

Church Gains In Far East

By FATHER MORGAN J. VITTEGLI, M.M.
Hong Kong — (NC) — Missionary work throughout the Far East during the past year resulted in an increase of 1,237,871 Catholics as the Church continued to progress despite the continued pressure of communism and nationalism.

There are at present 35,820,000 Catholics among the one and a half billion people living in the countries of the Far East from Korea to India and Pakistan.

A further indication of missionary progress in this part of Asia is the fact that native priests in these countries now number 11,766, compared with a total of 19,000 only 46 years ago. Since 1950 the number of native bishops has risen from 33 to 102.

FOREMOST AMONG the Far East missionary regions reporting an abundant harvest of souls is South Korea, where according to last year's census, some 42,383 converts were received into the Church. Today, the 2,258 Korean priests and 150 foreign missionaries care for 417,079 Catholics and have 102,592 catechumens under instruction.

Communism ruled North Korea has 40,000 Catholics. The rate of conversions in South Korea should continue to rise because of extremely favorable conditions. Among these are freedom of religion, encouragement on the part of the government, good transportation and the great personal sacrifices made by the Koreans to support the Church as much as they can.

The number of conversions made each year could be much higher were it not for a critical shortage of missionaries.

IN JAPAN (a total of 12,461 converts during the past year) raised the Catholic population to 266,006, compared with 120,000 a fifth of a century ago. Although there has been no extraordinary movement towards the Church since the immediate postwar period, the Church's growth in Japan has been constant and steady.

The Church in Japan, however, continues to enjoy one of the highest vocation rates in proportion to the Catholic population. There are now 352 Japanese priests, 496 seminarians, and 5,034 professed Sisters, novices and postulants. Foreign missionaries in Japan number 1,181, priests and 1,078 Sisters.

Formosa reports an immediate 20,000 converts baptized over the past 12 months. This brings the total Catholic population of the island to 164,000. In the past seven years the number of converts has increased by 44,500. While the conversion movement among the refugees from mainland China has nearly run its course, with the majority of those interested in the Church baptized, conversions among the 3,000,000 Formosan natives continue to increase.

The 10,000 catechumens presently under instruction are an indication that many of the missionaries, many of whom have been forced to leave Red China, are becoming more fluent in the local dialects and more familiar with the mentality and customs of the island's native population.

A greater emphasis on the apostolate among the Formosans, especially in the field of education, promises to bring greater numbers to the Church in the future. The average number of converts for each missionary in Formosa still remains higher than the highest average ever recorded in the Chinese mainland.

IN HONG KONG the Catholic population increased by 18,314 during the past year as the remarkable postwar conversion movement continues in this tiny British colony on the doorstep of Red China.

This year's census of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong reveals that there are now 146,464 Catholics in the colony. There are 12,180 catechumens under instruction in a population of three million inhabitants.

Chiefly responsible for the large number of converts made in Hong Kong in the past 10 years has been the immigration of some two and a half million refugees from the China mainland. The love and respect for the individual which the Church preaches is something eagerly sought after by the Chinese who had lost all earthly possessions and were reduced to the status of mere animals or machines.

Macau, a tiny Portuguese colony in southern China, has enjoyed a similar conversion movement among the Chinese refugees. A total of 804 converts during the past year has raised its Catholic population to 16,441.

The 19,043,744 Catholics in the Philippines make up more than half of the total Catholic population of the Far East. An increase of 539,471 was recorded here in the past year. In the Philippines, more than anywhere else in the Far East, Catholicism enjoys the prestige of being the religion of the overwhelming majority of the population.

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New Catholic Church in Israel

Haifa — (RNS) — American Father Thomas of the Sacred Heart (right), an Assistant to the Superior General of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, is shown after blessing ground for a new Catholic church in Haifa, Israel. Israeli government representatives and officials of the Haifa municipalities witnessed the laying of the cornerstone for the sanctuary, which is dedicated to St. Joseph. The church is being constructed to replace a building which has proved too small for the 4,000-member Catholic community in Haifa, mostly Arabs. It will be the third Catholic church built in Israel in recent years, where there are more than 37,000 Catholics.

Minister Advises Stress Whole Truth

Cincinnati — (NC) — Catholics have an obligation to "promote unity" and one good way is to emphasize the whole truth instead of denouncing those who are "holders of partial truth."

A former Protestant minister who five years ago became a Catholic offered this counsel to the Cincinnati Medialists. Irwin St. John Tucker, veteran Chicago newspaperman and St. Stephen's Episcopal church there, noted that "the desire for unity has been increasingly manifested throughout Christendom in the past few years."

"DENOMINATIONS which once gloried in their differences," he said, "now glory in their consolidation." Every new Protestant church has an altar. Now they must be shown what an altar means.

The Alabama-born convert, editor Amen, magazine of the Vernacular Society, said, "In fact, all heresy is the result of exaggeration of a truth or of a truth magnified out of proportion, just as an integral part of the body, growing out of proportion, becomes a disorder."

He is convinced, therefore, that "instead of denouncing holders of partial truth, the correct Catholic idea is to stress the truth, and urge that it be held in the right proportion."

"Catholics who know the fullness of their Faith recognize it even when held by others," he said. "They must proclaim the necessity of unity; for, while Protestant emphasis on private judgment can rest content with a multiplicity of sects, a Catholic must work for the unity of the spirit which brings about unity of its expression."

Citing the affection won by Pope John XXIII, Mr. Tucker said: "Never was there a man who won such universal love in so short a space of time. It is in the intensity of that good will that the hope of unity lies."

Mr. Tucker characterized Protestant sects as "fragments of the One Church — each holding some truth, but not in due proportion to the others."

"These treasures they possess — hymns, chorales, knowledge of Scripture, devotion to missionary work, dignified and intelligible liturgy — all these being the fast work of a young California priest."

When Father Richard A. Bell, M.M., of San Jose, Calif., learned of a distant village where the crops had failed and the people were in need of help he immediately swung into action. The 32-year-old Maryknoller began a motorcycle relay carrying sacks of food and distributing them throughout the stricken village.

The food packages carried the people through the drought until further aid was received. One woman to whom the young priest gave 15 pounds of noodles burst into tears and said, "If he hadn't brought food she would have had to sell her baby."

Today in the village three hundred people have signed up to study. This Christian religion which preaches and practices kindness.

Capital's Pupils Third Negro Washington — (RNS) — Almost 600 of the students enrolled in parochial schools in the District of Columbia are Negro, according to figures released by the superintendent of public schools, Dr. Carl F. Hansen.

Dr. Hansen said that nonpublic schools have 10,302 students enrolled in the city of Washington, a slight decline from last year.

There are 2,843 white students and 4,502 Negroes enrolled in church-related schools, most of which are conducted by the Catholic church, which completely desegregated its schools.

Violence Mars Independence

Yaounde — (NC) — Cameroon, became Africa's newest independent country amid continuing violence that in recent months has taken scores of lives, including those of two missionaries.

The new state's government, headed by a Moslem Premier, Amadou Ahidjo, blamed the violence on an outlawed left-wing party, the Union of the Cameroon People, which some observers have called communist-dominated. Others attribute the strife to bitter intertribal rivalry.

Cameroon is an almost entirely agricultural nation on Africa's west coast, about the size of California, with a population of 3,238,196, of whom only about 17,000 are whites. Catholics number 307,303; Moslems total about 625,000 and Protestants approximately 350,000. The rest are animist pagans.

The new country is a part of the former German colony of Kamerun, which after World War I was divided between France and Britain. After World War II the two parts were made into British and French territories. It is the French-administered area that has become independent. The British Cameroon are governed as part of the neighboring colony of Nigeria.

THE CHURCH was established in the region in 1890 when the first mission station was opened and the Kamerun apostolic prefecture was established. It was placed in charge of the Pallottine Fathers and its first apostolic prefect was Father Henry Vieler.

The first missionaries suffered severely from malaria and many of them died, but new missions continued to be established and in 1904 the prefecture of Kamerun was raised to the rank of an apostolic vicariate, and Father Vieler was named its first bishop.

Today the Church in Cameroon is divided among the

Nuns Benefit From Will Philadelphia — (RNS) — The Catholic Medical Mission Sisters will receive the medical library and equipment of the late Dr. Joseph J. Toland, Jr., of Philadelphia, and, upon the death of his widow, a \$25,000 legacy, according to the terms of his will.

After Mrs. Toland's death, a \$25,000 bequest goes to the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, and \$1,000 to the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales at North East Catholic High School.

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