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CATHOLIC CHURCH
STATISTICS
2025

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**CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS DEPENDENT ON THE DICASTERY FOR EVANGELIZATION -
SECTION FOR FIRST EVANGELIZATION AND NEW PARTICULAR CHURCHES**

TABLES

CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS 2025

By Elena Grazini & Luca Mainoldi

Vatican City (Fides News Agency) – As every year, in view of World Mission Sunday, which this year celebrates its 99th anniversary on Sunday, October 19, 2025, on the theme “*Missionaries of Hope Among all Peoples*”, Fides News Agency offers some statistics chosen to give a panorama of the Church in the world in the last year.

All the data in this dossier, and the subsequent processing of tables, are taken from the latest edition of the «Church's Book of Statistics» and regard members of the Catholic Church, church structures, healthcare, welfare and education.

The data in the volume relating to the total world population and the number of baptized Catholics are updated to June 30, 2023. The other data are updated to December 31, 2023.

Please note that variations are indicated in brackets, increase (+) or decrease (-) compared to the previous year (2022), according to the comparison made by Fides News Agency.

Finally, the picture of ecclesiastical circumscriptions dependent on the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for First Evangelization and New Particular Churches is reported.

World Population

To June 30, 2023 the world population was **7.914.582.000**, with an increase of 75.639.000 units compared to the previous year. The positive trend is confirmed for all continents.

The most significant increase is Africa (+32.858.000). Followed by Asia (+32.350.000), America (+7.966.000), Europe (+1.508.000) and Oceania (+957.000).

Catholics and percentage

To June 30, 2023, Catholics in the world numbered **1.405.454.000** units with an overall increase of 15.881.000 Catholics compared to the previous year. Even in this case, the increase affects all five continents, including Europe. A decrease in Europe was registered in 2022 compared to 2021.

As in previous years, increases were registered above all in Africa (+8.309.000) and in America (+5.668.000). Followed by Asia (+954.000), Europe (+740.000) and Oceania (+210.000). The world percentage of Catholics increased slightly (+0,1) compared to the previous year, reaching **17,8%**. The Continents register slight variations.

Persons and Catholics per priest

This year the number of persons per priest in the world increased by 236 units, reaching **15.918** (last year 15.682). There are increases in Oceania (+314), America (+127) and Europe (+134), while there are decreases in Asia (-231) and Africa (-83). There is also an increase in the number of Catholics per priest: **3.453** (+45 units compared to last year). Increases were registered in America (+85), Europe (+34), Oceania (+73) and Africa (+17); decreases were registered in the number of persons per priest in Asia (-20).

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions and mission stations

Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions mean Patriarchal, Metropolitan, Archiepiscopal and Episcopal Sees, Territorial Prelatures and Territorial Abbeys, Exarchates and Ordinariates, Military Ordinariates, Apostolic Vicariates, Apostolic Prefectures, Apostolic Administrations, Missions *sui iuris* and Patriarchal Exarchates. The number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions increased by 5 units compared to the previous year, to **3.041**. New circumscriptions were created in Africa (+3) in America (+2) and in Asia (+2). The number in Oceania (81) remain unvaried, while there is a decrease in Europe (-2).

There are **122.777 mission stations** in the world (previous year 126.549). **Mission Stations with a resident priest** number **3.200** (+666). An increase was registered in Africa (+486), Asia (+244) and America (+48), while a decrease was registered in Europe (-103) and in Oceania (-9).

Mission stations without a resident priest decreased compared to the previous year (-4.438 units), reaching **119.577**. A decrease is registered in all continents. A significant decrease of mission stations was registered in America (-2.066), in Africa (-1.493) followed by Asia (-738), Oceania (-118) and Europe (-23).

Bishops

The total number of Bishops in the world increased by 77 units compared to the previous year, reaching **5.430**. The number of diocesan Bishops increased (+84) and Religious Bishops decreased (-7). Diocesan Bishops number **4.258**, while that of Religious Bishops is **1.172**. Diocesan Bishops increase in Africa (+31), in America (+23) in Asia (+19) and in Europe (+11) while the number in Oceania remains unvaried. Religious Bishops decrease in America (-9), Europe (-2) and also in Africa (-1), the number in Oceania remains unvaried while there is an increase in Asia (+5).

Priests

For the past five years, available statistics show that the total number of priests in the world continues to decline, reaching **406.996** (-734 in the last year). Once again, it is Europe that shows a consistent decrease (-2486), followed by America (-800) and Oceania (-44). Like last year, significant increase were registered in Africa (+1.451) and in Asia (+1.145).

Compared to last year, **diocesan priests** in the world decreased by 429 units, reaching **278.742**. The number of diocesan priests increased in Africa (+1221) and in Asia (+542). Compared to last year there is a major decrease in America (+446). A decrease continues in Oceania (-56) and above all in Europe (-1690).

Compared to last year there is also a decrease of **religious priests**, reaching **128.254** (-305). There is an increase in Africa (+230), in Asia (+603) and in Oceania (+12). Religious priests decrease in America (-354) and Europe (-796).

Permanent deacons

Permanent deacons in the world continue to increase (+1234), reaching **51.433**. The increase was registered in America (+1257), and in Oceania (+57). A slight decrease was registered in Asia (-1) in Africa (-3) and in Europe (-27).

Permanent diocesan deacons in the world are **50.868**, with an overall increase of 1333 units. The number increases in Africa (+14) in America (+1268), in Oceania (+56) and in Asia (+14). A slight increase was registered only in Europe (-19).

Religious permanent deacons number **565**, with a decrease of 50 units compared to the previous year. An increase was registered in Oceania (+1), while a decrease was registered in Africa (-17) in Asia (-15) in Europe (-8) and in America (-11).

Men and women religious

The number of non-religious priests decreased by 666 units compared to the previous year, reaching **48.748**. A decrease was registered in Europe (-308) in America (-293) in Asia (-126) and in Oceania (-46) while an increase was registered only in Africa (+107).

Even this year there is an overall decrease in the number of women religious, reaching **589.423** (-9.805). An increase was registered, once again, in Africa (+1.804) and in Asia (+46), while a decrease was registered in Europe (-7.338), America (-4.066) and Oceania (-251).

Secular Institutes

Members of male institutes number **600** (-10). A decrease in America (-3) in Asia (-2) and in Africa (-7). There is a slight increase in Europe (+2) while the situation remains unvaried in Oceania.

Members of female institutes also decreased this year: -689 units, a total of **18.266**. An increase was registered in Africa (+77), in Asia (+51) and in Oceania (+21) while a decrease is registered in Europe (-654), and in America (-184).

Lay missionaries and Catechists

The number of lay missionaries in the world is **444.606**, with a global increase of 31.320 units. An increase was registered in America (+29.652), Asia (+2290) and Oceania (+76), while the number decreases in Europe (-294) and in Africa (-404).

Catechists in the world increased by 17.384 units, reaching **2.866.966**. A decrease was registered in Africa (-11.054) and in Europe (-17.173). Numbers increased in Oceania (+328) and in particular in Asia (+14.616) and in America (+30.667).

Major seminarians

The number of major seminarians, diocesan and religious decreased this year, they are globally **106.495** (they were 108.481 in the previous year). An increase was registered only in Africa (+383), while a decrease was registered in America (-362), in Asia (-1331) in Europe (-661) and also in Oceania (-15) where last year saw a slight increase (+15).

Major diocesan seminarians decrease and number **64.063** (-845) as well as religious seminarians reaching **42.432** (-1141). Major diocesan seminarians increased, like last year, only in Africa (+299) and Oceania (+3), while a decrease was registered in America (-606), in Europe (-425) and in Asia (-116).

Religious major seminarians increased in Africa (+84) and in America (+244), while a decrease was registered in Asia (-1215) in Europe (-236) and in Oceania (-18).

Minor seminarians

The total number of minor seminarians, diocesan and religious decreased by **95.021** (-140). In detail, the trend in Africa has reversed, moving from the increase recorded in the previous annual statistics (+1.065) to the decrease recorded in the latest statistics (-90). A decrease was registered in Europe (-169) and Oceania (-31), while a significant increase was registered in Asia (+123) and a slight increase in America (+27).

Minor diocesan seminarians increase and number **72.654** (+192) while religious seminarians decrease in number **22.367** (-332).

The number of diocesan seminarians decrease in all continents except Africa (+320) and America (+20), while decrease in Asia (-24), Europe (-100) and Oceania (-24).

Religious minor seminarians increased only in Asia (+147) and in America (+7), while decrease in Europe (-69), in Oceania (-7) and in particular in Africa (-410) which saw an increase last year.

Catholic schools and education

In the field of education, the Catholic Church runs 74.550 kindergartens with 7.639.051 pupils (it should be noted that compared to the previous year, the kindergartens run by the Church have increased by 228 units, and pupils have increased by 16,571 units); 102.455 primary schools with 36.199.844 pupils (the previous year there were 102,189 primary schools with 35,729,911 pupils); 52.085 secondary schools with 20.724.361 pupils (in 2022 there were 50,851 institutes of this educational level for a total of 20,566,902 pupils). Furthermore, 2.688.615 pupils study in secondary schools and 4,468,875 in university institutes affiliated with the Catholic Church.

Catholic charity and healthcare centers

Charity and healthcare centres run in the world by the Church are **103.951** and include: 5.377 hospitals and 13.895 dispensaries, mainly in Africa (1.634 hospitals and 4.973 dispensaries) and in America (1.391 hospitals e 3.520 dispensaries); 504 Care Homes for people with Leprosy, mainly in Asia (257) and Africa (189); 15.566 Homes for the elderly or the chronically ill or people with a disability, mainly in Europe (8.515); 8.593 orphanages, mainly in Asia (2.906) and Europe (2.284); 10.858 creches; 10.827 marriage counselling centres, mainly in Europe (5.092) and America (3.027); 3.147 social rehabilitation centers, mainly in America (1.412) and 35.184 other kinds of institutes, mainly in America (15.245) and in Europe (15.460).

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions dependent on the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for First Evangelization and New Particular Churches

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions (Metropolitans, Archdioceses, Dioceses, Territorial Abbeys, Apostolic Vicariates, Apostolic Prefectures, Missions *sui iuris*, Territorial Prelatures, Apostolic Administrations and Military Ordinariates) dependent on the Dicastery for Evangelization are **1.130** (+7). Most of the ecclesiastical circumscriptions entrusted to the Dicastery based in Piazza di Spagna are in Africa (530) and in Asia (483). Followed by America (71) and Oceania (46).

In the following tables the detail of each Continent

CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS – TABLES 2025

In brackets variations compared to the previous year: increase (+) decrease (-)

World population/Catholics

	Population	Catholics	Percentage
Africa	1.417.231.000 (+32.858.000)	280.732.000 (+8.309.000)	19,8% (+0,1%)
America	1.046.606.000 (+7.966.000)	671.877.000 (+5.668.000)	64,2% (+0,1%)
Asia	4.683.202.000 (+32.350.000)	155.198.000 (+954.000)	3,3% (0)
Europe	723.823.000 (+1.508.000)	286.329.000 (+740.000)	39,6% (+0,1%)
Oceania	43.721.000 (+957.000)	11.318.000 (+210.000)	25,9% (-01%)
TOTAL	7.914.582.000 (+75.639.000)	1.405.454.000 (+15.881.000)	17,8% (+0,1)

**Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to June 30, 2023)*

Persons/Catholics per priest

	Persons per priest	Catholics per priest
Africa	25.716 (-83)	5.094 (+17)
America	8.844 (+127)	5.677 (+85)
Asia	43.849 (-231)	2.096 (-20)
Europe	4.667 (+134)	1.846 (+34)
Oceania	9.950 (+314)	2.576 (+73)
TOTAL	15.918 (+236)	3.453 (+45)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions/Mission Stations

	Ecclesiastical Circumscription	Mission Stations with resident priest	Mission Stations without resident priest
Africa	554 (+3)	1.090 (+486)	71.198 (-1.493)
America	1.102 (+2)	554 (+48)	15.888 (-2.066)
Asia	545 (+2)	1.180 (+244)	31.338 (-738)
Europe	759 (-2)	297 (-103)	429 (-23)
Oceania	81 (=)	79 (-9)	724 (-118)
TOTAL	3.041 (+5)	3.200 (+666)	119.577 (-4.438)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Bishops

	Total Bishops	Diocesan Bishops	Religious Bishops
Africa	770 (+30)	564 (+31)	206 (-1)
America	2.014 (+14)	1.504 (+23)	510 (-9)
Asia	841 (+24)	662 (+19)	179 (+5)
Europe	1.675 (+9)	1446 (+11)	229 (-2)
Oceania	130 (=)	82 (=)	48 (=)
TOTAL	5.430 (+77)	4.258 (+84)	1.172 (-7)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Priests

	Total Priests	Diocesan Priests	Religious Priests
Africa	(+1.451)	38.570 (+1221)	16.540 (+230)
America	(-800)	84.513 (-446)	33.832 (-354)
Asia	(+1.145)	41.880 (+542)	32.176 (+603)
Europe	(-2486)	11.138 (-1690)	43.953 (-796)
Oceania	(-44)	2.641 (-56)	1.753 (+12)
TOTAL	406.996 (-734)	278.742 (-429)	128.254 (-305)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Permanent Deacons

	Total Deacons	Diocesan Permanent Deacons	Religious Permanent Deacons
Africa	496 (-3)	471 (+14)	25 (-17)
America	34.322 (+1257)	34.179 (+1268)	143 (-11)
Asia	353 (-1)	262 (+14)	91 (-15)
Europe	15.678 (-27)	15.378 (-19)	300 (-8)
Oceania	584 (+57)	578 (+56)	6 (+1)
TOTAL	51.433 (+1234)	50.868 (+1333)	565 (-50)

**Data «Church’s Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)*

Men and Women Religious

	Men Religious	Women Religious
Africa	9.271 (+107)	84.994 (+1.804)
America	12.621 (-293)	137.215 (-4.066)
Asia	12.754 (-126)	175.614 (+46)
Europe	13.177 (-308)	185.840 (-7.338)
Oceania	925 (-46)	5.760 (-251)
TOTAL	48.748 (-666)	589.423 (-9.805)

**Data «Church’s Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)*

Members of Secular Institutes

	Members of Secular Institutes Male	Members of Secular Institutes Female
Africa	90 (-7)	1.318 (+77)
America	166 (-3)	4.728 (-184)
Asia	52 (-2)	1.860 (+51)
Europe	291 (+2)	10.332 (-654)
Oceania	1 (=)	28 (+21)
TOTAL	600 (-10)	18.266 (-689)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Lay Missionaries and Catechists

	Lay Missionaries	Catechists
Africa	8.282 (-404)	467.058 (-11.054)
America	381.545 (+29.652)	1.564.960 (+30.667)
Asia	48.444 (+2290)	372.533 (+14.616)
Europe	6.121 (-294)	449.588 (-17.173)
Oceania	214 (+76)	12.827 (+328)
TOTAL	444.606 (+31.320)	2.866.966 (+17.384)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Major Seminarians – Diocesan and Religious

	Major Seminarians	Diocesan Major Seminarians	Religious Major Seminarians
Africa	34.924 (+383)	22.822 (+299)	12.102 (+84)
America	27.376 (-362)	18.538 (-606)	8.838 (+244)
Asia	30.436 (-1.331)	15.003 (-116)	15.433 (-1.215)
Europe	12.800 (-661)	7.090 (-425)	5.710 (-236)
Oceania	959 (-15)	610 (+3)	349 (-18)
TOTAL	106.495 (-1.986)	64.063 (-845)	42.432 (-1.141)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Minor Seminarians – Diocesan and Religious

	Minor Seminarians	Diocesan Minor Seminarians	Religious Minor Seminarians
Africa	55.439 (-90)	48.365 (+320)	7.074 (-410)
America	9.323 (+27)	6.410 (+20)	2.913 (+7)
Asia	22.671 (+123)	13.057 (-24)	9.614 (+147)
Europe	7.436 (-169)	4.687 (-100)	2.749 (-69)
Oceania	152 (-31)	135 (-24)	17 (-7)
TOTAL	95.021 (-140)	72.654 (+192)	22.367 (-332)

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Catholic Schools and Pupils

	INFANT Schools	INFANT Pupils	PRIMARY Schools	PRIMARY Pupils	SECONDARY Schools	SECONDARY Pupils	HIGH SCHOOL Pupils	UNIVERSIT. Students
Africa	21.091	2.872.331	45.206	21.125.043	18.392	7.034.393	173.024	315.276
America	15.474	1.249.489	21.213	5.676.520	11.765	3.452.610	783.513	2.543.486
Asia	14.060	1.597.728	16.273	5.687.465	11.629	5.974.049	1.389.715	542.898
Europe	22.445	1.833.681	15.671	2.925.220	9.539	3.758.422	333.639	1.032.715
Oceania	1.480	85.822	4.092	785.596	760	504.887	8.724	34.500
TOTAL	74.550	7.639.051	102.455	36.199.844	52.085	20.724.361	2.688.615	4.468.875

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Hospital/clinics, charity work, welfare

	Hospitals	Dispensaries	Leprosy centers	Homes for the elderly/ chronically ill, disabled	Orphanages	Kindergartens	Marriage counsel centers	Catholic schools	Other institutes
Africa	1.634	4.973	189	652	1.151	2.369	1.478	240	1.186
America	1.391	3.520	38	3.405	2.127	2.743	3.027	1.412	15.245
Asia	1.166	2.449	257	2.620	2.906	2.747	1.032	475	2.900
Europe	960	2.397	20	8.515	2.284	2.839	5.092	914	15.460
Oceania	226	556	-	374	125	160	198	106	393
TOTAL	5.377	13.895	504	15.566	8.593	10.858	10.827	3.147	35.184

*Data «Church's Book of Statistics» (updated to December 31, 2023)

Ecclesiastical Circumscriptions dependent on the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for First Evangelization and New Particular Churches (updated to the latest change)

	M	AD	D	AT	VA	PA	MSI	PT	AA	OM	TOT
Africa	95	3	407	-	18	3	1	-	-	3	530
America	5	-	22	-	40	1	2	1	-	-	71
Asia	80	1	342	1	17	33	3	-	4	2	483
Oceania	11	-	31	-	-	1	2	-	-	1	46
TOTAL	191	4	802	1	75	38	8	1	4	6	1130

Key

M	Metropolitan Arcidiocese
AD	Arcidiocese
D	Diocese
AT	Territorial Abbeys
VA	Apostolic Vicariates
PA	Apostolic Prefecture
MSI	Missio sui iuris
PT	Territorial Prelature
AA	Apostolic Administration
OM	Military Ordinariate