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## **The Catholic Church in the Philippines: A Statistical Overview**

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**The Catholic Church in the Philippines:  
A Statistical Overview  
PEDRO S. DE ACHÚTEGUI, S.J.**

The publication of *The 1983 Catholic Directory of the Philippines\** offers an extraordinary opportunity to take a look at the "statistical profile" of the Catholic Church in our country which results from the data presented in the Directory. A brief account of the nature and preparation of this Directory, as well as its new features, may help to provide the proper perspective to evaluate the particular data summarized in this article. Its aim is simply to present in summary form the facts and figures that are spread throughout the 870 pages of the book. With these summarized figures in sight, the reader may be able to "draw his own conclusions" — or better still, draw the profile of the Church which he feels best fits the data given.

**I. PREPARATION OF THE DIRECTORY**

**A. BACKGROUND**

A series of directories of the Catholic Church in the Philippines has been published by the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) since the post World War II years. Directories appeared with sufficient regularity, and for a time even yearly. In the course of time, however, the directory began to outgrow its original make-up and structure. The increased number of ecclesiastical jurisdictions, the multiplicity, variety and at times greater sophistication of Church structures and organizations at the diocesan and parochial levels, the expansion of educational centers and various other aspects of

*\*1983 Catholic Directory of the Philippines.* Pedro S. de Achútegui, S.J., Editor. Manila: Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 1983. XIV +857 pages.

the life of the Church in the Philippines – all combined to indicate a clear need for a thorough revision and a new format. By 1982 it was generally felt that the time had come for a new method of preparation and a new structure of the directory.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), with the graciously-given consent of the Society of the Divine Word, took upon itself to update and simplify the last directory published in 1981, by securing, coordinating and unifying new data. A serious attempt had to be made to get greater collaboration from the primary sources – mainly dioceses and religious congregations. Letters and questionnaires were sent to all dioceses, religious congregations and organizational units at the national level to secure complete, accurate and updated information. Results were slow in coming,<sup>1</sup> but all in all, persistency paid good dividends, and the outcome was satisfactory.

In past directories, more particularly in most recent volumes, much of the new data could not be properly incorporated into the directory's sectional arrangement. Because of the constraint of circumstances and numerous obscurities in the source data themselves, information was often simply *added*, not *integrated*. There was, therefore, a need of disentangling items that had been put together by mere *chronological accession*, and rearranging them in order to establish a uniform pattern for all the ecclesiastical territories.

One drawback, however, was created by the over nine-month period between reception of some of the data and the actual publication of the Directory. Yet the figures are substantially correct even if some date from late 1982 or even earlier.

The new Directory is published by the CBCP which means it has a semi-official character, but was printed, as before, by Arnoldus Press. The present author was in charge of preparing the new edition.

The overall concern and the guiding principle that determined the disposition of sections and parts, as well as the use of various devices, was *practicality* – based on the very nature of a directory. Accordingly, the following methodological principles have directed the composition of the present edition.

1. Some individuals or institutions had to be prodded with a second and even a third letter, to be followed still at times by a second telegram!

*Arrangement.* As much as possible, alphabetical order has been followed throughout the Directory. In the main section of the book, the territories are arranged alphabetically, beginning with Antipolo and ending with Zamboanga. Bold titles and clear running heads indicate whether the territory in question is an archdiocese, a diocese, a prelature or a vicariate.

Within the ecclesiastical jurisdictions themselves alphabetical order has also been followed for the parishes within the same vicariate — with the exception that the parish where the vicar forane resides always appears in the first place. Alphabetical order is also observed in the listing of the religious congregations and educational centers within each category and, when feasible, also in the names of persons (with certain exceptions regarding the names of the religious within their own communities).

*Uniformity of terminology.* Different terms to express the same reality have been avoided. For priests, only “Rev.” is used. “Parish Priest” and “Assistant” are used instead of “Pastor” and “Curate.”<sup>2</sup> “Population” is used to cover the former terms “souls” or “inhabitants.”

Generally the term “created” is used to indicate the date of the decree emanating from the Holy See that establishes a new territory; “erected” is used for the date of the formal canonical establishment of the territory; “established,” as a neutral word, is usually reserved to signify either “created” or “erected” when the information at hand did not clearly indicate to which one the date referred.

*Simplification.* A principal reference is chosen in which all the pertinent data are included; other references include only the summarized data. As much as possible, longer titles preceding the name (like “Rt. Rev. Msgr.”) and other titles following the name (M.A., Ph.D., S.T.L., V.F., H.P., etc.) have been either minimized (given only the first time the name appears) or completely avoided. The number of pages has been reduced considerably by use of slightly wider columns on a wider page (6 inches instead of 5), longer pages (9 inches instead of 7), smaller point-size type and parentheses indicating different aspects of the same item.

2. The rich variety in the clothing of religious sisters belonging to different congregations is matched by the variety of terminology they use to describe different categories of persons and apostolates. This variety withstood every effort to obtain even a minimum uniformity. The editor apologetically acknowledges this failure — with a sigh.

Although a reasonable uniformity was sought, absolute uniformity was neither advisable nor even possible: respect for the "traditional" order has prevailed over the strict alphabetization of all the items in a determined section – even if perhaps this latter would have been the ideal.

*Structuring of organizations.* The pattern generally adopted in the presentation of each ecclesiastical territory is as follows:<sup>3</sup>

1. Brief description of the territory
2. Name of and data on the bishop(s)
3. Present status of the territory (in summary form)
4. Curia usually divided into three sections: Administrative, Judiciary, Pastoral
5. Parishes and Parochial Clergy
6. Diocesan Clergy with no Parish Assignment
7. Seminaries
8. Religious Congregations/Communities
9. Educational Centers
10. Miscellaneous Listings

As for the religious congregations which occupy the last section of the Directory, the following order has been adopted: (1) The congregations are listed alphabetically, according to the official abbreviation of the congregation (where there is one); (2) In the listing of communities, works and personnel within each congregation, and the ecclesiastical territories where members of the congregation exercise their apostolate, they are also listed alphabetically; (3) An effort has been made to keep the order of communities, works and personnel within each ecclesiastical territory as it has been submitted by the respective congregations.

*Basic Norm.* All the dates of creation or change of status of ecclesiastical territories and appointments of bishops have been counter-checked against the 1982 edition of the *Annuario Pontificio*, the official book of information on the Church from the Holy See which has helped in solving many problems both informational

3. Given the special complexity of the Manila Archdiocese, the new structure approved by the 1979 Synod of Manila has been adopted and is accompanied by an additional chart. The division of the diocesan "Curia" into three sections (Administrative, Judiciary, Pastoral) – even in those dioceses whose curias are not formally divided into sections – is purely functional. It does not touch the internal structural divisions proper to each diocese.

and methodological. Where discrepancies have been found between previous directories or the information supplied by the dioceses and the *Annuario*, the date given by the *Annuario* has been preferred because of its official character.

*New Features.* The main changes or features introduced in this edition are the following:

1. *Size.* As mentioned above, the *size* of the Directory has been changed from 5 x 7 inches to 6 x 9 inches, representing an addition of 19 square inches per page over the previous format. This, together with the changes described, has made it possible to reduce the number of pages from over 1,100 to about 870.

2. *Territories.*

a. The *ecclesiastical territories* are listed in strict *alphabetical* order instead of the former arrangement by archdioceses, dioceses, prelatures and vicariates.

b. There is an up-to-date *historical table* (with a corresponding *chart* indicating the chronological and genealogical order) of the various *ecclesiastical territories*, together with a *map* of the present ecclesiastical divisions.

c. The *historical notes*, which in previous directories were placed at the beginning of each ecclesiastical jurisdiction, have been remanded to a special section, with cross references for each territory to the proper page in the Directory.

3. *Listing.*

a. A complete list of the *Roman Pontiffs* opens the Directory.

b. The *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines* (CBCP) is placed before the individual ecclesiastical territories.<sup>4</sup>

c. The *bishops* are listed first in order of *seniority*, i.e. according to the date of their ordination to the episcopacy, and then *alphabetically*, with their corresponding territories or status.

d. Filipino priests, religious brothers and sisters in *foreign missions* are listed ("Section E. Overseas Mission Apostolates," pp. 735-42).

4. *Summaries and Indexes.*

a. A synoptic *statistical chart* of the personnel and institutions of the Church in the Philippines has been drawn up. The chart summarizes all the data found in the Directory; separate

4. When the Directory was already in the press, the new CBCP officers for 1984-1985 were elected: The names were added to make the list up-to-date (pp. 855-56).

charts for the religious congregations of men and women are added.

b. Finally there are five analytical indexes: (1) towns where *parishes* are established; (2) *bishops* and *priests*; (3) religious *brothers*; (4) religious *sisters*; (5) *deceased* bishops, priests and brothers since July 1, 1981. In these indexes the ecclesiastical territory or religious congregation to which each person belongs is indicated.

## II. SIGNIFICANT DATA FROM THE DIRECTORY

We will present in this central section of the article, the data deemed most significant in forming an overview of the Church today. After the general figures, ecclesiastical divisions, diocesan organizations and status of the hierarchy are given, tables showing various relations of population to number of priests by dioceses and regions are tabulated, including important data on parish population and priests in actual parish work. Statistics on the number, work and distribution of Religious men and Religious women follows, concluding with data on educational centers and overseas apostolates.

### A. GENERAL FIGURES

1. *Population*: 51,479,829; Catholics: 43,129,303 (83.8%);  
Non-Catholics: 8,350,589 (16.2%)

<i>2. Ecclesiastical Territories</i>		<i>Special Divisions</i>	
Archdioceses	16	Military Vicariate	1
Dioceses	41	Filipino-Chinese Apostolate	1
Prelatures	5	Parishes	2,127
Apostolic Vicariates	<u>5</u>	Chapels/Missions	8,617
Total	<u>67</u>		

3. *Ecclesiastical Personnel* 110

#### a. *Archbishops*

Active	17
Retired	<u>3</u>
	<u>20</u>

#### b. *Bishops*

Active	77
Retired	<u>13</u>
	<u>90</u>

c. *Priests*: Diocesan (secular): 2,978; Regular: 1,976;  
Total: 4,954

d. *Congregations*: Religious Institutes, Societies of Apostolic Life, Secular Institutes in the terminology of the new Code of Canon Law, cc. 731-746. (cf. tables between pp. 734-35).

<i>Congregations of Men:</i>		<i>Congregations of Women:</i>	
Number of Institutes	39	Number of Institutes	96
Priests (including bishops)	1,153	Sisters	7,130
Brothers	346		
Scholastics	1,189		

#### 4. *Ecclesiastical Institutions*

		<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Students</i>
a. <i>Diocesan Seminaries:</i>	Major	13	1,974
	Minor	<u>42</u>	<u>2,889</u>
	Total	<u>55</u>	<u>4,863</u>

#### b. *Catholic Schools*<sup>5</sup>

		<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Students</i>
i. Universities (17) Colleges (171)		188	320,552
ii. High Schools: Diocesan/Parochial		371	412,563
	Run by Religious	568	186,464
iii. Elementary Schools: Parochial		729	164,692
	Run by Religious	<u>833</u>	<u>163,157</u>
	Totals	<u>2,689</u>	<u>1,247,228</u>

iv. Teachers: Priests (fulltime)	314	Sisters	1,125
Brothers	127	Lay	<u>14,683</u>

Total 16,249

c. Retreat Houses	41	e. Orphanages/Homes	37
d. Hospital/Clinics	126		

5. Not all figures are complete since some dioceses did not report – namely four on diocesan and ten on religious-run high schools; four dioceses did not report on parochial and eighteen on religious-run elementary schools; twenty-six did not report on sisters in education and twenty-five on lay teachers.

### 5. Pastoral Ministry<sup>6</sup>

a. Infant Baptisms	749,296	c. Marriages: Catholic	124,587
b. Adult Converts	<u>43,194</u>	Mixed	<u>2,735</u>
Total	<u>792,490</u>	Total	<u>127,322</u>

### B. ECCLESIASTICAL DIVISIONS

The Philippines is divided into the following territories or jurisdictions

#### *Archdioceses: 16*

Caceres (Naga City)	Davao	Nueva Segovia(Vigan)
Cagayan de Oro	Jaro (Iloilo City)	Ozamis
Capiz	Lingayen-Dagupan	Palo
Cebu	Lipa	San Fernando (P)
Cotabato	Manila	Tuguegarao
		Zamboanga

#### *Dioceses: 41*

Antipolo	Dumaguete	Masbate
Bacolod	Iba	Pagadian
Balanga	Ilagan	Romblon
Bangued	Iligan	San Fernando (LU)
Bayombong	Imus	San Jose, Antique
Boac	Kalibo	San Pablo
Borongan	Kidapawan	Sorsogon
Butuan	Laoag	Surigao
Cabanatuan	Legazpi	Tagbilaran
Calbayog	Lucena	Tagum
Catarman	Maasin	Tandag
Daet	Malaybalay	Tarlac
Digos	Malolos	Virac
Dipolog	Marbel	

6. Again the figures are incomplete: twenty-two dioceses did not report on infant baptisms, twenty-one on adult converts, twenty-two on Catholic marriages and thirty-five on mixed marriages.

*Prelatures "Nullius": 5*

Batanes-Babuyan	Ipil	Marawi
Infanta	Isabela (Basilan)	

*Apostolic Vicariates: 5*

Calapan (Or. Mindoro)	Mountain Province	San Jose (Occ. Mindoro)
Jolo	Palawan	

1 Military Vicariate

1 Special "Apostolate", The Filipino-Chinese Apostolate

C. PRINCIPAL DIOCESAN ORGANIZATIONS

The following list presents significant councils, commissions and offices in the Diocesan Curia Organization, together with the number of ecclesiastical territories which have or do not have them.<sup>7</sup>

	<i>Have</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Do not have</i>
1. Presbyteral Council	31	46.3	36
2. Pastoral Council	12	17.9	55
3. Matrimonial Tribunal/Office	24	35.8	43
4. Social Action Commission/Center	53	79.1	14
5. Family Life Commission/Office	40	59.7	27
6. Ecumenical Commission/Liason	6	8.9	61
7. Cursillo Movement Office/Center	25	37.3	42
8. Charismatic Movement Office	14	20.9	53

7. One ecclesiastical territory has all the organizations listed in the table, two have none. Seven dioceses have only one, eleven have four, two have five, five have six, and the rest varies between two and three.

D. PRESENT STATUS OF THE PHILIPPINE HIERARCHY<sup>8</sup>

ARCHBISHOPS: 20	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Coadjutor</i>	<i>Retired/ Resigned</i> <sup>9</sup>
	16	1	3
BISHOPS: 90	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Coadjutor c. i. s.</i>	<i>Auxiliary</i>
	41	2	22
	<i>Prelates Ordinary</i> <sup>10</sup>	<i>Vicars Apostolic</i>	<i>Apostolic Administrator</i>
	4	5	1
	<i>Military Vicar</i>	<i>Filipino- Chinese Min.</i>	<i>Retired/ Resigned</i>
	1	1	13
Total	110		

The median age of the Philippine Bishops at present is between 55 and 56 years.

Table 1. *Number of Total Population, of Catholics and of Priests, and of Population and of Catholics per Priest*

	Population	Catholics	%	Priests	Popu- lation per Priest	Catholics per Priest
Antipolo	907,808	850,610	93.7	39	23,277	21,810
Bacolod	1,994,328	1,711,829	82.0	187	10,665	9,154
Balanga	321,860	263,925	82.0	27	11,921	9,775

8. Since the publication of the Directory three members of the hierarchy have died: Cardinal Julio R. Rosales of Cebu, Bishop Henry Byrne, SSC, of Iba, and Bishop Vicente P. Reyes of Cabanatuan. One archbishop resigned (Archbishop Teopisto V. Alberto of Caceres) and was replaced (by Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi, auxiliary of Manila). One Coadjutor Bishop became residential bishop (Bishop Ciceron S. Tumbocon of Cabanatuan), an auxiliary was made residential bishop (Bishop Paciano P. Aniceto, former auxiliary of Tuguegarao), and a new auxiliary bishop was appointed (Bishop Diosdado Talamayan for Tuguegarao).

9. Some of the *retired* archbishops and bishops still work in the dioceses themselves, usually where they were Ordinaries, either as vicars general or simple parish priests, or on the national level serving as chairmen or members of some CBCP commissions. Of the ninety-four bishops who have not yet retired eighty-nine are Filipinos, two Americans, two Spaniards and one German.

10. Batanes-Babuyan is headed by a Prelate who is not a bishop.

Bangued	172,209	147,548	85.5	32	5,381	4,611
Batanes	18,250	17,922	98.2	8	2,281	2,240
Bayombong	337,278	215,857	64.0	20	16,061	10,279
Boac	178,725	163,846	94.5	17	9,651	9,103
Borongan	329,032	312,981	95.0	54	6,093	5,796
Butuan	598,811	516,878	89.3	44	13,154	11,747
Cabanatuan	1,102,985	910,246	82.5	62	17,790	14,681
Caceres	1,378,800	1,203,715	87.3	142	9,710	8,477
Cagayan	754,000	662,268	87.8	75	10,053	8,830
Calapan	574,531	454,750	79.0	69	8,327	6,591
Calbayog	563,703	540,190	95.8	47	11,991	11,493
Capiz	576,286	538,149	93.4	77	7,484	6,989
Catarman	382,812	356,629	93.1	29	13,200	12,297
Cebu	2,149,473	2,020,504	94.0	277	7,756	7,294
Cotabato	790,000	360,000	45.6	39	20,256	9,231
Daet	307,995	271,067	88.0	35	8,799	7,745
Davao	535,517	439,110	82.0	109	4,913	4,029
Digos	583,100	448,255	76.9	32	18,222	14,008
Dipolog	580,730	442,064	75.7	41	14,237	10,782
Dumaguete	1,198,875	983,885	83.5	88	13,398	11,180
Iba	343,043	257,250	75.0	42	8,168	6,125
Ilagan	852,720	631,300	74.0	53	16,089	11,911
Iligan	603,928	460,063	76.0	14	43,138	32,863
Imus	707,150	566,936	79.9	78	9,064	7,140
Infanta	167,680	141,367	84.3	17	9,864	8,315
Ipil	450,395	368,859	81.9	20	22,519	18,443
Isabela	200,000	50,000	25.0	11	18,182	4,545
Jaro	1,432,000	1,244,786	86.9	207	6,918	6,013
Jolo	450,000	15,000	3.3	12	37,500	1,250
Kalibo	332,984	311,141	93.4	31	10,741	10,037
Kidapawan	379,928	253,439	66.8	21	18,692	12,083
Laoag	526,193	338,030	65.0	41	12,834	8,244
Legazpi	900,000	890,000	98.9	100	9,000	8,900

	Population	Catholics	%	Priests	Popu- lation per Priest	Catholics per Priest
Lingayen-Dag.	1,750,000	1,565,000	88.4	128	15,351	13,728
Lipa	1,172,747	1,025,533	87.4	115	10,198	8,918
Lucena	1,014,564	958,390	90.9	104	9,803	9,215
Maasin	490,319	451,265	90.9	41	12,105	11,006
Malaybalay	700,000	600,000	85.7	48	14,583	12,500
Malolos	1,276,158	1,083,724	84.9	110	11,496	9,763
Manila	7,834,028	7,340,458	93.7	988	7,929	7,430
Marawi	400,000	30,000	7.5	8	50,000	3,750
Marbel	831,271	665,016	80.0	47	17,637	14,149
Masbate	540,413	484,645	83.5	41	14,156	11,821
Mt. Province	836,761	460,000	55.0	79	10,592	5,823
Nueva Segovia	443,591	374,953	84.5	96	4,621	3,905
Ozamis	391,213	288,617	73.7	39	10,031	7,400
Pagadian	466,387	339,785	72.8	19	24,547	17,883
Palawan	340,795	258,638	75.9	62	7,745	5,878
Palo	1,104,766	1,069,567	96.8	128	10,726	10,384
Romblon	197,840	170,832	86.3	25	8,243	7,118
San Fernando (LU)	440,640	374,351	85.0	30	17,626	14,974
San Fernando(P)	1,259,726	1,206,084	95.0	96	14,996	14,358
San Jose, Antique	340,280	250,000	73.5	40	8,507	6,250
San Jose (Occ. Min.)	213,655	123,795	57.9	17	12,568	7,286
San Pablo	984,894	866,969	86.0	82	12,011	10,573
Sorsogon	500,685	475,651	95.0	44	11,379	10,811
Surigao	376,415	289,640	75.6	31	12,142	9,182
Tagbilaran	805,904	771,418	95.7	118	6,830	6,537
Tagum	1,058,941	908,113	85.7	56	18,910	16,216
Tandag	392,715	335,329	85.4	28	14,026	11,976
Tarlac	684,319	582,672	85.1	35	19,552	16,648
Tuguegarao	746,663	621,764	83.3	74	10,090	8,404
Virac	175,247	172,139	98.2	25	7,302	7,172
Zamboanga	314,162	269,967	78.4	42	8,194	6,428

**TABLE 2. *Ranked Proportion in Descending Order of Population (over 12,000) to One Priest***

Marawi	50,000	Iligan	16,089
Iligan	43,138	Bayombong	16,061
Jolo	37,500	Lingayen-Dag.	15,351
Pagadian	24,547	San Fernando (P)	14,996
Antipolo	23,277	Malaybalay	14,583
Ipil	22,519	Dipolog	14,237
Cotabato	20,256	Masbate	14,156
Tarlac	19,552	Tandag	14,026
Tagum	18,910	Dumaguete	13,398
Kidapawan	18,692	Catarman	13,200
Digos	18,222	Butuan	13,154
Isabela	18,182	Laoag	12,834
Cabanatuan	17,790	S. Jose (Occ. Mind)	12,568
Marbel	17,637	Surigao	12,142
San Fernando (LU)	17,626	Maasin	12,105
		San Pablo	12,011

**TABLE 3. *Ranked Proportion in Descending Order of Catholics (over 10,000) to One Priest***

Iligan	32,863	Marbel	14,149
Antipolo	21,810	Digos	14,008
Ipil	18,443	Lingayen-Dag.	13,728
Pagadian	17,883	Malaybalay	12,500
Tarlac	16,648	Catarman	12,297
Tagum	16,216	Kidapawan	12,083
San Fernando (LU)	14,974	Tandag	11,976
Cabanatuan	14,681	Iligan	11,911
San Fernando (P)	14,358	Masbate	11,821

(Continuation of Table 3)

*Ranked Proportion in Descending Order of Catholics (over 10,000) to one Priest*

Dumaguete	11,180	San Pablo	10,573
Maasin	11,006	Palo	10,384
Sorsogon	10,811	Bayombong	10,279
Dipolog	10,782	Kalibo	10,037

TABLE 4. *Ranked Proportion in Descending Order of Non-Catholics (over 2,500) to One Priest*

Marawi	46,250	Digos	4,213
Jolo	36,250	Ilagan	4,117
Isabela	13,637	Ipil	4,076
Cotabato	11,026	Marbel	3,507
Pagadian	6,663	Cabanatuan	3,109
Kidapawan	6,009	Surigao	2,960
Bayombong	5,782	Tarlac	2,904
San Jose (Occ. Mind)	5,285	Tagum	2,690
Mt. Province	4,769	San Fernando (LU)	2,652
Laoag	4,539	Ozamis	2,631

*Explanatory note to Table 5.*

The terms "Excess" and "Deficiency", as used in Table 5, are relative to a situation of perfect equality among all regions in the number of Catholics per priest or sister. They do *not* refer to an excess (or deficiency) of priests or of sisters in relation to the *actual pastoral needs* of the country. From this point of view the situation is far from ideal, as may be seen in comparison with some other countries.

The excess of religious priests and sisters in the Luzon region may be due, at least in part, to the numerous houses of formation and educational centers located mainly in Metro Manila.

TABLE 5. *Proportionate Distribution of Priests and Sisters by Regions*<sup>11</sup>

**LUZON:** Population 27,430,530; Catholics 23,997,144

*Priests*

Diocesan	1,470 (1,549) <sup>(a)</sup>	Deficiency	79
Religious	<u>1,254 (1,097)<sup>(b)</sup></u>	Excess	<u>157</u>
Total	<u><u>2,724</u></u>	Total Excess	<u><u>78</u></u>

*Sisters* 4,667 (3,780)<sup>(c)</sup> Excess 887

**VISAYAS:** Population 12,958,535; Catholics 11,640,305

*Priests*

Diocesan	1,103 (732) <sup>(a)</sup>	Excess	371
Religious	<u>317 (532)<sup>(b)</sup></u>	Deficiency	<u>215</u>
Total	<u><u>1,420</u></u>	Total Excess	<u><u>156</u></u>

*Sisters* 1,309 (1,786)<sup>(c)</sup> Deficiency 480

**MINDANAO:** Population 10,957,513; Catholics 7,743,003

*Priests*

Diocesan	335 (613) <sup>(a)</sup>	Deficiency	278
Religious	<u>401 (354)<sup>(b)</sup></u>	Excess	<u>47</u>
Total	<u><u>736</u></u>	Total Deficiency	<u><u>231</u></u>

*Sisters* 1,098 (1,496)<sup>(c)</sup> Deficiency 398

(a) If equitably distributed throughout the Philippines in proportion of one diocesan priest to population.

(b) If equitably distributed throughout the Philippines in proportion of one religious priest to population.

(c) If equitably distributed throughout the Philippines in proportion of one religious sister to population.

11. The margin of error because of *slight* rounding of some figures is minimal. The combined excess of Luzon and Visayas is 234; the deficiency of Mindanao in our figures is 231, a difference of only three priests.

TABLE 6. *Ecclesiastical Territories with the Highest Number of Diocesan Priests*<sup>12</sup>

Manila	168	Palo	103
Jaro	166	Lipa	91
Cebu	165	Legazpi	83
Caceres	129	Nueva Segovia	78
Bacolod	117	Capiz	77
Lingayen-Dagupan	114	Dumaguete	66
Malolos	108	Borongan	53
Lucena	103	San Pablo	53

TABLE 7. *Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions by the Lowest Number of People (under 10,000) per Priest*

Batanes	2,281	Iba	8,168
Nueva Segovia	3,905	Romblon	8,243
Davao	4,913	Calapan	8,327
Borongan	6,093	San Jose, Antique	8,507
Tagbilaran	6,830	Daet	8,974
Jaro	6,918	Legazpi	9,000
Zamboanga	7,172	Imus	9,064
Virac	7,302	Boac	9,651
Capiz	7,484	Caceres	9,710
Palawan	9,243	Lucena	9,803
Cebu	7,756	Infanta	9,864
Manila	7,928*		

\*In Manila there are only 274 priests in parish apostolate, or a proportion of one priest in parish work for 28,591 people.

12. There are 191 priests retired, and at least 269 abroad or on leave, with another 66 on study leave either abroad or in the Philippines and 77 serving as military chaplains — a total of 603.

TABLE 8. *Ranked Proportion in Ascending Order of Catholics (under 10,000) to One Priest*

Jolo	1,250 (37,500) <sup>(a)</sup>	Imus	7,140
Batanes	2,240	Virac	7,172
Marawi	3,750 (11,496) <sup>(a)</sup>	Cebu	7,294
Nueva Segovia	3,905	Manila	7,430 <sup>(b)</sup>
Davao	4,905	Daet	7,745
Isabela	4,545 (18,182) <sup>(a)</sup>	Infanta	8,315
Borongon	5,796	Tuguegarao	8,404 (10,090) <sup>(a)</sup>
Mt. Province	5,823	Caceres	8,477
Palawan	4,878	Cagayan	8,830 (10,053) <sup>(a)</sup>
Jaro	6,013	de Oro	
Iba	6,125	Legazpi	8,900
San Jose, Antique	6,250	Lipa	8,918
Zamboanga	6,428	Boac	9,103
Tagbilaran	6,537	Bacolod	9,154 (10,665) <sup>(a)</sup>
Calapan	6,591	Lucena	9,215
Capiz	6,989	Malolos	9,763 (11,496) <sup>(a)</sup>
Romblon	7,118	Batangas	9,775 (11,921) <sup>(a)</sup>

a. The figure in parenthesis indicates the number of *people* (over 10,000) per priest.

b. In Manila there are only 274 priests in parish apostolate, or a proportion of one priest in parish work for 26,790 *Catholics*.

*Explanatory note to Table 9.*

Seven ecclesiastical territories did not submit any figures for their parishes. Hence the table is incomplete. In several territories some parishes could not be classified according to the divisions made by population because figures were lumped together with the phrase "Included in X." None of them, therefore, could be used for the drawing up of this table.

TABLE 9. *Parishes by Population and Number of Priests and Parishes with Only One Priest*

<i>Population per parish</i>	<i>No. of Parishes</i>	<i>No. of priests in these parishes</i>	<i>Parishes with only 1 priest</i>
Over 100,000	13	39	3
Between 75,000 and 100,000	36	115	8
Between 50,000 and 75,000	97	202	33
Between 40,000 and 50,000	106	212	34
Between 30,000 and 40,000	191	338	95
Between 20,000 and 30,000	369	549	255
Between 10,000 and 20,000	563	703	451
Between 5,000 and 10,000 <sup>(a)</sup>	262	293	273
Totals	1,637 <sup>(b)</sup>	2,451 <sup>(c)</sup>	1,152

(a) Only about 63 parishes from a total of 2,127 have a population under 4,000 people.

(b) The total number of parishes in the Philippines is 2,127.

(c) The total number of priests, both diocesan and regular, in the parish apostolate, as parish priests, assistant parish priests or chaplains for chaplaincies or "missions" depending on the parishes, is 2,856, or 57% of the grand total of 4,954 priests.

G. NUMBERS, WORKS AND DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS MEN

1. The *total number* of men religious is 3,326 in 39 religious orders or congregations. Of these congregations 27 are clerical (two have three provinces or equivalent divisions, and two others have two provinces or the equivalent), 6 societies of apostolic life (the new terminology in the 1983 Canon Law) and 6 congregations of brothers.

The 3,326 men religious are divided as follows:

<i>Bishops:</i>	29		
<i>Priests:</i>	2,184	<i>Brothers:</i>	373
Filipinos	882	Filipinos	200
Foreign	1,164	Foreign	146
Not specified	138	Not specified	27

*Scholastics:* 1,189. These religious seminarians are practically all Filipinos; 766 of them are in theology. To this number, 270 novices and 206 candidates are to be added.

2 *Works:* Religious men take care of:

- a. at least one-fifth of all the parishes in the Philippines.
- b. 277 schools owned or administered.
- c. 14 diocesan seminaries administered, and 33 for their own scholastics.
- d. 9 retreat houses.
- e. 32 other apostolates.

3. *Distribution* of religious priests. There appears to be a disproportionate concentration of religious priests in some areas. By way of illustration, the number of religious priests together with the corresponding population in *six ecclesiastical territories* appears in the following table:<sup>13</sup>

13. These figures do not include the heavy concentration of religious priests in territories entrusted to some religious congregations such as, for instance, the CICM (Mt. Province and Bayombong with 71 priests) and SVD (Bangued, Calapan and San Jose of Occidental Mindoro with 101).

	<i>Religious Priests</i>	<i>Population</i>
Manila	820	7,834,028
Cebu	112	2,149,473
Davao	82	535,517
Bacolod	70	1,994,328
Jaro	41	1,432,000
Imus	<u>33</u>	<u>707,150</u>
Total	<u>1,158</u>	<u>14,652,496</u>

The combined figure of religious priests in the six above-mentioned dioceses constitutes 53% (1,158) of the total number of religious priests (2,184), while the combined population of the six dioceses is only 28.5% (14,652,496) of the Philippine population (51,479,892). It is also worth noting that Manila has just under 20% of all priests (diocesan and regular) for about 15% of the nation's population. But this is a better situation than in 1970 when it had about 21% of priests for only 10% of the population. One of the reasons for the high number of religious priests in Manila is the great number of houses of formation and of educational centers in the capital of the Republic.

#### H. NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS WOMEN

##### 1. Number.

Ninety-six religious congregations of women work in the Philippines, with a total of 7,130 members in vows or religious commitment.<sup>14</sup> Of these, 6,375 are reported as Filipinas, and 305 as foreigners; the rest, 450, have not been specified. To this number 632 novices and 360 candidates are to be added – all of them Filipinas. They live in 577 houses, and staff/administer 567 schools.

The number of congregations of women is three times the number of men's congregations. Seven are contemplative (with a relatively remarkable number of vocations) and at least five are secular institutes.

<sup>14</sup>In the summary table of statistics only eighty congregations of women are listed. The remaining sixteen are to be found under the title "Religious Congregations without Complete Data" (pp. 733-34) and in the *Addenda* (p. 857).

## 2. Distribution.

As is the case with men religious, there is also a heavy concentration of sisters in a relatively small number of dioceses, with the unavoidable consequence of an unequal distribution of personnel over the Islands. The ten dioceses which have the highest number of sisters, with the corresponding population of these dioceses, are listed here:

	<i>Sisters</i>	<i>Population</i>
Manila	2,077	7,834,028
Jaro	563	1,432,000
Cebu	542	2,149,473
Mt. Province	308	836,761
Nueva Segovia	253	443,591
Bacolod	186	1,994,328
Lucena	170	1,014,564
Davao	158	535,517
Zamboanga	143	314,162
San Pablo	142	984,894
	<hr/> 4,542	<hr/> 17,539,318

The combined *population* in these ten ecclesiastical territories is 34% (17,539,318) of the total Philippine population (51,479,892), while the number of sisters in these ten dioceses is 63.7% (4,542) of the total number of sisters (7,130). Moreover almost three-fourths of this number (2,950), or 41.4% of the *total* number of sisters in the Philippines (7,130), are found in five dioceses of Luzon. The same reason given above for the high number of religious priests in Manila applies also to the heavy concentration of sisters.

### I. DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL CENTERS

The repartition of Catholic educational centers over the country is also uneven. As is to be expected, the greater concentration of Catholic educational institutions is found in the metropolises. For an overall perspective, however, the distribution of Catholic

educational centers according to the classical geographical areas of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao is as follows:

	<i>Universities</i>	<i>Colleges</i>	<i>High Schools</i>	<i>Elementary Schools</i>
Luzon	10 <sup>(a)</sup>	83 <sup>(b)</sup>	546 <sup>(c)</sup>	811 <sup>(d)</sup>
Visayas	4	45	330	433
Mindanao	3	42	300	344

(a) 4 in Manila; (b) 28 in Manila; (c) 136 in Manila; (d) 309 in Manila

This distribution of educational centers helps to explain the heavy concentration of religious men and women in Manila and other major cities.

#### J. OVERSEAS MISSION APOSTOLATES

In conformity with the special mandate of John Paul II to the Filipino people during his apostolic pilgrimage in 1981, a special section is dedicated in the Directory to the "Overseas Mission Apostolates."

In the minds of the great majority of Catholics there seems to be a clear distinction between priests or religious studying abroad, working in the curia or a generalate of a religious congregation or teaching in a university in one of the countries of the First World, and those who are exercising their apostolate, let us say, in the heart of Africa, countries of the Third World or among Moslems and Buddhists. This is the reason why the Directory makes a distinction between personnel in "Foreign Missions" and personnel "Abroad," even if both are listed under the title "Overseas Mission Apostolates." A partial reason for listing together these two categories is that the very concept of "*missionary*" is undergoing a certain change due to new theological insights and the religious and socio-political situation of countries to which these missionaries are sent.

1. Numbers.

*In foreign Missions:*

Diocesan priests	6
Religious men	140
Sisters	391
Lay persons	<u>19</u>
Total	<u><u>556</u></u>

*Abroad:*

Diocesan priests	234
Religious priests	66
Sisters	132
	<u><u>432</u></u>

a. Among the 17 religious congregations of *men* which have Filipino missionaries abroad, the following are those with the highest number of members sent (cf. pp. 735-37 and 741-42):

The Society of the Divine Word (SVD)	65	(plus 5 abroad)
The Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM)	28	(plus 14 abroad)
The Society of St. John Bosco (SDB)	15	

Other congregations have less than ten members in the missions.

b. Thirty-two from among ninety-six congregations of *sisters*, or one-third of the congregations of women religious, have missionaries abroad (cf. pp. 737-42). The eight congregations of women religious which have the highest number of Filipino missionaries abroad are:

Congregation of Religiosas Misioneras de Sto. Domingo (OP)	50	(plus 19 abroad)
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul (DC)	43	
Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres (SPC)	37	(plus 40 abroad)
Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM)	32	(plus 15 abroad)
Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (MIC)	32	
Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic	25	
Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS)	22	(plus 5 abroad)
Congregation of the Religious of the Blessed Virgin Mary (RVM)	20	

2. The *field of apostolate*: Filipino missionaries work in seventeen countries in Africa, fifteen in Asia including the Middle East, sixteen in Latin America and five in the Pacific Islands.

The highest number of the "total" contingent abroad is in West Africa (31) followed by Ghana (11). In Asia, *Indonesia* is the first

beneficiary (46). In Latin America, *Argentina* with twenty-four is followed by Brazil with fourteen, while in the Pacific Islands, *Papua, New Guinea*, occupies first place with a total of twenty-six. (Although West Africa is a region – while Ghana is a country – the term “West Africa” has been used by the Congregations themselves, when they submitted the data, as representing a single entity.)

### III. SOME REFLECTIONS AND CHALLENGES

The preceding figures and series of tables speak for themselves. But there is always a danger: statistics has been humorously defined as “the art of lying with numbers.” It may therefore be dangerous to draw conclusions, especially those with emotionally-charged implications, from this mass of sheer data. On the other hand, these figures do call for some serious reflection, such as that which we wish to present here, usually in the form of questions arising from these summaries.

#### A. ON THE STATISTICAL IMAGE OF THE CHURCH

*Ecclesiastical Divisions and Regions.* The *Luzon* region with a total population of 27,430,000 (53.5% of the country) has twenty-nine of the sixty-seven ecclesiastical divisions (43%), seven of which are archdioceses and eighteen dioceses. Eight dioceses (Cabanatuan, Caceres, Lingayen, Lipa, Lucena, Malolos, Manila, San Fernando-Pampanga) have over one million people each, and six over one million Catholics (Manila alone has over seven million Catholics). The question naturally arises whether only one bishop can adequately shepherd more than one million people, as is the case of Cabanatuan, Lucena, and San Fernando (Pampanga).

In the *Visayas* region, with a population of 12,958,000 (25% of the country), there are seventeen ecclesiastical divisions out of sixty-seven (or 25.4%), of which four are archdioceses and twelve dioceses. Five have over one million population, and two have about two million each (Cebu slightly more with three bishops, and Bacolod slightly less with only one bishop).

Finally the *Mindanao* region with less population (10,857,513 or 21% of the country), although spread over a much larger territory, has twenty ecclesiastical divisions (29.9% of the total) of which five are archdioceses and eleven dioceses, with twenty-five

active bishops (26.6%). Except for Tagum, no diocese exceeds a million. In terms of territory, however, and religious affiliation, as well as the economic, political – and military – situation, the Mindanao region poses the greatest challenge to the Church today and for the foreseeable future. The problems are gigantic. Resources in personnel are deficient – there is a clear understaffing of priests in comparison with the Luzon and, especially, the Visayas regions. Mindanao with the smallest population among the three regions, has the highest number of non-Catholics in the Philippines (40.4%) and the highest proportion by regions (67.7%). Problems created by culture, migration and development, none of which are directly reflected in the figures of the Directory, compound the difficulties.

All in all, among the three regions Mindanao's lack of personnel is the most glaring. Relative to the other two regions, Luzon and Visayas, Mindanao is deficient in priests by 231 and in sisters by 398 (see next section). This presents a rather bleak picture for the very region which is in direst need. Perhaps one reason why Mindanao is in such need is precisely because it is so lacking in Church personnel. Surely there is a challenge here, especially for diocesan priests and for sisters. Who could predict what Mindanao could become with an injection of over 600 specialized personnel, priests and sisters?

#### J. APPORTIONMENT OF PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES BY REGIONS

With such an immense population (over 51 million), such a great number of Catholics (over 43 million), and such a disproportion of priests to the overall population and to the number of Catholics, an accurate assessment of personnel available is needed to plan for a more equitable distribution of clergy.

Comparing the number of priests with population figures for the year 1983 results in the following ratios: *one priest* for every 10,392 inhabitants – i.e. 8,705 Catholics and 1,687 non-Catholics. The ratio in 1960 was one priest for every 8,363 inhabitants – i.e. 7,004 Catholics and 1,359 non-Catholics.<sup>15</sup>

15. Some comparisons, using as basis the *Statistical Yearbook of the Church for 1982* (Vatican City), may bring out the significance of these ratios. The highest ratio of *priests* to Catholics is in North America (Canada and the United States) with one priest to every 856 Catholics. Europe has 1,136 Catholics per priest, Asia 2,347, Africa 3,444, and Latin America 6,506. The Philippines has 8,705 Catholics per priest.

Regarding *diocesan major seminarians*, in 1983 the ratio in the Philippines is one diocesan major seminarian for every 21,848 Catholics. Fifteen years ago, in 1967, it was one diocesan major seminarian for 29,810 Catholics. The present proportion, therefore, marks a clear improvement.<sup>16</sup>

As for the number of *religious sisters*, the ratio in the Philippines is one sister per every 6,043 Catholics. In 1967 the ratio was one sister for every 5,844 Catholics: the situation, therefore, has deteriorated in the last 15 years.<sup>17</sup>

*Comparative Statistics on Catholics per Priest/Sister/Diocesan Major Seminarian*

		<i>Catholics per Priest</i>	<i>Catholics per Sister</i>	<i>Catholics per Major Seminarian</i>
North America (Canada & USA)		856	378	10,375
Europe		1,136	525	16,146
Asia		2,347	741	8,029
Africa		3,444	1,674	10,434
Latin America		6,500	2,329	47,523
PHILIPPINES	1960/1967	– 7,004	5,844	29,810
	1983	– 8,705	6,043	21,848

Relative to the actual number of priests we have, the *Visayas* region has more than its share of *priests* (a relative “excess” of 156) but less than its share of sisters. The *Luzon* region has slightly more than its proportion of priests and many more than

16. The comparison for *diocesan major seminarians* is as follows: Asia has one diocesan major seminarian for every 8,029 Catholics, North America one for every 10,375, Africa one for every 10,434, Europe one for 16,146. The lowest, and more saddening, proportion is in Latin America with one major seminarian for 47,523 Catholics.

17. These are the ratios for *sisters*: North America has one sister per every 378 Catholics, Europe one for 525 (with a great concentration in Rome and Milan), Asia one for every 741 (but the proportion in India is one for every 221 Catholics), Africa one for every 1,674, Latin America one for 2,329.

its share of sisters (an "excess" of 887). By contrast, the *Mindanao* region suffers from a proportionate deficiency of 231 priests and 398 sisters. If we focus on the *diocesan clergy* alone Visayas has a proportionate excess of 371, while Luzon has a deficiency of 79 and Mindanao of 278. Should not these figures encourage both dioceses and religious congregations to reflect on the possibility of a more generous – or simply a more equitable – sharing?

The data regarding *educational Centers* also need to be seriously considered. The great concentration of these centers in the urban areas deprives the rural areas of educational facilities and the work of evangelization that goes with Catholic institutions, thus leaving the rural sector largely unattended and consequently more vulnerable to the influence of proselytist groups that feel no particular attraction for ecumenical collaboration – or even respect – for the Catholic faith.

*Dioceses, Parishes and Cities.* Fourteen dioceses have over one million population, six have over 800,000, and eleven over 500,000. What does this number of over-populated dioceses suggest in regard to "the distribution of clergy and resources which is reasonable and in keeping with the needs of the apostolate," of which the Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, especially articles 22-24, speaks when treating of the problem of boundaries of dioceses? Is there any way of approaching this truly serious problem? Something similar may be asked regarding the great number of parishes with 20,000 persons and above. Will not this situation become still more critical with the continued increase in population and the present relative decrease in vocations?

Given this situation, could not the possibilities offered by the office of permanent deacons, by Basic Christian Communities, by lay ministers, and the like, be seriously considered as partial means to respond to this continued lack of sufficient clergy? How can the new approaches indicated in the recently promulgated Canon Law be implemented in our situation? Canon 517 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law seems to open new perspectives in this respect.

As for the megapolises, Manila represents a serious problem. As far as the number of Catholics is concerned, Manila today is one of the largest dioceses in the world. Some attempts at studying the pastoral problem of the great cities are presently being made: Paris

and Madrid, following New York and Chicago (all with fewer Catholics than Manila) are pioneering in this direction with a certain success. Besides Manila, Cebu is growing into another megapolis, the concomitant problems are better anticipated than solved.

*Organization of the Curias.* Spurred by its exceptional growth in population and complexity, the archdiocese of Manila re-organized its curia (as shown in its organigram, pp. 330-31) – a direct result of the 1979 Archdiocesan Synod. This may perhaps serve as a rough model for other dioceses, which, according to the information submitted for publication in the Directory, often lack a well-organized and structured curial system.

If we examine the multifarious organizations that exist in quite a number of dioceses, certain questions arise spontaneously. Why is it that social awareness seems to be present almost everywhere, while ecumenical consciousness seem to be (officially, at least) almost non-existent, and the missionary thrust not too evident? Do the numerous “organizations, movements, offices and directors” reflect a vibrantly alive christian community? What kind of basic image and “model” of the Church is reflected by these organizations? From their sheer number and variety, doubts may perhaps arise regarding any effective coordination of so many parish organizations, both at the parochial and diocesan levels. Moreover, is the actual priority given to sacramental and devotional life properly complemented by corresponding instructional, formational and communitarian means so that the ecclesial community will be a community of living faith?

*The Ecumenical and Inter-religious Dimension.* The number of non-Catholics comes to about 8,350,000 or 16.2% of the total population. Of these, slightly less than two-thirds are Christians, divided into about 585 religious groups; over one-third are Moslems (the great majority), members of other living faiths, and some animistic tribes. What is the response of the Philippine Church to this challenge? Pope John Paul II, during his visit to the Philippines in 1981, stressed the need for ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. Eight million is a very large number, more than enough, it seems, to demand the dedication to this specific apostolate of a good number of properly-trained personnel. The ecumenical challenge is simply staggering.

## B. ON THE DIRECTORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*About Limitations.* There are, to be sure, many limitations in the Directory. For one thing, some data are already out of date. There are, moreover, some omissions and mistakes.<sup>18</sup> While the data, figures and statistics in the Directory are, on the whole, substantially correct and reliable, with the normal margin of error characteristic of this kind of work, certain figures that should tally do not tally. The explanation is quite simple: the figures have different sources, and it is practically impossible to decide which one is more correct or to make further research.

*Some Modest Suggestions*

1. The addresses and homilies of John Paul II during his apostolic pilgrimage to the Philippines in February 1981 were the object of special reflection by the Philippine hierarchy during the 1982 January meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. They discovered that the primary emphasis placed by the Pope was the *missionary vocation of the Philippines*. Could not this be a starting point to motivate vocations, generous commitment, daring initiatives for building up the Church in the Philippines?

2. Would it not help the work of evangelization and the necessary coordination for the Church in the Philippines to have a concrete means of cross *communication* among all the dioceses and regions through a Newsletter, a periodical, or something similar?

3. A *Plenary Council* is envisioned by the new Code of Canon Law (cc. 439-446). Some commentators are not too optimistic about such councils in view of the activities expected from the already existing Episcopal Conferences (CIC 447-459). However a Plenary Council, especially if the external solemnities and formalities are trimmed to the minimum, may serve to mobilize not only the bishops, members of the Episcopal Conferences, but also the whole People of God. "It [the Plenary Council] can

18. It seems that mistakes have been particularly striking in regard to the bishops: one is so young that he was born only in 1982 (p. 318) although his birthyear is 1902; a second was consecrated bishop in his mother's womb, like the prophet Jeremiah, exactly 9 months before his birth (p. 485); a third was being ordained a bishop before he was ordained a priest (p. 95). The reader may find other interesting novelties for which this editor will be grateful if informed.

determine whatever seems opportune for an increase of faith, for the ordering of common pastoral action, for the direction of morality and for the preservation, introduction and defence of a common ecclesiastical discipline" (CIC 445). Such a council held in the Philippines relatively soon could usher in a new era for living the Catholic faith, committing ourselves to evangelization both within and outside our country, and coordinating all the spiritual and human reserves with which the good Lord has abundantly endowed the only Christian country in Asia.