

PROJECT NO: 101589

TAX | NON-TAX

# Slovenia



## Re-engaging Faith



### Overview

This project is planning and implementing Bible reading opportunities and community building activities to re-engage Slovenians in church attendance and their Christian faith in a post-Christian environment.

### The Need

Slovenia is a country seeing increasing secularisation, as well as a lack of priests in the Catholic Church. Although the Catholic Church has 70% of the population's adherence, it is mostly nominal — there is a decline in attendance in Catholic parishes throughout Slovenia, further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As well as a decline in attendance, within the churches there is a lack of programs for engaging people with the word of God. While the priests are looking for different approaches to pastoral work, there is a growing need to systematically introduce believers to reading God's word. There are many traditional Christians who would like to deepen their faith and engage with the Bible, but they don't know how. Simple discipleship activities are needed to involve lay people at the heart level, helping them to strengthen their faith in facing the challenges of everyday life.

70%

of Slovenians are nominally Catholic.

↓ 6%

of Catholic population between 2009 and 2019.

90%

of 70 parishes surveyed indicated a desire to be a part of Bible Society's Bible reading programs.

<h1>Goals</h1>	
<p>This project aims to build on the foundation laid by Bible Society's Bible Reading Marathon project which began fourteen years ago and has become known in all dioceses in Slovenia. Many parishes (in 2022 more than 50) organise mini-Bible reading marathons.</p> <p>The goal of this project is to respond further to these groups, who need accompaniment and occasional encouragement for engaging with the Bible. This project will create and implement programs to help parish groups enter into everyday life with God's word.</p>	<p>Bible Society will help to introduce a regular reading of God's word by helping priests and other Catholic pastoral lay workers to form small Bible reading groups/communities, where people can actively engage with the word of God, learn to apply it to their daily lives and share it with their friends.</p> <p>Specifically, this project will: provide first contact with the word of God through the Bible Reading Marathon, and other mission outreach; expand the engagement with the Scripture in Bible reading groups/communities and encourage a daily</p>
<p>encounter with God's word; train and support leaders/facilitators of the groups; raise up contact people in the parishes who will liaise with Bible Society; and finally, promote Bible Society's special Journaling New Testament in parishes and general public with the intention of introducing its Scripture engagement materials.</p>	
<h2>Impact</h2>	<h2>Testimonies</h2>
<p>This project is aiming to impact 7,500 people between January – December 2023. The impact of the project will be seen in an increase of regular Bible reading, indicated by growth of groups dedicated to regular Bible reading. The impact will also be seen in a readiness to organise Bible related events in parishes, such as subscribing to a mini marathon or Bible Sunday.</p>	<p>"Thank you for the wonderful and special energy that this Bible Marathon emanated. It moved me and made me remember my grandmother and the values we learned from the Holy Bible. Truly a unique experience." - <i>Daniela</i></p> <p>"Several times during the week (during the day, as well as late in the evening or early in the morning) I listened for a short time to the live broadcast on YouTube. It was really great to watch countless young and old faces read the word of God. I think that Slovenians have shown in this way that the Bible means a lot to us. What we need now is the next step which is to respond to what we have read and live accordingly!" - <i>Gregor, a listener and a reader in one of the Bible Marathon groups on YouTube</i></p>
<h2>Prayer Needs</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please pray to find the right volunteers who would be willing to devote their time to take on the responsibility as group leaders.</li> <li>• For the parish priests to be receptive and to recommend this initiative to others.</li> <li>• For Bible reading groups to be formed among priests themselves, which would help them in finding new approaches to share the Gospel.</li> <li>• Please pray for the young people who are open but lack perseverance to form regular Bible reading groups.</li> </ul>	

