanitarian from Nepal', *Mormon Times* website, 8 October <http://www.mormontimes.com/article/17707/Bishnu-Adhikari-The-humble-humanitarian-from-Nepal> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 14

<sup>20</sup> 'Country Information: Nepal' 2010, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website, 29 January <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/58625/Country-information-Nepal.html> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 13

According to an article posted on the LDS website in 2009, the church established a Mission in New Delhi, India in November 2007, which was to be responsible for Northern India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.<sup>21</sup> The article contained no information as to what activities – if any – missionaries undertook in Nepal.

An article from the LDS website claims a small branch of the Church in Kathmandu has about 50 active members, and averages about 12 baptisms a year. Acknowledging that missionaries are not permitted to teach or spread the gospel, the author claims once converted, Nepali people can teach each other.<sup>22</sup>

No information could be found containing further detail of LDS activity in Nepal, or as to how LDS members are treated in the country as a result of this activity. Given that proselytising is illegal in Nepal (see Question 5 below), it is unlikely LDS missionaries would risk actively seeking to convert people, and would instead focus on supporting and maintaining existing members.

## **5. Is proselytising illegal in Nepal? If so, what is the punishment?**

Proselytising is illegal in Nepal. The USDOS 2010 report on religious freedom stated that Nepal's interim constitution, promulgated in January 2007, provides for freedom of religion; however, it specifically prohibits proselytising.<sup>23</sup>

Proselytising is punishable by fines or imprisonment, and foreigners face expulsion. NGOs and individuals are allowed to file reports where suspicions of proselytising arise, which are in turn investigated by the government.<sup>24</sup> Some Christian and Muslim groups share concerns that the ban on proselytisation limits the expression of non-Hindu religious belief.<sup>25</sup>

## **6. Please provide information about the National Defence Army: i.e. when they were established, their current status and power, and how the authorities deal with them.**

According to Christian Solidarity Worldwide, armed groups and political parties – particularly Hindu fundamentalists and monarchists – have expressed opposition towards the principles of secularism following the declaration of Nepal as a secular state.<sup>26</sup> The Nepal Defence Army (NDA) is a Hindu fundamentalist group that seeks to re-establish Nepal as a Hindu kingdom, and has been responsible for a number of terrorist attacks.<sup>27</sup> According to the India Info website, the NDA – comprised of former soldiers, ex-police

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<sup>21</sup> Terry, M. 2009 'The Mormons in India', *Church News*, 5 September <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/57849/Church-in-New-Delhi-moving-forward.html#> – Accessed 3 September 2010 – Attachment 15

<sup>22</sup> Topham, L. S. 2003, 'Light in a Land of Mystery', Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website, July [http://lds.org/ldsorg/v/index.jsp?vnextoid=f318118dd536c010VgnVCM1000004d82620aRCRD&locale=0&sourceId=61a91c90483eb010VgnVCM1000004d82620a\\_&hideNav=1](http://lds.org/ldsorg/v/index.jsp?vnextoid=f318118dd536c010VgnVCM1000004d82620aRCRD&locale=0&sourceId=61a91c90483eb010VgnVCM1000004d82620a_&hideNav=1) – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 16

<sup>23</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November – Attachment 3

<sup>24</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section II – Attachment 3

<sup>25</sup> US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November, Section II – Attachment 3

<sup>26</sup> Christian Solidarity Worldwide 2009, *Nepal: Emerging threat of Hindu extremism*, October, Section 4 <http://dynamic.csw.org.uk/article.asp?t=report&id=116> – Accessed 19 February 2010 – Attachment 4

<sup>27</sup> International Crisis Group 2010, *Nepal's Political Rites of Passage – Crisis Group Asia report No 194*, 29 September, p.28 – Attachment 17

personnel and victims of Maoist guerrillas – united to “form a Hindu army with suicide bombers to fight Islamic and Christian zealots as well as communists”.<sup>28</sup> As of 2007, the NDA was headed by Parivartan, a former policeman who claims to have joined the Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist Leninist as a schoolboy. Parivartan claimed the NDA had nearly 1,200 trained soldiers who possessed arms and had the expertise to manufacture explosives. He further claimed the soldiers were being trained in India, where they also obtained the ingredients to manufacture explosives.<sup>29</sup>

According to Parivartan, the NDA had no links to former King Gyanendra, nor were they funded by the palace. He claimed the NDA did not want bloodshed, saying he had “stopped plans to assassinate Maoist chief Prachanda and Maoist minister Dev Gurung”.<sup>30</sup> Such claims, however, are undermined by the actions of the NDA. In January 2008, cadres of the NDA injured eight people when they threw a bomb at a micro-bus near a mass meeting of the seven-party alliance.<sup>31</sup> According to *Al-Jazeera*, the NDA claimed responsibility for a May 2009 church bombing that killed two people and wounded at least 12 others.<sup>32</sup>

While information on the current status and power of the NDA could not be found, four leaders of the NDA, including Chairman R.P. Mainali, were arrested for possessing arms in September 2009. Mainali had been released on bail for a previous arrest, and was reportedly on the police ‘most-wanted’ list.<sup>33</sup> In January 2010, Mainali reportedly denounced communal violence from gaol, claiming he wanted to launch a ‘peaceful agitation’ to establish a Hindu state.<sup>34</sup> Following Mainali’s arrest, the pastor of a church bombed by the NDA thanked the government for “having done its duty”, but warned the arrest did not mean “that threats for Christians in the country are over”.<sup>35</sup> The absence of current reporting on the NDA suggests the arrests of its leadership has marginalised the group.

However, on 4 March 2011 it was reported that six NDA members were arrested by Nepali police with a cache of arms and explosives. Officials claimed they were planning

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Hindu army training in Nepal to fight Al Qaida’ 2007, India Info website, 20 June <http://news.indiainfo.com/2007/06/20/nepal.html> – Accessed 16 February 2011 – Attachment 18

<sup>29</sup> ‘Hindu army training in Nepal to fight Al Qaida’ 2007, India Info website, 20 June <http://news.indiainfo.com/2007/06/20/nepal.html> – Accessed 16 February 2011 – Attachment 18

<sup>30</sup> ‘Hindu army training in Nepal to fight Al Qaida’ 2007, India Info website, 20 June <http://news.indiainfo.com/2007/06/20/nepal.html> – Accessed 16 February 2011 – Attachment 18

<sup>31</sup> ‘Nepal Defence Army Behind Bhotahity Blast: Police’ 2008, *Himalayan Times*, 19 January <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0vgqzpb8Va3pa.axamal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20080119> – Accessed 24 January 2008 – Attachment 19

<sup>32</sup> ‘Blast rips through Nepal church’ 2009, *Al-Jazeera*, 23 May <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2009/05/2009523622063367.html#> – accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 20

<sup>33</sup> ‘Four extremist Nepal Defence Army leaders arrested with arms’ 2009, Thaindian News website, 6 September [http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/south-asia/four-extremist-nepal-defence-army-leaders-arrested-with-arms-2\\_100243510.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/south-asia/four-extremist-nepal-defence-army-leaders-arrested-with-arms-2_100243510.html) – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 21

<sup>34</sup> ‘Jailed Nepal Defence Army chief going through change of heart’ 2010, Kantipur website, 11 January <http://www.ekantipur.com/2010/01/11/top-story/jailed-nepal-defence-army-chief-going-through-change-of-heart/306153/> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 22

<sup>35</sup> ‘The arrest of Hindu extremist Mainalo does not extinguish the fears of Nepali Christians’ 2009, *AsiaNews*, 11 September <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/The-arrest-of-Hindu-extremist-Mainalo-does-not-extinguish-the-fears-of-Nepali-Christians-16305.html#> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 23



an attack in an unspecified location in Kathmandu under the direction of Mainali. No further information verifying Mainali's involvement was found.<sup>36</sup>

**7. Please briefly describe the Mormon religion in Australia: ie when it was established; how it differs from other Christian religions; what the required rituals (eg baptism) are to become a Mormon; and the expected practice (eg attending church) once a Mormon.**

### **LDS History in Australia**

According to the Australian LDS website, members of the Church first arrived in Australia in 1840<sup>37</sup>, with the first diocese being established in Australia in 1960.<sup>38</sup> The first LDS temple was dedicated in Sydney in 1984, and another four temples have since been established around the country. The LDS claim there are 800 Missionaries from over 30 countries serving in Australia, supported by seven Missions. The LDS estimate there are currently over 128,400 members and over 180 chapels in Australia.<sup>39</sup>

### **How LDS differs from other Christian religions**

In 1820, LDS founder Joseph Smith reportedly had a vision in which two celestial personages appeared claiming "all existing churches were wrong, all their creeds were an abomination, and all their professors were corrupt".<sup>40</sup> Smith claimed he was chosen to restore – rather than reform – a church that had disappeared from the face of the earth.

There are a number of key elements that separate the LDS from other Christian religions:

- Mormons consider the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Trinity as three distinct beings who are one in purpose, while Christians consider the Trinity as of the same substance and three persons in one being;<sup>41</sup>
- Mormons believe in a period of learning and preparation after death before a second physical incarnation, while other Christians do not;<sup>42</sup>
- Mormons believe the wicked enter an unpleasant spirit prison prior to judgement, and only the most obstinately wicked will be consigned to 'Outer Darkness' for

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<sup>36</sup> 'Major terrorist plot foiled, six held with explosives' 2011, *Himalayan News Service*, source: *The Himalayan Times*, 4 March

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Major+terrorist+plot+foiled%2C+six+held+with+explosives&NewsID=278696> – Accessed 9 March 2011 – Attachment 24

<sup>37</sup> 'Facts and Figures' (undated), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website,

<http://www.lds.org.au/index.php/newsroom-press-kit/facts-figures> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 25

<sup>38</sup> 'Early Church History' (undated), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website,

<http://www.lds.org.au/index.php/newsroom-press-kit/church-history> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 26

<sup>39</sup> 'Facts and Figures' (undated), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website,

<http://www.lds.org.au/index.php/newsroom-press-kit/facts-figures> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 25

<sup>40</sup> 'Mormonism vs Christianity' (undated), All About Religion website

<http://www.allaboutreligion.org/mormonism-vs-christianity.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 27

<sup>41</sup> 'Comparison Chart of Mormonism vs Mainstream Christianity' (undated), Religion Facts website

<http://www.religionfacts.com/mormonism/comparison.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 28

<sup>42</sup> 'Comparison Chart of Mormonism vs Mainstream Christianity' (undated), Religion Facts website

<http://www.religionfacts.com/mormonism/comparison.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 28

eternity. Other Christians believe in Hell as a place or state of being of eternal torment and distance from God;<sup>43</sup>

- The LDS does not have an official symbol, although the angel Moroni raising a trumpet is seen atop Mormon temples. Other Christians use the cross as their official symbol;<sup>44</sup>
- While other Christians believe that God is a spirit, Mormons believe God was once a man;<sup>45</sup>
- The LDS requires members to wear a special temple undergarment except when it is not possible. Mormons see the temple garment as spiritual armour, and a symbol of modesty. Other Christians have no such undergarment.<sup>46</sup>
- In Christianity, Jesus is the self-existent creator of all things, while in Mormonism, he is the spirit brother of Lucifer who was conceived in Heaven by a celestial Mother and came in flesh as the result of the Father having union with the Virgin Mary;<sup>47</sup>
- In distinction to orthodox Christian theology, Mormons do not believe the Bible is the infallible repository for redemptive revelation. They believe the Book of Mormon is the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of their religion;<sup>48</sup>
- While other Christians believe they will stand before God dressed in the spotless robes of Christ's righteousness, Mormons contend they will appear before Heavenly Father dressed in fig-leaf aprons;<sup>49</sup> and
- Mormons believe that the resurrected Jesus ministered to the Nephites in America, appearing before them in a temple, and allowing them to feel the wounds in his hands and feet.<sup>50</sup>

### **Required rituals to become a Mormon and expected practices**

Mormons believe baptism is essential if a person is to receive salvation and return to live with their Heavenly Father. People must be spiritually clean and worthy in order to live with God. Baptism must be by total immersion in water accompanied by the saying of

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<sup>43</sup> 'Comparison Chart of Mormonism vs Mainstream Christianity' (undated), Religion Facts website <http://www.religionfacts.com/mormonism/comparison.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 28

<sup>44</sup> 'Comparison Chart of Mormonism vs Mainstream Christianity' (undated), Religion Facts website <http://www.religionfacts.com/mormonism/comparison.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 28

<sup>45</sup> 'Mormonism vs Christianity' (undated), All About Religion website <http://www.allaboutreligion.org/mormonism-vs-christianity.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 27

<sup>46</sup> 'Mormons at a glance' 2009, BBC UK Religion, 10 February <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/mormon/> – Accessed 26 November 2010 – Attachment 29

<sup>47</sup> 'Mormonism vs Christianity' (undated), All About Religion website <http://www.allaboutreligion.org/mormonism-vs-christianity.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 27

<sup>48</sup> 'Mormonism vs Christianity' (undated), All About Religion website <http://www.allaboutreligion.org/mormonism-vs-christianity.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 27

<sup>49</sup> 'Mormonism vs Christianity' (undated), All About Religion website <http://www.allaboutreligion.org/mormonism-vs-christianity.htm> – Accessed 18 February 2011 – Attachment 27

<sup>50</sup> 'Mormons: God' 2009, BBC UK Religion, 10 February [http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/mormon/beliefs/god\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/mormon/beliefs/god_1.shtml) – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 30

prayers. Before a person can be baptised they will be interviewed, usually by a local Bishop or equivalent official, to make sure they have repented their sins, have faith in Jesus Christ and understand and are willing to obey the laws of Gospel. A convert must be re-baptised even if they have already been baptised into one of the mainstream Christian Churches.<sup>51</sup>

Most Mormon families will spend about three hours with their local community each Sunday, with the key event being the Sacrament Meeting, which lasts around 70 minutes. Members receive a sacramental communion of bread and water, and the service is led by the bishop. Communal worship is informal, taking place in a simple chapel.<sup>52</sup>

Individual Mormons usually pray privately each morning and night. Mormon families usually ask for a blessing on food before eating. Members of the LDS fast each month on the first Sunday, which involves going without food and drink for two consecutive meals. They give the money they would have spent for the meals to the Church – the fast offering. On that day, the local Mormon community comes together for a fast and testimony meeting. The fast is preceded, accompanied, and followed by prayer.<sup>53</sup>

The LDS encourages all young men and women who are physically and mentally fit to serve as Missionaries. Older couples can also do Mission work. Men usually serve for two years from the age of 19 and are given the title ‘Elder’, while women serve for 18 months and take the title ‘Sister’. To become a Missionary, a candidate must apply to the Church and be interviewed to assess their worthiness. Mormons also practice tithing, in which one tenth of their annual income is given to the Church.<sup>54</sup>

## Attachments

1. ‘Pope appoints first Catholic bishop to Nepal’ 2007, Catholic Online website, source: *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 2 February [http://www.catholic.org/international/international\\_story.php?id=23009](http://www.catholic.org/international/international_story.php?id=23009) – Accessed 19 April 2007.
2. ‘Easter rally calls Nepal gov’t to expand religious freedom’ 2007, Catholic Online website, source: *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 10 April [http://www.catholic.org/international/international\\_story.php?id=23700](http://www.catholic.org/international/international_story.php?id=23700) – Accessed 24 April 2007.
3. US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010*, 17 November.
4. Christian Solidarity Worldwide 2009, *Nepal: Emerging threat of Hindu extremism*, October, pp.5-6 <http://dynamic.csw.org.uk/article.asp?t=report&id=116> – Accessed 19 February 2010.

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<sup>51</sup> ‘Mormons at a glance’ 2009, BBC UK Religion, 10 February

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/mormon/> – Accessed 26 November 2010 – Attachment 29

<sup>52</sup> ‘Mormons at a glance’ 2009, BBC UK Religion, 10 February

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/mormon/> – Accessed 26 November 2010 – Attachment 29

<sup>53</sup> ‘Mormons at a glance’ 2009, BBC UK Religion, 10 February

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<sup>54</sup> ‘Mormons at a glance’ 2009, BBC UK Religion, 10 February

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5. 'New Threats, Old Enmity Pummel Nepal's Christians' 2010, *Compass Direct News* <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/nepal/25596/> – Accessed 27 October 2010.
6. Bhandari, S. 2009, 'Two dead, 14 injured in Nepal church blast: police', Google News website, [Source: *Agence France-Presse*], 23 May <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jfL7xiIg0glqihUYMP8I0W5Q9eqQ> – Accessed 22 March 2010.
7. 'Christians rally to protest church bombing' 2009, *Union of Catholic Asian News*, 2 June <http://www.ucanews.com/2009/06/02/christians-rally-to-protest-church-bombing/> – Accessed 22 March 2010.
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