

Briefly noted

News in the [April 22, 2008](#) issue

Research indicates that within the next 12 years, the number of Muslims worshipping at mosques in Britain will outstrip that of Catholics attending mass. According to London's *Daily Telegraph* March 25, the study by Britain's Christian Research organization estimates that the number of Catholics attending Sunday mass will have dropped to 679,000 by 2020. At the same time, the report's statisticians say, the number of Muslims praying at mosques will have climbed to 683,000. The newspaper says the Christian Research report, based on British government and academic information as well as the firm's own religious-trends study, comes "amid growing tensions over the place of Muslims in British society."

Saudi Arabia will deny a request by the Vatican to build that Muslim country's first Christian church, according to a report broadcast March 25 by a television channel owned by the Saudi royal family. The report came the same day that Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah announced plans to host a conference of monotheistic religions, including Islam, Christianity and Judaism—a project that he said he had discussed with Pope Benedict XVI on a visit to the Vatican last November. The conference would be the first such interreligious event in Saudi Arabia, which forbids public observance of any faith but Islam. Earlier this month, a delegation of Muslim scholars and clerics met with Vatican officials in Rome to plan a Christian-Muslim summit in November.