

Cath. Ch. - M. Freri, Joseph
Facts and Figures.
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The Missionary Congress

Held in Chicago, Nov. 1908,

**unanimously adopted the following
resolution :**

“ We recognize the immense amount of good accomplished in the past by the SOCIETIES FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH and the Holy Childhood, and earnestly urge upon our people the need of increased support for these excellent institutions.”

In his address to the Congress Archbishop Quigley of Chicago said :

“ . . . The Foreign Missionary Agencies of the SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH and of the Holy Childhood, were never better organized than they are to-day.”

A NEW PRIVILEGE GRANTED TO OUR ECCLESIASTICAL BENEFACTORS.

The Holy Father, by a decree of February 1, 1908, has granted to all Priests who are Diocesan or Parochial Directors or **SPECIAL MEMBERS** of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the power to apply to Rosaries the Indulgences known as the Croisier. (*An Indulgence of 500 days for each "Our*

Father" and "*Hail Mary.*")

TO

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

627 LEXINGTON AVE., NEW YORK

I desire to be enrolled as a Special Member of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, and you will find herewith an offering of \$_____ for the purpose.

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THE FOREIGN MISSIONS

The following article by the Right Rev. Mgr. J. Freri, Director General of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, was, by request, prepared for and read at the Catholic Missionary Congress held at Chicago in November, 1908. Within the fifteen minutes allowed for each paper, all that it was possible to do was to *glance* at the foreign mission field, the workers, the means at their disposal, and the results of their labors.

From this brief survey, we shall, however, see what Catholics are doing for the spread of the Gospel, and the reign of the Catholic Church over the minds and hearts of mankind.

By way of contrast, we will also look at what is being done for the same purpose by our separated Christian brethren.

The Missionary Field.

What is the Missionary field? From a certain point of view the whole world is a missionary field; there is not a portion of it where missionary effort is not required.

But, from a more restricted point of view, we will call foreign missions those countries that are still under the jurisdiction of the Propaganda. The recent action of Our Holy Father, Pope Pius X. has considerably limited

the field, and for our purpose we will follow this distinction.

A few general figures will suffice. They are the ones furnished by the Propaganda itself. We may remark, nevertheless, that in some cases they are only approximative.

On the American continent there are still a few Prefectures and Vicariates looked upon as missionary countries. These are located in the West Indies, Lower California, Peru, Chili and Argentina. Their total population is about 2,500,000, of which 650,000 are Catholics, ministered to by 400 missionaries.

In Europe there are a number of missionary countries under the jurisdiction of the Propaganda: such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, part of Germany, the Balkan States, Turkey. Their total population is about 40 millions, of whom a little over a million are Catholics, the rest being Protestants, Schismatics, Jews, Mohammedans, etc. The number of missionary priests in these countries is nearly 1,500.

The whole of Asia is a mission land, with its enormous population of 900,000,000, of whom less than 3 millions and a half belong to the true Church, the rest being Mohammedans, Buddhists, Brahmans, Shintoists,

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Pagans and other non-Christians. There are in Asia 7,650 missionary priests.

The African continent and islands contain over 150 millions of people and less than one million of Catholics with 750 priests.

Oceanica has a population of 7,500,000 with 1,200,000 Catholics and 1,500 priests.

If we add these figures we find that the total population of the missionary world may be reckoned in round numbers at eleven hundred millions, the number of Catholics 6,850,000, and the number of missionary priests 11,800. I have not mentioned their faithful helpers, about 4,000 brothers and 40,000 nuns.

This means that there is in the mission field, at which we are now looking, a population of one Catholic for every fifteen thousand people, and one missionary for every 93,000 non-Catholics.* In other words, to-day, eighteen centuries after the Redemption of mankind, there are over **1000 MILLIONS** of *human beings who have not as yet received the Gospel message.*

* In some parts the proportion is considerably larger. For instance, the Prefecture Apostolic of Canton, China, contains a pagan population of **31 millions**, and the Catholic missionaries number 86, which gives one priest for about 350,000 pagans!

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I do not say who do not belong to the Church. We have millions of these, right by our side, there are millions of them even in what we call the Catholic countries of Europe. But of these, many have either lost the faith through their own fault, or the fault of their forefathers. To many others the blessings of Christianity are offered under many forms, the truth is preached at their door, one may say. To use a common expression : **they have a chance!** But there are millions, nay hundreds of millions of pagans, especially in Asia and Africa, who have never known that a Saviour was ever born to them, who have never heard the sweet name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

When we reflect upon these statistics, we find that they are startling, astounding, heart-rending! We are not surprised that they form, in the hands of infidels, one of the most powerful arguments against the Divine origin of our Holy Religion.

To think that 1800 years after the Redemption, more than one-half of the world has not heard of it because the number of messengers has been insufficient to bring to them the good tidings!

Why No Greater Progress ?

Naturally, we are inclined to ask: " But has the Church to whom her founder said: 'Go, teach **all** nations . . . Preach the Gospel to **every creature**' . . . been faithful to her vocation ? "

Yes, the Church has been faithful to her mission from the beginning. But she can carry on this apostolate, which in the words of Our beloved Holy Father, is "**pre-eminently Her work**," only in proportion to the means placed at Her disposal by Her children to overcome the obstacles she constantly encounters. There are many hindrances, besides the powers of darkness, as active to-day as in the time of Our Lord. I will merely mention the two following.

The great defection of the XVI. century, which brought about the apostasy of several European Catholic nations and caused millions of the faithful to leave the fold, is having the most disastrous consequences for the Christian missions. After being indifferent for two centuries as to what became of the heathen, the Protestant denominations, in the XIX. century, developed the most wonderful spirit of proselytizing. One hundred

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years ago they began to send forth their emissaries, and to-day Protestant missionaries are to be found in **every corner of the earth**. They are established in places where Catholic priests have as yet been unable to set foot. When, at the cost of what sacrifices, only God knows, our missionaries arrive in an isolated place, they often find that the cockle has been sown in the field of the Father, and that in order to have the faith prevail they must overcome, not only the degraded practices of paganism, but the objections naturally raised by the spectacle of a divided Christianity.

The other obstacle is the lack of men and women workers, and, above all, the lack of means, which is the main cause of the lack of workers. I wish time would allow me to show you how immense is that lack of men and means by repeating some of the cries of distress from the field, that we daily hear. Let these two suffice:

Only three weeks ago the Superior of the Belgian Foreign Missions wrote us that he had forty men ready to go to the Philippines, where there is a lamentable need of priests, but no money to pay for their transportation.

A Jesuit Father in a letter to us from

China last month stated that in one district only, that of N. Kiang-Su, 10,000 Catechumens could be baptized **every year** if there were priests to minister to them and funds to build chapels. The crop is whitening, but there is no one to gather the harvest.

The Budget of the Missions.

This leads us to the question: What is the budget of the foreign missions? It is difficult to determine it accurately. We have, of course, the reports of the various organizations receiving alms for the missions, at least of those that publish reports. Besides this, nearly all Religious Orders and Societies issue bulletins, through which they solicit the charity of the faithful. Then, again, missionaries receive alms from their brethren in more fortunate lands, from their relatives and friends at home; some of their converts are giving a little help, very little, for generally they are poor, "*Pauperes evangelizantur.*"

Now, including all these sources of income, after collecting much information and consulting several chiefs of missions, I think I am far within the truth in saying that the missionaries, above mentioned, live and work on less than 6 millions of dollars a year, including everything. If we reckon 10,000

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priests, 4,000 brothers, and 40,000 nuns, this would give an average of \$111.00 per year and per capita. With this amount they have to support themselves, build churches, maintain schools, hospitals, asylums, colleges, seminaries, pay the transportation of missionaries, etc.

It is clear that, under such conditions, Catholic mission work cannot progress, despite the superhuman sacrifices and absolute self-devotion of the poor missionary priests, brothers, and nuns, who consent to live away from everything they hold dear in this world, in unhealthy countries, and in, I shall not say evangelical poverty, but abject misery, for the salvation of their fellow-beings.

Protestant Missionary Efforts.

And now, by way of contrast, it may be interesting to know what our separated brethren are doing for the same cause.

According to the official report of the United Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the whole sum collected in 1907 by Protestants of all countries was \$21,418,869.00, of which sum \$8,997,970.00 were contributed by Protestants in the United States. It is clear that our Protestant fellow-countrymen

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believe they have obligations in this matter. We find that every sect makes great sacrifices to send out, and support in a liberal manner, missionaries to preach and teach what they believe to be the Gospel of Christ.

Let us not delude ourselves that Protestants missions are a mere sham. With this enormous outlay they are obtaining remarkable results, and, above all, they are raising a powerful obstacle to the planting of the true Christian Faith. There are nations that would to-day be far on the road toward Catholicity, were it not that when our missionaries arrived they found that Protestantism had already, there as everywhere, done its work of dividing the minds of the people and leading them towards incredulity and indifference.

It is not to be wondered that in all their letters, our missionaries complain of the utter impossibility of competing with their Protestant neighbors. Were it not for the efficiency of the Truth they preach, and the grace of God which is with them, they could accomplish little or nothing.

Nevertheless they are doing wonders with the means at their disposal. But if we are to make any further advance among the billion

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of pagans and non-Catholics, more apostles must be sent, and there must be an output of alms in these days, as in the days of St. Paul, on the part of the brethren who have received the Faith.

From the foregoing, it follows that Catholics are not doing their duty to their unbelieving and pagan brethren. I do not speak of American Catholics only, but of those of old Europe as well. I venture to say that many so-called Catholic nations have not generously passed to others the Light of Faith, and this is perhaps why it is growing dim among some of them. Let us beware of the same fate.

A Plea for the Missions.

I may be excused for making a plea in behalf of foreign missions, it was the necessary consequence of the subject assigned to me. But, I am not exclusive; I know quite well that home missions, whose cause will be eloquently pleaded in this Congress, have the first claim upon us. Yes, it is the first duty of every Catholic to help missionary work in his parish, in his diocese, in his country. Indian and Negro missions, missions to non-Catholics ought to have his practical sympathy, but he

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ought also to remember occasionally his foreign brother still in absolute darkness.

This does not call for the sacrifice of our substance. A trifle from each one, if gathered regularly and assiduously would be a wonderful help to Mother Church for the spread of our Holy Faith. Charity begins at home, but must not end there. The Catholic whose charity is limited by the shadow of his church steeple fails to understand all the obligations of his vocation. As Cardinal Wiseman said: "Every member of the Catholic and Apostolic Church ought to consider it an honor and a glory to be included in the sublime commission to labour for the conversion of pagan nations."

Yes, we are sadly in need of missionary work in this country, and to use the words of Cardinal Manning: "It is because we have need of men and means at home that I am convinced we ought to send both men and means abroad. In exact proportion as we freely give what we have freely received, will our works at home prosper and the zeal and number of our priests be multiplied. This is the test and the measure of Catholic life among us. The missionary spirit is the condition of growth and if the faith is

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to be extended at home, it must be by our aiding to carry it abroad."

Paradoxical as the assertion may appear, I believe that one of the necessary conditions of success in our propagation of the Gospel at home is to contribute to its propagation abroad. And this is why I utter the wish: God speed the day when every parish will have a mother's love for these far-away priests, brothers and nuns who are striving for Christ, in the wilderness, beyond the frontiers of civilization and Christendom!

*"The harvest indeed is great,
but the labourers are few."*

*"Pray ye therefore the Lord of
the harvest, that he send forth
labourers into His harvest."*

Matt. IX., 37

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

It was founded in Lyons, France, in 1822 in answer to an appeal for help from Mgr. Dubourg, Bishop of New Orleans, and the first missions assisted were those of Louisiana and Kentucky. But the Society soon asserted its Catholic character by assisting the Apostolate throughout the whole missionary world. To-day it aids more than three hundred dioceses and vicariates in America, Asia, Africa, Oceanica and the non-Catholic countries of Europe.

While it aims at helping the whole Missionary world, it solicits the prayers and alms of the whole Catholic world. Founded in France, its administration has remained there, but it has legations in all the countries of Europe and the republics of North and South America.

The duties of the delegates are to make the work of the missions known to the faithful and collect their alms which are distributed in accordance with the desire of the Holy Father, the data of the Propaganda and the reports from the chiefs of missions. It is a law of the Society to make its affairs public and full reports of the collections and distributions are published regularly.

The Society has no permanent fund. At the beginning of each year, the total sum of money collected during the past year is distributed to the missions which are thus always at the mercy of the faithful.

The Society's Organization

The aim of the Society is to assist by prayers and alms, the missionaries who preach the Gospel in heathen and other non-Catholic countries.

The organization is very simple.

To be a Member it is necessary : 1—To recite daily one "*Our Father*," one "*Hail Mary*," and "*St. Francis Xavier Pray, For Us*." 2—To contribute at least *Five Cents Monthly* to the missions. The usual method of gathering the contributions of the Faithful is to form the Associates into **Bands of Ten**, of whom one acts as **Promoter**.

There are **Special Members** who contribute six dollars a year, and **Perpetual Members** who contribute at one time, or at different times during the course of one year, a sum of at least forty dollars **Deceased Persons** may be enrolled by their friends as Ordinary, Special or Perpetual members.

Both living and dead associates share in the merits and prayers of missionaries and thousands of Masses offered yearly for the benefactors.

Legal Form of Bequest.

The Society is incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, and any person intending to leave a gift may use the following form of bequest:

"I hereby give, devise and bequeath unto *The Society for the Propagation of the Faith* (New York City) the sum of _____ Dollars.

The Society and the Holy See.

The Propagation of the Faith was canonically established by Pope Pius VII. in 1823, the year following its foundation, and all the Popes who have succeeded him in the see of Peter have recommended it to the charity of the faithful.

Leo XII. approved the Society in 1824 and Pius VIII. in 1829. In 1840 Gregory XVI. placed it in the rank of universal Catholic Institutions.

Pius IX. in 1847 and Leo XIII. in 1879 confirmed this judgment, and in 1904 our beloved Holy Father Pius X. addressed an encyclical letter to the Catholic world in which he said :

“ Through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith salvation began for numberless people. . . Through it there has been gathered a harvest of souls. . We are filled with hope that this most noble association will grow in strength day by day . . . and may Christ protect it since it is its aim to spread His Most Holy Name. . . ”

Spiritual Favors.

In pursuance of the paternal solicitude of the Sovereign Pontiffs, the Society has been enriched with many Spiritual Favors. Some are common to all members, others are privileges granted to ecclesiastical benefactors.

What the Society has Done for The Missions

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith to-day furnishes the largest fund for the support of the Missions.

The following statement will show the amount the Catholic world has given and the Missionary world has received through this channel of Apostolic zeal since the foundation of the Society in **1822 up to 1908.**

Collected by the Society in

America	\$ 4,180,782.88
Europe	70,244,475.97
Asia	83,158.08
Africa	295,485.49
Oceanica	123,015.17
Total	\$74,926,917.59

Distributed to Missions in

America	\$10,495,339.16
Europe	10,706,783.87
Asia	30,247,000.95
Africa	10,790,906.49
Oceanica.....	6,923,277.63
Special Donations.....	} 5,763,609.49
Transportation of Mis- sionaries.....	
Management	
Total	\$74,926,917.59

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**The Annals of the
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Is the Official Organ of the Society.**

It is published every other month, and is forwarded gratis to all Perpetual and Special Members, also to all Bands of Ten Associates.

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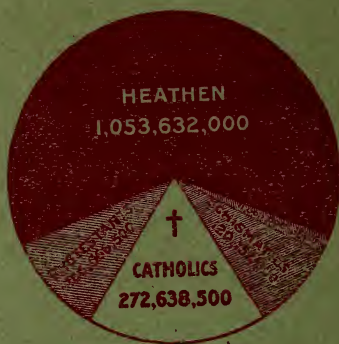
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Society for the Propagation of the Faith

627 Lexington Ave.

New York City



Figures speak.

To many, the proportion of Catholics represented in the above diagram is surprising, if not disappointing.

Are we right in believing that it should be larger?

It is in your power to help in making it larger.