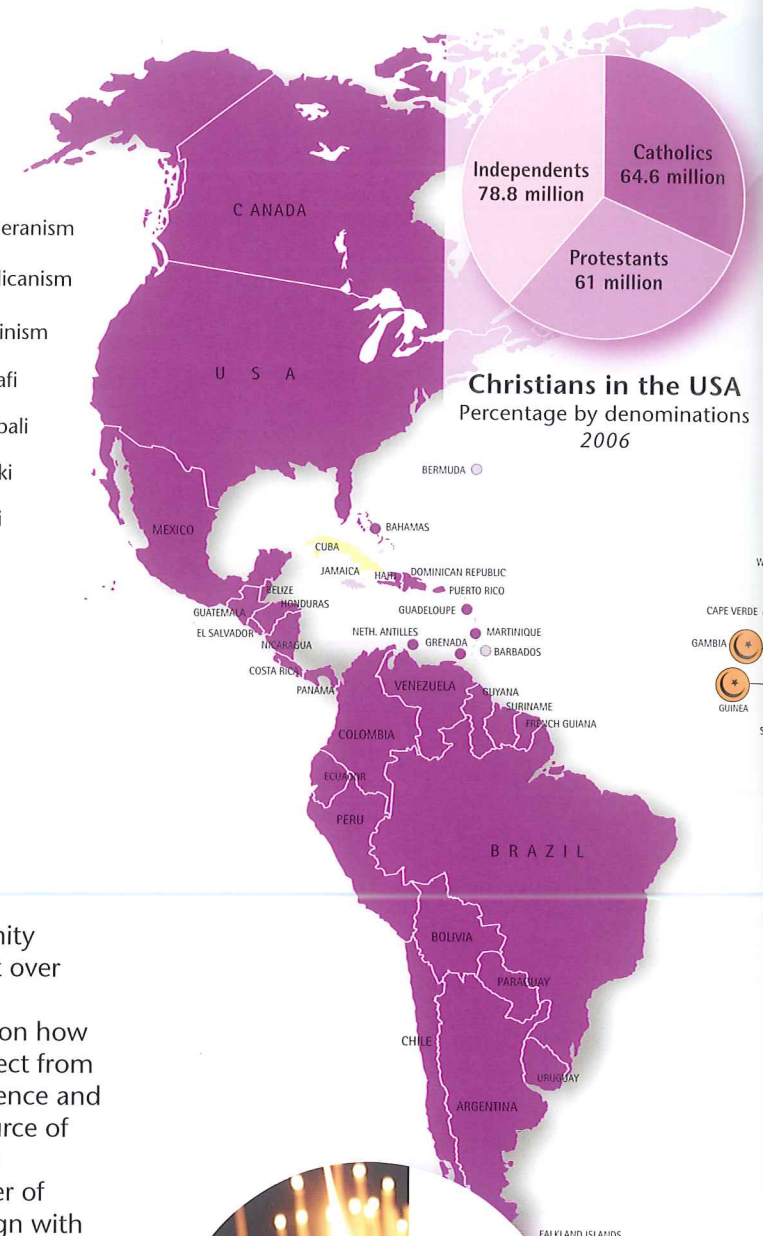


Schools and Schisms

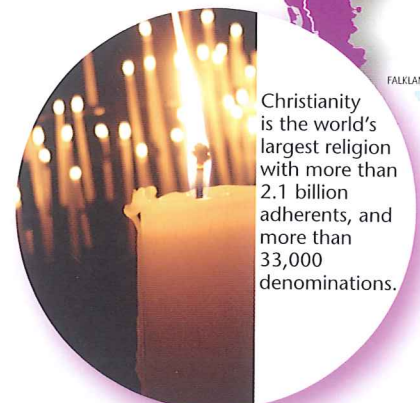
Most popular religion by group and sub-group

- Buddhism**
 - Mahayana
 - Chinese
 - Tibetan
 - Theravada
 - Japanese
- Christianity**
 - Catholicism—Protestantism
 - Lutheranism
 - Anglicanism
 - Calvinism
 - Orthodox
 - Christian Independents
- Islam**
 - Sunni
 - Hanafi
 - Hanbali
 - Shi'a
 - Ithna'ashaariyya
 - Zaydis
 - Shafi
- other religions**
 - Ibadiyyah
 - Hinduism
 - Judaism
 - Chinese indigenous religion
 - other indigenous beliefs
 - atheism



The world's largest religions are Christianity (about 2 billion believers) and Islam (just over 1 billion).

Religious belief has a strong influence on how people think and act and what they expect from life. Faith is a matter of individual conscience and for much of the world's people it is a source of stability and comfort. But religion's deep influence also makes it a profound marker of identity, so religious differences often align with the deepest cultural differences and social divisions. Where religious leaders cannot or will not restrain how those differences are expressed, heated and uncontrollable conflicts can explode. Some of the most brutal violence in the world's history – and still today – is inflicted in the name of religion. And differences within religions – between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, for example, or between Protestant and Catholic Christians – are often as intense as differences between them.



India's Muslim population exceeds 158 million, the second largest in the world after Indonesia, but represents only 13% of India's population.

Main religions
Number of adherents to the main religions 2005

Buddhists make up nearly 6% of the world's population. 98% live in South-East Asia.