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OUR MISSION

MISSIO SACBC - PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

Tel: +27 12 816 5001 Mobile: +27 62 247 7698 Email: pms.dirsa@gmail.com
1030 Meerlust Road, Equestria, Pretoria * PO Box 73514, Lynnwood Ridge 0040, RSA

Facebook: **Missio Sacbc** & Pontifical Mission Societies—South Africa, Botswana & Swaziland

International Website: www.ppoomm.va

BANKING DETAILS: ABSA BANK, Acc No: 404-860-5313, Acc Name: Pontifical Mission Societies

Dear Friends,

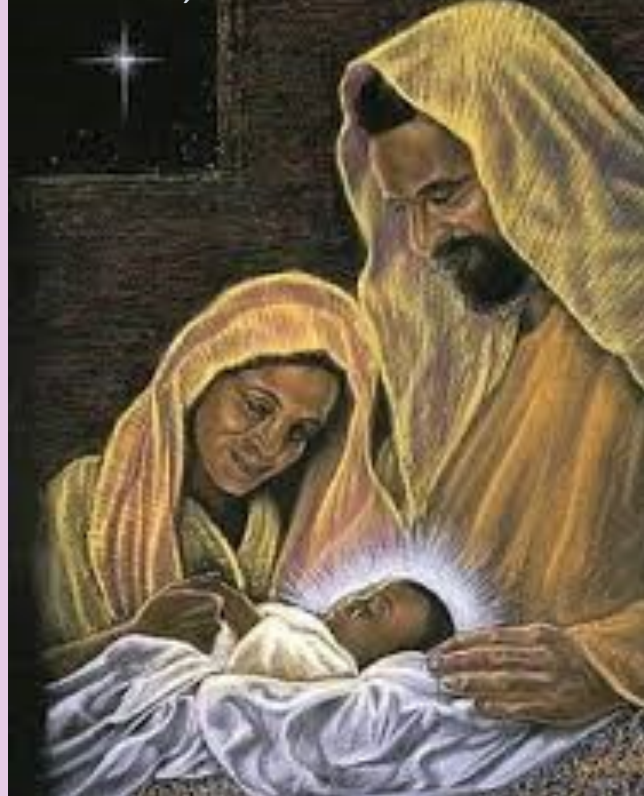
As we come to the end of 2016 we look back with gratitude to the Lord for all the graces and blessings that we have received. The National Directors of Missio / Pontifical Mission Societies are extremely thankful to know that millions of people have been helped spiritually, physically and intellectually through the solidarity and generosity of our donors throughout the world. We ask God to bless and protect the Missionaries who dedicate their lives to bringing Jesus' new life, forgiveness, mercy, hope and healing touch to all Nations.

In this our 10th edition of **OUR MISSION** we also give the official statistics relating to the Catholic Church in the whole world. The number of bishops, priests and deacons have increased slightly, the number of Religious have decreased. Unfortunately the average age in all categories has increased. We all should work in promoting vocations to Priesthood and Religious life along with our regular prayer for new vocations and for all our serving pastors and leaders in our Church.

Sadly with the numerous scandals that have rocked the Catholic Church in recent years, one can become blinded to the so many dedicated and good persons who serve and labour in the same Catholic Church throughout the world helping millions of students, orphans, sick, elderly and abandoned persons. The Catholic Church certainly does more than any government, NGO, other religious group or charitable organization, in reaching out to and serving in situations of suffering, exclusion, discrimination and injustice throughout the world irrespective of whether those concerned are Catholic or not.

As we look forward to the celebration of Christmas and the beginning of a New Year, let us commit ourselves as Christians living in South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland to be more open to the Universal Mission of the Catholic Church. To move

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel which means, God-with-us." Matthew 1:23



from a self-absorbed and self-interested view—only the needs and challenges of my parish and diocese—to a truly **catholic vision** where we become concerned also about the needs and extreme challenges that our brothers and sisters face in other parts of the world, in particular in areas of first evangelization and where the Church is persecuted and struggling to survive and grow.

I wish you and yours abundant blessings, joy and peace from the Christ Child in this Christmas season! Let Jesus dwell in your life in order that you may be transformed ever more to make Him present to our world!

Gordon Rees

Fr. Gordon Rees mccj
National Director
Missio SACBC / PMS -South Africa, Botswana & Swaziland

CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS 2016

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 2014) 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 2014 the world population was 7,160,739,000 with an increase of 66,941,000 units compared with the previous year. Population growth was registered on every continent above, except Europe: increases were registered above all in Asia (+ 7,349,000) and Africa (+23,000,000) followed by America (+8,657,000) and Oceania (+649,000). Decrease in Europe (-2.714.000).

Catholics

On the same date Catholics in the world numbered 1,272,281,000 units with an overall increase of 18,355,000 more than the previous year. The increase affects all continents, except Europe. Increases were registered above all in Africa (+8,535,000) and in America (+6,642,000) followed by Asia (+3,027,000), and Oceania (+208,000). Decrease in Europe (- 57,000).

The world percentage of Catholics increased by 0.09 %, settling at 17.77%. By continent: increases were registered in Africa (+ 0.38), America (+ 0.12), Asia (+ 0.05), Europe (+ 0.14). and Oceania (+ 0.09).

Persons and Catholics per priest

This year the number of persons per priest in the world increased by 130 units, average 13,882. The distribution by continent: increase in America (+ 79); Europe (+41) and Oceania (+289); decrease in Africa (- 125); Asia (-1100).

The number of Catholics per priest in the world increased by 41 units, average 3060. There are increases in Africa (+73), America (+59); Europe (+22) and Oceania (+83); decrease in Asia (-27).

Ecclesiastical circumscriptions and mission stations

The number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions are 9 more than the previous year to 2998 with new circumscriptions created in: Africa (+1), America (+3), Asia (+3), Europe (+2). Oceania unvaried.

Mission stations with a resident priest number 1864 (7 less than in the previous year) and increases registered in Africa (+39) and Europe (+2). Decreases in America (-35), Asia (-8) and Oceania (-5).

Mission Stations without a resident priest increased in number by 2703 units, to 136,572. Compared to the previous year, increase is registered in Africa (+1151), America (+2891), and Oceania (+115). The number dropped in Asia (- 1.452) and Europe (-2).

Bishops

The total number of Bishops in the world increased by 64 units, to **5237**. Contrary to previous years where *Diocesan Bishops* increased in numbers, while *Religious Bishops* decreased, this year they both increased. *Diocesan Bishops* number 3992 (47 more), while *Religious Bishops* number 1245 (17 more). The increase in diocesan Bishops is registered in all continents except Oceania (-1): in America (+20); Asia (+ 9), Africa (+1) and Europe (+18). The number of religious Bishops increased on every continent: Africa (+5), America (+2), Asia (+3), Europe (+6), Oceania (+1).

Priests

The total number of priests in the world increased by 444 units, to **415,792**. The only continents which registered a decrease was again Europe (-2564) and a slight decrease in America (-123) and Oceania (-86), whereas figures grew in Africa (+1089) and Asia (+2.128). *Diocesan priests* increased by 765 units, reaching a total of 281,297 with increases in Africa (+ 1023); America (+810) and Asia (+848). A drop in Europe (-1914) and Oceania (-2). The number of *Religious priests* decreased by 321 units to a total 134,495. Increases were registered as in recent years in Africa (+66) and Asia (+1280), whereas numbers dropped in America (-933), Europe (-650) and Oceania (-84).

Permanent Deacons

Permanent deacons in the world increased by 1371 units to **44,566**. The highest increase was registered again in America (+965) and in Europe (+311) and an increase in Africa (+25), Asia (+65) and Oceania (+5).

Permanent Diocesan deacons in the world are 43,954, with an overall increase of 1304 units. They increased on every continent: Africa (+8), America (+971), Asia (+36), Europe (+285) and Oceania (+4).

Religious permanent deacons number 612, increased by 67 units compared to the previous year, with increases in Africa (+17), Asia (+29), Europe (+26) and Oceania (+1). The only decrease was registered in America (-6).

Men and women religious

The number of religious priests decreased by 694 units to **54,559**. Situation: increase in Africa (+331) and Asia (+66), while a decrease was registered in America (-362), Europe (-653) and Oceania (-76). Even this year there is an overall decrease in the number of women religious by 10,846 units to 682,729. An increase was registered in Africa (+725) and Asia (+ 604), decrease in America (-4.242), Europe (-7.733) and Oceania (-200).



Members of secular institutes, male and female

Members of *male* secular institutes number **654** with an overall decrease of 58 units. At a continental level there is an increase only in Africa (+2) while a decrease was registered in America (-13), Asia (-16), Europe (-31), Oceania unvaried.

The members of *female* secular institutes increased this year, by 243 units to a total of **24,198** members. Increase in Asia (+ 44) and Europe (+515) while a decrease was registered in Africa (-7), America (- 306) and Oceania (-3).

Lay missionaries and catechists

The number of lay missionaries in the world is **368,520** units, with an overall increase of 841 units. Numbers increase in Africa (+9), Europe (+6806) and Oceania (+ 41). Decrease was registered in America (-5596) and Asia (-419)

Catechists in the world increased by 107,200 units to a total of **3,264,768**. A significant increase was registered in Africa (+103,084), Asia (+6862) and a slight increase in Oceania (+271). Decrease in America (-2814) and Europe (-203).

Major seminarians

The number of major seminarians, diocesan and religious decreased this year, they are globally -1312 units, reaching a total of **116,939**. Increases occurred only in Africa (+636), while this year even a decrease in America (-676), Asia (-635), Europe (-629) and Oceania (-8).

Major diocesan seminarians number 70.301 (-1236 less than the previous year) and Religious major

seminarians 46,638 (-76). Diocesan seminarians increased only in Africa (+222), while decreases are in America (-595), Asia (-373), Europe (-471) and Oceania (-20).

Major Religious Seminarians decreased in three continents: America (-82), Asia (-262) and Europe (-158). Increases in Africa (+414) and Oceania (+12).

Minor seminarians

The number of minor seminarians, diocesan and religious increased by 1014 units to **102,942**. Overall increase on all continents, except Oceania (-42): Africa (+487), America (+1), Asia (+174) and Europe (+394). *Minor diocesan seminarians* number 78,489 (-67), whereas *religious seminarians* number 24,453 (+ 1.081). The number of diocesan minor seminarians decreased in America (-47), Asia (-668) and Oceania (-37). Increases in Africa (+291) and Europe (+394). Religious minor seminarians increased in number in Africa (+196), America (+48) and Asia (+ 842) and decreased in Oceania (-5) and unvaried in Europe.

Catholic schools and Education

In the field of education, the Catholic Church runs **73.580 kindergartens** with **7,043,634 pupils**; **96,283 primary schools** with **33,516,860 pupils**; **46,339 secondary schools** with **19,760.924 pupils**. The Church also **cares for 2,477,636 high school pupils**, and **2,719,643 university students**.

Catholic charity and healthcare centres

Charity and healthcare centres run in the world by the Church include: **5158 hospitals**, most of them in America (1501) and Africa (1221); **16,523 dispensaries**, mainly in Africa (5230); America (4667) and Asia (3584); **612 Care Homes** for people with Leprosy, mainly in Asia (313) and Africa (174); **15,679 Homes for the elderly**, or the chronically ill or people with a disability, mainly in Europe (8304) and America (3726); **9492 orphanages**, mainly in Asia (3859); **12,637 creches**, mainly in Asia (3422) and America (3477); **14,576 Marriage Counselling Centres**, mainly in America (5634) and Europe (5670); **3782 social rehabilitation centres** and **37,601 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) to 4 October 2016 are **1108** with an decrease of 3 circumscriptions compared to last year. Most of the ecclesiastical circumscriptions are in Africa (508) and in Asia (480). Followed by America (74) and Oceania (46).

Agenzia Fides 23/10/2016 (Slightly adapted)

NEW BOOKLET:

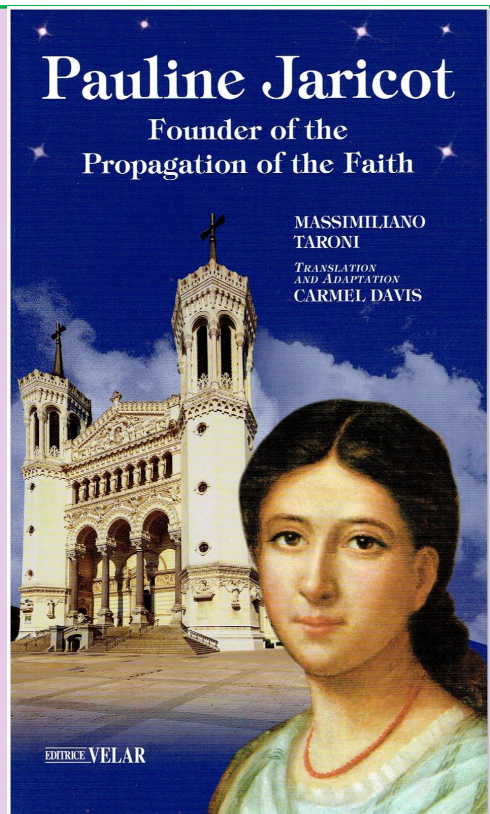
PAULINE JARICOT

Founder of the Propagation of the Faith

The National Directors of English Speaking Countries of Missio / Pontifical Mission Societies in a joint effort under the leadership of Catholic Mission - Australia, have printed a booklet (translated from Italian) on the life of Pauline Jaricot, the founder of the Propagation of Faith. This 48 page full colour booklet, with photos on every page is an easy read and gives us an insight into the life and amazing work done by this dedicated lay person. Her life shows us what a committed Christian can achieve and the amazing legacy that can be left as a gift to the Universal Church.

We would like to send to our **regular donors a free copy** of this booklet — please send us your: **Name, Surname and Postal address** via **email: pms.dirsa@gmail.com** or **SMS: 0622477698** in order that we may post it to you.

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JOIN THE UNIVERSAL MISSIONARY ACTIVITY OF THE CHURCH BY:

- ◆ Praying daily for the missions & missionaries
- ◆ Animating your parish in mission awareness
- ◆ Regular donations
- ◆ Once-off donations
- ◆ Bequeathing to the Pontifical Mission Societies in your last will and testament.

*Please use your name and cell or telephone number as a **reference number** if you wish us to acknowledge your donation.*

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We would kindly ask you to do your part in promoting the missions by forwarding this newsletter by email to confreres, catholic organisations, friends, family, parishioners and acquaintances.

For those who have absolutely no way of getting it by email - ask your parish priest or a friend to be so kind as to print it for you.

WISHING YOU A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS &
A NEW YEAR FILLED WITH JOY, PEACE & PROSPERITY !!
MAY JESUS FIND A WELCOMING HOME IN YOUR LIFE!

