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CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS

Vatican City (Fides Service) – As every year in the month of October, in view of World Mission Sunday, Fides News Service offers, with the help of a few statistics, a panorama of Catholic missionary activity all over the world. Tables regarding members of the Church, church structures in the fields of pastoral care, healthcare, education and assistance are taken from the latest edition of the Church's Book of Statistics (31 December 2007). Please note that variations, *increase* or *decrease*, emerging from our own comparison with last year's figures, are marked increase + or decrease –. in brackets

World population

On 31 December 2007 the world population was **6,617,097,000** with an *increase* of 74,273,000 units compared with the previous year. Population *growth* was registered on every continent including Europe, as

it was noted in the previous year: Africa +16,865,000; America +11,327,000; Asia + 43,304,000; Oceania +531,000; Europe +2,246,000.

Catholics

On the same date Catholics in the world numbered **1.146.656.000** with an overall *increase* of 15.906.000 more than the previous year, in every continent as follows: Africa +6.612.000; America +5.535.000; Asia +2.428.000; Europe + 1,132,000 Oceania +199.000.

The world percentage of Catholics *increased* by 0.05 %, settling at 17.33%; by continent: increases were registered in Africa + 0,40; Asia + 0,02; in Europe + 0,03 and in Oceania - 0,17 . a slight drop in numbers was registered in America - 0,17.

Persons and Catholics per priest

This year again the number of **persons** per priest in the world *increased* by 140 units, (average **12,879**). The distribution by continent resembles previous years: *increase* in America, Europe and Oceania, decrease in Africa and Asia : Africa - 456; America +71; Asia - 794; Europe +53; Oceania +207;

The number of **Catholics** per priest in the world *increased* by 34 units (average **2,810**). Here too we have *increases* on every continent except Asia: Africa + 30; America + 31; Asia -20; Europe +22; Oceania +65.

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions and mission stations

The number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions *increased* by **13** to **2,936** with new circumscriptions created in: Africa +2; America +6; and Europe +5. Mission stations **with a resident priest 1,016** (1,531 less than in the previous year) are decreasing on every continent.

Mission Stations **without a resident priest** *increased* in number by 5,159 units, to **124,642**. Increases registered on every continent were greater in America (+ 3,764), and Africa (+ 1,310); followed by Asia (+ 75); Europe (+6); Oceania (+ 4).

Bishops

The number of bishops in the world *increased* by 48 units, to **4,946**. Every continent, except America -2, registered an increase: Africa (+ 19); Asia, (+12) and Europe (+13) Oceania (+6). The increase in numbers regard both diocesan and religious Bishops: **Diocesan** bishops number **3,729** (40 more than in the previous year); **Religious** Bishops number **1,217** (increase of 8 units). The increase in diocesan bishops is registered on every continent: Africa (+12); Asia (+10), Europe (+15); Oceania (+3); whereas in America the situation remains unchanged. The number of religious Bishops increased slightly in Africa (+ 7); Asia (+2) and Oceania (+ 3), whereas the number dropped in Europe (-2) and America (-2).

priests

The total number of priests in the world *increased* by 762 units, to **408,024**. The only continents which registered a decrease were again Europe (-2,260) and Oceania (- 55), whereas figures grew in Africa (+1,180); America (+ 376) and Asia (+1.521). Diocesan priests *increased* by 1,340 units, reaching a total of **272,431** with *increases* in Africa (+1,024), America (+853), Asia (+864) but showed a slight drop in Oceania (- 9), and again a decrease in Europe (- 1,392). The number of Religious priests decreased by 578 units to a total **135,593**. Increases were registered as in recent years in Asia (+657) and Africa (+156), whereas numbers dropped in America (- 447), Europe (- 868) and Oceania (- 46).

permanent deacons

Permanent deacons *increased* by 1,422 units to **35,942**. The highest increase was registered again in America (+898) and in Europe (+472), followed by Africa (+24), Asia (+ 20) and Oceania (+8). Diocesan Permanent deacons number **35,297**, with *increases* on all continents (total *increase* 1,309 units): Africa (+ 28), America (+829); Asia (+ 23); Europe (+419) and Oceania (+ 10).

Religious permanent deacons number **645**, with an increase of 133 units more than in the previous year with increases in America (+69); and Europe (+ 53); but a decrease in Africa (- 4) and Asia (- 3); Oceania (-2).

men and women religious

The number of Brothers *dropped* by 151 units to **54,956**. Situation: *increase* in Africa (+ 75); America (+ 111), Asia (+ 36); and Oceania (+ 19). The only *decrease* was registered in Europe (- 392). An overall *decrease* in the number of women religious (- 6,586), today **746,841**, was registered by continent as follows: *increase* in Africa (+ 1,178) and Asia (+ 2,838) and *decrease* in Europe (- 5,843), America (- 4,650) and Oceania (- 109).

members of secular institutes, male and female

Members of male secular institutes number **665** with an overall decrease of 26 units. Numbers *increased* only in Europe (+ 15), the situation in Oceania remained the same with only one member of a secular institute. Numbers *decreased* in Africa (- 17), America (- 6), Asia (- 18).

Members of Female secular institutes decreased again this year, by 572 units to a total of **26,778** members. *Decreases* were registered in America (- 238), in Europe (- 415) and Oceania (-2) while numbers increased in Africa (+18), Asia (+ 65).

lay missionaries and catechists

The number of lay missionaries in the world is **250,464** units, with an overall increase of 33,696 units, distributed as follows: America (+31,417), Asia (+ 2,552) and Europe (+ 493). Whereas numbers dropped in Africa (- 711) and Oceania (- 55).

Catechists in the world increased by 6,665 units to a total of **2,993,354**. Numbers grew in Africa (+ 5,896), Asia (+ 14, 383), and Europe (+ 7,403), but dropped in America (- 20,071) and Oceania (- 946).

major seminarians

The overall number of major seminarians, diocesan and religious, rose again, although less than the previous year, increasing by 439 units to **115,919**. Numbers grew in Africa (+ 695), Asia (+ 595), and Oceania (+ 5) but dropped in America (- 381) and Europe (- 475).

Diocesan major seminarians number **71,225** (653 *less* than the previous year) but Religious major seminarians increased to **44,602** (+1.092). Diocesan seminarians increased in Africa (+136) and Oceania (+ 5), but decreased in America (- 239), Asia (- 74) and Europe (- 481).

Religious Seminarians increased in Africa (+ 559), Asia (+ 669) and Europe (+ 6). Numbers remained the same in Oceania (=) and dropped in America (- 142).

minor seminarians

The number of minor seminarians, diocesan and religious, *decreased* by 671 units, to **101,978**. Numbers grew in Africa (+782), Europe (+ 13) and Oceania (+ 49), but dropped in America (- 684) and Asia (- 831). Diocesan minor seminarians number **77,145** (- 1, 158), whereas religious seminarians number **24,833** (+ 487). The number of diocesan minor seminarians has decreased on every continent except Oceania (+ 63). Religious minor seminarians decreased in number in America (- 136), Asia (- 241) and Oceania (- 14), but increased in Africa (+ 815) and Europe (+ 63).

Catholic schools

In the field of education the Catholic Church runs **67,264** kindergartens with 6,386,497 pupils; **91,694** primary schools with 29,800,338 pupils; 41,210 secondary schools (+274) with 16,778,633 pupils. The Church also cares for 1,894,148 high school pupils and 2,837,370 university students.

Catholic charity and healthcare centres

The Church runs **5,378 hospitals** most of them in America (1,669) and Europe (1,363); **18,088 dispensaries** mainly in America (5,663), Africa (5,373) and Asia (3,532); **521 Care Homes** for people with Leprosy mainly in Asia (293) and Africa (186); **15,448 Homes** for the elderly, or the chronically ill or people with a disability mainly in Europe (8,271) and America (3,839); **9,376 orphanages**, about one third in Asia (3,376); **11,555 creches** ; **13,599 marriage counselling centres** mainly in Europe (5,919) and America (4,827); **33,146 social rehabilitation centres** and **10,356 other kinds of institutions**.

STATISTICS

*Source: Church's Yearly Book of Statistics latest edition
elaborated by Fides*

in brackets variations compared with previous year: increase (+) decrease (-)

WORLD POPULATION – CATHOLICS

Continent	Population	Catholics	Percentage
Africa	943,743,000 (+ 16,865,000)	164,925,000 (+ 6,612,000)	17.48 % (+ 0.40)
America	907,393,000 (+ 11,327,000)	568,570,000 (+ 5,535,000)	62.66 % (- 0.17)
Asia	4,024,970,000 (+ 43,304,000)	120,894,000 (+ 2,428,000)	3.00 % (+ 0.02)
Europe	706,798,000 (+ 2,246,000)	283,240,000 (+ 1,132,000)	40.07 % (+ 0.03)
Oceania	34,193,000 (+ 531,000)	9,027,000 (+ 199,000)	26.43 % (+ 0.17)
Total	6,617,097,000 (+ 74,273,000)	1,146,656,000 (+ 15,906,000)	17.33% (+ 0.05)

PERSONS /CATHOLICS PER PRIEST

Continent	persons per priest	Catholics per priest
Africa	27,230 (- 456)	4,759 (+ 30)
America	7,469 (+ 71)	4,680 (+ 31)
Asia	50,432 (- 794)	2,290 (- 20)
Europe	3,636 (+ 53)	1,457 (+ 22)
Oceania	7,312 (+ 207)	1,931 (+ 65)
Total	12,879 (+ 140)	2,810 (+ 34)

ECCLESIASTICAL CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS– MISSION STATIONS

Continent	Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions	Mission Stations <i>with</i> resident priest	Mission Stations <i>without</i> resident priest
Africa	516 (+ 2)	248 (- 1,329)	70,805 (+ 3,764)
America	1,072 (+ 6)	105 (- 79)	12,668 (+ 1,310)
Asia	523 (=)	578 (- 114)	40,566 (+ 75)
Europe	746 (+ 5)	35 (- 8)	64 (+ 6)
Oceania	79 (=)	50 (- 1)	539 (+ 4)
total	2,936 (+ 13)	1,016 (- 1,531)	124,642 (+ 5,159)

BISHOPS

Continent	Total bishops	diocesan bishops	Religious bishops
Africa	657 (+ 19)	474 (+ 12)	183 (+ 7)

America	1,847 (- 2)	1,278 (=)	569 (- 2)
Asia	732 (+ 12)	539 (+ 10)	193 (+ 2)
Europe	1,576 (+ 13)	1,349 (+ 15)	227 (- 2)
Oceania	134 (+ 6)	89 (+ 3)	45 (+ 3)
total	4,946 (+ 48)	3,729 (+ 40)	1,217 (+ 8)

PRIESTS

Continent	Total priests	Diocesan priests	Religious priests
Africa	34,658 (+ 1,180)	23,154 (+ 1,024)	11,504 (+ 156)
America	121,495 (+ 376)	79,654 (+ 853)	41,841 (- 477)
Asia	52,802 (+ 1,521)	30,991 (+ 864)	21,811 (+ 657)
Europe	194,393 (- 2,260)	135,971 (- 1,392)	58,422 (- 868)
Oceania	4,676 (- 55)	2,661 (- 9)	2,015 (- 46)
total	408,024 (+ 762)	272,431 (+ 1,340)	135,593 (- 578)

PERMANENT DEACONS

Continent	Total permanent deacons	Diocesan Permanent deacons	Religious Permanent deacons
Africa	403 (+ 24)	381 (+ 28)	22 (- 4)
America	23,256 (+ 898)	23,000 (+ 829)	256 (+ 69)
Asia	163 (+ 20)	118 (+ 23)	45 (- 3)
Europe	11,848 (+ 472)	11,529 (+ 419)	319 (+ 53)
Oceania	272 (+ 8)	269 (+ 10)	3 (- 2)
total	35,942 (+ 1,422)	35,297 (+ 1,309)	645 (+ 113)

BROTHERS AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS

Continent	Brothers	Women Religious
Africa	7,921 (+ 75)	61,886 (+ 1,178)
America	16,755 (+ 111)	206,509 (- 4,650)
Asia	10,041 (+ 36)	158,692 (+ 2,838)
Europe	18,693 (- 392)	310,138 (- 5,843)
Oceania	1,546 (+ 19)	9,589 (- 109)

total	54,956 (- 151)	746,814 (- 6,586)
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MEMBERS OF SECULAR INSTITUTES

Continent	Members of secular institutes Male	Members of secular institutes Female
Africa	41 (- 17)	537 (+ 18)
America	193 (- 6)	5,738 (- 238)
Asia	24 (- 18)	1,726 (+ 65)
Europe	406 (+ 15)	18,734 (- 415)
Oceania	1 (=)	43 (- 2)
total	665 (- 26)	26,778 (- 572)

LAY MISSIONARIES AND CATECHISTS

Continent	Lay missionaries	Catechists
Africa	3,590 (- 711)	399,932 (+ 5,896)
America	229,639 (+ 31,417)	1,723,284 (- 20,071)
Asia	12,456 (+ 2,552)	312,553 (+ 14,383)
Europe	4,422 (+ 493)	541,828 (+ 7,403)
Oceania	357 (- 55)	15,757 (- 946)
total	250,464 (+ 33,696)	2,993,354 (+ 6,665)

MAJOR SEMINARIANS – DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS

Continent	Total Major seminarians	Diocesan Major seminarians	Religious Major seminarians
Africa	24,729 (+ 695)	16,654 (+ 136)	8,075 (+ 559)
America	36,769 (- 381)	24,845 (- 239)	11,924 (- 142)
Asia	31,297 (+ 595)	14,966 (- 74)	16,331 (+ 669)
Europe	22,143 (- 475)	14,127 (- 481)	8,016 (+ 6)
Oceania	981 (+ 5)	633 (+ 5)	348 (=)

total	115,919 (+ 439)	71,225 (- 653)	44,694 (+ 1,092)
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MINOR SEMINARIANS – DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS

Continent	total minor seminarians	diocesan minor seminarians	religious minor seminarians
Africa	48,812 (+ 782)	43,053 (- 33)	5,759 (+ 815)
America	15,982 (- 684)	10,973 (- 548)	5,009 (- 136)
Asia	24,038 (- 831)	15,117 (- 590)	8,921 (- 241)
Europe	12,813 (+ 13)	7,698 (- 50)	5,115 (+ 63)
Oceania	333 (+ 49)	304 (+ 63)	29 (- 14)
Total	101,978 (- 671)	77,145 (- 1,158)	24,833 (+ 487)

SCHOOLS AND PUPILS

	INFANT schools	children	PRIMARY schools	pupils	SECONDARY schools	PUPILS	High school pupils	UNIVERSITY Pupils
Africa	12,496	1,266,444	33,263	14,061,806	9,838	3,738,238	54,362	76,432
America	15,788	1,636,893	22,562	7,085,289	11,053	3,727,151	566,257	1,926,978
Asia	13,683	1,642,586	15,698	4,959,065	9,298	5,061,593	1,021,516	525,794
Europe	23,602	1,738,825	17,222	3,045,764	10,338	3,859,905	243,180	297,647
Oceania	1,695	101,749	2,949	648,414	683	391,746	8,833	10,519
total	67,264	6,386,497	91,694	29,800,338	41,210	16,778,633	1,894,148	2,837,370

HOSPITALS/CLINICS, CHARITY WORK, WELFARE

Continent	hospitals	Dispensaries	Leprosy centres	Homes for the elderly, chronically ill, disabled	orphanages	Nursery schools	Marriage Counselling centres,	other institutes	total
Africa	1,074	5,373	186	753	979	1,997	1,590	2,947	1,279
America	1,669	5,663	38	3,839	2,463	3,715	4,827	13,652	4,239
Asia	1,102	3,532	293	2,095	3,367	3,211	969	5,379	1,870
Europe	1,363	2,947	3	8,271	2,480	2,524	5,919	10,576	2,761
Oceania	170	573	1	490	87	108	294	592	207
total	5,378	18,088	521	15,448	9,376	11,555	13,599	33,146	10,356

ECCLESIASTICAL CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS DEPENDENT ON THE CONGREGATION FOR THE EVANGELISATION OF PEOPLES

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – The Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples is at the service of the Holy Father the Pope as the “central body for promoting, directing and co-ordinating” the activity of evangelisation of peoples and missionary cooperation throughout the world (cfr, Ad gentes, 29; Pastor bonus, 85),

The Church down through the centuries, in obedience to the command received from Christ, has always proclaimed the Gospel to all peoples. In order to fulfil her missionary duty, in the face of growing demand for evangelisation in the 16th century, the Church set up special structures. In 1622 Pope Gregory XV instituted the “Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide”, with the task of “preaching and proclaiming the Gospel and Catholic doctrine in all missions”, giving the Congregation decision making powers to guarantee rapidity and effectiveness. In 1627 Pope Urban VIII founded the Urban College of Propaganda Fide for the formation of secular clergy for the mission and the Tipografia Poliglotta (Printing Press) to print documents and books in many different languages.

With the apostolic constitution Pastor bonus Pope John Paul II confirmed the general principle of jurisdiction laid down by the Second Vatican Council (cfr. Ad gentes, 29), which states: “The Congregation has the task of directing and co-ordinating activity for the evangelisation of peoples and for missionary cooperation” (85),

The main duties of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples include: ensure fair distribution of missionaries; formation for local secular clergy and catechists; involve Religious Institutes, Mission Societies, and local Churches in the task of evangelising mission territories.

Latest details (10 October 2009) of Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions under the care of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (CEP) :

The CEP is responsible for a total number of 1,094 Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions

Continent	AD	D	AT	VA	PA	M	AA	OM	TOTAL
Africa	87	378	-	14	9	1	1	3	493
America	7	31	-	45	-	2	-	-	85
Asia	76	333	1	15	36	3	4	2	470
Oceania	11	31	-	-	1	2	-	1	46
TOTAL	181	773	1	74	46	8	5	6	1094

KEY: archdiocese (AD), diocese (D), territorial abbacy (AT), apostolic vicariate (VA), apostolic prefecture (PA), apostolic administration (AA), Mission sui juris (M), military Ordinariate (OM) (S.L.) (Agenzia Fides 15 October 2009)

Special Feature prepared by S.L. - Fides News Service 15 October 2009