



agenzia fides

at the service of the Church in mission

*MISSIONARY OCTOBER*

**XCVIII World Mission Sunday**  
**October 20, 2024**

**CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**STATISTICS 2024**

**APPENDIX DATA**  
**1998/2022**

## CATHOLIC CHURCH STATISTICS 2024

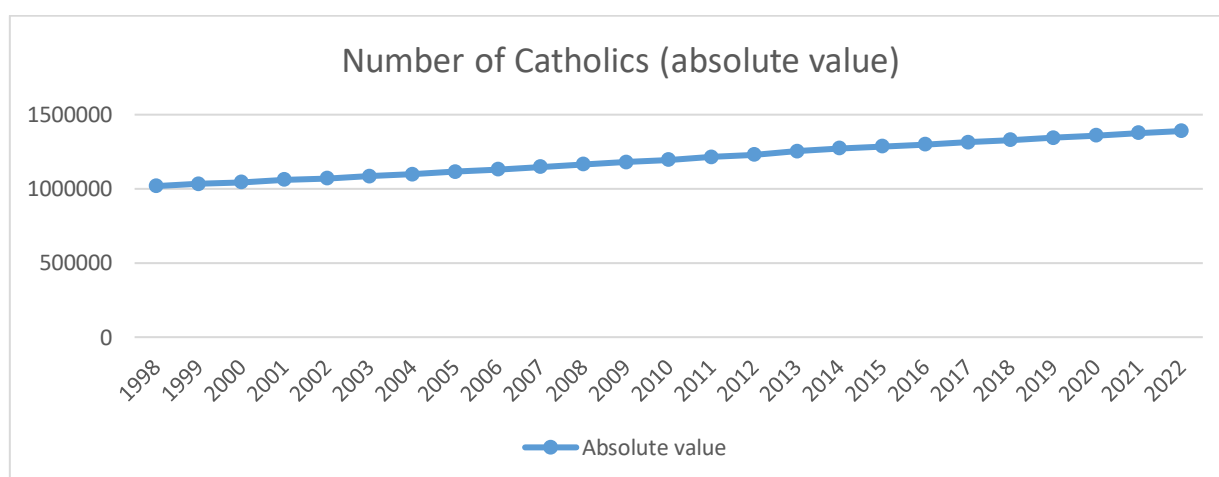
### APPENDIX DATA 1998/2022

Vatican City (Fides Agency) - In view of the forthcoming Ordinary Jubilee of the Catholic Church, Fides Agency encloses this appendix in order to offer a more detailed overview of the life of the Church in the world compared to the usual dossier that collects statistical data, in which are collected and summarized also with the help of graphs, data concerning the Catholic population, the number of priests, men and women religious and the number of baptisms administered worldwide over the twenty-five years between 1998 and 2022.

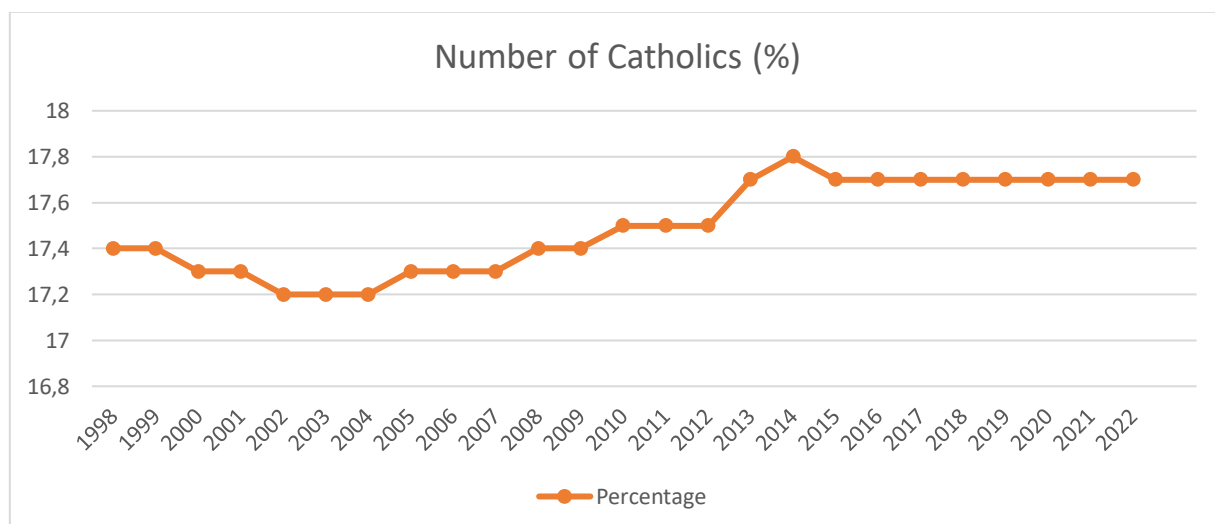
This appendix also collects and processes data and tables from the «Church's Book of Statistics» published from 1998 to 2022. Unlike the classic dossier, the data taken into consideration do not go into the details of each individual continent, but offer the general worldwide picture in order to propose a broader context of analysis.

### Catholics

What is immediately apparent from the data collected is that the number of Catholics worldwide has been steadily increasing over the twenty-five years taken into consideration.

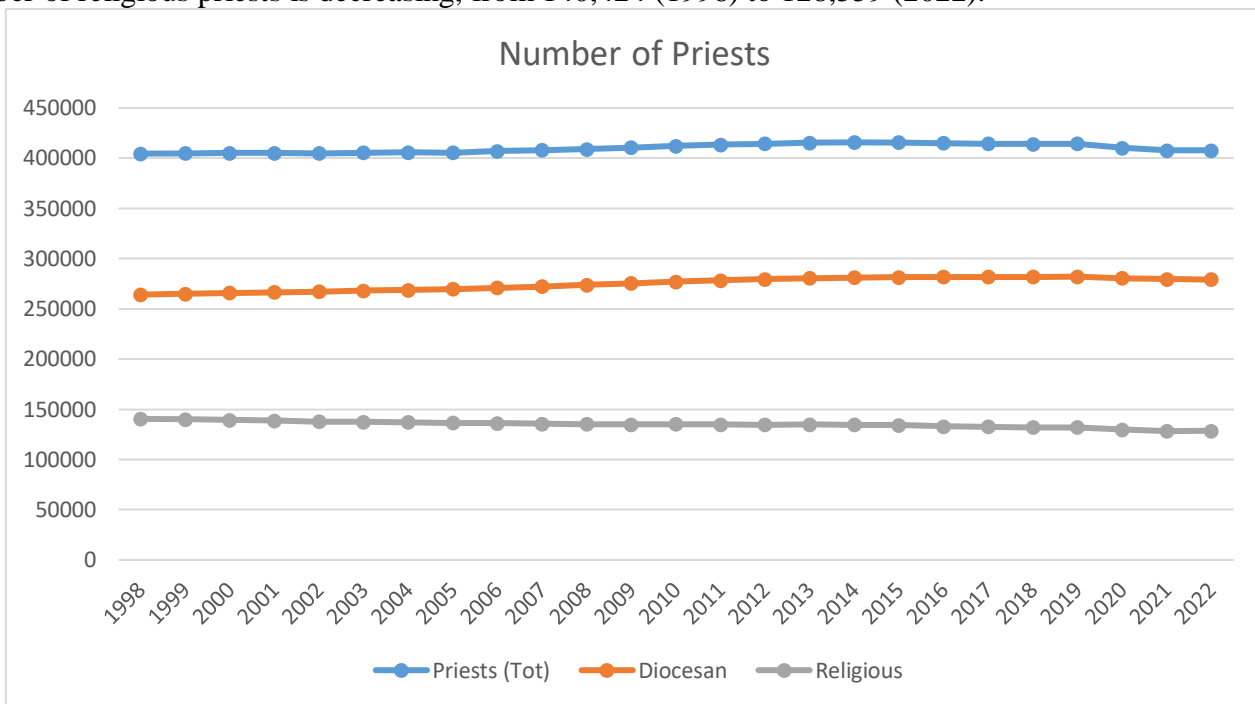


While in 1998 there were 1,018,257,000 Catholics, today there are 1,389,573,000 according to the latest data. At the same time, there has also been general population growth: in twenty-five years, we have gone from a population of 5,855,623,000 to 7,838,944,000. In this perspective, the percentage figure is significant. In 1998, 17.4% of the world population was Catholic. In the latest available change it has reached 17.7%. A percentage, the latter, which has remained unvaried since 2015 after a mini-peak reached in 2014 (17.8%).



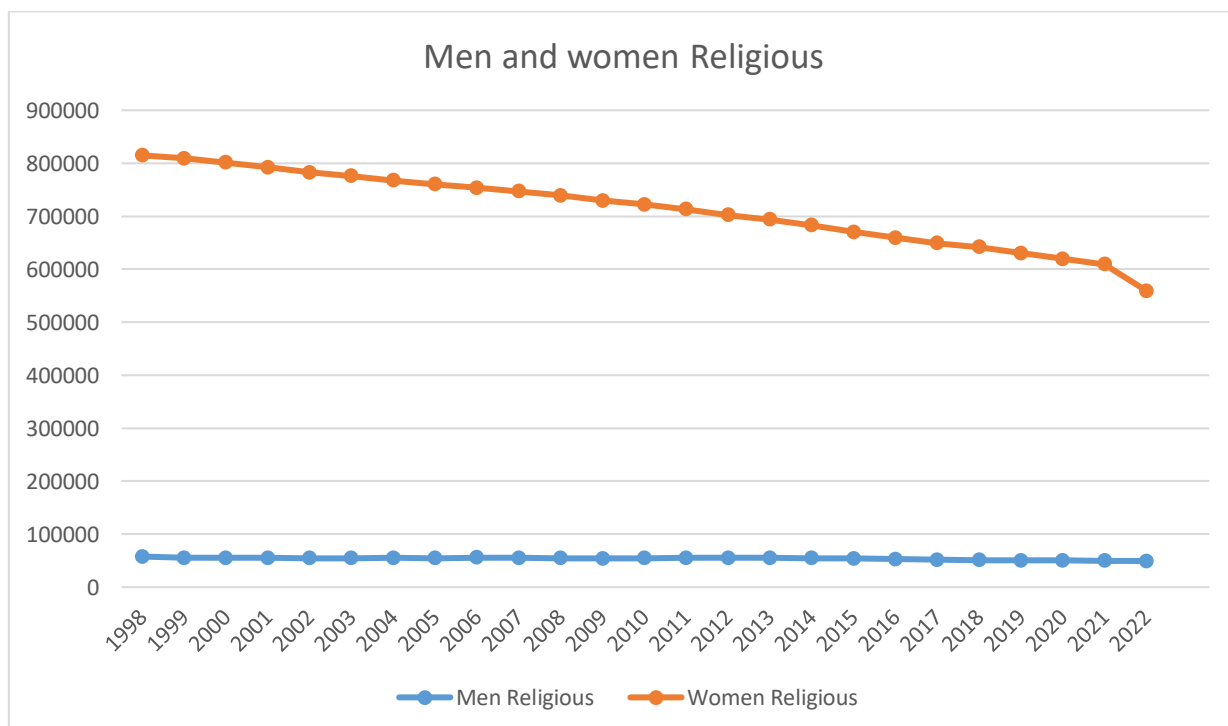
### Priests

The other significant figure concerns the number of priests. In total, worldwide, the number of priests has gone from 404,628 to 407,730 in the twenty-five years taken into consideration. If we go into detail, we can see that while the number of diocesan priests is increasing (from 264,202 in 1998 to 279,171 in 2022), the number of religious priests is decreasing, from 140,424 (1998) to 128,559 (2022).



### Men and women Religious

As far as the number of religious is concerned, men and women religious have registered a decrease. According to the data, the number of men religious in the twenty-five years taken into consideration has never exceeded 60,000. At the end of 2022, the number reached 49,414 (in 1998, the number reached 57,813). The same downward curve, although graphically more evident, is repeated for women religious, who have gone from 814,779 to 559,228 in twenty-five years



### Baptisms administered

While the Catholic population is increasing, the administration of the sacrament of Baptism has decreased worldwide. It fell from 17,932,891 Baptisms administered in 1998 to 13,327,037 in 2022. A peak was registered on the occasion of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Catholic Church in 2000: 18,408,076 Baptisms were administered worldwide during the Holy Year.

