

**PRE-PLenary COUNCIL STATISTICAL PROFILE  
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES**

Pedro S. de Achútegui, S.J.

The present article is an updating of statistics pertaining to the Catholic Church in the Philippines. The general structure of the article follows the pattern of its two predecessors, published in 1984 and 1987.<sup>1</sup> It presents in a kind of synthetic view, and has reduced to some unity, the more than 600,000 data spread out in the 1,268 pages of the *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*.<sup>2</sup> But going beyond those previous studies the present article offers some new features. Two may be singled out.

The first is a *comparative* presentation of data, usually side by side in the columns, so that the reader may not simply see the present situation as reflected in cold numbers but will also see some of the changes — progression or regression — that might have taken place in the Philippine Church in the last years. This kind of retrospection may also serve to make a reasonable projection for the future, particularly during the deliberations of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines — a momentous event for the Philippines which happens to be the first plenary council to take place in the whole Church since the promulgation of the new Code of Canon Law in 1983.<sup>3</sup>

Another feature is the analysis of data related to the *Philippine hierarchy* such as a study of the places of origin of the bishops, their academic achievements, institutions where they obtained their

1. P. S. de Achútegui, S.J., "The Catholic Church in the Philippines: A Statistical Overview," *Philippine Studies* 32 (1984) 77-106; "A Statistical Profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippine," *Landas* 1 (1987) 39-71.

2. *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, P. S. de Achútegui, S.J., ed. (Manila: Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 1989) xiv + 1,254. — Unless otherwise indicated, figures in parentheses in the present article usually refer to the 1986 Directory for purposes of comparison.

3. The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines is scheduled for the beginning of 1991, after a three-year period of preparation.

theological training, present age, their age at the time of their ordination as bishops, years in the priesthood prior to their appointment, occupation at the time of their nomination, and the like. This analysis introduces in the article a *qualitative* dimension that may help in understanding a certain problematic proper to the Philippine situation that is operative in the present and future leadership of the bishops.

In order to achieve this more comprehensive view which goes beyond the 1989 Directory, the author has had recourse to prior directories and literature that go back several years, and to the biodata of the bishops kindly supplied by the secretariat of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.<sup>4</sup>

## I. FIGURES AND TABLES

### A. TABLE 1. GENERAL FIGURES

|   |             |                             |                               |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Population</i> <sup>(a)</sup> 56,965,108 (+ 5.7%) |             |                             |                               |
| Catholics:  |             | 46,781,742 (+ 2.9%)         | 82.1% (- 2.5% of 1986 pop.)   |
| Non-Catholics:  |             | 10,183,366 (+ 20.5%)        | 17.87% (+ 2.17% of 1986 pop.) |
| <hr/>   |             |                             |                               |
| 2. <i>Ecclesiastical Territories</i>                    |             | <i>Special Divisions</i>    |                               |
| Archdioceses  | 16          | Military Ordinariate        | 1                             |
| Dioceses  | 50 (+ 6.4%) | Filipino-Chinese Apostolate | 1                             |
| Prelatures  | 6           | Parishes                    | 2,192 (2,037) (+ 7.6%)        |
| Apostolic Vicariates                                    | 5           | Chapels/Missions            |                               |
|   |             |                             | 9,681 (10,299) (- 6.0%)       |
| Total   | <u>77</u>   |                             |                               |
| <hr/>   |             |                             |                               |
| 3. <i>Personnel</i>                                     |             |                             |                               |
| a. <i>Archbishops</i>                                   |             | b. <i>Bishops</i>           |                               |
| Active  | 19          | Active                      | 77                            |
| Retired   | 5           | Retired                     | 19                            |
|   | <u>24</u>   |                             | <u>96</u>                     |
|   |             | Total                       | <u>120</u>                    |

4. The biodata had been prepared by the CBCP secretariat as press releases on the occasion of the appointment of new bishops. Gratitude is hereby expressed for permission to use them. Diagrams are based on Sr. Paz Katigbak, O.S.B.'s graphs.

|                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| c. <i>Priests:</i> Diocesan (Secular) | 3,407 (+ 6.9%)        |
| Regular                               | <u>2,165</u> (+ 1.6%) |
| Total                                 | <u>5,572</u> (+ 8.5%) |

d. *Congregations:* Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life, Secular Institutes in the terminology of the new Code of Canon Law, cns. 573-746.

| <i>Congregations of Men</i> <sup>(b)</sup> |                | <i>Congregations of Women</i> |                 |
|--|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Number of Institutes                       | 60 (+ 25.0%)   | Number of Institutes          | 200 (+ 60.0%)   |
| Priests (including bishops)                | 2,193 (+ 5.8%) | Sisters                       | 9,231 (+ 16.7%) |
| Brothers                                   | 483 (- 25.6%)  |                               |                 |
| Scholastics                                | 1,483 (- 2.1%) |                               |                 |

### 4. *Institutions*

|  | <i>Institutions</i> | <i>Students</i>  |
|--|---------------------|------------------|
| a. <i>Diocesan Seminaries</i> <sup>(c)</sup> |                     |                  |
| Major: Theology                              | 19/                 |                  |
| College (Philosophy)                         | 34/                 | 4,011            |
| Minor: Pre-College                           | 23/                 |                  |
| High School                                  | 26/                 | 2,989            |
| Senior                                       | 1                   | 32               |
| Total  | <u>103</u>          | <u>7,032</u>     |
| b. <i>Catholic Schools</i> <sup>(d)</sup>    |                     |                  |
| Universities                                 | 19                  |                  |
| Colleges                                     | 158                 | 418,853          |
| High Schools                                 | 1,180               | 622,795          |
| Elementary Schools                           | <u>1,582</u>        | <u>332,630</u>   |
| Total  | <u>2,939</u>        | <u>1,374,278</u> |
| c. <i>Retreat Houses</i>                     | 76                  |                  |
| d. <i>Hospitals/Clinics</i>                  | 155                 |                  |
| e. <i>Orphanages/Homes</i>                   | 108                 |                  |

## 5. Pastoral Ministry

|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Infant Baptisms     | 1,162,364 (+ 4.%)         |
| Adult Converts      | <u>27,935 (+ 9.2%)</u>    |
| Total               | <u>1,190,299 (+ 4.2%)</u> |
| Marriages: Catholic | 189,192 (+ 10.1%)         |
| Mixed               | <u>3,151 (- 8.3%)</u>     |
| Total               | <u>192,343 (+ 9.8%)</u>   |

## Explanation of Table 1

(a) The nationwide increase in *population* in the period 1986-89, as reported by the dioceses, has been 3,057,780 (5.7%), while the increase of *Catholics*, again as reported by the dioceses, in the same period has been 1,327,712 (2.9%), thus reducing the proportion of Catholics to the general population.

Conversely, the number of non-Catholics has increased by 1,730,068, from 8,453,298 in 1986 to 10,183,366 in 1989, or an increase of 20.5%.

While the increase of Catholics in relation to the population in the period 1983-85 had been 0.5%, in the period of 1986-89 there has been a 2.5% proportionate decrease.

(b) There is a discrepancy between the number of *religious priests* and of *religious sisters* as reported by the dioceses, and as reported by the institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life. For obvious reasons we consider that the figures given by the institutes and societies are more accurate, and so we have used the latter in this article.

(c) The problem of terminology regarding "major" and "minor" seminaries encountered in the last two directories, has not yet been satisfactorily solved in the 1989 Directory. Much against the officially approved terminology in the *Priestly Formation and the 1980 Philippine Program* (repeated in the 1984 revised edition), and the explicit request made of the dioceses when the questionnaire was sent to them, most of the dioceses still preferred to keep the old terminology instead of dividing their seminaries into High

School Seminary, Pre-College Seminary, College Seminary (the former "Philosophy"), Theology Seminary, and Senior Seminary. Thus the editor of the Directory was forced to keep the old terminology of "major" and "minor."

It is obviously due to this inaccurate use of the terms "major" and "minor," plus a perhaps less careful reporting from the dioceses, that the figures, particularly for major seminarians, appear disconcerting, not to say distorted, in the last three directories. These figures, when compared with one another, would imply a phenomenal increase in 1986 over 1983 and a similarly phenomenal decrease in 1989 over 1986. The figures presented here in Table 1 are the closest to reality.

A careful, almost microscopic dissecting of all the data supplied by the dioceses gives us the following picture: There are 4,011 diocesan "major" seminarians, of whom 1,358 are in Theology, and 2,653 in Philosophy/College. The number of "minor" seminarians, students in pre-college and high school, is 2,989. Adding 32 senior seminarians, we have a total of 7,032.

In the concrete this means one "major" seminarian in Theology for every 34,450 Catholics. Assuming that 90% of these Theology students will be ordained priests, the theoretical increase of new priests from the diocesan clergy would be 1,223 in 4 years or 305 per year.<sup>5</sup> Since the average number of priests who have died during the last 3 years has been 67 per year, the increase of priests would be about 238 per year.<sup>6</sup>

(d) The increase in *Catholic schools* — 2,939 in 1989 as against 2,177 in 1986 — does not necessarily mean an *actual* increase in the number of schools. The apparent increase may be due to more complete as well as more accurate reporting of the various levels of each school — college, high school, elementary — as was requested in the questionnaires sent to the dioceses and religious institutes.

The total number of *teachers*, as submitted by the 77 ecclesiastical jurisdictions, is 23,645. Of these, 466 are priests or brothers and 1,774 are sisters. These figures are however clearly incomplete,

5. This, however, is not totally exact since members of religious institutes taking courses in these seminaries are at times counted as regular students.

6. The figures for seminaries are more accurate than those submitted by the dioceses. These were updated in January 1990 in Tagaytay during the CBCP seminar on the Formation of Priests, preparatory to the Synod of Bishops in Rome this coming October.

since 23 dioceses did not submit any data in this respect, and already in 1986 the CEAP report put the number of Catholic teachers at about 35,000 — even if only 69% of those schools to which the questionnaires had been sent had responded.

TABLE 2. ECCLESIASTICAL DIVISIONS

The Philippines is divided into the following territories or jurisdictions:<sup>8</sup>

*Archdioceses:* 16

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

*Dioceses:* 50

|            |             |                         |
|------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Alaminos   | Iba         | Pagadian                |
| Antipolo   | Ilagan      | Romblon                 |
| Bacolod    | Iligan      | San Carlos*             |
| Balanga    | Imus        | San Fernando (La Union) |
| Bangued    | Kabankalan* | San Jose, Antique       |
| Bayombong  | Kalibo      | San Jose, N. Ecija      |
| Boac       | Kidapawan   | San Pablo               |
| Borongan   | Laoag       | Sorsogon                |
| Butuan     | Legazpi     | Surigao                 |
| Cabanatuan | Lucena      | Tagbilaran              |
| Calbayog   | Maasin      | Tagum                   |
| Catarman   | Malaybalay  | Talibon                 |
| Daet       | Malolos     | Tandag                  |
| Digos      | Marbel      | Tarlac                  |
| Dipolog    | Masbate     | Urdaneta                |
| Dumaguete  | Mati        | Virac                   |
| Gumaca     | Naval*      |                         |

*Prelatures "Nullius":* 6

|                 |                   |           |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Batanes-Babuyan | Ipil              | Libmanan* |
| Infanta         | Isabela (Basilan) | Marawi    |

8. An asterisk indicates dioceses established after 1986.

*Apostolic Vicariates:* 5

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

*Military Ordinariate:* 1

*Special "Apostolate":* Filipino-Chinese Apostolate 1

## B. ORGANIZATION OF THE DIOCESES

There is a general format for the structure of the dioceses in accordance with canon 469 of the Code of Canon Law. However, given the variety of situations, the extent of the territory, the number of personnel, the works of the apostolate, and the different institutions working within the territory, each bishop retains the freedom to organize his diocese in the most convenient way. This article, following the divisions in the Directory, places the diocesan curia first, followed by the administrative, pastoral and judicial sections. Difficulties abound since, especially in the administrative-pastoral section, the dioceses have submitted a variety of more than 200 different names to signify what probably are often the same kind of entity.

1. *Diocesan Curia*

The personnel of the diocesan Curia may be classified under the following categories:

|   | <i>Dioceses</i>                              |
|---|--|
| Vicar General alone                           | 48, but combined with chancellor             |
| Chancellor alone                              | 22, but combined with other functions        |
| Episcopal vicars <sup>7</sup>                 | 16   |
| Secretary alone                               | 7, but combined with chancellor or oeconomus |
| Oeconomus, financial secretary, cashier, etc. | 42   |
| Moderator curiae                              | 5  |
| Pro-synodal examiner                          | 14   |

7. For purposes of a greater involvement in the preparation, celebration and implementation of the decrees of the forthcoming Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, it has been suggested that the diocesan coordinators for the Council be raised to the rank of episcopal vicars "ad casum". This responds to the description of the functions of episcopal vicars in cn. 476 of the Code of Canon Law that uses the expression "in certo negotiorum genere" (in a certain type of business).

In 1965 there were 8 *archdioceses*, 9 in 1971, 12 in 1976, 14 in 1981. There were 19 *dioceses* in 1965, 26 in 1971, 30 in 1976, 33 in 1981, 41 in 1983. There were 11 *prelatures* in 1965, 12 in 1971, 14 in 1981, 5 in 1983. In 1965 there were 4 *apostolic vicariates* and 5 in 1983.

## 2. Administrative and Pastoral Sections <sup>9</sup>

|   | 1986    |
|---|---------|
| Administrative Council/Board                | 23 (11) |
| College of Consultors                       | 59 (44) |
| Commissions/Committees/Councils/Boards      |         |
| – Worship/Liturgy                           | 53 (47) |
| Liturgical Music and Arts                   | 22 (19) |
| – Education/Formation                       | 52 (18) |
| Catechetics                                 | 26 (14) |
| Confraternity of Christian Doctrine         | 11 (10) |
| Catholic Schools/Superintendent of          | 44 (21) |
| – Service                                   | 22      |
| Social Action/Justice and Peace             | 59 (41) |
| – Temporalities                             | 14 (12) |
| Financial Board, Economic Council, Finances | 45 (14) |
| – Youth Centers, Student Catholic Action    | 50 (25) |
| Pastoral Council                            | 16 (33) |
| Presbyteral Council/Senate of Priests       | 51 (33) |
| Council of the Laity/Lay Apostolate         | 34 (24) |
| Censors/Board of Censors                    | 19 (14) |
| Council of Vigilance                        | 12 (13) |
| Family Life Apostolate/Programs             | 44 (13) |
| Ecumenical Board/Office                     | 3 ( 4)  |
| Legal Department/Counsel                    | 13 (13) |
| Mass Media/Apostolate of                    | 35 (25) |
| Vocations/Vocation Director                 | 45 (24) |

### Organizations, Movements, Offices, Directors

|                             | 1986    |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Adoración Nocturna Filipina | 35 (26) |
| Alay Kapwa Movement         | 11 (17) |
| Apostleship of Prayer       | 40 (34) |
| Barangay sang Birhen        | 13 (13) |
| Catholic Women's League     | 48 (40) |

9. To facilitate the comparison between the figures of 1989 and 1986, the same divisions and terminology have been retained as in the two previous articles.

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement        | 35 (26) |
| Children of Mary                             | 21 (18) |
| Christian Family Movement/Marriage Encounter | 16 (22) |
| Cursillos in Christianity                    | 23 (24) |
| Daughters of Mary Immaculate                 | 26 (23) |
| Holy Name Society                            | 20 (19) |
| Knights of Columbus                          | 48 (36) |
| Legion of Mary                               | 49 (42) |
| Mother Butler's Guild/Mission Guild          | 32 (23) |
| Pontifical Mission Societies                 | 23 (23) |

## 3. Judiciary Section

There has been a clear improvement in the judiciary section of several dioceses if we compare the 1989 with the 1986 data. Thirty-four (34) dioceses have established or updated their offices, and increased or upgraded the personnel. This may be clearly seen by comparing the present figures with those of 1986.

|                                     | 1986    |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Diocesan Tribunal                   | 11 ( 5) |
| Matrimonial Court of First Instance | 2 ( 3)  |
| Judicial Vicar/Official/President   | 23 (15) |
| Vice-Official                       | 3 ( 3)  |
| Judges                              | 16 (11) |
| Promoter of Justice                 | 16 (12) |
| Defender of the Bond                | 22 (19) |
| Notaries/Actuaries                  | 23 (23) |

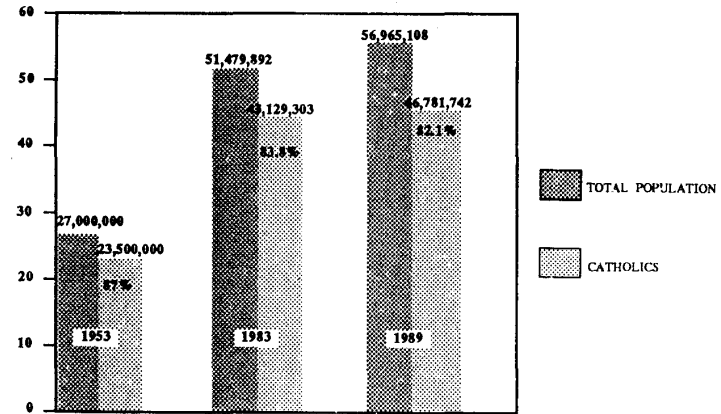
## C. TABLES 3-8. POPULATION, CATHOLICS, PRIESTS

TABLE 3. Total Population, Number of Catholics and Priests, and Ratio of Population and of Catholics per Priest

|           | Population | Catholics | %    | Priests | Population<br>per Priest | Catholics<br>per Priest |
|-----------|------------|-----------|------|---------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Alaminos  | 368,897    | 330,562   | 89.6 | 20      | 18,444                   | 16,528                  |
| Antipolo  | 1,306,912  | 1,096,096 | 83.9 | 37      | 35,321                   | 29,624                  |
| Bacolod   | 981,555    | 830,136   | 84.6 | 117     | 8,389                    | 7,095                   |
| Balanga   | 394,955    | 347,359   | 87.9 | 28      | 14,105                   | 12,405                  |
| Bangued   | 177,513    | 154,169   | 86.8 | 41      | 4,329                    | 3,760                   |
| Batanes   | 18,250     | 17,922    | 98.2 | 9       | 2,027                    | 1,991                   |
| Bayombong | 399,877    | 248,015   | 62.0 | 25      | 15,995                   | 9,920                   |
| Boac      | 275,465    | 184,225   | 66.9 | 20      | 13,773                   | 9,211                   |
| Borongan  | 374,225    | 362,999   | 97.0 | 41      | 9,127                    | 8,853                   |
| Butuan    | 817,544    | 679,563   | 83.1 | 52      | 15,722                   | 13,068                  |

|                  | Population | Catholics | %     | Priests | Population per Priest | Catholics per Priest |
|------------------|------------|-----------|-------|---------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Cabanatuan       | 807,164    | 641,695   | 79.5  | 32      | 25,223                | 20,052               |
| Caceres          | 1,306,178  | 1,131,913 | 86.6  | 152     | 8,593                 | 7,446                |
| Cagayan          | 1,012,820  | 889,260   | 87.8  | 91      | 11,129                | 9,772                |
| Calapan          | 580,820    | 488,920   | 84.18 | 35      | 16,594                | 13,969               |
| Calbayog         | 563,703    | 540,190   | 95.8  | 53      | 10,635                | 10,192               |
| Capiz            | 621,754    | 606,994   | 97.6  | 92      | 6,758                 | 6,597                |
| Catarman         | 382,812    | 356,625   | 93.2  | 35      | 10,937                | 10,189               |
| Cebu             | 2,500,000  | 2,250,000 | 90.0  | 338     | 7,396                 | 6,656                |
| Cotabato         | 790,000    | 360,000   | 45.6  | 69      | 11,449                | 5,217                |
| Daet             | 340,030    | 323,028   | 95.0  | 47      | 7,234                 | 6,872                |
| Davao            | 730,920    | 643,564   | 88.0  | 103     | 7,096                 | 6,248                |
| Digos            | 687,702    | 542,253   | 78.8  | 35      | 19,648                | 15,492               |
| Dipolog          | 747,952    | 650,718   | 87.0  | 64      | 11,686                | 10,167               |
| Dumaguete        | 760,617    | 635,115   | 83.5  | 70      | 10,865                | 9,073                |
| Gumaca           | 563,614    | 528,455   | 93.8  | 33      | 17,079                | 16,013               |
| Iba              | 616,225    | 540,785   | 87.7  | 42      | 14,672                | 12,875               |
| Ilagan           | 1,038,821  | 742,529   | 71.5  | 50      | 20,776                | 14,850               |
| Iligan           | 628,327    | 477,528   | 76.0  | 33      | 19,040                | 14,470               |
| Imus             | 1,090,651  | 940,141   | 86.2  | 52      | 20,974                | 18,079               |
| Infanta          | 235,662    | 200,313   | 85.0  | 21      | 11,222                | 9,538                |
| Ipil             | 581,310    | 360,412   | 62.0  | 27      | 21,530                | 13,348               |
| Isabela          | 268,500    | 83,400    | 31.05 | 14      | 19,178                | 5,957                |
| Jaro             | 1,432,000  | 1,244,720 | 86.9  | 206     | 6,951                 | 6,042                |
| Jolo             | 475,000    | 16,400    | 3.45  | 14      | 33,928                | 1,171                |
| Kabankalan       | 850,448    | 667,317   | 78.4  | 34      | 25,013                | 19,620               |
| Kalibo           | 384,450    | 334,471   | 86.9  | 46      | 8,357                 | 7,271                |
| Kidapawan        | 435,236    | 331,484   | 76.2  | 27      | 16,119                | 12,277               |
| Laoag            | 555,907    | 359,548   | 64.7  | 47      | 11,827                | 7,649                |
| Legazpi          | 973,697    | 960,449   | 98.64 | 118     | 8,251                 | 8,139                |
| Libmanan*        |            |           |       |         |                       |                      |
| Lingayen-Dagupan | 758,996    | 664,785   | 87.6  | 104     | 7,298                 | 6,392                |
| Lipa             | 1,382,109  | 1,144,720 | 82.8  | 120     | 11,517                | 9,539                |
| Lucena           | 652,974    | 637,706   | 97.0  | 63      | 10,364                | 10,122               |
| Maasin           | 541,528    | 490,580   | 90.6  | 44      | 12,307                | 11,149               |
| Malaybalay       | 710,754    | 564,782   | 79.5  | 54      | 13,162                | 10,458               |
| Malolos          | 1,400,000  | 1,200,000 | 85.7  | 121     | 11,570                | 9,917                |
| Manila           | 6,748,503  | 6,343,593 | 94.0  | 1,299   | 5,195                 | 4,883                |
| Marawi           | 600,000    | 27,000    | 4.5   | 10      | 60,000                | 2,700                |
| Marbel           | 1,031,524  | 719,054   | 70.0  | 60      | 17,192                | 11,984               |
| Masbate          | 685,483    | 582,660   | 85.0  | 44      | 15,579                | 13,242               |
| Mati             | 402,178    | 340,254   | 84.6  | 18      | 22,343                | 18,903               |
| Mt. Province     | 877,744    | 545,758   | 62.0  | 81      | 10,836                | 6,737                |
| Naval            | 218,708    | 202,163   | 92.4  | 18      | 12,150                | 11,231               |
| Nueva Segovia    | 500,387    | 429,387   | 85.8  | 81      | 6,177                 | 5,301                |
| Ozamiz           | 461,023    | 346,669   | 75.2  | 45      | 10,244                | 7,703                |
| Pagadian         | 540,495    | 378,346   | 70.0  | 30      | 18,016                | 12,611               |
| Palawan          | 361,268    | 276,236   | 76.5  | 48      | 7,526                 | 5,754                |
| Palo             | 1,262,251  | 1,121,091 | 88.8  | 112     | 11,270                | 10,009               |
| Romblon          | 222,422    | 187,761   | 84.4  | 31      | 7,174                 | 6,056                |
| San Carlos       | 704,042    | 601,239   | 85.46 | 34      | 20,707                | 17,683               |

|                      | Population | Catholics | %    | Priests | Population per Priest | Catholics per Priest |
|----------------------|------------|-----------|------|---------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| San Fernando (LU)    | 503,587    | 417,977   | 83.0 | 32      | 15,737                | 13,061               |
| San Fernando (P)     | 1,343,671  | 1,289,924 | 96.0 | 132     | 10,179                | 9,772                |
| San Jose, Antique    | 400,450    | 281,554   | 70.3 | 47      | 8,520                 | 5,990                |
| San Jose (NE)        | 480,636    | 384,508   | 80.0 | 23      | 20,897                | 16,717               |
| San Jose (Occ. Min.) | 319,039    | 260,558   | 81.7 | 28      | 11,394                | 9,305                |
| San Pablo            | 1,163,940  | 1,052,954 | 90.4 | 99      | 11,756                | 10,635               |
| Sorsogon             | 581,950    | 550,438   | 94.6 | 52      | 11,191                | 10,585               |
| Surigao              | 442,999    | 334,350   | 75.4 | 30      | 14,766                | 11,145               |
| Tagbilaran           | 467,365    | 451,014   | 97.9 | 59      | 7,921                 | 7,644                |
| Tagum                | 853,452    | 746,002   | 87.4 | 46      | 18,553                | 16,217               |
| Talibon              | 440,727    | 410,994   | 93.3 | 37      | 11,911                | 11,107               |
| Tandag               | 442,263    | 349,244   | 82.7 | 24      | 17,594                | 14,551               |
| Tarlac               | 854,114    | 682,672   | 79.9 | 33      | 25,882                | 20,687               |
| Tuguegarao           | 834,180    | 667,334   | 80.0 | 76      | 10,976                | 8,780                |
| Urdaneta             | 540,182    | 437,182   | 80.9 | 32      | 16,880                | 13,661               |
| Virac                | 180,504    | 177,254   | 98.2 | 34      | 5,308                 | 5,213                |
| Zamboanga            | 408,911    | 351,377   | 85.9 | 50      | 8,178                 | 7,027                |



The ratios of population to one priest are presented in Tables 4 and 5 below. In 1986 there were 47 dioceses where the proportion of one priest to a population of over 10,000 existed. Today, as shown in Table 4, this number has increased to 55 dioceses, — certainly not a good sign in itself. Neither is it a good sign that while in 1986 there were 25 dioceses with less than 10,000 persons to a priest, in 1989 this number has been reduced to 21, as shown in Table 5.

TABLE 4. Dioceses with Highest Ratios of One Priest to Population (over 10,000)

|                   | 1986                          |                      | 1986            |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Marawi            | 60,000 (44,444) <sup>10</sup> | Surigao              | 14,766 (13,032) |
| Antipolo          | 35,321 (28,647)               | Iba                  | 14,672 (11,761) |
| Jolo              | 33,928 (37,500)               | Balanga              | 14,105 (11,961) |
| Tarlac            | 25,882 (18,495)               | Boac                 | 13,773 ( 9,651) |
| Cabanatuan        | 25,223 (26,206)               | Malaybalay           | 13,162 (13,960) |
| Kabankalan*       | 25,013                        | Maasin               | 12,307 (15,096) |
| Mati              | 23,343 (24,336)               | Naval*               | 12,150          |
| Ipil              | 21,530 (13,647)               | Talibon*             | 11,911          |
| Imus              | 20,974 (14,062)               | Laoag                | 11,827 (11,959) |
| San Jose (NE)     | 20,897 (21,671)               | San Pablo            | 11,756 (12,302) |
| Iligan            | 20,776 (16,714)               | Dipolog              | 11,686 (14,358) |
| San Carlos*       | 20,707                        | Malolos              | 11,570 (11,605) |
| Digos             | 19,648 (14,912)               | Lipa                 | 11,517 (10,903) |
| Isabela           | 19,178 (15,285)               | Cotabato             | 11,449 (11,449) |
| Iligan            | 19,040 (23,271)               | San Jose (Occ. Min.) | 11,394 (11,577) |
| Tagum             | 18,553 (17,167)               | Palo                 | 11,270 ( 8,587) |
| Alaminos          | 18,444 (18,961)               | Infanta              | 11,222 (14,729) |
| Pagadian          | 18,016 (19,433)               | Sorsogon             | 11,191 (14,425) |
| Tandag            | 17,594 (14,026)               | Cagayan de Oro       | 11,129 (10,053) |
| Marbel            | 17,192 (20,216)               | Tuguegaxao           | 10,976 (10,544) |
| Gumaca            | 17,079 (20,730)               | Catarman             | 10,937 (12,760) |
| Urdaneta          | 16,880 (23,482)               | Dumaguete            | 10,865 (13,245) |
| Calapan           | 16,594 (11,510)               | Mt. Province         | 10,836 ( 8,192) |
| Kidapawan         | 16,119 (15,392)               | Calbayog             | 10,635 (11,504) |
| Bayombong         | 15,995 (17,128)               | Lucena               | 10,364 ( 8,500) |
| San Fernando (LU) | 15,737 ( 9,429)               | Ozamiz               | 10,244 (11,641) |
| Butuan            | 15,722 (11,764)               | San Fernando (P)     | 10,179 (13,091) |
| Masbate           | 15,579 (14,931)               |                      |                 |

TABLE 5. Dioceses with Lowest Ratios of One Priest to Population (under 10,000)

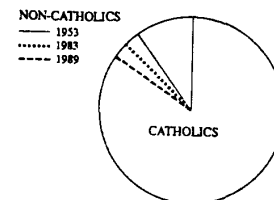
|                      | 1986          |               | 1986          |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Batanes              | 2,027 (2,281) | Virac         | 5,308 (7,966) |
| Bangued              | 4,329 (5,465) | Nueva Segovia | 6,177 (5,402) |
| Manila <sup>10</sup> | 5,195         | Capiz         | 6,758 (6,885) |

10. Out of the 1,300 priests in the archdiocese of Manila only 372 (28.6%) are directly involved in parish work, either as parish priests or parochial vicars, with some other priests as attached or resident, several of them already retired. Of the 372 priests in parish work, 170 are religious, representing 45.7% of all the priests assigned to the parishes.

|                  |               |                   |                |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Jaro             | 6,951 (6,364) | Zamboanga         | 8,178 ( 9,837) |
| Davao            | 7,096 (5,578) | Legazpi           | 8,251 ( 8,433) |
| Romblon          | 7,174 (7,880) | Kalibo            | 8,357 ( 8,117) |
| Daet             | 7,234 (8,728) | Bacolod           | 8,389 ( 9,827) |
| Lingayen-Dagupan | 7,298 (8,250) | San Jose, Antique | 8,520 (10,144) |
| Cebu             | 7,396 (7,557) | Caceres           | 8,593 ( 9,467) |
| Palawan          | 7,526 (5,979) | Sorsogon          | 9,127 ( 6,542) |
| Tagbilaran       | 7,921 (7,239) |                   |                |

TABLE 6. Dioceses with Highest Ratios of One Priest to Catholic Population (over 10,000)<sup>11</sup>

|               | 1986            |                   | 1986            |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Antipolo      | 29,624 (24,139) | Butuan            | 13,068 (10,512) |
| Tarlac        | 20,687 (15,748) | San Fernando (LU) | 13,061 ( 8,129) |
| Cabanatuan    | 20,052 (20,835) | Iba               | 12,875 ( 9,353) |
| Kabankalan*   | 19,626          | Pagadian          | 12,611 (14,158) |
| Mati          | 18,903 (20,567) | Balanga           | 12,405 ( 9,808) |
| Imus          | 18,079 (12,120) | Kidapawan         | 12,277 (10,546) |
| San Carlos*   | 17,683          | Marbel            | 11,984 (16,173) |
| San Jose (NE) | 16,717 (17,444) | Naval*            | 11,231          |
| Alaminos      | 16,528 (16,084) | Maasin            | 11,149 (13,653) |
| Tagum         | 16,217 (14,296) | Surigao           | 11,145 ( 9,867) |
| Gumaca        | 16,013 (19,612) | Talibon*          | 11,107          |
| Digos         | 15,492 (11,563) | San Pablo         | 10,635 (10,990) |
| Iligan        | 14,850 (12,369) | Sorsogon          | 10,585 (13,080) |
| Tandag        | 14,551 (11,976) | Malaybalay        | 10,458 (11,964) |
| Iligan        | 14,470 (17,686) | Calbayog          | 10,192 (11,024) |
| Calapan       | 13,969 (10,227) | Catarman          | 10,189 (11,887) |
| Urdaneta      | 13,661 (19,090) | Dipolog           | 10,167 (12,434) |
| Ipil          | 13,348 (11,177) | Lucena            | 10,122 ( 7,997) |
| Masbate       | 13,242 (12,318) | Palo              | 10,009 ( 8,206) |



11. Since 1986 the proportion of priests to Catholic population over 10,000 has deteriorated in 19 dioceses. The dioceses more affected are Antipolo, Digos, Imus, San Fernando (LU) and Tarlac. The proportion has improved in 15 dioceses, with the greatest improvement in the dioceses of Gumaca, Iligan, Urdaneta and Marbel.

TABLE 7. Dioceses with Lowest Ratios of One Priest to Catholic Population (under 10,000)

|                   | 1986          |                      | 1986           |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Jolo              | 1,171 (1,250) | Zamboanga            | 7,027 ( 7,545) |
| Batanes           | 1,991 (2,240) | Bacolod              | 7,095 ( 8,055) |
| Marawi            | 2,700 (3,333) | Kalibo               | 7,271 ( 7,799) |
| Bangued           | 3,760 (4,726) | Caceres              | 7,446 ( 8,265) |
| Manila            | 4,883 (7,168) | Tagbilaran           | 7,644 ( 7,064) |
| Virac             | 5,213 (7,825) | Laoag                | 7,649 ( 7,682) |
| Cotabato          | 5,217 (5,217) | Ozamiz               | 7,703 ( 8,673) |
| Nueva Segovia     | 5,301 (4,461) | Legazpi              | 8,139 ( 8,166) |
| Palawan           | 5,754 (4,537) | Tuguegarao           | 8,780 ( 8,792) |
| Isabela           | 5,957 (4,332) | Borongan             | 8,853 ( 6,357) |
| San Jose, Antique | 5,990 (7,828) | Dumaguete            | 9,073 (11,055) |
| Jaro              | 6,042 (5,532) | Boac                 | 9,211 ( 9,103) |
| Romblon           | 6,056 (6,944) | San Jose (Occ. Min.) | 9,305 ( 8,104) |
| Davao             | 6,248 (4,574) | Infanta              | 9,538 (12,520) |
| Lingayen-Dagupan  | 6,392 (7,226) | Lipa                 | 9,539 ( 8,918) |
| Capiz             | 6,597 (6,609) | Cagayan de Oro       | 9,772 ( 8,830) |
| Cebu              | 6,656 (7,255) | San Fernando (P)     | 9,772 (12,564) |
| Mt. Province      | 6,737 (4,504) | Malolos              | 9,917 ( 9,789) |
| Daet              | 6,872 (7,772) | Bayombong            | 9,920 (10,936) |

In 24 dioceses the proportion of priests to the Catholic population under 10,000 has improved. The greatest improvement has taken place in Dumaguete, Manila, San Jose de Antique, San Fernando (P) and Virac. The proportion has deteriorated in 13 dioceses. The dioceses most affected are Borongan, Davao and Mt. Province.

TABLE 8. Dioceses with the Highest Number of Diocesan Priests (over 50)

|                      | 1986      |                  | 1986      |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| Manila <sup>12</sup> | 229 (204) | Malolos          | 120 (118) |
| Cebu                 | 192 (175) | San Fernando (P) | 114 ( 84) |
| Jaro                 | 164 (174) | Legazpi          | 106 ( 86) |
| Caceres              | 142 (139) | Tagbilaran       | 102 (121) |

12. Of the 203 parishes in the archdiocese of Manila, 51 (25.1%) are entrusted to members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life. The number of diocesan priests who belong to the archdiocese of Manila is 229; but there are 128 other diocesan priests residing in Manila who belong to other dioceses and are generally classified as "guest priests." Some of them are assigned to the parishes.

|                  |          |            |          |
|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
| Palo             | 98 (108) | San Pablo  | 67 ( 62) |
| Lipa             | 97 ( 92) | Lucena     | 63 ( 67) |
| Bacolod          | 92 (119) | Dipolog    | 60 ( 45) |
| Capiz            | 92 ( 86) | Dumaguete  | 59 ( 67) |
| Lingayen-Dagupan | 88 ( 77) | Tuguegarao | 55 ( 53) |
| Nueva Segovia    | 69 ( 75) |            |          |

In 1986 there were 20 dioceses with 50 or more diocesan priests. In 1989 there are 19. However, the total number of diocesan priests in these 19 dioceses is 2,009 as against 1,952 in 1986, an increase of 57 diocesan priests. The greatest proportionate increase in the number of diocesan priests since 1986 is found in Legazpi (28.9%), San Fernando (P) (26.3%), Dipolog (25.0%) and Lingayen-Dagupan (12.5%). The greatest proportionate decrease has taken place in Bacolod (22.7%), Tagbilaran (15.7%), Palo (9.2%). The decrease in Bacolod may be due to the division of the diocese.

#### *Basic Christian Communities (BCCs)*

The beginning of Basic Christian Communities (BCCs) or Base-level Ecclesial Communities (BECs) goes back perhaps two decades. The bishops spoke forcefully about their nature and importance. They defended them against the encroachment and systematic attack from the part of the government which was trying to control their life and suppress their activities since they were considered revolutionary or at least leftist in character.<sup>13</sup>

A survey conducted a few years ago in connection with an eventual national pastoral plan — which never got off the ground — revealed the existence of several models of BCCs (BECs). A marked trend was observed towards more social involvement among all these small communities.

13. Cf. the letter of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, "Joint Pastoral Letter to Our People. The Bond of Love in Proclaiming the Good News." It was issued in January 1977 and signed by the late Cardinal Julio R. Rosales of Cebu, then President of the Conference. The then Philippine Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile was reported as having stated that "the effectiveness of the basic communities constitutes a danger to the government in so far as they can in practice build up the infrastructure of a political power base throughout the country. Their social action programmes and human rights campaigns have eroded government influence." Quoted in M. Roekaerts, "Church and State in the Philippines," *Pro Mundi Vita: Dossiers, Asia-Australasia* 17 (October 1981) 20.

Fifteen dioceses reported the existence of BCC's/BEC's:

|                |                   |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Cagayan de Oro | Marbel            | San Jose, Mindoro |
| Calbayog       | Naval             | San Pablo         |
| Digos          | Palo              | Sorsogon          |
| Iligan         | San Carlos        | Tagbilaran        |
| Kabankalan     | San Jose, Antique | Tagum             |

The fact that 15 dioceses have explicitly reported the existence of such BCCs indicates a growing awareness of their importance and a real process of conscientization that is taking place in this respect. Even without reporting on such communities, their dynamic existence has become a widespread phenomenon, particularly in Mindanao, in which Tagum has become a harbinger of such communities.

## II. THE PHILIPPINE BISHOPS

The ecclesiological — and even ecclesiastical — role of the bishops as the prime leaders of the people of God, first in their own dioceses but also in the whole country, seems to demand something more than cold figures and statistics about their persons. The faithful are interested in knowing more than simply how many bishops there are, how many of them are archbishops or how many are bishops, how many are still active, or how many of them are retired. This section deals with some aspects in the life of the bishops which normally would have bearing on the *quality* of their leadership, and which may therefore rightly be considered as a part of the profile of the Philippine Church statistically and otherwise. Two initial observations are in place:

1. The synthesis presented here comes partly from data in the *1989 Catholic Directory*, complemented with more abundant information on each of the bishops that was furnished by the secretariat of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). These data are usually contained in press releases issued by the CBCP on the occasion of new appointments.

2. For obvious reasons these data and reflections will be limited to the bishops who are still *officially active* as residential, co-adjutors, and auxiliaries, or who are entrusted with special tasks for the whole Church in the Philippines. In other words, this synthesis does not consider those who are already retired and are classified in the Directory as "emeriti". The principal data on this latter group can be found in the Directory, usually in the dioceses

where they have exercised their episcopal functions immediately prior to their retirement, or at times in the dioceses where they reside at present.<sup>14</sup>

### A. GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN

If we take a look at the geographical origin of the 99 bishops presently active in the Philippines, 60 come from Luzon, 35 from Visayas, and 2 from Mindanao (2 other are foreign born). As for the bishops from Luzon, 15 proceed from Northern Luzon, 22 from Central Luzon (including the 9 from Manila), and 23 from Southern Luzon. It is a curious fact that the two bishops from Mindanao were born there just because their families were temporarily living in the South; both however are at present assigned in Luzon.

#### *Geographical Origin of the Bishops (by provinces)*

|                  | Priests <sup>15</sup> |                  | Priests |                  | Priests |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Manila (L)       | ( 229) 9              | Albay (L)        | ( 48) 2 | Benguet (L)      | ( 17) 1 |
| Cebu (V)         | ( 192) 7              | Bataan (L)       | ( 18) 2 | Catanduanes (L)  | ( 32) 1 |
| Iloilo (V)       | ( 164) 7              | Batangas (L)     | ( 77) 2 | Cotabato (M)     | ( 19) 1 |
| Camarines N. (L) | ( 142) 5              | Camarines S. (L) | ( 47) 2 | Laguna (L)       | ( 67) 1 |
| Bohol (V)        | ( 56) 5               | Capiz (V)        | ( 72) 2 | Lucena (L)       | ( 63) 1 |
| Bulacan (L)      | ( 120) 5              | Cavite (L)       | ( 33) 2 | Marawi (M)       | ( 31) 1 |
| Aklan (V)        | ( 46) 4               | Ilocos Sur (L)   | ( 69) 2 | Mt. Province (L) | ( 33) 1 |
| Negros Occ. (V)  | ( 92) 3               | Isabela (L)      | ( 29) 2 | Negros Occ. (V)  | ( 57) 1 |
| Leyte (V)        | ( 164) 3              | La Union (L)     | ( 26) 2 | Occ. Min. (L)    | ( 24) 1 |
| Ilocos N. (L)    | ( 37) 3               | Marinduque (L)   | ( 20) 2 | Pangasinan (L)   | (134) 1 |
| Samar (V)        | ( 39) 3               | Nueva Ecija (L)  | ( 32) 2 | Romblon (V)      | ( 30) 1 |
|                  |                       | Pampanga (L)     | (114) 2 |                  |         |
|                  |                       | Quezon (L)       | (117) 2 |                  |         |
|                  |                       | Tarlac (L)       | ( 28) 2 |                  |         |

As appears in the top half of the first column, 5 provinces together with Manila have given 38 bishops (38.4%) to the Philippine Church. Is there any plausible explanation for the great number of bishops coming from certain regions or provinces while

14. Section A of the *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines* is entitled "Hierarchy of the Catholic Church." After some biodata on the present Pope, John Paul II, and a description of the offices of the Roman Curia, the Directory dedicates 27 pages and a chart to the Philippine dioceses and gives some more general data on the bishops of the Philippines with several listings. Together with a brief description of the diocese at the beginning of each ecclesiastical territory, the principal data on the bishop or bishops are given.

15. The numbers in parentheses indicate the *present* number of diocesan priests in the provinces from where the bishops originate.

there are no bishops from other provinces or regions? Several hypotheses have been timidly proposed, generally in the form of questions, but it is difficult to find a satisfactory answer. For example: does the disproportion depend primarily on the higher or lower number of diocesan priests in a given diocese? That may apply in some cases, but hardly in others like the case of Aklan (4 bishops and 46 priests) in contrast, for instance, with Pampanga (2 bishops and 114 priests), or Pangasinan (1 bishop and 134 priests). Or again Pangasinan in contrast with Camarines Norte (5 bishops and 142 priests). Others suggest it may be due to a deeper and more fervent catholicism of the people and a more edifying life of priests in certain areas. But this again has been disputed. A third opinion is that it is due to stronger or more enterprising leaders among bishops whose positions entail a greater say in the appointment of new bishops. It is probable that in a good number of cases direct knowledge by some bishops of the leadership qualities of priests who have been closer to them in administration, or as personal secretaries, is the cause. But why such a great discrepancy among the regions? A sociological study of the factors intervening in the selection and appointment of bishops could be an interesting topic for research.

#### B. THEOLOGICAL FORMATION

It is assumed that the general approach in theological formation, the methodology employed, the emphasis on the content and similar elements, necessarily influence the outcome of priestly formation. The different pastoral approaches in the presentation of theology, as well as the different methodological principles and attitudes towards dogma, moral, and social teaching of the Church which are found in and are characteristic of each seminary, can explain some marked differences in the bishops' different kinds of leadership and their doctrinal or pastoral accents. The present bishops come from the following seminaries or schools of Theology:

|   |    |                                   |   |
|---|----|-----------------------------------|---|
| Central Seminary, Univ. of Sto. Tomas   | 36 | Rome (as seminarians)             | 4 |
| San Carlos, Manila (CM, CICM, diocesan) | 8  | Naga, Holy Rosary (diocesan)      | 3 |
| Jaro, Iloilo (diocesan)                 | 8  | Vigan, Imm. Conc. (SVD, diocesan) | 3 |
| San Jose, Manila (SJ)                   | 8  | Calbayog (diocesan)               | 1 |
| Cebu, San Carlos (CM)                   | 7  | Davao, Regional Seminary          | 1 |
| Christ the King (SVD)                   | 5  |                                   |   |

The fact that one third of the bishops had their theological formation in the Central Seminary of the University of Sto. Tomas (not excluding those who pursued graduate studies in UST) has by necessity impressed a kind of character on a respectable portion of the present Philippine hierarchy. (Bishops belonging to religious institutes usually get their formation in their own houses of studies.)

Since on the other hand, two thirds of the bishops have received their theological formation from ten other seminaries, a question may be raised: Is it possible that some — sometimes sharp — differences that emerge among the bishops in their handling of pastoral problems at the national level may have their origin in the theological formation which they had received in the seminary? Can this difference in theological formation be the reason for the fact that some bishops are labelled as “conservative” while others are branded as “liberal”? Such usually over-simplified epithets in turn may give rise to apparent discrepancies among them. Could not this offer the occasion to reflect on the possibility of having a more “common” — not “unified” and still less “uniform” — approach to the study of Theology in the various seminaries, with greater collaboration among them? This seems to be at least highly advisable since these seminaries are training future leaders to be the pastors in a country that needs — even doctrinally — a unified approach to solve its many religious, social, pastoral, and even economic and political problems.

#### C. FUNCTIONS /OCCUPATION OF THE BISHOPS AT THE TIME OF THEIR APPOINTMENT

What kind of work — administrative, educational, pastoral — were the candidates engaged in *at the time* of their appointment as bishops? Out of the 99 active bishops,

- 36 were fully engaged in functions of *administration*, generally in the curia;
- 35 were fully engaged in *seminary* formation as administrators, spiritual directors, or professors;
- 17 more were at one time or another working in seminaries often full time, as rectors, directors or professors;
- 24 were engaged in *pastoral*, generally parish, work;
- 6 were engaged in *education*;
- 2 were *formators* in religious institutes.

It is to be noted that some of the administrators were also doubling as seminary personnel, or vice versa. But in this article these functions are considered totally independent from one another, and generally *only one function* is considered as the main occupation for determining the "field" from which the candidates were taken.

As the table shows, the three main functions in which the bishops-elect were engaged at the time of their appointment are administration (36.36%), seminaries (35.35%), and pastoral work (24.24%), with an overwhelming preponderance in administration and in seminary work (present and past) — 71 out of 99 bishops. This, however, should not obscure the fact that not a few administrators — not so much seminary personnel — have also been in pastoral work *prior* to their appointments to positions of administration.

Some questions spontaneously arise. It is obvious that the functions in which the priests were engaged when they were raised to the episcopacy will by necessity influence the character of their leadership in their dioceses. Could this perhaps be one reason why, as has been pointed out on several occasions, the area of "administration" often takes precedence over the area of "pastoral" in not a few dioceses? Even John Paul II has hinted at this in one of his addresses to a group of Philippine bishops in their "ad limina" visit.

Another point worth considering is the fact that 52 bishops were either actually engaged in seminary work at the time of their appointment (35 of them), or have been previously engaged in that kind of work (17). It is difficult to assess the direct pastoral experience or the pastoral sensitivity this fact may entail. But could not this basis in seminary work be used by the bishops to influence their former subjects or students, now full-fledged priests, to a thorough renewal of their life-style as priests in both their own spiritual life and their ministry? Former mentors always retain a real influence on the majority of their subjects or students.

Possibly, the 36 who were full-time administrators at the time of their appointment as bishops had been pastors before being brought to the curia. This, however, does not imply that a good parish priest is always prepared for the wider responsibilities of administering a diocese. As for the seminary personnel, while generally it may be accepted that they would normally be better prepared intellectually than the average priest, nevertheless they

may be liable to have even less pastoral sensitivity than the administrators, especially if they were assigned to the seminary shortly after ordination.

#### D. AGE AT WHICH PRIESTS WERE APPOINTED BISHOPS

|                              |    |         |   |
|------------------------------|----|---------|---|
| Between 35 - 39 years of age | 5  | 55 - 59 | 8 |
| 40 - 44                      | 42 | 60 - 64 | 5 |
| 45 - 49                      | 22 | 65 - 69 | 1 |
| 50 - 54                      | 14 |         |   |

The fact that practically two-thirds (2/3) of the bishops (64) were appointed bishops when they were still in their forties is by itself a significant element in the evaluation — and relative youth — of the Philippine episcopacy. This has been one of the reasons for the vitality and dynamism abundantly shown by the Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

#### E. YEARS IN THE PRIESTHOOD AT THE TIME OF THEIR APPOINTMENT AS BISHOPS

|                     |    |         |    |
|---------------------|----|---------|----|
| Between 5 - 9 years | 1  | 25 - 29 | 10 |
| 10 - 14             | 16 | 30 - 34 | 6  |
| 15 - 19             | 37 | 35 - 39 | 3  |
| 20 - 24             | 23 | 40 - 44 | 2  |

Most of the bishops (37) were appointed after 15 to 19 years in the priesthood. This also argues for a more dynamic and experienced leadership. However, 21 bishops were appointed after they had been 25 or more years in the priesthood — about 8 of them having been appointed at a rather mature age.

#### F. ACADEMIC DEGREES

|                | Baccalaureate | Licentiate (MA) | Doctorate |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Philosophy     | 7             | 22 (+4)         | 5         |
| Theology       | 5             | 28              | 17        |
| Canon Law      | 1             | 5               | 17        |
| Holy Scripture | —             | 2               | —         |
| Civil degrees  | 8             | 9               | 1         |

Out of the 99 bishops, 66 (or 2/3) have an ecclesiastical degree. Eighteen (18) have also a civil degree, 14 of whom also have both. At times the same bishop has several ecclesiastical degrees — like

licentiate in Philosophy, licentiate in Theology, doctorate in Canon Law, or a double doctorate in Canon Law and in Theology. Therefore the number of degrees that appear in the table may be deceptive, since although there are 112 degrees listed, only 67 bishops have ecclesiastical degrees. As is obvious, only the highest degree is listed in the table.

In the column of doctorates, only doctorates "laboris causa", not doctorates "honoris causa", are recorded.

The above table shows that 50 bishops have some degree in Theology, 17 of them doctorates. This is a positive feature very much in keeping with the function of the bishop as "teacher of the faith." Whether or not, with so many pastoral responsibilities heavily weighing on their shoulders the bishops are able to keep their theological knowledge truly updated, is quite a different matter.

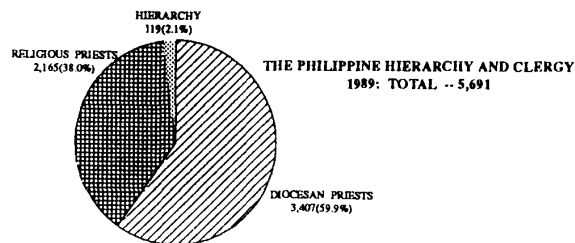
The number of bishops with some ecclesiastical degree in Canon Law (23, 17 of them doctorates) is also quite high, especially considering the fact that after Vatican II the emphasis clearly shifted from the juridical to the pastoral. The fact that there are 17 doctors in Canon Law among the Philippine bishops cannot but have a noticeable influence on the way certain pastoral problems are being approached. In contrast, only one bishop, together with the sole "non-bishop prelate," have a licentiate in Scripture.

#### G. MOVEMENT IN THE HIERARCHY

In the last 3 years, 11 members of the hierarchy became emeriti: 4 archbishops, all of them residential; and 7 bishops, 6 of them residential.

Five (5) bishops were promoted to residential archbishops, and 14 new bishops were appointed, 9 of them residential.

Five (5) members of the hierarchy died: 2 archbishops, one of them residential, and 3 bishops, 2 of them residential.



### III. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

The preceding figures and tables give us the basis for a reflection on the pastoral problematic of the Church in the Philippines.

#### 1. Uneven distribution of apostolic personnel

TABLE 9. Proportionate Distribution of Priests and Sisters by Regions

|                                  |                 |  |                         |            |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Luzon</b><br>(38 dioceses)    | Population      | 31,566,282 (+ 4.0%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | Catholics       | 26,681,766 (+ 1.7%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | Non-Catholics   | 4,884,516 (+ 18.4%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | <b>Priests</b>  |  |                         |            |
|                                  | Diocesan        | 1,789 (+ 6.0%) (1,888) <sup>(a)</sup>  | Deficiency              | 9          |
|                                  | Religious       | 1,475 (+ 15.2%) (1,014) <sup>(b)</sup> | Excess                  | 461        |
|                                  | <b>Total</b>    | <b>3,264 (+ 9.9%)</b>                  | <b>Total Excess</b>     | <b>452</b> |
|                                  | <b>Sisters</b>  | 6,503 (+ 14.5%) (5,115) <sup>(c)</sup> | Excess                  | 1,388      |
| <b>Visayas</b><br>(18 dioceses)  | Population      | 13,109,057 (+ 8.5%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | Catholics       | 11,514,963 (+ 5.6%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | Non-Catholics   | 1,534,094 (+ 3.6%)                     |                         |            |
|                                  | <b>Priests</b>  |  |                         |            |
|                                  | Diocesan        | 1,111 (+ 2.5%) (784) <sup>(a)</sup>    | Excess                  | 327        |
|                                  | Religious       | 301 (- 9.9%) (498) <sup>(b)</sup>      | Deficiency              | 197        |
|                                  | <b>Total</b>    | <b>1,412 (- 0.4%)</b>                  | <b>Total Deficiency</b> | <b>130</b> |
|                                  | <b>Sisters</b>  | 1,646 (- 4.7%) (2,124) <sup>(c)</sup>  | Deficiency              | 478        |
| <b>Mindanao</b><br>(21 dioceses) | Population      | 13,048,928 (+ 13.6%)                   |                         |            |
|                                  | Catholics       | 9,191,660 (+ 11.2%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | Non-Catholics   | 3,857,268 (+ 20.7%)                    |                         |            |
|                                  | <b>Priests:</b> |  |                         |            |
|                                  | Diocesan        | 507 (+ 21.9%) (780) <sup>(a)</sup>     | Deficiency              | 273        |
|                                  | Religious       | 389 (- 3.9%) (496) <sup>(b)</sup>      | Deficiency              | 107        |
|                                  | <b>Total</b>    | <b>896 (+ 9.1%)</b>                    | <b>Total Deficiency</b> | <b>380</b> |
|                                  | <b>Sisters</b>  | 1,082 (- 2.8%) (2,114) <sup>(c)</sup>  | Deficiency              | 1,032      |

The uneven distribution of apostolic personnel in the three geographical regions of the Philippines — Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao — is probably one of the major problems in creating new strategies for evangelization, particularly in the right use of manpower. Table 9 gives us a bird's-eye view of the situation.

The following factors may help in understanding the comparative value of the figures in the table:

a. The *percentages* in parenthesis indicate the increase (+) or decrease (–) of people or personnel in comparison with the figures in 1986.

b. The figures, also in parentheses, after the percentages indicate what the number *would be if* the personnel — priests and sisters — were distributed over the three regions strictly in accordance with the population they are meant to serve, given the actual number of priests and sisters in the country.

c. The terms “excess” and “deficiency” in the right column of each region do *not* indicate what is objectively in excess/deficiency for a reasonable apostolic activity, but rather the deviation — too many or too few — in relation to the *just proportionate distribution* of actual personnel in the Philippines.

Hence the picture Table 9 presents is not very “rosy.” The glaringly uneven distribution of personnel is a serious problem. Hopefully it may be transformed into a salutary challenge to awaken the sense of apostolic responsibility in the dioceses and religious institutes that have “more” personnel. At the same time it may pave the way for some perhaps “drastic” decisions by the forthcoming Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in order to make the task of evangelization in the Philippines a reality. Three points may be highlighted here:

1. In the three regions the *population* has increased at a faster pace than the number of Catholics. On the other hand, the proportion of increase in the number of *non-Catholics* when compared with the figures of 1986 is high in Luzon (18.4%) and still higher in Mindanao (20.7%). Surprisingly, though, the increase in the number of Catholics in Mindanao (11.2%) in comparison with the number of Catholics there in 1986, has been higher than in Visayas (5.6%) and much higher than in Luzon (1.7%).

2. Although a further reflection will be made below on the distribution of religious priests and sisters in the three regions, *Visayas* appears by far to be the region most adversely affected by

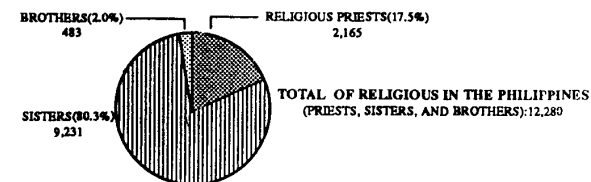
the distribution of personnel. While in 1986 it had an “excess” of 251 *priests*, in 1989 it has a “deficiency” of 130 which represents a total decrease of 381 priests. The relative lack of *sisters* has also increased from only 46 in 1986 to 299 in 1989 — again a decline of 253.

3. *Mindanao* seems to remain “the abandoned one.” Although it has reduced its “deficiency” in the number of *sisters* from 570 in 1986 to 473 in 1989, this still remains a great lack. In regard to *priests*, the deficiency has jumped from 285 in 1986 to 380 in 1989. This means that in precisely the region which is more in need of pastoral manpower and which has increased its population by 1,584,343 the number of its priests has been reduced by 95. Whether this seeming neglect is due to religious, political, cultural or economic factors in the region, the fact remains that Mindanao is not receiving the pastoral attention it is entitled to.

2. Proportion of Priests in Parishes and Population

TABLE 10. Parishes by Population and Number of Priests, and Parishes with Only One Priest<sup>16</sup>

| Population per Parish     | No. of Parishes      |         | No. of Priests in these Parishes |         | Parishes with Only 1 Priest |         |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|
|                           | 1986                 | (%)     | 1986                             | (%)     | 1986                        | (%)     |
| Over 100,000              | 20                   | ( 24)   | 56                               | ( 57)   | 4                           | ( 7)    |
| Between 75,000 and 100,00 | 37                   | ( 29)   | 112                              | ( 87)   | 9                           | ( 8)    |
| Between 60,000 and 75,000 | 59                   | ( 49)   | 135                              | (114)   | 16                          | ( 14)   |
| Between 50,000 and 60,000 | 61                   | ( 76)   | 141                              | (157)   | 15                          | ( 27)   |
| Between 40,000 and 50,000 | 118                  | (117)   | 211                              | (225)   | 63                          | ( 47)   |
| Between 30,000 and 40,000 | 195                  | (196)   | 293                              | (231)   | 113                         | (105)   |
| Between 20,000 and 30,000 | 412                  | (306)   | 543                              | (613)   | 298                         | (341)   |
| Between 10,000 and 20,000 | 601                  | (605)   | 641                              | (702)   | 517                         | (543)   |
| Between 5,000 and 10,000  | 214                  | (232)   | 267                              | (246)   | 198                         | (219)   |
| Below 5,000               | 70                   | ( 66)   | 83                               | ( 68)   | 58                          | ( 64)   |
|                           | 1,787 <sup>(a)</sup> | (1,700) | 2,482 <sup>(b)</sup>             | (2,500) | 1,291 <sup>(c)</sup>        | (1,375) |



The fact that at least 902 parishes out of 2,192 (or 41.1%) have a population of over 20,000 — even if some of them have a parochial vicar — indicates how enormous is the apostolic task the priests are confronted with. The total number of priests in these 902 parishes is 1,491, which gives an average of 3 priests for every 2 parishes, or 1.65 per parish. But 1,291 parishes have only 1 priest — the parish priest. Among these parishes 1,035 have over 10,000 people, 518 of them over 20,000.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Diocesan Clergy With No Parish Assignment

The number of priests who appear in the dioceses under the rubric "Diocesan Clergy with No Parish Assignment" in the 1986 Directory totalled 1,171. In the 1989 Directory this number has risen to 1,359, a 16.0% increase.

|   | 1986                 |
|---|----------------------|
| Seminary personnel                        | 247 ( 153)           |
| Chaplains in mission stations             | 24 ( 91)             |
| Chaplains in hospitals                    | 20 ( 69)             |
| Chaplains in the armed forces             | 65 ( 70)             |
| Priests in dioceses other than their own  | 304 ( 224)           |
| Priests on study leave in the Philippines | 42 ( 45)             |
| Retired/sick priests                      | 215 ( 185)           |
| Priests abroad/on leave                   | 439 ( 334)           |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>1,359 (1,171)</b> |

A comparative analysis with other previously mentioned data reveals that out of the 3,407 diocesan priests, 39.9% are not assigned to parish work. The above table gives their assignments or functions. Some of them, however, are also directly involved in pastoral work — such as the various kinds of chaplains (a total of 109). The number of diocesan priests abroad/on leave is quite high and has increased by 31.4% since 1986. A great number from

16. (a) About 400 parishes are not represented in Table 10. At times the sources do not give population figures; at times there is no priest assigned to the parish; not seldom an indication is made: "Population: Included in (another parish)."

(b) Twenty-two (22) bishops are also parish priests.

(c) This figure represents 58.8% of all the parishes in the Philippines and 81.5% of the parishes that specify the population and the number of priests.

among these priests are in the United States of America. More priests — 80 more than in 1987 — are working outside their dioceses, but still in the Philippines.<sup>17</sup>

The dioceses with the highest number of priests abroad/on leave are Caceres, Jaro and Tagbilaran (21), San Fernando (P) and Sorogon (19), Lingayen-Dagupan (18), Lipa (15), Capiz and Manila (14), Daet (13), Calbayog and Imus (12), Cebu and Nueva Segovia (11), and Kalibo (10).

### Number of priests from other dioceses ("guest priests")

|           |   |                      |      |               |   |
|-----------|---|----------------------|------|---------------|---|
| Bacolod   | 3 | Iligan               | 1    | Mt. Province  | 5 |
| Balanga   | 1 | Infanta              | 2    | Nueva Segovia | 3 |
| Bangued   | 2 | Isabela              | 3    | Ozamiz        | 3 |
| Boac      | 1 | Jaro                 | 6    | Pagadian      | 2 |
| Borongan  | 8 | Kalibo               | 1    | Palawan       | 4 |
| Caceres   | 6 | Kidapawan            | 2    | Palo          | 9 |
| Cagayan   | 1 | Laoag                | 2    | Romblon       | 3 |
| Calbayog  | 1 | Legazpi              | 4    | San Pablo     | 7 |
| Capiz     | 5 | Lingayen             | 9    | Sorogon       | 6 |
| Cebu      | 3 | Lipa                 | 7    | Tagbilaran    | 4 |
| Daet      | 7 | Lucena               | 4    | Tagum         | 1 |
| Digos     | 2 | Maasin               | 5    | Tandag        | 3 |
| Dipolog   | 6 | Malaybalay           | 2    | Tuguegarao    | 7 |
| Dumaguete | 5 | Malolos              | 7    | Virac         | 2 |
| Gumaca    | 1 | Manila <sup>18</sup> | 128* | Zamboanga     | 9 |
| Iligan    | 1 |                      |      |               |   |

### 4. Non-Catholics in the Philippines

Table 1 shows that the number of non-Catholics in the Philippines is over 10 million. The majority of the population is Catholic (81.8%) and the majority of the non-Catholic population is Christian — although it is not easy to determine in each case the actual percentage of Christians and non-Christians.

17. *L'Osservatore Romano* (18 June 1990, p. 11), summarizing the findings in the recently published *Statistical Yearbook of the Church for 1988*, speaks of the number of priests who have migrated from their homelands. It affirms that "North America experienced an increase of 1,048 priests due to migration in 1988."

18. In the archdiocese of Manila there is an "Office of Guest Priests" with a bishop in charge to cope with the high number of priests coming from other dioceses but not incardinated. Besides this number, 47 other priests have been incardinated in the archdiocese since 1973.

TABLE 11. Population and Number of Non-Catholics by Diocese and Number of Non-Catholics per Priest

|                    | Population | Non-Catholics | Percentage<br>per Priest | Non-Catholics |
|--------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| - Alaminos         | 368,987    | 38,355        | 10.3                     | 1,918         |
| + Antipolo         | 1,306,912  | 210,816       | 16.1                     | 5,698         |
| - Bacolod          | 981,555    | 151,419       | 15.4                     | 1,294         |
| - Balanga          | 394,955    | 47,596        | 12.0                     | 1,161         |
| - Bangued          | 177,513    | 23,344        | 13.2                     | 569           |
| - Batanes          | = 18,250   | 328           | 1.8*                     | 36            |
| + Bayombong        | 399,877    | 151,862       | 37.9                     | 6,074         |
| ++ Boac            | 275,465    | 91,240        | 33.1                     | 4,562         |
| + Borongan         | 374,225    | 11,226        | 3.0                      | 274           |
| ++ Butuan          | 817,544    | 137,981       | 16.9                     | 2,653         |
| + Cabanatuan       | 807,164    | 165,469       | 20.5                     | 5,171         |
| - Caceres          | 1,306,178  | 174,265       | 13.3                     | 1,146         |
| + Cagayan de Oro   | 1,012,820  | 123,560       | 1.3                      | 1,358         |
| + Calapan          | 580,820    | 91,900        | 15.8                     | 2,626         |
| - Calbayog         | = 563,703  | 23,513        | 4.2                      | 444           |
| - Capiz            | 621,754    | 14,760        | 23.7                     | 160           |
| - Catarman         | = 382,812  | 26,187        | 6.8                      | 748           |
| ++ Cebu            | 2,500,000  | 250,000       | 10.0                     | 740           |
| - Cotabato         | = 790,000  | 430,000       | 54.4*                    | 6,232         |
| - Daet             | 340,030    | 17,002        | 5.0                      | 362           |
| - Davao            | 730,920    | 87,356        | 11.9                     | 848           |
| + Digos            | 687,702    | 145,449       | 21.2                     | 4,156         |
| - Dipolog          | 747,952    | 97,234        | 13.0                     | 1,519         |
| - Dumaguete        | 760,617    | 125,502       | 16.5                     | 1,793         |
| + Gumaca           | 563,614    | 35,159        | 6.2                      | 1,065         |
| - Iba              | 616,225    | 75,440        | 12.2                     | 1,796         |
| ++ Ilagan          | 1,038,821  | 296,292       | 28.5                     | 5,926         |
| - Iligan           | = 628,799  | 150,799       | 24.0                     | 4,570         |
| + Imus             | 1,090,651  | 150,510       | 13.8                     | 2,894         |
| - Infanta          | 235,662    | 35,349        | 15.0*                    | 1,683         |
| ++ Ipil            | 581,310    | 220,898       | 38.0                     | 8,181         |
| + Isabela          | 268,500    | 185,100       | 68.9                     | 13,221        |
| - Jaro             | 1,432,009  | 187,280       | 13.1*                    | 909           |
| - Jolo             | 475,000    | 458,600       | 96.5                     | 32,757        |
| - Kabankalan       | 850,448    | 183,131       | 21.6                     | 5,386         |
| ++ Kalibo          | 384,450    | 50,033        | 13.0                     | 1,088         |
| - Kidapawan        | 435,236    | 103,752       | 23.8                     | 3,843         |
| - Laoag            | 555,907    | 196,359       | 35.3                     | 4,177         |
| - Legazpi          | 973,697    | 13,248        | 1.4                      | 112           |
| - Libmanan         |            |               |                          |               |
| - Lingayen-Dagupan | = 758,996  | 94,211        | 12.4*                    | 906           |
| + Lipa             | 1,382,109  | 237,389       | 17.2                     | 1,978         |
| - Lucena           | 652,974    | 15,268        | 2.3                      | 242           |
| + Masin            | 541,528    | 50,948        | 9.4                      | 1,158         |
| ++ Malaybalay      | 710,754    | 145,972       | 20.6                     | 2,703         |

|                        | Population | Non-Catholics | Percentage<br>per Priest | Non-Catholics |
|------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| - Malolos              | 1,400,000  | 200,000       | 14.3                     | 1,653         |
| - Manila               | 6,748,503  | 404,910       | 6.0                      | 312           |
| ++ Marawi              | 600,000    | 573,000       | 95.5                     | 57,300        |
| ++ Marbel              | 1,031,524  | 312,470       | 30.3                     | 5,208         |
| - Masbate              | 685,483    | 102,825       | 15.0                     | 2,337         |
| + Mati                 | 402,178    | 61,924        | 15.4                     | 3,440         |
| - Mt. Province         | 877,744    | 331,986       | 37.8                     | 4,099         |
| - Naval                | 218,708    | 16,545        | 7.6                      | 919           |
| - Nueva Segovia        | 500,387    | 71,000        | 14.2                     | 877           |
| - Ozamiz               | 461,023    | 114,354       | 24.8                     | 2,541         |
| ++ Pagadian            | 540,495    | 162,149       | 30.0                     | 5,405         |
| - Palawan              | = 361,268  | 85,032        | 23.6                     | 1,772         |
| ++ Palo                | 1,262,251  | 141,160       | 11.2                     | 1,260         |
| + Romblon              | 222,422    | 34,661        | 15.6                     | 1,118         |
| - San Carlos           | 704,042    | 102,803       | 14.6                     | 3,024         |
| + San Fernando (LU)    | 503,587    | 85,610        | 17.0                     | 2,675         |
| + San Fernando (P)     | 1,343,671  | 53,747        | 4.0                      | 407           |
| + San Jose, Antique    | 400,450    | 118,896       | 29.7                     | 2,530         |
| + San Jose (NE)        | 480,636    | 96,128        | 20.0                     | 4,179         |
| - San Jose (Occ. Min.) | 319,039    | 58,481        | 18.3                     | 2,089         |
| - San Pablo            | 1,163,940  | 110,986       | 9.5                      | 1,121         |
| -- Sorsogon            | 581,950    | 31,512        | 5.4                      | 606           |
| ++ Surigao             | 442,999    | 108,649       | 24.5                     | 3,622         |
| -- Tagbilaran          | 467,365    | 16,351        | 3.5                      | 277           |
| - Tagum                | 853,452    | 107,450       | 12.6                     | 2,336         |
| - Talibon              | 440,727    | 29,733        | 6.7                      | 804           |
| + Tandag               | 422,263    | 73,019        | 17.3                     | 3,042         |
| ++ Tarlac              | 854,114    | 171,442       | 20.1                     | 5,195         |
| ++ Tuguegarao          | 834,180    | 166,846       | 20.0                     | 2,195         |
| + Urduyeta             | 540,182    | 103,000       | 19.1                     | 3,219         |
| + Virac                | 180,504    | 3,250         | 1.8                      | 96            |
| - Zamboanga            | 408,911    | 57,534        | 14.1                     | 1,151         |

It would not be too difficult to distinguish between dioceses or provinces where the non-Catholics are predominantly Christians from those predominantly non-Christians — for instance Moslems. Thus Moslems predominate in some southern dioceses: such as Jolo, Cotabato, Marawi, Isabela, Marbel. In others, the non-Catholics would rather be Protestants, Aglipayans, or members of the Iglesia ni Cristo. Such would be the case of Bacolod or Dumaguete in Negros, and Cabanatuan, Laoag or Tarlac in Luzon, to mention just a few examples.

The following tables present two main items: the proportion of non-Catholics to population by dioceses, and the number of non-Catholics one priest would have theoretically to attend to.

TABLE 12. Dioceses with Largest Number of Non-Catholics

|              |         |                   |         |
|--------------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| Marawi       | 573,000 | Pagadian          | 162,149 |
| Jolo         | 458,600 | Bayombong         | 151,862 |
| Cotabato     | 430,000 | Bacolod           | 151,419 |
| Manila       | 404,910 | Iligan            | 150,799 |
| Mt. Province | 331,986 | Imus              | 150,510 |
| Marbel       | 312,470 | Malaybalay        | 145,972 |
| Iligan       | 296,792 | Digos             | 145,449 |
| Cebu         | 250,000 | Palo              | 141,160 |
| Lipa         | 237,389 | Butuan            | 137,981 |
| Ipil         | 220,898 | Dumaguete         | 125,502 |
| Antipolo     | 210,816 | Cagayan           | 123,560 |
| Malolos      | 200,000 | San Jose, Antique | 118,896 |
| Laoag        | 196,359 | Ozamiz            | 114,354 |
| Jaro         | 187,280 | San Pablo         | 110,986 |
| Isabela      | 185,100 | Surigao           | 108,649 |
| Kabankalan   | 183,131 | Tagum             | 107,450 |
| Caceres      | 174,265 | Urdaneta          | 103,000 |
| Tarlac       | 171,442 | Kidapawan         | 103,752 |
| Tuguegarao   | 166,846 | Masbate           | 102,825 |
| Cabanatuan   | 165,469 | San Carlos        | 102,803 |

TABLE 13. Ratio of Highest Non-Catholic Population to One Priest (over 2,000)

|               |                |                      |               |
|---------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Marawi        | 57,300 (95.5%) | Mt. Province         | 4,099 (37.8%) |
| Jolo          | 32,757 (96.5%) | Kidapawan            | 3,843 (23.8%) |
| Isabela       | 13,221 (68.9%) | Surigao              | 3,622 (24.5%) |
| Ipil          | 8,181 (38.0%)  | Mati                 | 3,440 (15.4%) |
| Cotabato      | 6,232 (54.4%)  | Urdaneta             | 3,219 (19.1%) |
| Bayombong     | 6,074 (37.9%)  | Tandag               | 3,042 (17.3%) |
| Iligan        | 5,926 (28.5%)  | San Carlos           | 3,024 (14.6%) |
| Antipolo      | 5,698 (16.1%)  | Imus                 | 2,894 (13.8%) |
| Pagadian      | 5,405 (30.0%)  | Malaybalay           | 2,703 (20.6%) |
| Kabankalan    | 5,386 (21.6%)  | San Fernando (LU)    | 2,675 (17.0%) |
| Marbel        | 5,208 (30.3%)  | Butuan               | 2,653 (16.9%) |
| Tarlac        | 5,195 (20.1%)  | Calapan              | 2,626 (15.8%) |
| Cabanatuan    | 5,171 (20.5%)  | Ozamiz               | 2,541 (24.8%) |
| Iligan        | 4,570 (24.0%)  | San Jose, Antique    | 2,530 (29.7%) |
| Boac          | 4,562 (33.1%)  | Masbate              | 2,337 (15.0%) |
| San Jose (NE) | 4,179 (20.0%)  | Tagum                | 2,336 (12.6%) |
| Laoag         | 4,177 (35.3%)  | Tuguegarao           | 2,195 (20.0%) |
| Digos         | 4,156 (21.2%)  | San Jose (Occ. Min.) | 2,089 (18.3%) |

In 1986 there were 31 dioceses where the proportion was one priest to over 2,000 non-Catholics. In 1989 the number of these dioceses has risen to 36, a 16.1% increase. In Table 13 the percentages in parentheses indicate the proportion of non-Catholics to the population of the diocese.

The presence of over ten million non-Catholics could be an opportunity for Catholics to implement the directives, and live in the spirit of Vatican II in the field of *ecumenical relations*. Strange as it may appear, however, only 3 dioceses reported having a formal commission on ecumenical and inter-religious affairs, while a fourth has an officer-in-charge of ecumenism. Many reasons may be surmised to explain this rather anomalous situation — the heritage of history, the aggressiveness of Protestants, especially of fundamentalist groups, or the lack of understanding on the part of Catholics of what ecumenism really is. The increase of the non-Catholic population should give food for thought and encourage decision for action.

## 5. Numbers, Works and Distribution of Religious

### a) Religious Men

#### 1. Number

There are 60 institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life (religious orders or congregations) — 12 more than in 1986. Of these institutes 50 are clerical. Of the institutes of consecrated life 2 have 3 provinces or equivalent divisions and 4 others have 2 each.

The 4,193 men religious are divided as follows:

Bishops: Active: 14 Retired: 12  
 Prelate Ordinary, not Bishop: 1  
 Other members (excluding novices) 4,166

|             |                          | 1986    |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Priests     | 2,250 (1,183 Filipinos)  | (4,134) |
| Scholastics | 1,483 (mostly Filipinos) | (2,131) |
| Brothers    | 433 (282 Filipinos)      | (1,541) |
| Novices     | 341                      | ( 582)  |
| Candidates  | 913                      | ( 306)  |

|   |   |                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Filipino religious men in foreign missions                      | 203   | (166)                          |
| Parishes administered   | 414   | (358)                          |
| The ten (10) institutes of men with the highest membership are: |   |                                |
| SVD   | Society of the Divine Word                      | 446 (331 priests) & 30 novices |
| SJ  | Society of Jesus                                | 381 (308 priests) & 25 novices |
| CICM  | Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary    | 325 (134 priests) & 9 novices  |
| SDB   | Salesian Society of St. John Bosco              | 321 (147 priests) & 20 novices |
| OAR   | Order of the Augustinian Recollects             | 196 (83 priests) & 8 novices   |
| OP  | Order of Preachers                              | 192 (146 priests) & 19 novices |
| MSSC  | Missionary Society of St. Columban              | 156 (155 priests)              |
| CSsR  | Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer          | 141 (84 priests) & 7 novices   |
| CMF   | Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary | 131 (33 priests) & 9 novices   |
| OMI   | Oblates of Mary Immaculate                      | 129 (69 priests) & 3 novices   |

## 2. Works

Religious men take care of

- 414 parishes or 18.9% of the total number of parishes in the Philippines (2,203)
- 263 schools either owned or administered
- 15 diocesan seminaries and 64 for their own seminarians (23 major, 41 minor)
- 23 retreat houses
- 127 other apostolates

## 3. Distribution

A comparison between population and the number of religious priests in nine dioceses illustrates the disproportionate concentration of religious priests in some areas.

|                | <i>Religious Priests</i> | <i>Population</i> |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
|                | 1986                     |                   |
| Manila         | 1,020 (820)              | 6,748,503         |
| Cebu           | 146 (133)                | 2,500,000         |
| Davao          | 67 ( 68)                 | 730,920           |
| Cotabato       | 50 ( 40)                 | 790,000           |
| Mt. Province   | 48 ( 68)                 | 877,744           |
| Jaro           | 42 ( 51)                 | 1,432,000         |
| Cagayan de Oro | 41 ( 32)                 | 1,012,820         |
| Imus           | 37 ( 27)                 | 1,090,651         |
| San Pablo      | 32 ( 28)                 | 1,163,940         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1,483</b>             | <b>16,346,578</b> |

The combined figures of religious priests in the nine above-mentioned dioceses (1,483) constitute 67.6% of the total number of religious priests (2,193), while the combined population of these nine dioceses is only 16,346,578 (28.7%). This leaves only 767 religious priests (32.4%) for the remaining 68 dioceses with a population of 40,618,530 (71.3% of the Philippine population). Also, 46.5% of all the religious priests are concentrated in the archdiocese of Manila even if the population of the archdiocese, if we were to accept the figures submitted by the curia, is only 11.8% of the total population of the Philippines.

## b) Religious Women

### 1. Number

|                                      | 1986          |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Members (excluding novices)          | 9,231 (7,908) |
| Filipinos                            | 8,269 (7,007) |
| Novices                              | 1,071 ( 815)  |
| Candidates                           | 1,351 ( 570)  |
| Filipino Sisters in Foreign Missions | 633 ( 525)    |

The ten (10) institutes of women with the highest membership are:

|     |                                 |                  |
|-----|---------------------------------|------------------|
| SPC | Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres | 645 & 13 novices |
| RVM | Religious of the Virgin Mary    | 609 & 33 novices |

|      |  |                  |
|------|--|------------------|
| DC   | Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul                  | 517 & 30 novices |
| OCD  | Order of the Most Blessed Virgin Mt. Carmel                  | 275 & 17 novices |
| OSA  | Augustinian Sisters of Our Lady of Consolation               | 275 & 7 novices  |
| SSpS | Servants of the Holy Spirit                                  | 264 & 9 novices  |
| OP   | Religiosas Dominiccas de Sta. Catalina de Sena               | 252 & 12 novices |
| OP   | Dominican Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary of the Philippines | 252 & 12 novices |
| AR   | Augustinian Recollect Sisters                                | 251 & 23 novices |
| CFIC | Congregation of Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception     | 246 & 13 novices |

## 2. Works

Religious women have 726 independent houses, and own or administer 520 schools and 384 centers or institutions such as retreat houses, hospitals and clinics, dormitories and orphanages.

## 3. Distribution

A rather disturbing finding is the glaring disproportion in the distribution of religious sisters over the whole territory of the Philippines. Table 14 shows that 7,766 sisters, or 84.1% of all the sisters in the Philippines, are concentrated in 16 dioceses (out of 77), attending to a population of 24,173,893 — or 42.4% of the total Philippine population. This leaves only 1,465 sisters (15.9% of all the sisters in the Philippines) for the remaining 61 dioceses (79.2% of all the dioceses) with a population of 32,191,215 — or 57.6% of the total Philippine population. In other words, this means that while there is one sister for every 3,113 people in the 16 privileged dioceses, there is one sister for every 22,383 people in the other 61 dioceses. This undoubtedly constitutes a serious apostolic dislocation — to use a milder term — that demands a prompt remedy. It may be reasonably expected that both the major superiors of the religious institutes of women themselves and the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines will collaborate to put an end to this rather anomalous situation.

TABLE 14. Dioceses with the Highest Number of Sisters and Proportion of One Sister to Population.<sup>19</sup>

|                  | <i>Sisters 1986</i> | <i>Population 1986</i> |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Manila           | 4,492 (3,324)       | 6,748,503 ( 1,502)     |
| Cebu             | 553 ( 535)          | 2,500,000 ( 4,520)     |
| Jaro             | 510 ( 558)          | 1,432,000 ( 2,807)     |
| Mt. Province     | 285 ( 290)          | 877,744 ( 8,079)       |
| Davao            | 251 ( 196)          | 730,920 ( 2,912)       |
| Lucena           | 251 ( 136)          | 652,974 ( 3,037)       |
| Antipolo         | 198 ( 88)           | 1,306,912 ( 6,601)     |
| Malolos          | 168 ( 144)          | 1,400,000 ( 8,333)     |
| Lipa             | 155 ( 98)           | 1,382,109 ( 8,917)     |
| Nueva Segovia    | 150 ( 148)          | 500,387 ( 3,336)       |
| San Fernando (P) | 150 ( 97)           | 1,343,671 ( 8,958)     |
| San Pablo        | 147 ( 153)          | 1,163,940 ( 7,918)     |
| Cagayan          | 137 ( 125)          | 1,012,820 ( 7,393)     |
| Tuguegarao       | 123 ( 68)           | 834,180 ( 6,782)       |
| Bacolod          | 120 ( 177)          | 981,555 ( 8,180)       |
| Caceres          | 106 ( 117)          | 1,306,178 (12,322)     |
|                  | 7,766 (6,254)       | 24,173,893 (96,597)    |

## 6. Overseas Mission Apostolates

Here the term "missionary" is used for those who exercise their apostolate in the so-called mission territories and as people usually understand it. These missionaries are distinguished from those assigned abroad for other functions, generally in countries of the first world. Since 1986 the number of Filipino missionaries has increased by 20.0%, an increase indicative of a church growing in the awareness of its missionary responsibility. The number of those "abroad" has increased by 39.6%.

### 1. Number

| <i>In Foreign Missions:</i> | <i>1986</i> | <i>Abroad:</i>   | <i>1986</i> |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Diocesan priests            | 20 ( 13)    | Diocesan priests | 307 (334)   |
| Religious men               | 203 (166)   | Religious men    | 158 ( 91)   |
| Sisters                     | 633 (525)   | Sisters          | 635 (239)   |
| Lay persons                 | 12 ( 19)    |                  | 1,100 (664) |
|                             | 868 (723)   |                  |             |

19. Figures in parentheses in the column of sisters refer to the 1986 Directory; figures in parentheses in the column of population refer to the proportion of sisters to the population of the diocese.

a. There are 23 religious institutes of men which have Filipino missionaries abroad. The 3 with the highest number of Filipino missionaries are:

|      |  |                   |
|------|--|-------------------|
| SVD  | Society of the Divine Word                   | 101 (+ 12 abroad) |
| CICM | Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary | 53 (+ 8 abroad)   |
| SDB  | Salesian Society of St. John Bosco           | 50 (+ 22 abroad)  |

b. Sixty-two (62) religious institutes of women have Filipino missionaries abroad. Those with the highest number of Filipino missionaries are:

|        |   |                  |
|--------|---|------------------|
| OP     | Congregación de Religiosas Misioneras de Sto. Domingo         | 83 (+ 29 abroad) |
| SPC    | Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres                               | 64 (+ 22 abroad) |
| FMM    | Franciscan Missionaries of Mary                               | 63 (+ 18 abroad) |
| DC     | Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul                   | 60 (+ 8 abroad)  |
| RVM    | Religious of the Virgin Mary                                  | 59 (+ 21 abroad) |
| OP     | Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary | 45 (+ 8 abroad)  |
| SSpS   | Servants of the Holy Spirit                                   | 43 (+ 8 abroad)  |
| SSpSAP | Sisters of the Holy Spirit of Perpetual Adoration             | 41 (+ 32 abroad) |

## 2. The field of the apostolate

The Filipino missionaries work in 25 countries in Africa, 20 countries in Asia including the Middle East, 16 in Latin America, and 8 in the Pacific Islands.

TABLE 15. Countries with the Highest Number of Filipino Missionaries (over 10 missionaries)

| A. AFRICA |    | B. ASIA     |    |
|-----------|----|-------------|----|
| Ghana     | 32 | Taiwan      | 86 |
| Zaire     | 17 | Indonesia   | 52 |
| Kenya     | 14 | Thailand    | 42 |
| Tanzania  | 12 | South Korea | 31 |
| Zambia    | 12 | Hongkong    | 30 |
| Botswana  | 11 | Japan       | 29 |
|           |    | India       | 20 |

### C. LATIN AMERICA

|                |    |
|----------------|----|
| Peru           | 19 |
| Argentina      | 18 |
| Brazil         | 18 |
| Neth. Antilles | 14 |

### D. PACIFIC ISLANDS

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Papua, New Guinea | 69 |
| Hawaii            | 58 |
| Guam              | 27 |

## IV. BY WAY OF SUMMARY

The best way to end this long article seems to be to "let the numbers speak for themselves" by reducing the statistics to a brief summary. We thereby find positive signs intertwined with other less encouraging aspects. Here we present the more salient factors.

1. On the positive side, we find that in 1989 the *number of Catholics* had increased by 2.9% in relation to the number of Catholics in 1986. There has been however a decrease of 2.5% in relation to the increase in population, down from 83.7% in 1986 to 82.1% (see Table 1).

2. By contrast, *non-Catholics* have increased by 20.5% in relation to their numbers in 1986, and by 2.2% in relation to the population. Based on the data submitted by the dioceses themselves, the number of non-Catholics in the Philippines is 10,183,366 (see Table 11).

3. In the last three years there has been a 6.9% increase in the number of *secular priests* and 1.6% increase in the number of *religious priests*. But the *proportion* of all the priests to the total population has slightly decreased by 0.88% — from 10,134 in 1986 to 10,223 in 1989. It has however slightly increased by 1.27% in relation to Catholics, with one priest for every 8,396 Catholics in 1989 as in contrast with 8,545 in 1986. The extremely high number of Catholics per priest remains one of the most serious problems of the Church in the Philippines. Religious sociologists are generally agreed that for the lay faithful to receive a *minimum* of pastoral care for growth in Christian life, the *maximum* number of Catholics per priest is 2,000.<sup>20</sup>

20. By way of comparison it would be useful to consider that, according to the latest *Statistical Yearbook of the Church* edited by the Vatican Office of Statistics, there are 7,014 Catholics per priest in Latin America, 4,249 in Africa, 2,512 in Asia, 1,210 in Europe. North America has a proportion of 991 Catholics per priest. — This article was already in the press when the National Statistics Office issued a preliminary report, tentatively placing the population at 60.5 million as of May 1, 1990.

4. The number of *institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life* has increased by 25.0% for the institutes of men (60 in 1989 as against 48 in 1986) with an increase in the number of priests from 2,131 in 1986 to 2,193 in 1989. As for the institutes of women the increase during the same period has been 66.4% (from 125 to 208) and the number of sisters by 16.7% (from 7,908 to 9,231, according to figures given by the institutes of women themselves).

5. Four more *ecclesiastical divisions* were added: the dioceses of Kabankalan, San Carlos and Naval and the prelature of Libmanan.

6. The *uneven distribution of personnel* as shown in Table 9 is both a serious problem and an apostolic challenge for the Church in the Philippines. *Mindanao* is "apostolically starving." If there were an even distribution of priests for the whole country, Mindanao would have 1,276 priests; it has only 896 — a deficiency of 380 priests. Similarly in an even distribution of sisters, Mindanao would have 2,116; it has only 1,643 — a deficiency of 473.

The *Visayas* region is also "apostolically malnourished." It has a deficiency of 130 priests (a cumulative loss of 381 since 1986) and of 299 sisters.

By contrast, *Luzon* has an "overpopulation" of priests and sisters — judged in terms of equal distribution of personnel. If the priests were to be evenly and proportionately distributed over the whole archipelago, Luzon would have 3,037 priests. It however has an "excess" of 450 priests and of 1,924 sisters.

The *distribution of sisters* is a problem by itself since 84.1% (7,766 out of 9,231) are concentrated in 16 dioceses, leaving only 15.9% for the remaining 61 dioceses with a population of 32,200,000.<sup>21</sup>

7. Out of 3,407 *diocesan priests*, 39.9% are not in parish work, and 12.9% are abroad/on leave.

8. The fact that the number of *non-Catholics* has gone beyond the 10 million mark, with some dioceses having a much higher percentage than in 1986, is a matter of serious apostolic concern.

9. At the same time, as a positive sign of recovery and hope for the future, the *Basic Christian Communities* (BCCs) or Base-level

21. The archdiocese of *Manila* alone has 1,299 priests or 23.3% of all the priests in the country (5,572) and 4,492 sisters or 48.7% of all the sisters (9,231), even if it has only 13.5% of all Catholics and 11.8% of the total Philippine population.

Ecclesial Communities (BECs) appear to have gained considerable ground both in numbers and in the number of dioceses where they are presently active.

10. Finally, a bright light appears to be rising over the horizon of the Church in the Philippines: the awareness of, and response to, its *missionary responsibility*. The number of Filipino missionaries has increased as of late in a most conspicuous fashion: from 531 in 1983 to 723 in 1986, to 868 in 1989 — an increase of 63.5% in six years, a notable feat by any standard.

Still some nagging questions remain:

1. Is the pastoral situation of the Church in the Philippines as a whole improving? stagnating? regressing?

2. With the relative decrease in the number of Catholics and the increase in numbers and fervor of other proselytizing groups, particularly the Fundamentalists, is not the "Evangelization 2000" becoming more and more urgent?

3. What is to be done to put a prompt remedy to the glaringly uneven distribution of apostolic personnel in the various regions? After all, if the Church is "the Church of the poor," is it not principally in the rural areas that we encounter the poor even more than in the big cities?

4. Could the forthcoming Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, which is scheduled for January-February 1991, be the decisive dynamic force to get us out of the triumphalistic self-complacency in which we seem to have fallen? Could it be the beginning of a dynamic renewal of both the Christian life and the Church itself?

