

## Translation Update: Ninkare

Two hundred New Testaments formed a cross in the front of the church. Above them, a golden dove flew, symbolizing the Holy Spirit who will help the Ninkarse people understand and implement God's Word. The celebration of the Ninkare New Testament began!

Excited to have the New Testament in their own language, the villagers prepared extensively for the dedication, held on Dec. 4, 2004. Women printed a special celebration cloth to make clothing for the occasion, saying, "Everybody should know we now have the Book of God in our own language!" People prepared more than 500 shirts with "Read God's Word" printed on them. The local radio station announced the dedication for two weeks, highlighting that the New Testaments would cost only 500 CFA (about \$1) on the dedication day. More than 800 Books were sold. Traditional village chiefs, government elites, literacy agencies, church leaders and the capital's Christian television station all attended the dedication.

Starting the translation only eight years ago, Swiss Wycliffe translators Urs and Idda Niggli completed the Ninkare New Testament of Burkina Faso, giving more than 530,000 people in Bukina Faso and northern Ghana access to God's Word in their heart language. The Niggli's were able to accelerate the translation process by using a related language – one they had already translated – as a first draft.

Prior to this translation, more than 25 Ninkarse churches had the Bible in a language only the pastor understood. Even though he tried to translate the readings into Ninkarse, the congregation couldn't get a full grasp of the Gospel. Pastors often preached only from the Old Testament because even they didn't understand the New Testament's messages in a foreign language.

Literacy training is also increasing in Ninkare, as The National Bible Translation Organization runs literacy classes every year. Since most of these classes are held in church buildings and use Christian primers to teach reading, God's Word continues to spread through hearts and houses through literacy and Scripture publications. As the written Word spreads widely in the language area, there are at least two cases in which a literacy class turned into a church.

Five new evangelical congregations have started since 1998 when Luke's Gospel was published, and 300 adult believers have joined the church.

*Information gathered from Ken and Katy Wienecke*