

WORLD & NATION

Survey provides a look at the country's new priests

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A national study has found that nearly one-fourth of this year's new priests were born abroad and more than one-fourth come from racial or ethnic minorities.

The study, a survey of the ordination class of 2000, says that the median age of this year's ordinands is 36.1. Forty-nine percent are in the 30-39 age bracket; 25 percent are under 30; 18 percent are 40-49; and 9 percent are over 50.

The survey was conducted in February and March by contacting all U.S. dioceses and religious communities and asking a staff member to list the names of all the men preparing for ordination this year. The staff member was asked to complete a one-page questionnaire on each ordinand or to have the men fill it out.

The results, released May 22, tabulated characteristics of 383 ordinands across the country. Of these, 309 were preparing to serve in dioceses and 74 in religious orders.

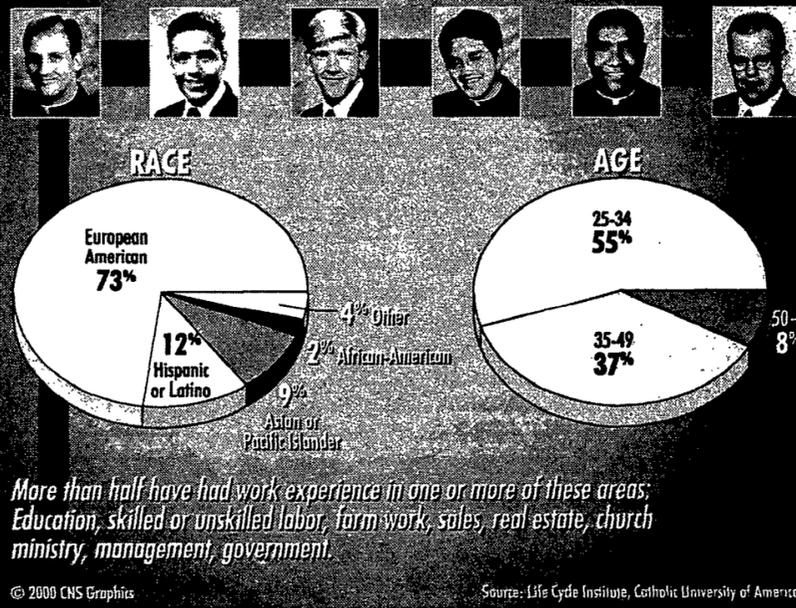
Catholic University of America sociologist Dean R. Hoge designed the survey for the bishops' Committee on Vocations and reported on the results.

As in previous studies, Catholic education was found to be a significant factor in the background of the ordination class.

Sixty percent have attended Catholic elementary school, 50 percent Catholic high school and 60 percent Catholic college. Among the general adult Catholic population, 54 percent say they have attended Catholic elementary school, 26 percent Catholic high school and 10 per-

Priests 2000

General makeup of priests ordained this year in the United States...



cent Catholic college.

On race and ethnicity, 73 percent of the ordinands are European-American, 12 percent Hispanic or Latino, 9 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 2 percent African-American, 1 percent African and 3 percent other. Less than 1 percent described themselves as European or as mixed.

Hoge noted that the Hispanic/Latino figure is higher than in previous years but still below the percentage of Hispanics in the total U.S. Catholic population, esti-

mated at 25 percent to 30 percent.

He noted that the African-American ordination rate also falls below the estimated 3 percent to 4 percent of Catholics who are African-American.

On the other hand, the ordination rate for Asians and Pacific Islanders is well above that group's representation, 2-3 percent, in the U.S. Catholic population.

While 76 percent of this year's ordinands are U.S.-born, 24 percent were born abroad, up 2 percent from last year. Six percent come from Mexico, 6 per-

cent from Vietnam and 2 percent each from Africa, Poland and the Philippines. Other native countries or regions represented in this year's class include Western Europe, Central America, Ireland, Korea, Colombia, the Caribbean and Peru.

Nearly three-fourths of those being ordained had at least a bachelor's degree before they entered the seminary, including 13 percent with master's degrees and about 5 percent with doctorates. Only 20 percent entered the seminary after high school.

Nearly five out of six reported prior work experiences. The most commonly cited were:

- Educator, such as teacher, school administrator, coach or guidance counselor: 16 percent.

- Skilled or unskilled laborer or farm-worker: 14 percent.

- Church ministry, such as parish administrator or religious educator: 11 percent.

Other jobs included managers, supervisors, government officials, military, social workers and a wide range of jobs in business, finance, health care, law, science, the arts, engineering, computers and writing.

Among favorite hobbies, four areas stood out: music, reading, team sports and individual sports. Each of those was mentioned by 12 percent to 13 percent of the ordinands.

Twenty-nine men's religious communities and 132 of the 192 U.S. dioceses responded to the survey. A U.S. seminary survey last fall indicated more than 600 seminarians were in their final year of studies this year. That suggests the 383 respondents in the new survey represented about three-fifths of this year's ordinands.

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JUNE SPECIALS

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New archbishop of New York installed

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — The Archdiocese of New York is a "basilica" that must be built on the foundation of "uncompromising acceptance of all that the Lord has revealed," said the newly installed head of the archdiocese.

Archbishop Edward M. Egan, delivering the homily at his installation Mass June 19, compared the archdiocese to a basilica in Rome, Sts. John and Paul, that has served as the titular church of the cardinals of New York.

He recalled that his episcopal consecration was held there in 1985, and recounted the tradition that the basilica was named for two saints of the fourth century who were martyred under the anti-Christian emperor, Julian (the Apostate), because of their refusal to "forsake the truth of our Lord and Savior."

After their martyrdom, their house became a church, and successor churches were built above it, he said.

He said New York Cardinal Francis J. Spellman arranged for the excavations that confirmed the tradition and opened the saints' home for visitors to see today.

"I love the Basilica of Sts. John and Paul because it sums up what parishes and dioceses are all about," Archbishop Egan said.

The archbishop, who has taken "In the holiness of truth" as his episcopal motto (from Ephesians 4:24), said the truth that God has revealed must be known, accepted and announced "completely, clearly, courageously."

Referring to a poll that indicated many Catholics doubted that Christ was really present in the bread and wine of Communion, Archbishop Egan said Catholics must be "a eucharistically



CNS photo
U.S. bishops line up to congratulate new New York Archbishop Edward M. Egan at the end of his installation Mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral June 19.

prayerful people if our basilica is to stand."

Then, in reference to the day's Gospel reading, the story of Jesus' inaugural sermon at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-22), the archbishop said the faith must be lived out in "works of justice and charity."

Archbishop Egan asked the people of the archdiocese to let a "new New Yorker" work with them to "remove all doubt about the foundation of our basilica."

The archbishop made a reference to abortion in his homily, which brought applause. He said Catholics could not accept the poverty of others, neglect the sick and disabled or "stand idly by" while

a "being" that no one could prove is "other than human being with an unalienable right to live" was killed in the mother's womb.

The Mass lasted more than two hours, plus a preliminary half-hour for processing in representatives of various sectors of the archdiocese, hundreds of priests, dozens of visiting archbishops and bishops and a row of cardinals in red.

Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, apostolic nuncio in the United States, read the letter from Pope John Paul II appointing Archbishop Egan to New York, and then escorted the new archbishop to his chair in the sanctuary.

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, New York Gov. George E. Pataki, New York City Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and numerous other prominent public figures were among the more than 3,000 people that packed the cathedral for the event.

The new archbishop did not engage in the kind of joking or informal gestures that his predecessor, the late Cardinal John J. O'Connor, used to flavor his installation and other events.

But at the end of Mass, Archbishop Egan delighted the congregation by introducing his first-grade teacher, Dominican Sister Donatillo Ryan, now 96, from St. Giles School in Oak Park, Ill. Members of his family were also present, and some participated in the Scripture readings and brought up offertory gifts.

Archbishop Egan received warm applause from the congregation, and they reached out eagerly to shake hands with him as the recession moved through the cathedral.

He also took time to go outside at the end, and greeted people on Fifth Avenue who had been listening to the service by loudspeaker.