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STATISTICS ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MEXICO AND CUBA

Pope Benedict XVI is due to make an apostolic trip to Mexico and Cuba from 23 to 29 March, to mark the two hundredth anniversary of the independence of Mexico, and the four hundredth of the discovery of the image of "Nuestra Senora de la Caridad del Cobre" in Cuba. For this occasion, statistics have been published concerning the Catholic Church in those two countries. The information, updated to 31 December 2010, comes from the Central Statistical Office of the Church.

Mexico has a surface area of 1,958,201 square kilometres and a population of 108,426,000, of whom 99,635,000 (91.89 per cent) are Catholic. There are 93 ecclesiastical circumscriptions, 6,744 parishes and 7,169 pastoral centres of other kinds. Currently, there are 163 bishops, 16,234 priests, 30,023 religious, 505 members of secular institutes, 25,846 lay missionaries and 295,462 catechists. Minor seminarians number 4,524 and major seminarians 6,495.

A total of 1,856,735 students attend 8,991 centres of Catholic education of all levels and 1,822 special education centres. Other institutions belonging to the Church or run by priests or religious in Mexico include 257 hospitals, 1,602 clinics, 8 leper colonies, 372 homes for the elderly or disabled, 329 orphanages and nurseries, 2,134 family counselling centres and other pro-life centres, and 340 institutions of other kinds.

Cuba has a surface area of 110,861 square kilometres and a population of 11,242,000, of whom 6,766,000 (60.19 per cent) are Catholic. There are 11 ecclesiastical circumscriptions, 304 parishes and 2,210 pastoral centres of other kinds. Currently, there are 17 bishops, 361 priests, 656 religious, 24 members of secular institutes, 2,122 lay missionaries and 4,133 catechists. Minor seminarians number 13 and major seminarians 78.

A total of 1,113 students attend 12 centres of Catholic education of all levels and 10 special education centres. Other institutions belonging to the Church or run by priests or religious in Cuba include 2 clinics, 1 leper colony, 8 homes for the elderly or disabled, 3 orphanages and nurseries, and 3 institutions of other kinds.