



agenzia fides

AGENZIA DELLE PONTIFICIE OPERE MISSIONARIE

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WORLD MISSION DAY CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS 2017

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – As every year, in view of World Mission Day, which this year celebrates its 91st anniversary on Sunday, October 22, 2017, Fides News Service offers some statistics chosen to give a panorama of the missionary Church all over the world. The tables are taken from the latest edition of the “Church’s Book of Statistics” published (updated to 31 December 2015) regarding members of the Church, church structures, healthcare, welfare and education. 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

To 31 December 2015 the world population was **7.248.941.000** with an increase of **88.202.000** units compared with the previous year. Population growth was registered on every continent, including Europe: increases were registered above all in Asia (+ 47.656.000) and Africa (+ 31.252.000), followed by America (+ 8.735.000), Europe (+ 430.000) and Oceania (+ 129.000).

Catholics

On the same date Catholics in the world numbered **1.284.810,000** units with an overall increase of **12.529.000**. The increase affects all continents, except Europe. Increases were registered above all in Africa (+7.411.000) and in America (+ 4.756.000) followed by Asia (+ 1.583.000) and Oceania (+ 123.000). Decrease in Europe (- 1.344.000).

The world percentage of Catholics decreased by 0.05 %, settling at **17.72%**. By continent: increases were registered in Africa (+ 0.12) and Oceania (+ 0.24), decrease in America (- 0.08), and Europe (- 0.21). Asia unvaried.

Persons and Catholics per priest

This year the number of persons per priest in the world increased by 200 units, average **14,082**. The distribution by continent: increase in Africa (+ 42), America (+ 68) and Europe (+ 57), decrease in Asia (- 159) and Oceania (- 117).

The number of Catholics per priest in the world increased by 31 units, average **3.091**. There are increases in Africa (+ 40), America (+ 37); Europe (+ 14); decrease in Asia (-13) and Oceania (-11).

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions and mission stations

The number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions are 8 more than the previous year to **3,006** with new circumscriptions created in Africa (+1), America (+4), Asia (+1), Europe (+2). Oceania unvaried.

Mission stations with a resident priest number **1,559** (305 less than in the previous year) and an increase was registered only in America (+ 6), while decreases were registered in Africa (- 181), Asia (- 107) Europe (- 2) and Oceania (- 21).

Mission Stations without a resident priest increased in number by 6.428 units, to **143.000**. Increase were registered in Africa (+2.240), America (+ 3.344), and Asia (+ 968). The number dropped in Europe (- 19) and Oceania (- 105).

Bishops

The total number of Bishops in the world increased by 67 units, to **5,304**. Diocesan Bishops increased in numbers, while Religious Bishops decreased. Diocesan Bishops number **4,063** (71

more), while Religious Bishops number **1,241**. The increase in diocesan Bishops is registered in all continents except Africa which remains unvaried; America (+ 29); Asia (+ 8), Europe (+ 32), Oceania (+ 2). The number of religious Bishops increased only in Africa (+2), while a decrease was registered in America (- 2), Asia (- 1), Europe (- 3), Oceania unvaried.

Priests

The total number of priests in the world increased by 136 units, to **415.656**. The only continents which registered a decrease was again Europe (- 2.502). Increases were registered in Africa (+ 1.133), America (+ 47), Asia (+ 1.104) and Oceania (+ 82).

Diocesan priests increased by 217 units, reaching a total of **281.514** with a decrease only in Europe (- 1.596) and increases in Africa (+ 836); America (+ 436), Asia (+ 499) and Oceania (+ 42).

The number of Religious priests decreased by 353 units to a total **134.142**. Increases were registered as in recent years in Africa (+ 297), Asia (+ 605) and this year also in Oceania (+ 40), whereas numbers dropped in America (- 389) and Europe (- 906).

Permanent Deacons

Permanent deacons in the world increased by 689 units to **45.255**. The highest increase was registered again in America (+656) followed by Europe (+22), Asia (+12) and Oceania (+1). A slight decrease this year in Africa (- 2).

Permanent Diocesan deacons in the world are **44.627**, with an overall increase of 673 units.

They increased on every continent except in Africa (- 3): America (+ 652), Asia (+17), Europe (+5) and Oceania (+ 2).

Religious permanent deacons number **628**, increased by 16 units compared to the previous year, with decreases in Asia (- 5) and Oceania (- 1), increases in Africa (+1), America (+4) and Europe (+17).

Men and women religious

The number of non-religious priests decreased by 330 units to **54.229**. Situation: increase in Africa (+ 23) and Asia (+ 772), while a decrease was registered in America (- 315), Europe (- 784) and Oceania (- 26).

Even this year there is an overall decrease in the number of women religious by 12.399 units to **670.330**. An increase was registered in Africa (+ 959) and Asia (+ 930), decrease in America (- 5.652), Europe (- 8.394) and Oceania (- 242).

Members of secular institutes, male and female

Members of male secular institutes number **697** with an increase of (+43) after a period of global decrease. At a continental level there is an increase in Africa (+ 11), America (+ 25), Asia (+ 3) and Europe (+4), Oceania unvaried.

The members of female secular institutes decreased this year, by 1.339 units to a total of **22.859** members. Increase in Africa (+ 102), America (+ 50) and Asia (+ 6) while a decrease was registered in Europe (- 1.497). Oceania unvaried.

Lay missionaries and catechists

The number of lay missionaries in the world is **351.797** units, with an overall decrease of 16.723 units in particular in America (- 13.506), followed by Europe (- 2.837) and Asia (- 1.117).

Increase was registered in Africa (+679) and Oceania (+ 58).

Catechists in the world decreased by 142.115 units to a total of **3.122.653**. An increase was registered in Asia (+ 9.400) and in Oceania (+ 340). A decrease was registered in Africa (- 100.874), America (- 43.048) and Europe (- 7.933).

Major seminarians

The number of major seminarians, diocesan and religious decreased this year, they are globally 96 units, reaching a total of **116.843**. Increases occurred in Africa (+ 479) and in Asia (+272), while even this year a decrease in America (- 473), Europe (- 366) and Oceania (-8).

Major diocesan seminarians number **70.118** (- 183 less than the previous year) and Religious major seminarians **46.725** (+87). Diocesan seminarians increased in Africa (+ 289) and Asia (+110), while decreases are in America (- 337), Europe (- 221) and Oceania (- 24).

Religious Seminarians increased in Africa (+ 190), Asia (+ 162) and Oceania (+ 16), decrease in America (- 136), and Europe (- 145).

Minor seminarians

The number of minor seminarians, diocesan and religious increased by 1.409 units to **104.351**. Overall increase on all continents: Africa (+ 914), America (+ 273), Asia (+ 119), Europe (+ 90), Oceania (+13).

Minor diocesan seminarians number **80.098** (+1.609) and religious seminarians number **24.253** (-200). The number of diocesan minor seminarians increased on all continents: Africa (+ 784), America (+267), Asia (+400), Europe (+ 138), Oceania (+20).

Religious minor seminarians increased in number in Africa (+ 130) and America (+6), while decreases in Asia (- 281), Europe (- 48) and Oceania (- 7).

Catholic schools and Education

In the field of education, the Catholic Church runs 73.489 kindergartens with 7.043.922 pupils; 95.644 primary schools with 33.289.532 pupils; 47.415 secondary schools with 20.015.659 pupils. The Church also cares for 2.535.327 high school pupils, and 2.904.964 university students.

Catholic charity and healthcare centres

Charity and healthcare centres run in the world by the Church include: 5.391 hospitals, most of them in America (1.627) and Africa (1.295); 16.610 dispensaries, mainly in Africa (5.181); America (4.731) and Asia (3.520); 604 Care Homes for people with Leprosy, mainly in Asia (296) and Africa (187); 16.270 Homes for the elderly, or the chronically ill or people with a disability, mainly in Europe (8.348) and America (4.086); 9.924 orphanages, mainly in Asia (3.934); 12.376 creches, mainly in Asia (3.247) and America (3.435); 14.551 marriage counselling centres, mainly in America (5.546) and Europe (5.666); 3.776 social rehabilitation centres and 38.484 other kinds of institutions.

Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions dependent on the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

The ecclesiastical Circumscriptions dependent on the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (Cep) are **1.111** with an increase of 3 circumscriptions compared to last year in Africa. Most of the ecclesiastical circumscriptions are mainly in Africa (511) and in Asia (480), followed by America (74) and Oceania (46).

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	1.144.200.000 (+ 31.252.000)	222.170.000 (+ 7.411.000)	19,42 % (+0,12)
America	982.228.000 (+ 8.735.000)	625.268.000 (+ 4.756.000)	63,66 % (- 0,08)
Asia	4.367.040.000 (+ 47.656.000)	141.412.000 (+ 1.583.000)	3,24 % (=)
Europe	716.711.000 (+ 430.000)	285.752.000 (- 1.344.000)	39,87 % (- 0,21)
Oceania	38.762.000 (+ 129.000)	10.208.000 (+ 123.000)	26,36 % (+ 0,24)
Total	7.248.941.000 (+ 88.202.000)	1.284.810.000 (+12.529.000)	17,72% (- 0,05)

PERSONS/CATHOLICS PER PRIEST

Continent	persons per priest	Catholics per priest
Africa	25.976 (+42)	5.044 (+40)
America	7.983 (+ 68)	5.082 (+37)
Asia	45.912 (- 159)	2.185 (- 13)
Europe	4.001 (+ 57)	1.595 (+ 14)
Oceania	8.216 (- 117)	2.164 (- 11)
Totale	14.082 (+ 200)	3.091 (+ 31)

ECCLESIASTICAL CIRCUMSCRIPTION – MISSION STATIONS

Continenti	Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions	Mission Stations with resident priest	Mission Stations without resident priest
Africa	538 (+ 1)	412 (- 181)	78.896 (+ 2.240)
America	1.091 (+ 4)	420 (+6)	22.470 (+ 3.344)
Asia	538 (+ 1)	648 (- 107)	40.897(+ 968)
Europe	758 (+ 2)	68 (- 2)	84 (- 19)
Oceania	81 (=)	11 (- 21)	653 (- 105)
Total	3.006 (+ 9)	1.559 (- 305)	143.000 (+ 6.428)

BISHOPS

Continent	Total Bishops	Diocesan Bishops	Religious Bishops
Africa	713 (+ 2)	510 (=)	203 (+ 2)
America	1.985 (+ 27)	1.434 (+ 29)	551 (- 2)
Asia	799 (+ 7)	601 (+ 8)	198 (- 1)
Europe	1.674 (+ 29)	1.433 (+ 32)	241 (- 3)
Oceania	133 (+ 2)	85 (+ 2)	48 (=)
Total	5.304 (+ 67)	4.063 (+ 71)	1.241 (- 4)

PRIESTS

Continent	Total Priests	Diocesan priests	Religious priests
Africa	44.048 (+ 1.133)	30.538 (+ 836)	13.510 (+ 297)
America	123.036 (+ 47)	84.649 (+ 436)	38.387 (- 389)
Asia	64.714 (+ 1.104)	36.978 (+ 499)	27.736 (+ 605)
Europe	179.140 (- 2.502)	126.559 (- 1.596)	52.581 (- 906)
Oceania	4.718 (+ 82)	2.790 (+ 42)	1.928 (+ 40)
Total	415.656 (- 136)	281.514 (+ 217)	134.142 (- 353)

PERMANENT DEACONS

Continent	Totale Permanent deacons	Diocesan Permanent deacons	Religious Permanent deacons
Africa	450 (- 2)	397 (- 3)	53 (+ 1)
America	29.563 (+ 656)	29.379 (+ 652)	184 (+ 4)
Asia	315 (+ 12)	254 (+ 17)	61 (- 5)
Europe	14.532 (+ 22)	14.206 (+5)	326 (+ 17)
Oceania	395 (+ 1)	391 (+ 2)	4 (- 1)
Total	45.255 (+ 689)	44.627 (+ 673)	628 (+ 16)

BROTHERS AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS

Continent	Brothers	Women Religious
Africa	8.781 (+ 23)	71.567 (+ 959)
America	15.321 (- 315)	171.953 (- 5.652)
Asia	12.693 (+ 772)	171.296 (+ 930)
Europe	16.004 (- 784)	247.743 (- 8.394)
Oceania	1.430 (- 26)	7.771 (- 242)
Total	54.229 (- 330)	670.330 (- 12.399)

MEMBERS OF SECULAR INSTITUTES

Continent	Members of secular institutes	Members of secular institutes
	Male	Female
Africa	92 (+ 11)	1.012 (+ 102)
America	251 (+ 25)	5.449 (+ 50)
Asia	51 (+ 3)	1.892 (+ 6)
Europe	302 (+ 4)	14.466 (- 1.497)
Oceania	1 (=)	40 (=)
Total	697 (+ 43)	22.859 (- 1.339)

LAY MISSIONARIES AND CATECHISTS

Continent	Lay missionaries	Catechists
Africa	7.914 (+ 679)	405.204 (- 100.874)
America	301.384 (- 13.506)	1.776.154 (- 43.048)
Asia	30.798 (- 1.117)	386.511 (+ 9.400)
Europe	11.513 (- 2.837)	540.040 (- 7.933)
Oceania	188 (+ 58)	14.744 (+ 340)
Total	351.797 (- 16.723)	3.122.653 (- 142.115)

MAJOR SEMINARIANS – DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS

Continent	Total Major Seminarians	Diocesan Major seminarians	Religious Major seminarians
Africa	29.007 (+ 479)	19.462 (+ 289)	9.545 (+ 190)
America	33.512 (- 473)	22.560 (- 337)	10.952 (- 136)
Asia	34.741 (+ 272)	16.068 (+ 110)	18.673 (+ 162)
Europe	18.579 (- 366)	11.428 (- 221)	7.151 (- 145)
Oceania	1.004 (- 8)	600 (- 24)	404 (+ 16)
Total	116.843 (- 96)	70.118 (- 183)	46.725 (+ 87)

MINOR SEMINARIANS – DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS

Continent	Total Minor seminarians	Diocesan Minor seminarians	Religious Minor seminarians
Africa	54.253 (+ 914)	47.377 (+784)	6.876 (+ 130)
America	14.281 (+ 273)	10.363 (+ 267)	3.918 (+ 6)
Asia	25.765 (+ 119)	16.333 (+ 400)	9.432 (- 281)
Europe	9.837 (+ 90)	5.864 (+ 138)	3.973 (- 48)
Oceania	215 (+ 13)	161 (+ 20)	54 (- 7)
Total	104.351 (+ 1.409)	80.098 (+ 1.609)	24.253 (- 200)

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

	INFANT schools	INFANT pupils	PRIMARY schools	PRIMARY pupils	SECONDARY schools	SECONDARY pupils	High school pupils	UNIVERSIT pupils
Africa	18.670	1.652.751	39.055	17.594.307	14.166	5.498.749	103.424	111.109
America	15.762	1.415.734	20.871	6.282.640	11.718	4.234.476	837.101	1.906.729
Asia	13.936	1.965.212	15.925	5.677.354	11.198	6.078.539	1.289.477	455.623
Europe	23.758	1.945.591	15.921	2.984.655	9.639	3.760.172	292.481	400.349
Oceania	1.363	64.634	3.872	750.576	694	443.723	12.844	31.154
Total	73.489	7.043.922	95.644	33.289.532	47.415	20.015.659	2.535.327	2.904.964

HOSPITALS/CLINICS, CHARITY WORK, WELFARE

Continent	Hospital	Dispensar.	Leprosy centres	Homes for the elderly, chronically ill, disabled	Orphanages	Nursery schools	Mariage Counsel. centres	Catholic schools	Other institutes
Africa	1.295	5.181	187	669	1.191	3.131	2.127	230	2.019
America	1.627	4.731	48	4.086	2.476	3.435	5.546	1.573	16.212
Asia	1.184	3.520	296	2.725	3.934	3.247	943	719	4.093
Europe	1.040	2.624	72	8.348	2.201	2.431	5.666	1.148	15.831
Oceania	245	554	1	442	122	132	269	106	329
Total	5.391	16.610	604	16.270	9.924	12.376	14.551	3.776	38.484

ECCLESIASTICAL CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS DEPENDENT ON THE CONGREGATION FOR THE EVANGELIZATION 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).

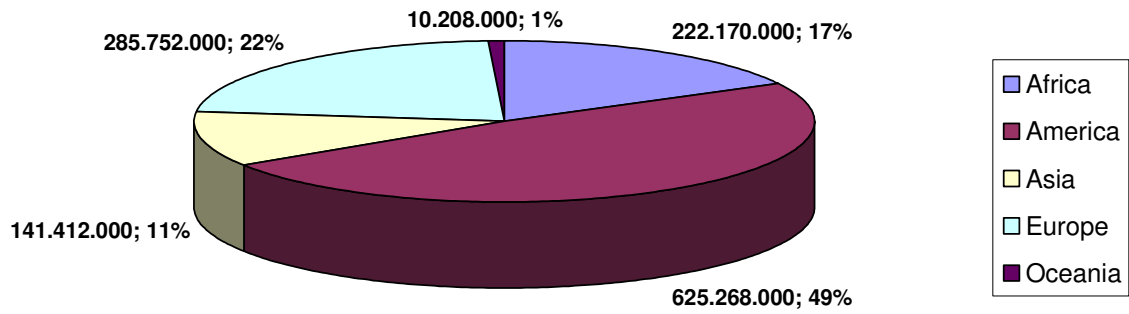
The main duties of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples include: ensure fair distribution of missionaries; formation for local secular clergy and catechists; involve Religious Institutes, Mission Societies, and local Churches in the task of evangelising mission territories.

The CEP is responsible for a total number of 1.111 Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions (to 22 September 2016)

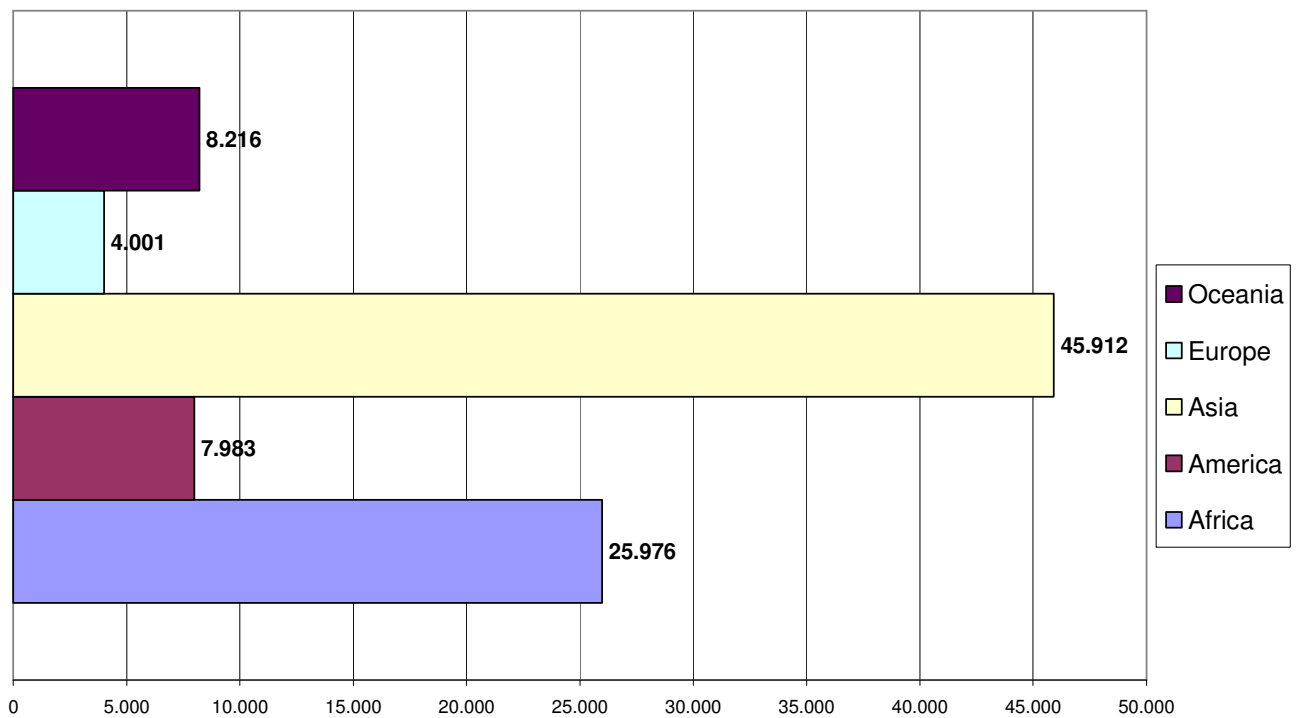
Continent	AD	D	AT	VA	PA	M	AA	OM	TOTALE
Africa	92	392	-	21	2	1	-	3	511
America	7	21	-	43	1	2	-	-	74
Asia	76	342	1	17	34	3	5	2	480
Oceania	11	31	-	-	1	2	-	1	46
TOTAL	186	786	1	81	38	8	5	6	1.111

KEY: Archdiocese (AD), Diocese (D), Territorial Abbacy (AT), Apostolic Vicariate (VA), Apostolic Prefecture (PA), Apostolic administration (AA), Mission sui juris (M), Military Ordinariate (OM).

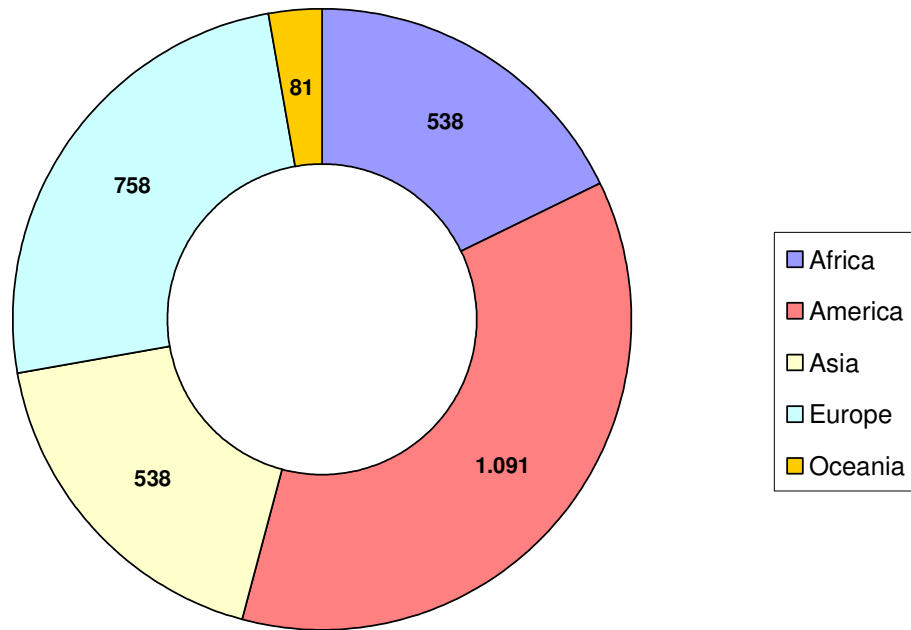
Catholics in the World



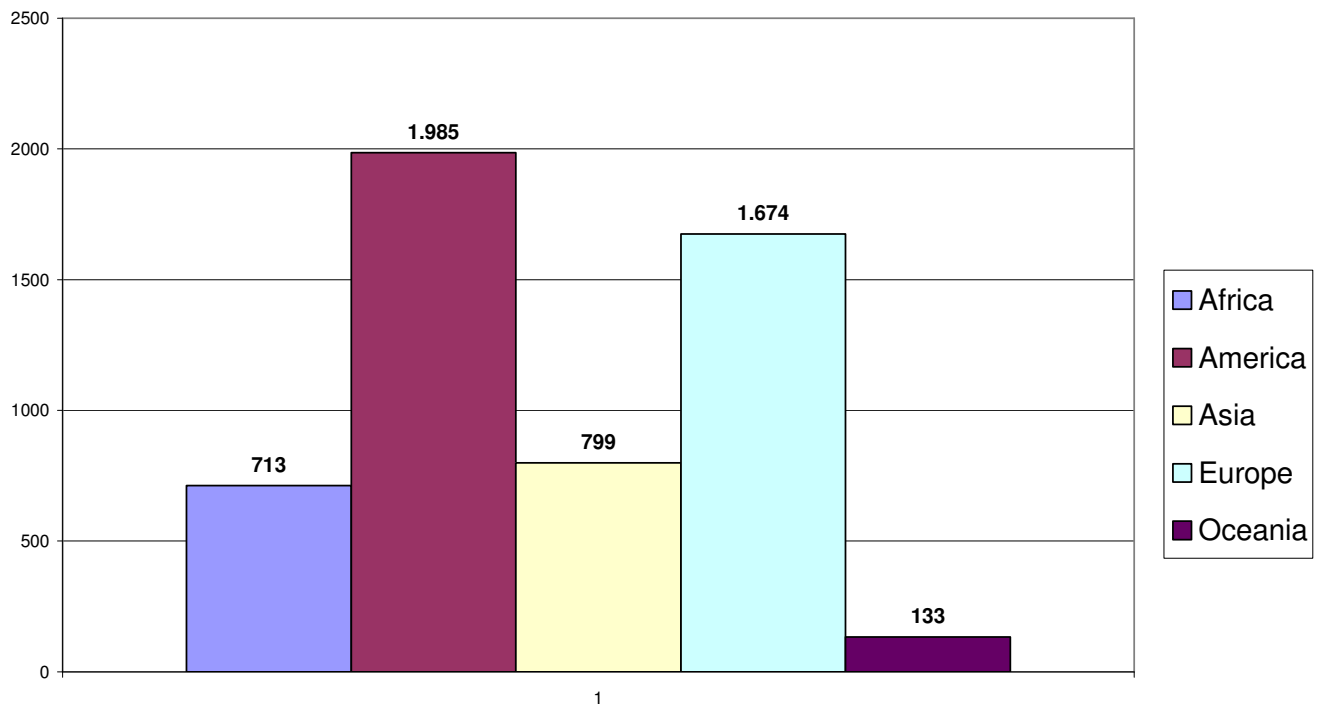
Persons per priest



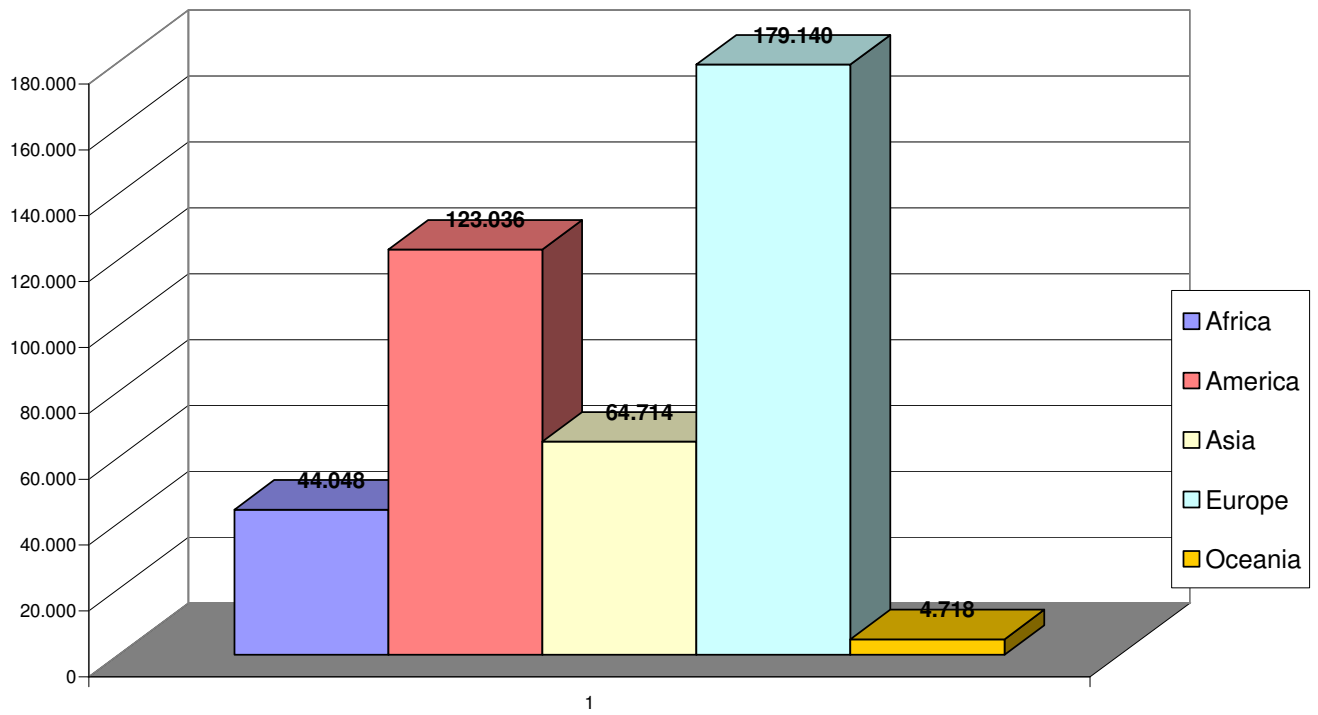
Ecclesiastical circumscriptions



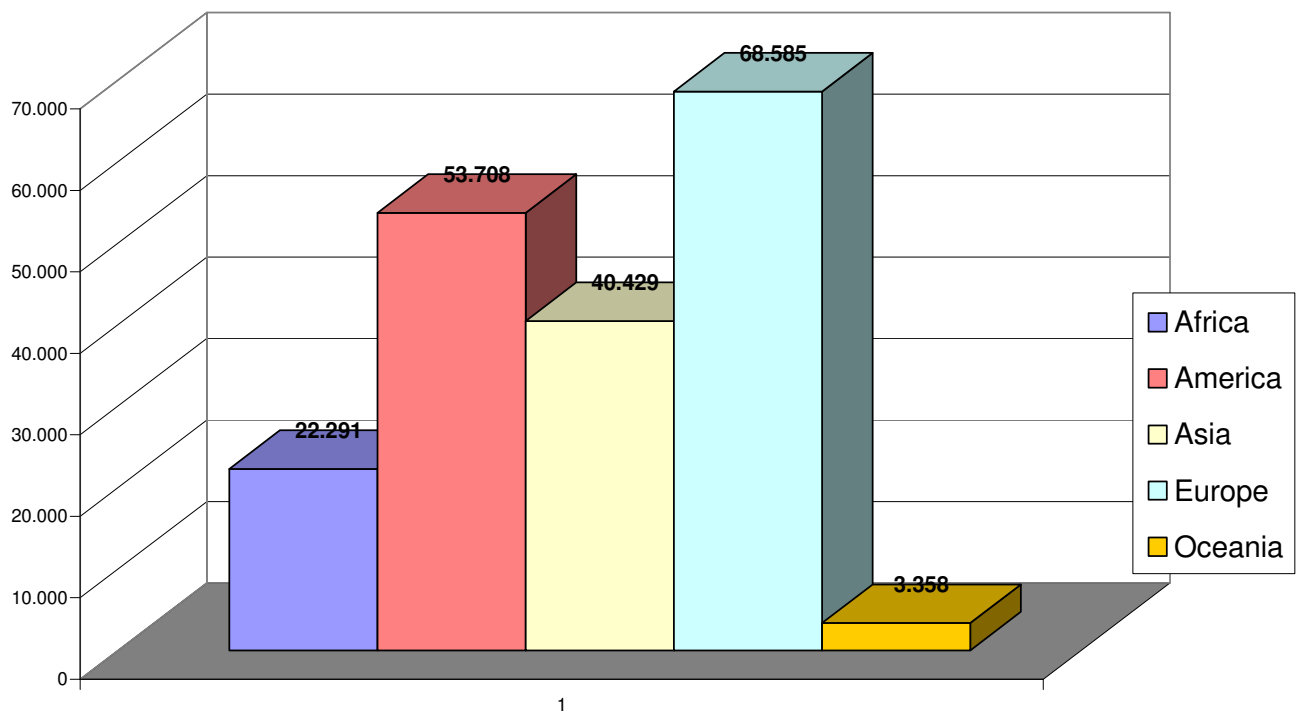
Catholic Bishops



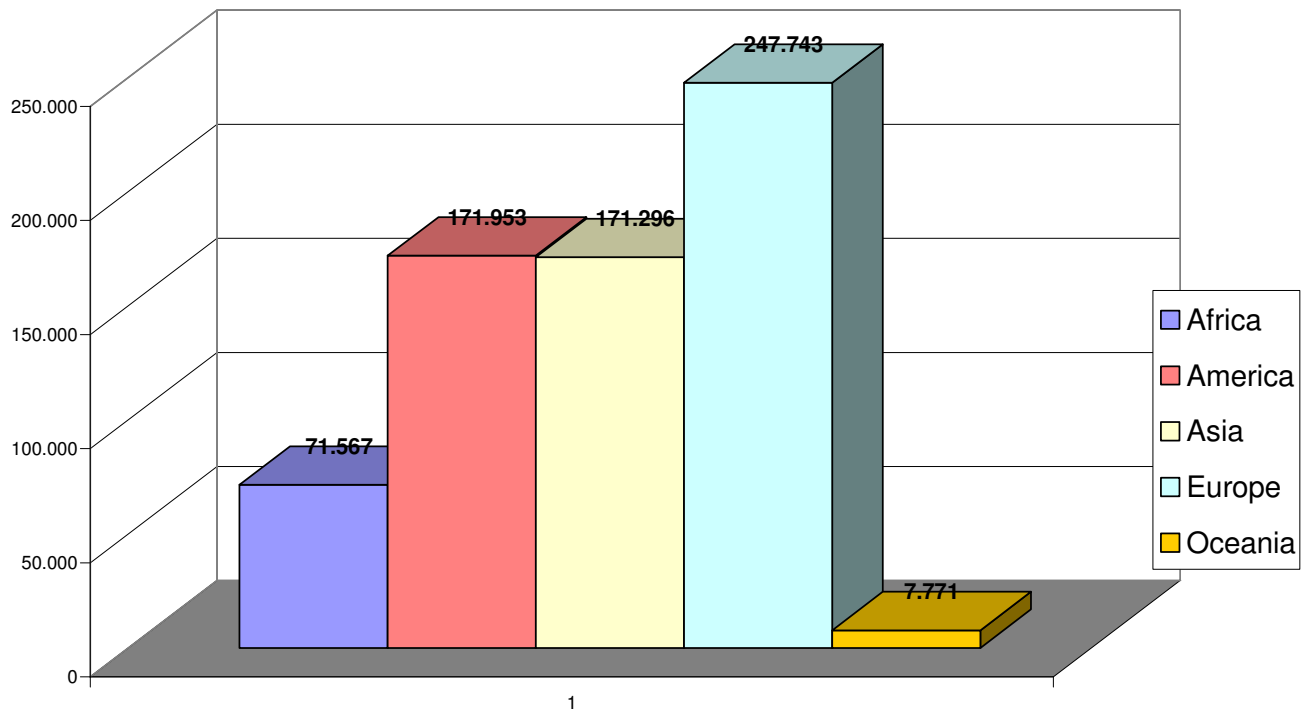
Priest in the world



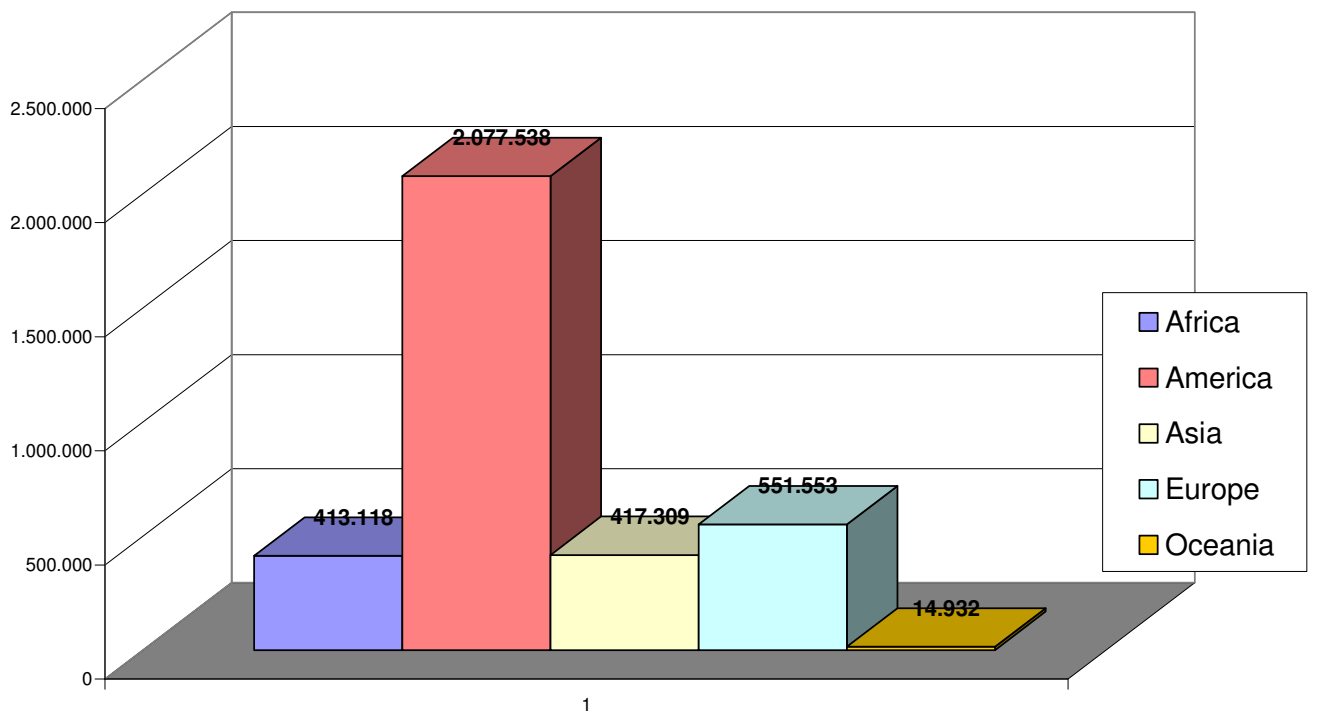
Religious in the world



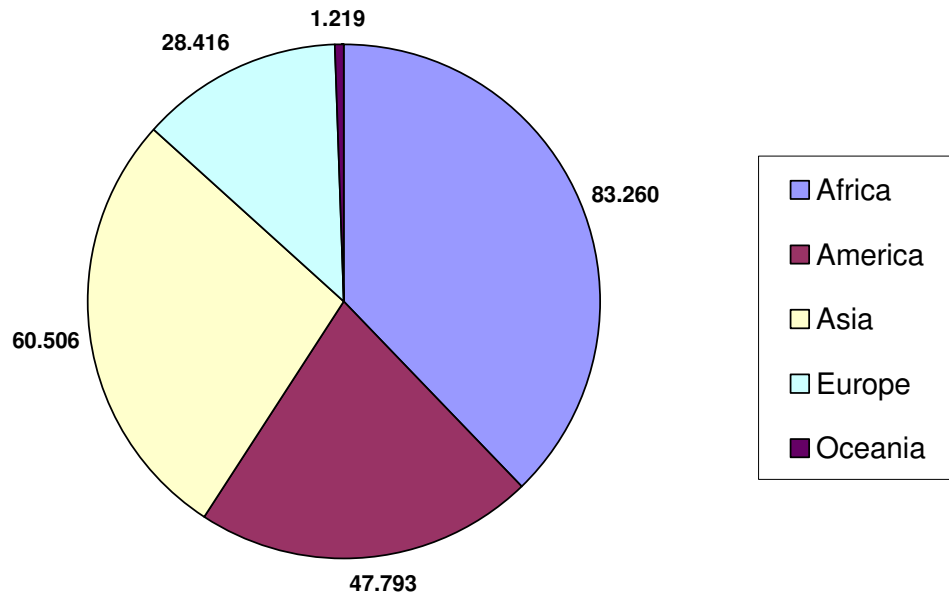
Women religious



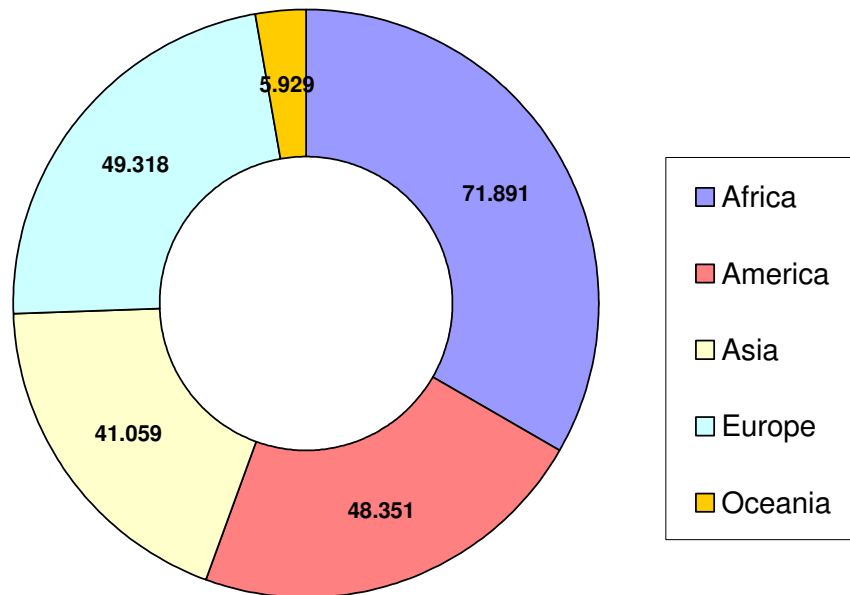
Lay missionaries and catechists



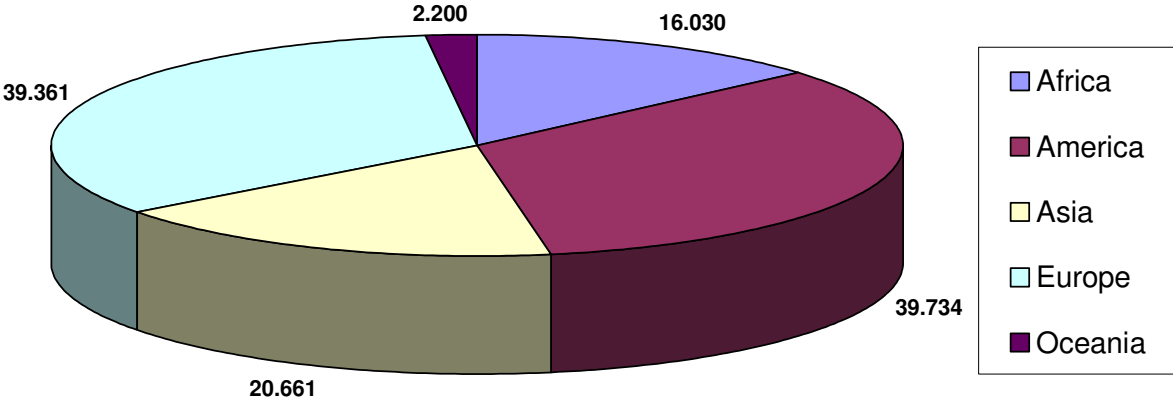
Seminarians in the world



Catholic schools



Catholic charity and healthcare centres



PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

Founded in the Churches of ancient Christian tradition to support the work of missionaries among non-Christian peoples, the Pontifical Mission Societies (PPOOMM) have become an institution of the universal Church and of every particular Church. According to the Vatican Council, they must be given a central place in missionary cooperation.

The PPOOMM are a single institution that includes four distinct branches. In common they have the main purpose of promoting the missionary and universal spirit within the People of God by disseminating information on missions, promotion of missionary vocations, collecting and distributing subsidies to missionaries, their works, and young Churches, encouraging communion with other Churches for the exchange of goods, aid, and staff.

Among the characteristics that distinguish the PPOOMM from other organizations of missionary cooperation, is first and foremost their universality as they are the Pope's Societies and depend on the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. At the same time, they are also the Bishops' Societies, expressing their universality in missionary animation and formation addressed to all Churches and to all members of the People of God, in the aid offered equally to all Churches in mission territories. Their primary purpose is evangelization, fundamental duty of the Church, without neglecting the concrete participation to integral human promotion.

The PPOOMM are organized at a supranational level (the Supreme Committee presided by the Prefect Cardinal; a Superior Council presided by the Archbishop President; a Secretary General for each Society), national (National Director appointed by the Prefect Cardinal assisted by a National Council) and diocesan (Diocesan Director appointed by the Bishop).

The **Four Pontifical Mission Societies** are:

Propagation of the Faith (PSPF)

Founded in Lyon in 1822 by Pauline Jaricot, has the task of promoting missionary cooperation in all Christian communities. For this purpose, together with the collection of aids, it takes care of missionary vocations, education to missionary spirit, especially in the missionary month of October, and organizes World Mission Day.

St. Peter the Apostle (POSPA)

Founded in Caen by Ladies Bigard in 1889, this Society is dedicated to supporting the formation of the local clergy in Mission Churches, as well as collaborating to the preparation of candidates to priesthood and religious life candidates to priesthood and religious life candidates to priesthood and religious life.

Holy Childhood or Missionary Childhood (MCA)

Founded in 1843 by Msgr. De Forbin Janson, Bishop of Nancy, to educate children to the missionary spirit, focusing on the needs of their peers in mission countries, with the offer of prayers and material aid.

Pontifical Mission Union (PMU)

Founded in Italy in 1916 by Blessed Father Paolo Manna. The PMU wants to promote missionary awareness among seminarians, priests and animate all the animators of the People of God for the mission, spreading and promoting the other three PMS.