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## WORLD MISSION DAY - CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS 2018

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – As every year, in view of World Mission Day, which this year celebrates its 92<sup>nd</sup> anniversary on Sunday, October 21, 2018, 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 2016) 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 2016 the world population was **7.352.289.000** with an increase of **103.348.000** units compared with the previous year. Population growth was registered on every continent, including Europe: increases were registered above all in Asia (+ 49.767.000) and Africa (+ 42.898.000), followed by America (+ 8.519.000), Europe (+ 1.307.000) and Oceania (+ 857.000).

### Catholics

On the same date Catholics in the world numbered **1.299.059.000** units with an overall increase of **14.249.000**. The increase affects all continents, except Europe for the third consecutive year (- 240.000). Increases were registered above all in Africa (+6.265.000) and in America (+ 6.023.000) followed by Asia (+ 1.956.000) and Oceania (+ 254.000).

The world percentage of Catholics decreased by 0.05 %, settling at **17.67%**. By continent: increases were registered in America (+ 0.06), Asia (+ 0,01) and Oceania (+ 0.02), decrease in Africa (- 0.18) and Europe (- 0,11).

### Persons and Catholics per priest

This year the number of persons per priest in the world increased by 254 units, average **14,336**. The distribution by continent: increase in Africa (+ 271), America (+ 108), Europe (+ 66) and Oceania (+ 181). The only decrease in Asia (- 264).

The number of Catholics per priest in the world increased by 39 units, average **3.130**. There are increases in Africa (+ 7), America (+ 74); Europe (+ 22), Oceania (+ 52). Asia unvaried (-13).

### Ecclesiastical circumscriptions and mission stations

The number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions are 10 more than the previous year to **3,016** with new circumscriptions created in Africa (+3), America (+3), Asia (+3), Europe (+1). Oceania unvaried.

Mission stations with a resident priest number **2,140** (581 more than in the previous year).

Decrease was registered only in Africa (- 63), while and an increase was registered in America (+ 98), Asia (+ 151) Europe (+ 364) and Oceania (+ 31).

Mission Stations without a resident priest decreased in number by 513 units, to **142.487**.

Increase were registered in Africa (+ 135), Europe (+ 456), and Oceania (+ 91). The number dropped in America (- 35) and Asia (- 1.160).

### Bishops

The total number of Bishops in the world increased by 49 units, to **5,353**. Diocesan Bishops and Religious Bishops increased in numbers. Diocesan Bishops number **4,063** (27 more), while Religious Bishops number **1,263** (22 more).

The increase in diocesan Bishops is registered in America (+ 20); Asia (+ 9), Europe (+ 3), while a decrease was registered in Africa (- 2) and Oceania (- 3). The number of religious Bishops increased in all continents except Asia (- 7): Africa (+ 5), America (+ 14), Europe (+ 8), Oceania (+ 2).

### **Priests**

The total number of priests in the world decreased even this year, to **414.969** (- 687). The only continents which registered a major decrease was again Europe (- 2.583). There was also a decrease in America (-589). Increases were registered in Africa (+ 1.181) and Asia (+ 1.304) Oceania unvaried.

Diocesan priests increased by 317 units, reaching a total of **281.831** with a decrease only in Europe (- 1.611) and increases in Africa (+ 983); America (+ 180), Asia (+ 744) and Oceania (+ 21).

The number of Religious priests decreased by 1.004 units to a total **133.138**. Increases were registered as in recent years in Africa (+ 198) and in Asia (+ 560), whereas numbers dropped in America (- 769), Europe (- 972), Oceania (- 21)

### **Permanent Deacons**

Permanent deacons in the world increased by 1.057 units to **46.312**. The highest increase was registered again in America (+842) followed by Europe (+145), Oceania (+45), Africa (+22) and Asia (+3).

Permanent Diocesan deacons in the world are **45.609**, with an overall increase of 982 units.

They increased on every continent except in Asia (- 38): Africa (+ 36), America (+ 807), Europe (+130) and Oceania (+ 47).

Religious permanent deacons number **703**, increased by 75 units compared to the previous year, with decreases in Africa (- 14) and Oceania (- 2), increases in Asia (+41), America (+35) and Europe (+15).

### **Men and women religious**

The number of non-religious priests decreased for the fourth consecutive year by 1.604 units to **52.625**. Situation: a decrease was registered in all continents: in Africa (-50), America (-503), Asia (-373), Europe (-614) and Oceania (-64).

Even this year there is an overall decrease in the number of women religious by 10.885 units to **659.445**. An increase was registered in Africa (+ 943) and Asia (+ 533), decrease in America (- 3.775), Europe (-8.370) and Oceania (-216).

### **Members of secular institutes, male and female**

Members of male secular institutes number **618** with a decrease of (-79) after an increase compared to the previous year. At a continental level there is an increase in Africa (+2) and Asia (+ 4), while a decrease in America (- 77), and Europe (-8), Oceania unvaried also this year. The members of female secular institutes decreased this year, by 459 units to a total of **22.400** members. Increase only in Africa (+ 113), while a decrease was registered in America (-33), Asia (-35) Europe (- 502) and Oceania (-2).

### **Lay missionaries and catechists**

The number of lay missionaries in the world is **354.743** units, with an overall increase of 2.946 units in particular in America (+ 4.728) and Africa (+759). Decrease was registered in Asia (- 1.569), Europe (-921) and Oceania (- 55).

Catechists in the world decreased by 36.364 units to a total of **3.086.289**. An increase was registered in only in Africa (+ 10.669). A decrease was registered in America (- 20.407), Asia (- 12.896), Europe (- 13.417) and Oceania (- 313).

### **Major seminarians**

The number of major seminarians, diocesan and religious decreased this year, they are globally 683 units, reaching a total of **116.160**. Increases occurred in Africa (+1.455) and in Asia (+9), while even this year a decrease in America (-1.123), Europe (-964) and Oceania (-60).

Major diocesan seminarians number **71.117** (+999 more than the previous year) and Religious major seminarians **45.043** (-1.682). Diocesan seminarians increased in Africa (+1.059), America (+16) and Asia (+310). Decreases are in Europe (-381) and Oceania (-5).

Religious Seminarians increased only in Africa (+396), while decreased in America (-1.139), Asia (-301), Europe (-583) and Oceania (-55).

### **Minor seminarians**

The number of minor seminarians, diocesan and religious this year decreased by 2.735 units to **101.616**. Overall decrease on all continents: Africa (-69), America (-1.299), Asia (-871), Europe (-581), Oceania (-5).

Minor diocesan seminarians number **78.369** (-1.729) and religious seminarians number **23.247** (-1.006). The number of diocesan minor seminarians increased in Africa (+ 236) and Oceania (+7). Decrease in America (-684), Asia (-988), Europe (-300),

Religious minor seminarians increased in number only in Asia (+207), while decreases in Africa (-305), America (-615), Europe (-281) and Oceania (-12).

### **Catholic schools and Education**

In the field of education, the Catholic Church runs 72.826 kindergartens with 7.313.370 pupils; 96.573 primary schools with 35.125.124 pupils; 47.862 secondary schools with 19.956.347 pupils. The Church also cares for 2.509.457 high school pupils, and 3.049.548 university students.

### **Catholic charity and healthcare centres**

Charity and healthcare centres run in the world by the Church include: 5.287 hospitals, most of them in America (1.530) and Africa (1.321); 15.937 dispensaries, mainly in Africa (5.177); America (4.430) and Asia (3.300); 610 Care Homes for people with Leprosy, mainly in Asia (352) and Africa (192); 15.722 Homes for the elderly, or the chronically ill or people with a disability, mainly in Europe (8.127) and America (3.763); 9.552 orphanages, mainly in Asia (3.660); 11.758 creches, mainly in Asia (3.295) and America (3.191); 13.897 marriage counselling centres, mainly in Europe (5.664) and America (4.984); 3.506 social rehabilitation centres and 35.746 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 **1.114** with an increase of 3 circumscriptions compared to last year. Most of the ecclesiastical circumscriptions are mainly in Africa (511) and in Asia (482), followed by America (75) 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
<b>Africa</b>	1.87.098.000 (+ 42.898.000)	228.435.000 (+ 6.265.000)	19,24 % (-0,18)
<b>America</b>	990.747.000 (+ 8.519.000)	631.291.000 (+ 6.023.000)	63,72 % (+ 0,06)
<b>Asia</b>	4.416.807.000 (+ 49.767.000)	143.368.000 (+ 1.956.000)	3,25 % (+0,01)
<b>Europe</b>	718.018.000 (+ 1.307.000)	285.512.000 (- 240.000)	39,76 % (- 0,11)
<b>Oceania</b>	39.619.000 (+ 857.000)	10.453.000 (+ 245.000)	26,38 % (+ 0,02)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.352.289.000 (+103.348.000)</b>	<b>1.299.059.000 (+14.249.000)</b>	<b>17,67% (- 0,05)</b>

### PERSONS/CATHOLICS PER PRIEST

Continent	persons per priest	Catholics per priest
<b>Africa</b>	26.247 (+271)	5.051 (+7)
<b>America</b>	8.091 (+ 108)	5.156 (+74)
<b>Asia</b>	45.648 (- 264)	2.172 (- 13)
<b>Europe</b>	4.067 (+ 66)	1.617 (+22)
<b>Oceania</b>	8.397 (+ 181)	2.216 (+52)
<b>Totale</b>	<b>14.336 (+ 254)</b>	<b>3.130 (+39)</b>

### ECCLESIASTICAL CIRCUMSCRIPTION – MISSION STATIONS

Continenti	Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions	Mission Stations with resident priest	Mission Stations without resident priest
<b>Africa</b>	541 (+ 3)	349 (- 63)	79.031 (+ 135)
<b>America</b>	1.094 (+ 3)	518 (+ 98)	22.435 (- 35)
<b>Asia</b>	541 (+ 3)	799 (+ 151)	39.737 (- 1.160)
<b>Europe</b>	759 (+ 1)	432 (+ 364)	540 (+ 456)
<b>Oceania</b>	81 (=)	42 (+ 31)	744 (+ 91)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.016 (+ 10)</b>	<b>2.140 (+ 581)</b>	<b>142.487 (- 513)</b>

### BISHOPS

Continent	Total Bishops	Diocesan Bishops	Religious Bishops
<b>Africa</b>	716 (+ 3)	508 (- 2)	208 (+ 5)
<b>America</b>	2.019 (+ 34)	1.454 (+ 20)	565 (+14)
<b>Asia</b>	801 (+ 2)	610 (+ 9)	191 (- 7)
<b>Europe</b>	1.685 (+ 11)	1.436 (+ 3)	249 (+ 8)
<b>Oceania</b>	132 (- 1)	82 (- 3)	50 (+ 2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.353 (+ 49)</b>	<b>4.090 (+ 27)</b>	<b>1.263 (+ 22)</b>

## PRIESTS

Continent	Total Priests	Diocesan priests	Religious priests
<b>Africa</b>	45.229 (+ 1.181)	31.521 (+ 983)	13.708 (+ 198)
<b>America</b>	122.447 (- 589)	84.829 (+ 180)	37.618 (- 769)
<b>Asia</b>	66.018 (+ 1.304)	37.722 (+ 744)	28.296 (+ 560)
<b>Europe</b>	176.557 (- 2.583)	124.948 (- 1.611)	51.609 (- 972)
<b>Oceania</b>	4.718 (=)	2.811 (+ 21)	1.907 (- 21)
<b>Total</b>	<b>414.969 (- 687)</b>	<b>281.831 (+ 317)</b>	<b>133.138 (- 1.004)</b>

## PERMANENT DEACONS

Continent	Totale Permanent deacons	Diocesan Permanent deacons	Religious Permanent deacons
<b>Africa</b>	472 (+ 22)	433 (+ 36)	39 (- 14)
<b>America</b>	30.405 (+ 842)	30.186 (+ 807)	219 (+ 35)
<b>Asia</b>	318 (+ 3)	216 (- 38)	102 (+ 41)
<b>Europe</b>	14.677 (+ 145)	14.336 (+ 130)	341(+ 15)
<b>Oceania</b>	440 (+ 45)	438 (+ 47)	2 (- 2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>46.312 (+ 1.057)</b>	<b>45.609 (+ 982)</b>	<b>703 (+ 75)</b>

## BROTHERS AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS

Continent	Brothers	Women Religious
<b>Africa</b>	8.731 (- 50)	72.510 (+ 943)
<b>America</b>	14.818 (- 503)	168.178 (- 3.775)
<b>Asia</b>	12.320 (- 373)	171.829 (+ 533)
<b>Europe</b>	15.390 (- 614)	239.373(- 8.370)
<b>Oceania</b>	1.366 (- 64)	7.555 (- 216)
<b>Total</b>	<b>52.625 (- 1.604)</b>	<b>659.445 (- 10.885)</b>

## MEMBERS OF SECULAR INSTITUTES

Continent	Members of secular institutes Male	Members of secular institutes Female
<b>Africa</b>	94 (+ 2)	1.125 (+ 113)
<b>America</b>	174 (- 77)	5.416 (- 33)
<b>Asia</b>	55 (+ 4)	1.857 (- 35)
<b>Europe</b>	294 (- 8)	13.964 (- 502)
<b>Oceania</b>	1 (=)	38 (- 2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>618 (- 79)</b>	<b>22.400 (- 459)</b>

## LAY MISSIONARIES AND CATECHISTS

Continent	Lay missionaries	Catechists
<b>Africa</b>	8.673 (+ 759)	415.873 (+ 10.669)
<b>America</b>	306.112 (+ 4.728)	1.755.747 (- 20.407)
<b>Asia</b>	29.233 (- 1.565)	373.615 (- 12.896)
<b>Europe</b>	10.592 (- 921)	526.623 (- 13.417)
<b>Oceania</b>	133 (- 55)	14.431 (- 313)
<b>Total</b>	<b>354.743 (+ 2.946)</b>	<b>3.086.289 (- 36.364)</b>

## MAJOR SEMINARIANS – DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS

Continent	Total Major Seminarians	Diocesan Major seminarians	Religious Major seminarians
<b>Africa</b>	30.462 (+ 1.455)	20.521 (+ 1.059)	9.941 (+ 396)
<b>America</b>	32.389 (- 1.123)	22.576 (+ 16)	9.813 (- 1.139)
<b>Asia</b>	34.750 (+ 9)	16.378 (+ 310)	18.372 (- 301)
<b>Europe</b>	17.615 (- 964)	11.047 (- 381)	6.568 (- 583)
<b>Oceania</b>	944 (- 60)	595 (- 5)	349 (- 55)
<b>Total</b>	<b>116.160 (- 683)</b>	<b>71.117 (+ 999)</b>	<b>45.043 (- 1.682)</b>

## MINOR SEMINARIANS – DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS

Continent	Total Minor seminarians	Diocesan Minor seminarians	Religious Minor seminarians
<b>Africa</b>	54.184 (- 69)	47.613 (+236)	6.571 (- 305)
<b>America</b>	12.982 (- 1.299)	9.679 (- 684)	3.303 (- 615)
<b>Asia</b>	24.984 (- 871)	15.345 (- 988)	9.639 (+ 207)
<b>Europe</b>	9.256 (- 581)	5.564 (- 300)	3.692 (- 281)
<b>Oceania</b>	210 (- 5)	168 (+ 7)	42 (- 12)
<b>Total</b>	<b>101.616 (- 2.735)</b>	<b>78.369 (- 1.729)</b>	<b>23.247 (- 1.006)</b>

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND PUPILS

	INFANT schools	INFANT pupils	PRIMARY schools	PRIMARY pupils	SECONDARY schools	SECONDARY pupils	High school pupils	UNIVERSIT pupils
<b>Africa</b>	19.806	2.194.900	39.893	19.174.414	14.816	5.911.675	110.729	116.391
<b>America</b>	15.617	1.379.128	20.841	6.285.603	11.554	3.979.437	713.778	1.827.041
<b>Asia</b>	13.673	1.841.271	15.956	5.967.560	10.857	6.015.157	1.338.774	453.581
<b>Europe</b>	22.389	1.835.096	15.569	2.948.487	9.926	3.590.479	333.552	617.559
<b>Oceania</b>	1.341	62.975	4.314	749.060	709	459.599	12.624	34.976
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.826</b>	<b>7.313.370</b>	<b>96.573</b>	<b>35.125.124</b>	<b>47.862</b>	<b>19.956.347</b>	<b>2.509.457</b>	<b>3.049.548</b>

**HOSPITALS/CLINICS, CHARITY WORK, WELFARE**

Continent	Hospital	Dispensar.	Leprosy centres	Homes for the elderly, chronically ill, disabled	Orphanages	Nursery schools	Marriage Counsel. centres	Catholic schools	Other institutes
Africa	1.321	5.177	192	665	1.130	2.794	2.112	267	1.863
America	1.530	4.430	55	3.763	2.449	3.191	4.984	1.588	14.267
Asia	1.154	3.300	352	2.686	3.600	3.295	875	484	3.823
Europe	1.020	2.461	10	8.127	2.183	2.342	5.664	1.093	15.577
Oceania	262	569	1	481	130	136	262	74	216
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.287</b>	<b>15.937</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>15.722</b>	<b>9.552</b>	<b>11.758</b>	<b>13.897</b>	<b>3.506</b>	<b>35.746</b>

**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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 1.114 Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions (to 23 September 2018)**

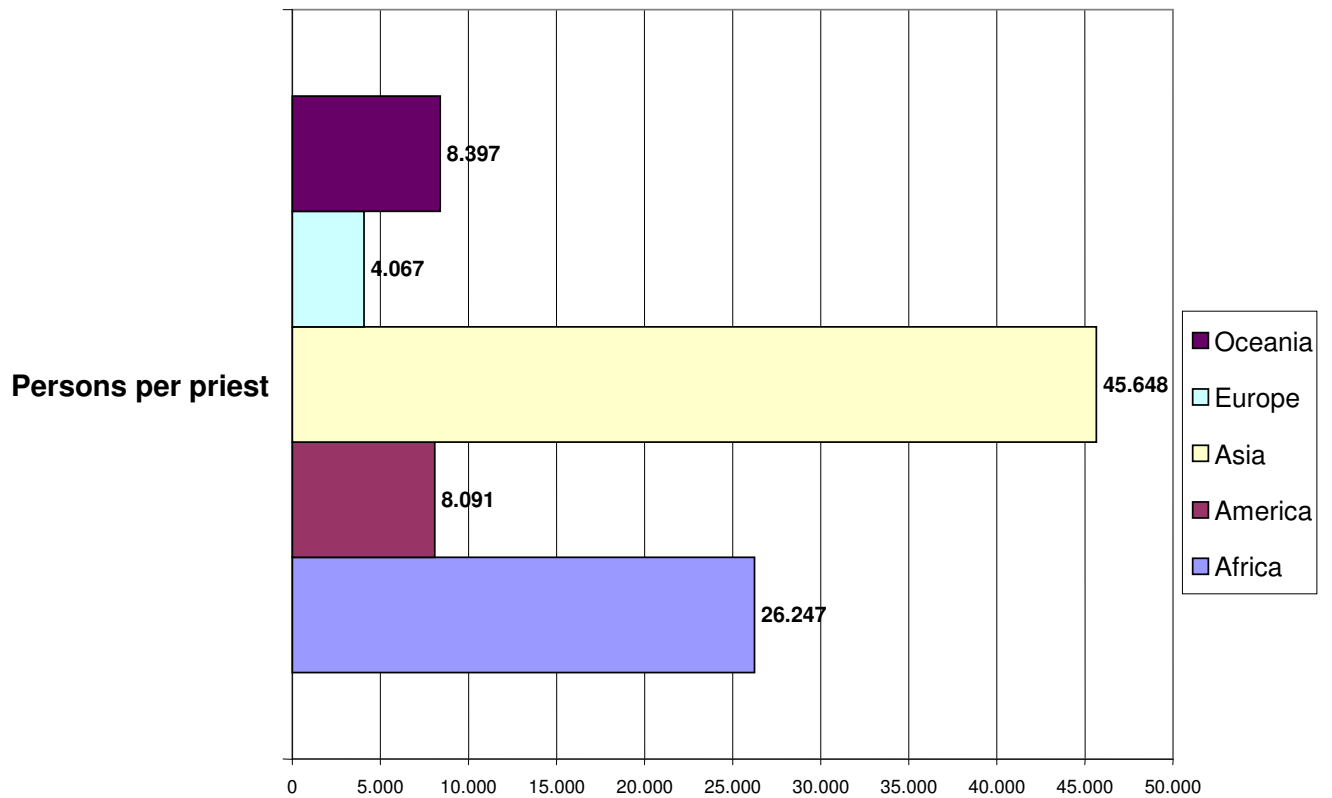
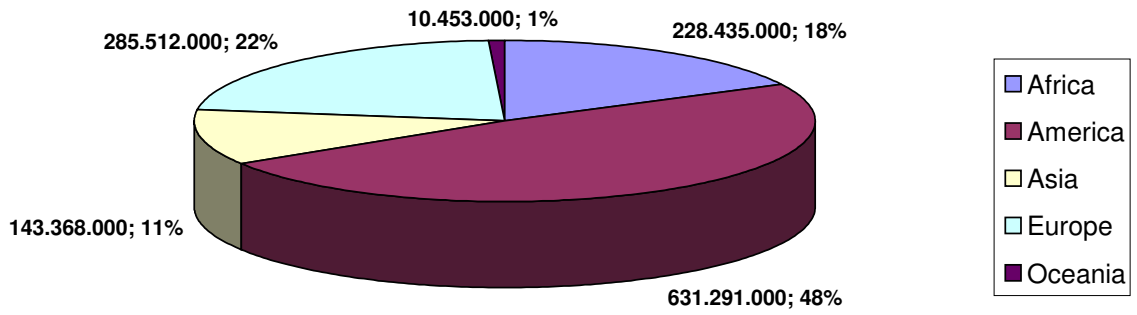
Continent	AD	D	TA	AV	AP	M	TP	AA	MO	TOTAL
Africa	92	393	-	20	2	1		-	3	511
America	7	23	-	41	1	2	1	-	-	75
Asia	76	344	1	17	34	3		5	2	482
Oceania	11	31	-	-	1	2		-	1	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1.114</b>

KEY: Archdiocese (AD), Diocese (D), Territorial Abbacy (TA), Apostolic Vicariate (AV), Apostolic Prefecture (AP), Mission sui juris (M), Territorial Prelature (TP), Apostolic administration (AA), Military Ordinariate (MO).

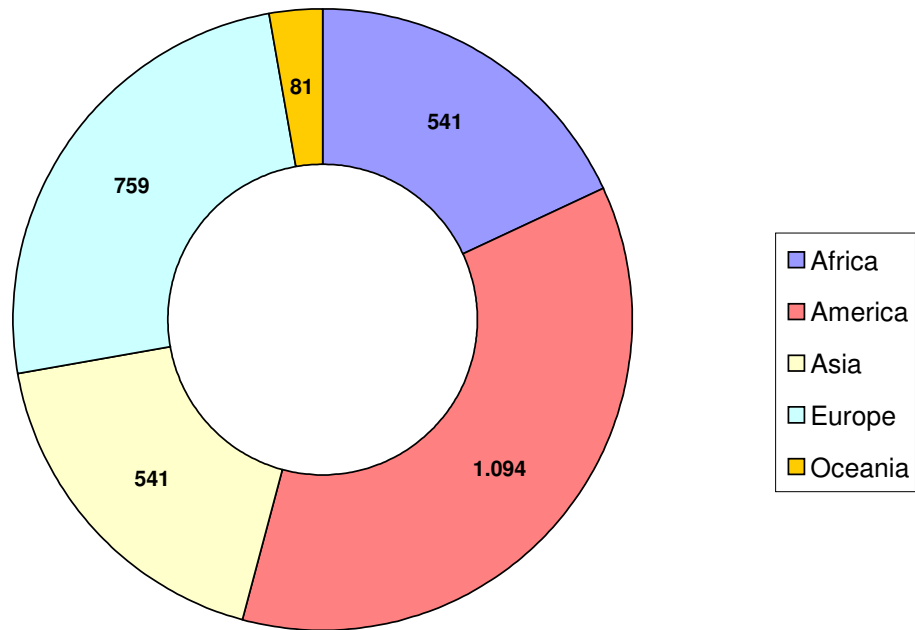


## OVERALL WORLD PICTURE

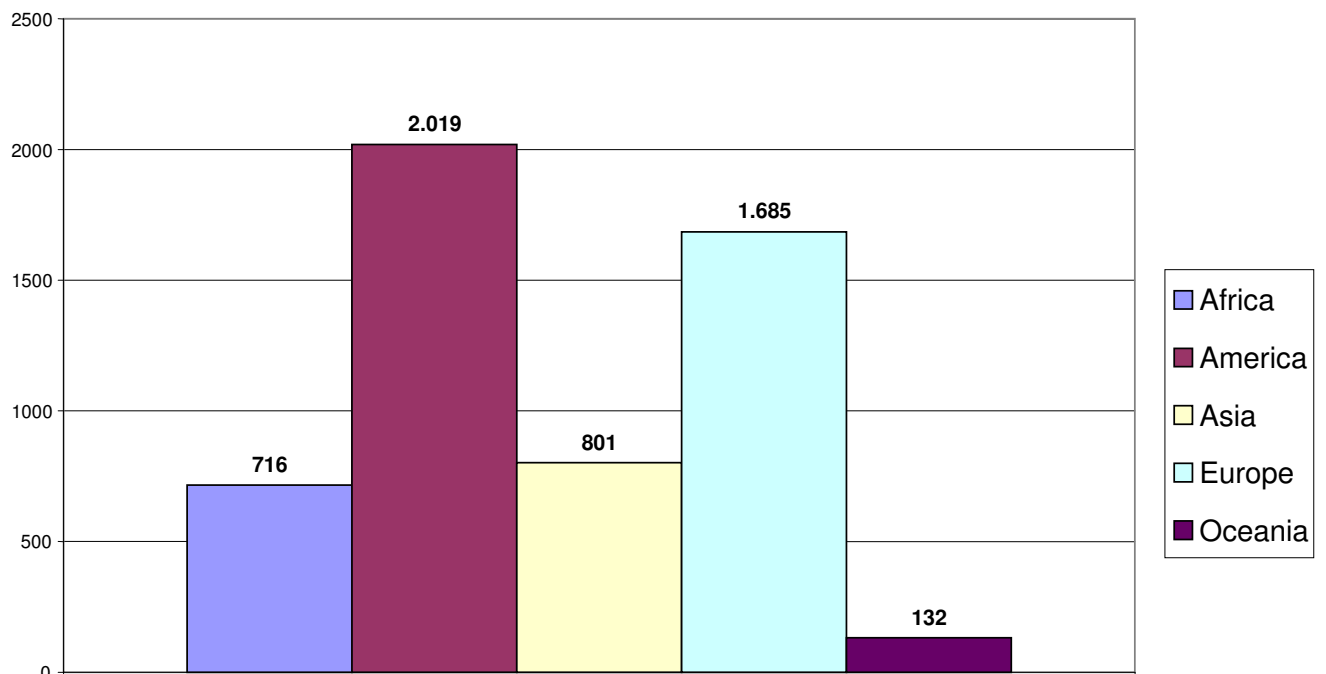
### Catholics in the World



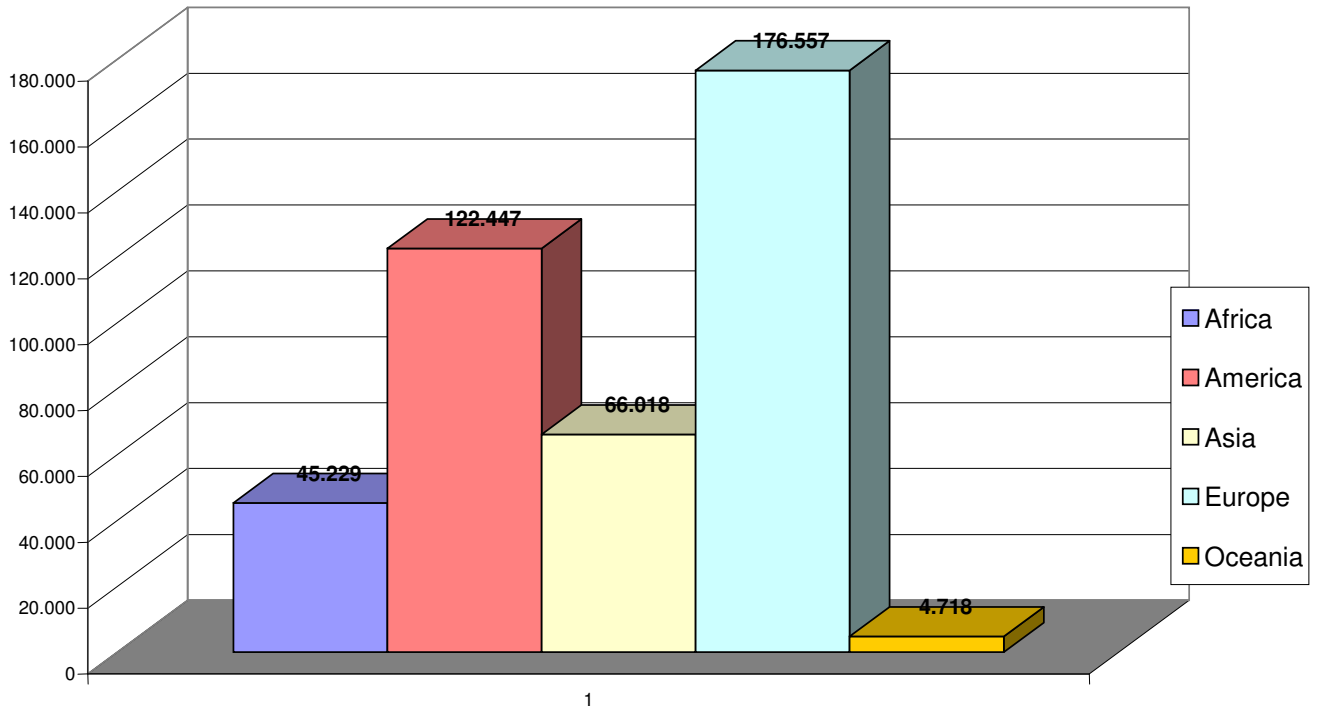
### Ecclesiastical circumscriptions



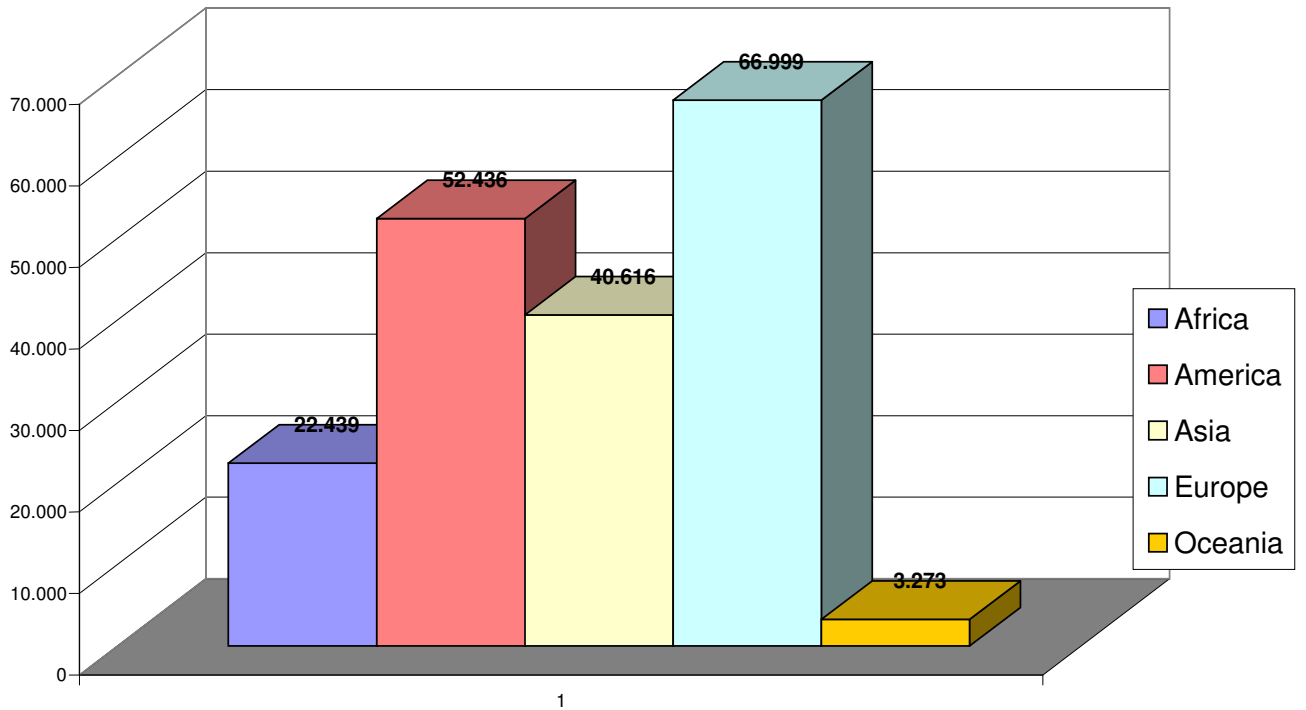
### Catholic Bishops



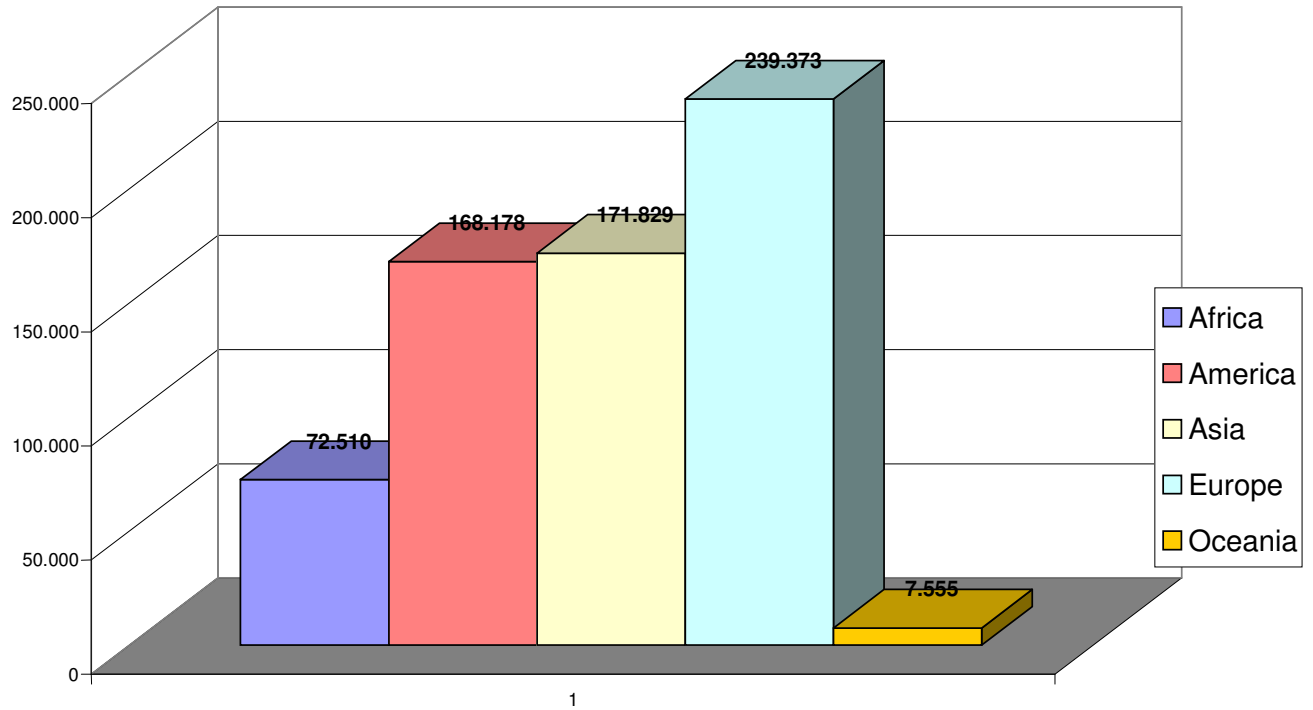
### Priests in the world



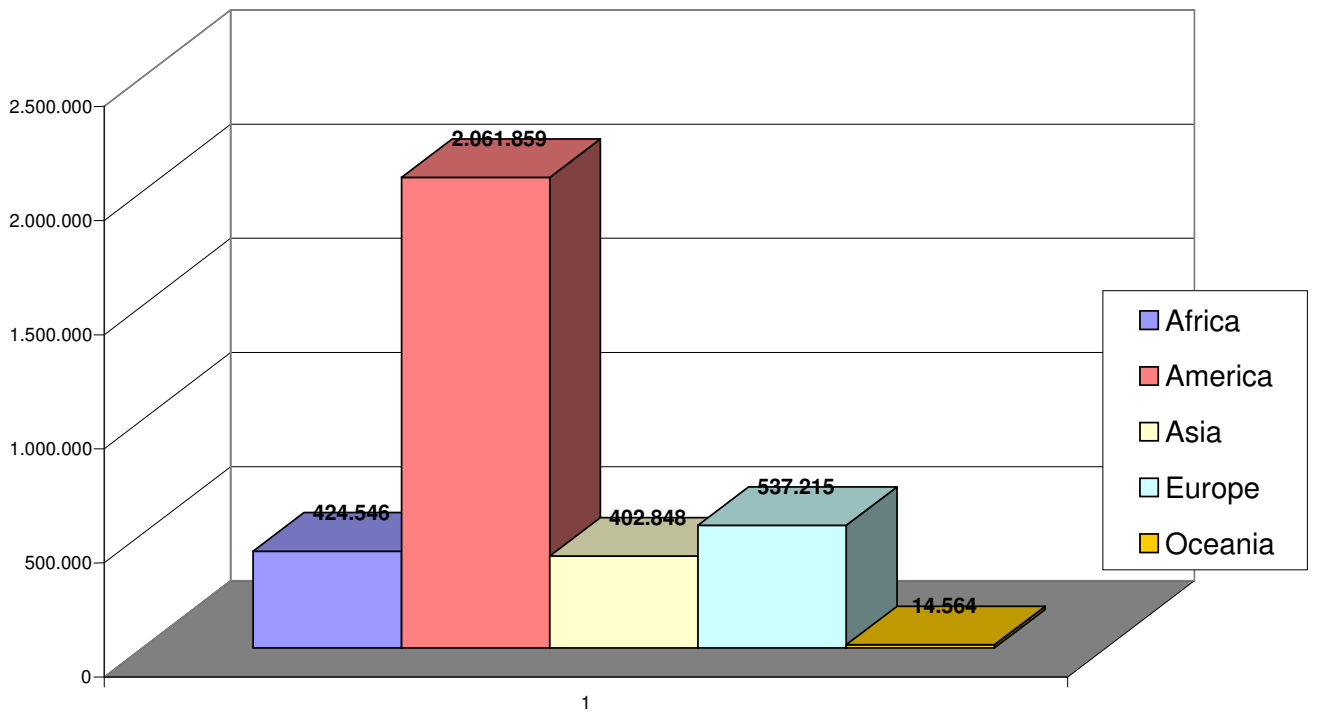
### Religious in the world



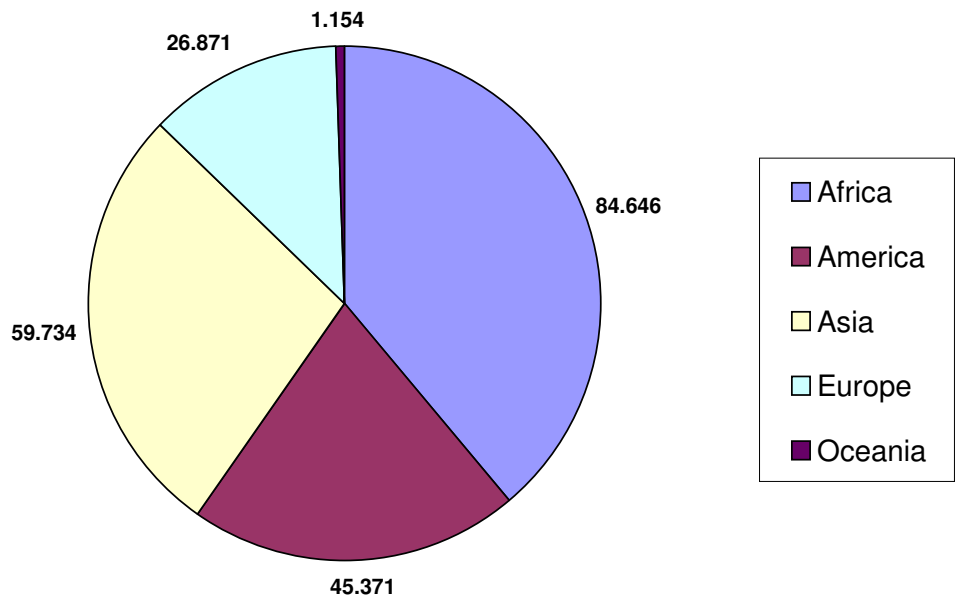
### Women religious



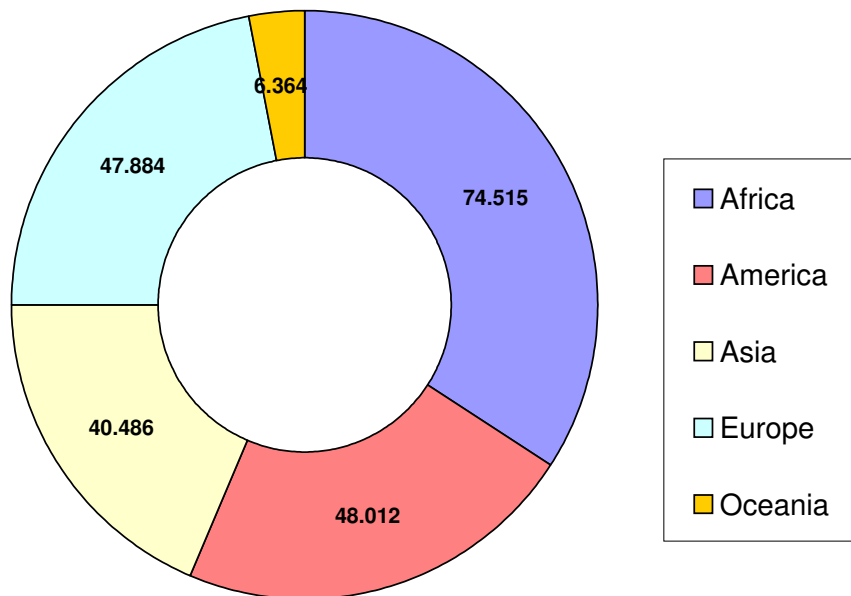
### Lay missionaries and catechists



### Seminarians in the world



### Catholic schools



### Catholic charity and healthcare centres

