

RELIGION IN SPAIN

Compiled by Clifton L. Holland, Director of PROLADES - 2003

RELIGIONS AS A PERCENT OF POPULATION

Roman Catholicism 82.1 percent

Other religions 2.0 percent

None 14.6 percent

(February 2002 poll by the Center for Sociological Investigations)

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

The Kingdom of Spain is located on the Iberian Peninsula in the southwestern region of Europe, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and France in the north, Portugal to the west and the Mediterranean Sea along its eastern and southern coasts. The heart of the peninsula is a plateau, which drops away from the Pyrenees and Cantabrian mountains in the north. This plateau, about 2,500 feet in elevation, is drained by four rivers that flow southwest into the Atlantic Ocean: the Douro, Tagus, Guadiana and Guadalquivir rivers. A fifth river, the Ebro, flows parallel to the Pyrenees and southeast into the Mediterranean Sea. The geographical features of mountains and rivers separate the peninsula into regions, which helps to explain the divisive regionalism that marks the history of Spain and Portugal.

Geography was unkind to inhabitants of Iberia as far as soil and climate is concerned. Only 30 percent of the land is fertile and the region is plagued with periodic draught, which creates a high demand for irrigation water. About 21 percent of the land has permanent pastures, about 32 percent is covered in woodlands, and only about nine percent has permanent cultivations: wheat, cotton, citrus, grapes, olives and fruits. However, its majestic scenery and architecture and its historical heritage have made Spain an attractive destination for tourists from around the world.

Politically, Spain is composed 50 provinces and 17 autonomous regions, which total 194,897 square miles. The present Kingdom of Spain was formed by the unification of various states, which for many centuries had kept their own names and boundaries, and had different laws (the *fueros*), customs, characteristics and methods of government. These independent states were: the Kingdoms of Galicia, León, Old and New Castile, Extremadura, Andalusia, Murcia, Valencia, the Balearic Isles, Aragón and Navarre; the two principalities of Asturias and Catalonia; and the Basque Provinces.

Although the official language of Spain is Castilian Spanish (74 percent of the population), regional languages are spoken also: Aragonese in Zaragoza; Basque (2 percent) in the Basque provinces; Catalán (17 percent) in the northeast, around Barcelona; Galician (7 percent) in the northwest, centered in Galicia; Valencian in Valencia; and Romani among the Gypsies throughout the county. The differences of language in the Iberian Peninsula today partially correspond to the distribution of the early inhabitants. In the regions of pure Iberians, Catalán is spoken, with its dialects, Valencian and Balearic; in the regions conquered by the Celts, the languages are Gallego, Portuguese and Asturias; in the Celtiberian and Tartesian portions, Castilian is spoken.

Madrid (population 3.0 million), the nation's capital and its largest city, is located in the heart of a windswept and treeless plain on the central plateau, which is blistering hot in the summer and ice cold in the winter. Several of the other large cities, such as Barcelona (1.6 million), Valencia (763,000) and Málaga (532,000), are located along the Mediterranean coast. Seville (720,000) and Córdoba (323,000) are located in the Guadalquivir River valley and Zaragoza (608,000) is located in the Ebro River valley. The City of Las Palmas (734,999) is located in the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Africa. The nation's population in 2002 was approximately 41 million.

Before the Roman conquest of North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula in 202 BCE, the territory known today as Spain was settled by a variety of ancient peoples: Cro-Magnon Man, the Basques and Tartesians (who may have formed the aboriginal population), the Celts (who also occupied a great part of France, Great Britain and Ireland), the Phoenicians, the Greeks and the Carthaginians (the latter three from the Mediterranean basin). After the Roman legions expelled the Carthaginians from the peninsula, there began two centuries of struggles with the hybrid Celtiberians (the descendants of previous immigrants), which were wars of tremendous ferocity and endless reprisals. By the beginning of the Christian era, the Iberian Peninsula was fully incorporated into the Roman Empire.

The Roman conquerors imposed unity on the inhabitants by introducing Roman Law and forced colonization, Latin became the common language, and city-building became the order of the day. The Roman period witnessed the construction of buildings, roads, bridges and aqueducts, some of which are still standing today. The Romans left their mark on the arts, and intellectual life flourished.

After the collapse of the Roman Empire in the early 5th century, waves of Germanic "barbarians" from Central and Northern Europe swept into the Iberian Peninsula, which ushered in the Visigoth Period, from 409 to 711 CE. The first invaders to arrive were the Vandals and the Suevi, followed by the Visigoths who had sacked Rome in 410 and invaded the peninsula soon thereafter. For more than 150 years, the Visigoths were in conflict with the Romans, the Vandals, the Franks, the Suevi and the Basques. After forcing the Vandals to flee to Africa in 419, the Visigoths established a kingdom with Toulouse (in modern France) as their capital, but in 507 they lost most of Gaul to the Franks and moved their capital to Toledo in Spain. In 585, the Visigoths conquered the Suevi in Galicia and gained control of most of the peninsula. Although the Visigoths were a minority in comparison to the Hispano-Roman population in the peninsula, they were the dominant rulers of the territory until 711 when the Muslim armies from North Africa invaded, conquered and occupied most of the peninsula.

Some Spaniards settled down to live under Arab rule, calling themselves Mozarabs, while the rest fled to the northern mountains, where they formed the four chief rallying-points for the Reconquest: Asturias, Navarre, Aragón and Catalonia. Under the immense pressure of the Moslem conquest, the Visigoths and Hispano-Romans became one people with one religion and one national aspiration: to reconquer their Spanish fatherland and make the Cross triumph over the Crescent.

During the Moslem occupation of Spain, from 711 to 1492, the Moors exerted a profound influence on its cultural and economic life for almost eight centuries. Moslem rule can be

divided into three periods: the years of conquest and final consolidation of power under the Caliphate of Córdoba, from 711-1031; the years of Reconquest of most of the peninsula by the Christian armies, from 1031-1276; and the confining of Moslems to a small area in southern Spain and the final triumph of the Christian kingdoms, from 1276-1492.

The year 1492 is considered the beginning of the modern Spanish state, and by 1512 the unification of present-day Spain was complete. Part of this general history is covered in the History section under Roman Catholicism.

During the 16th century, Spain became the most powerful nation in Europe, due to the immense wealth derived from its American colonies. However, a series of long, costly wars and revolts, including the defeat by the English of the "Invincible Spanish Armada" in 1588, led to a steady decline of Spanish power in Europe. Controversy over succession to the throne consumed the country during the 18th and 19th centuries, leading to occupation by France in the early 1800s under Napoleon. The Spanish colonies in Mexico and South America took advantage of this conflict to rid themselves of the monarchy.

The 19th century saw the revolt and independence of most of Spain's colonies in the Western Hemisphere; three wars over the issue of succession to the Spanish Throne; the political struggle between the Traditionalists (monarchists) and the Liberals (republicans); the brief ousting of the monarchy and establishment of the First Republic (1873-74); and, finally, the Spanish-American War (1898), in which Spain lost Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the United States of America.

During the 20th century, a period of dictatorial rule (1923-1931) under General Primo de Rivera ended with the establishment of democracy under the Second Republic (1931-1936), which was dominated by increasing political polarization, culminating in the leftist Popular Front electoral victory in 1936. Pressures from all sides, coupled with growing and unchecked violence, led to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936. This bloody conflict, which pitted brother against brother and priests against Marxist revolutionaries, ended in 1939 with the victory of traditionalist General Francisco Franco, who ruled Spain as a military dictatorship until his death in 1975. Then King Juan Carlos I took control of the situation, named Adolfo Suárez González as his Prime Minister, and called for democratic elections. A new Constitution was passed by referendum in December 1978, which formally established a parliamentary monarchy in which the king serves as the symbolic ruler. Democratic elections are held every four years, whereupon the king "appoints" as chief of government the leader of the party that wins the most votes.

In 1982, a Socialist majority was elected in parliamentary elections and Felipe González Márquez became Prime Minister. During the 1980s and 1990s, the government had to deal with violence caused by the Basque separatist movement, known as ETA. The center-right Popular Party (PP) came to power in 1996 under José María Aznar López as Prime Minister, after defeating the center-left Spanish Workers Socialist Party (PSOE) in the voting booths. Aznar also led the PP to a parliamentary majority in the March 2000 elections. In 2001 the Spanish government renewed its crackdown of the ETA, suspended the Batasuna party linked to ETA in 2002, and then permanently banned the party in 2003 because of its links to terrorist organizations.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

The 1967 Law of Religious Freedom was supported by the Catholic Church, which had changed some of its archaic views in the light of the Second Vatican Council. This Law put an end to religious intolerance and provided a legal basis for the existence of non-Catholic religious organizations. This opened the door for other religious groups to enter and work in Spain after decades of religious repression.

The 1978 Constitution provides for freedom of religion, which is generally respected in practice. Although there is no official state religion, the Roman Catholic Church enjoys some privileges that are unavailable to other religious groups. However, this Constitution meets the standards of religious freedom that are characteristic of Western democracies. The constitution right to religious freedom was further protected by the enactment of a statute in 1980, the Organic Law of Religious Liberty, which has favored religious minorities in Spain.

A public opinion poll published in December 2000 reported that Spaniards, in comparison to other European Union countries, were the most tolerant of people of other religions, with only 5.6 percent expressing a high degree of intolerance compared to 31.7 percent of Danes, 25.6 percent of Belgians, and 16.3 percent of Germans.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

¹DATE OF ORIGIN IN SPAIN

First century CE.

²NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS IN SPAIN

Approximately 82.1 percent of the population claims to be Roman Catholic, which totals about 3.4 million adherents.

³HISTORY

Christianity entered Spain as early as the first century. An ancient tradition affirms that the Apostle James the Elder, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus of Nazareth, was the first to evangelize the Iberian Peninsula, which was the basis for the development of the Way of St. James, or *Camino de Santiago*, as a pilgrimage route from France to the Santiago de Compostela Church in Galicia during the Middle Ages. According to Roman Catholic sources, the first diocese established in Spain was at Toledo and its first bishop was St. Eugenius, a Roman priest.

Despite the persecution of Christians by the Roman Emperors during the first three centuries, Christianity was deeply rooted in Spain prior to the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine in 312 and to the Edict of Milan in 313, which gave Christianity a legal status equal to any other religion in the Roman Empire. After 323, Constantine was the sole ruler of the Roman world and the Christian Church was free from persecution everywhere. In 325, the Emperor Constantine called for a universal council of Christian bishops from throughout the Roman Empire to meet in Nicaea (Asia Minor) to deal with the so-called "Arian controversy" that had divided Christendom. The resulting Council of Nicaea adopted a universal creed, known today as the Nicene Creed, which rejected Arianism; consequently, Arias, the bishop of Alexandria in North Africa, was condemned and banished by Constantine, but Arianism continued to exist in the Empire.

After the Visigoth conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the early 5th century, this theological controversy was a prime cause of discord between the Visigoths, who had accepted the Arian version of Christianity while dwelling in Central Europe, and the Romanized Iberians who adhered to the orthodox version, which was the official position of the Roman Catholic Church. The Visigoths in Spain persisted in their "error" until 589, when Reccared, the Visigoth king in Toledo, formally renounced his "heresy," accepted the declarations of the Council of Nicaea (325), and pledged loyalty to the Bishop of Rome during the Third Council of Toledo (589), which added religious unity to the political unity achieved by his father, King Leovigild. The religious unity established by this Council was the basis of the fusion of Visigoths with Hispano-Romans that produced the modern Spanish nation. During the 7th century, the Roman Catholic Church prospered in Spain and made significant contributions to the development of Spanish culture, particularly through the influence of St. Isidore of Seville (560-636). However, infighting between various Visigoth rulers created confusion and discord in their Iberian domain, which prepared the way for the Moslem invasion from North Africa in 711.

Despite the violence of the conquest, Moslem rule proved to be surprisingly tolerant. The Christians who had fled to the northern mountains were invited to return to their ancestral homes, were promised security of person and property, and were assured of full freedom of worship. The Moslems showed little zeal for converting Christians and Jews to Islam, they did not impose unbearable taxes on their subjects, and the three societies lived in relative peace with each other. The Moslems developed agriculture and livestock; introduced rice, sugar and other crops to the peninsula; and improved mining methods and metallurgy and promoted industry. The conquerors built new cities and rebuilt and expanded old ones, selecting ancient Córdoba as their new capital; by the 10th century this city had a population of more than 500,000, making it one of the largest and richest cities of the Mediterranean world. The Moslems cultivated science and technology; promoted education and Greek and Roman culture, and allowed Arabic, Christian and Jewish scholars to work together in intellectual cooperation. Moslem engineering and architecture made significant artistic contributions to Iberian culture.

However, this period of development and prosperity came to an end in the 10th century, when the Christian crusaders in northern Spain seized the opportunity to rebel against their Moorish conquerors, after quarrels within Moslem ranks caused Moslem-controlled Iberia to splinter into rival kingdoms after 1031. During the next four centuries great changes occurred on the peninsula as Christian leaders began the process of Reconquest and the creation of an independent Spanish nation under the powerful royal houses of Castile and Aragón. By the mid-thirteenth century, the Moslems had been forced to retreat into the mountainous kingdom of Granada in southern Spain, the Reconquest was now almost complete and Spain had gone far in achieving a national consciousness after Portugal withdrew to pursue its separate course. Through the centuries Spain had developed its own national language, Spanish, whereas the people of Portugal had created their own language, Portuguese. Both languages had a Moslem flavor with hundreds of imbedded words that became part of common speech. Commerce and industry increased as the ports of Seville, Valencia and Barcelona attracted the trade of the Mediterranean world.

The Catholic Church shared the triumphs of the Christian kingdoms of Castile and Aragón during this period of development and prosperity in Spain. Great cathedrals, churches and monasteries were built (or rebuilt) with generous endowments; the clergy grew powerful and their privileges were confirmed and enlarged. The energy and devotion of the missionary orders strengthened the role of the Catholic Church in society: the French Benedictines and Cistercians from the 9th to 12th centuries, followed by the Franciscans and the Dominicans in the 13th century. The Dominicans were founded by a Spaniard, Domingo de Guzmán, in 1219 and soon became the chief protagonists of learning in Europe, whereas the Franciscans became skilled in spreading the Catholic Faith among the common people.

One of the impulses to the crusading spirit of the Reconquest came from the alleged discovery of the long-lost tomb of the Apostle James the Greater, who, according to tradition, had preached the Gospel in Spain and then returned to Judea in Palestine where he was beheaded; later, his body was returned to Spain and buried in an undisclosed tomb. In the 9th century, according to legend, the word spread that a bright star had come to rest over James' lost tomb in northwestern Galicia, which gave rise to the belief in "the field of the star of St. James" or *campus stellae* in Spanish, known today as Santiago de Compostela. This site became an attraction for Catholic pilgrims from all over Europe who came by the thousands during that period. In the 11th century, the tomb of St. James was incorporated into one of the noblest of Romanesque cathedrals, and Santiago became the patron saint of Spanish knights who battled against Moslem armies during the centuries of the Reconquest. By the 12th century, the shine of Santiago de Compostela had become the center of the greatest pilgrimage in medieval Europe. Later, the Apostle James (Santiago) became the patron saint of the Kingdom of Spain, and his feast day is held on November 9.

The 12th century saw the rise of the Religious-Military Orders, which supposes recognition on the part of both Church and State. The Knights Templars, organized in Palestine in 1118 by French Catholic Crusaders who sought to liberate the Holy Land from the Moslem armies, helped the Spanish kings of Castile and León conquer the southwestern part of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors, who had controlled most of the peninsula since 711. In return, the Templars were granted ecclesiastical authority over the lands liberated from the Moors. For over 200 years the Templars provided their services as soldier-monks and civil engineers to various Iberian nobles to help defend their territories and expand commerce by building cities, fortifications, roads and bridges. The downfall of the Templars came in France, where King Philip IV ordered the arrest of all Templars on the first black Friday, October 13, 1307. They were accused of various crimes including heresy, although it seems likely that King Philip simply wanted to remove a powerful political and financial force from his Kingdom.

The ancient Spanish Military Orders are among the oldest in existence since their origin dates to the 12th through the 14th centuries. These Religious-Military Orders were founded during the severe conditions of the Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moorish invaders, called the Crusades of the West, which was the longest of all European wars. The Templars settled in the Iberian Peninsula around 1128, and they were followed by the Order of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem (1131), the Order of Calatrava (1164), the Order of Santiago (*Military Order of Saint James of the Sword*, 1173), the Order of Alcántara (1177), and the Order of Montesa (1317) were all established in Spain.

It is generally agreed that the end of the Reconquest and the foundation of the modern Spanish state began in the late 15th century. In 1492, after the marriage of Queen Isabel of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragón in 1469 and the establishment of a unified Catholic kingdom in Spain, the Catholic Monarchs conquered the Moorish kingdom of Granada and expelled the Jews from Spain (estimated at between 70,000-100,000), followed in 1502 by the expulsion of the remaining unconverted Moslems. The wealth confiscated from the departing Jews (some were allowed to remain in Spain by converting to Christianity) enabled Ferdinand and Isabel to finance the voyages of discovery of Christopher Columbus (an Italian, known in Spanish as Cristóbal Colón) in the Americas and the evangelization of the newly-discovered territories that became part of the kingdom of Spain.

One of the goals of the Catholic Monarchs was to spread and strengthen Catholicism, both in the Iberian Peninsula as well as in the Americas. The expulsion of the Jews and Moslems from Spain between 1492 and 1502, followed by the condemnation, persecution and expulsion of the "Lutherans" (referring to all Protestants) after 1521 was part of a crusade to make Catholicism an essential component of the Spanish national identity. Thus ended the brief period of Enlightenment in Spain (the University of Salamanca was one of the first and foremost European universities) and the beginning of a dark period of purging out heresy and humanistic "free-thinking" in the homeland and in the Spanish colonies of the New World.

The Office of the Holy Inquisition was permanently established in Spain as a state policy by the Catholic Monarchs with Papal approval in 1478, beginning in Castile and Seville, for the purpose of defending the Catholic Faith and rooting out any heresies that might exist within all levels of society. Any offenders could be detained, imprisoned, tortured and killed by the inquisitors in their quest to maintain the purity of the Catholic Faith and to protect its members from the influence of heretics: Jews, Muslims, Protestants (called "Lutherans"), blasphemers, bigamists, practitioners of witchcraft, those committing acts against the Holy Inquisition, and other miscellaneous heretical activities. It was not until 1835 that the Tribunals of the Holy Inquisition were finally abolished in Spain.

The results of the Inquisition in Spain were that Judaism, Islam and Protestantism were virtually nonexistent from the mid-16th century until the late 19th century. After the liberal Revolution (called The First Republic) of 1868, Protestants began to appear again in Spain, but Jews and Moslems did not arrive until the early 20th century, especially after World War I.

Between 1492 and 1967, the Roman Catholic Church dominated religious life in Spain and exported its faith through the foreign missionary endeavors of its religious orders, for both men and women, which were especially present in the countries of Latin America until the 1960s. The strong church-state relationship in Spain between 1500 and the mid-1850s allowed the Catholic Church to receive state financial support for its maintenance and expansion into the Spanish colonies in the Americas, which meant that the various religious orders were heavily involved in social service activities, such as schools, hospitals and welfare. However, the reformist policies of liberal governments during the First Republic (1873-1874) and the Second Republic (1931-1936) clashed with conservative forces, controlled by the monarchy and the Church, which resulted in violence confrontation during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

The winner of this conflict was General Francisco Franco who ruled Spain with an iron fist from

1939 until his death in 1975. During his oppressive dictatorship, Spain again became a confessional state that supported the Catholic Church morally and financially until the 1960s. The natural consequence of this policy was intolerance of other religions, although they were allowed to exist and worship in private. From 1953 until 1967, Spain had a Concordat with the Vatican, which insured that National Catholicism was an important part of state policy and Catholicism provided an “historical legitimacy” to the dictatorship. However, the first manifestation of religious tolerance by Franco’s government was encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church as part of the modernization process advocated by the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s; this new opening produced the 1967 Law of Religious Freedom, which put an end to religious intolerance in Spain and allowed other religious groups to acquire legal status.

Today, Spain is divided into the following ecclesiastical provinces: I, Seville; II, Madrid; III, Valencia; IV, Granada; V, Santiago de Compostela; VI, Oviedo; VII, Tarragona; VIII, Burgos; IX, Toledo; X, Pamplona y Tudela; XI, Valladolid; XII, Zaragoza; and XIII, Mérida-Badajoz. The oldest dioceses in Spain were erected in the 1st century: Cartegana, Guadix, Tarragona and Toledo, with the later having primacy under its first bishop, St. Eugenius. The diocese of Lugo (now part of Santiago de Compostela) was erected during the 2nd century, and during the 3rd century the dioceses of Córdoba, Grenada, Palencia and Seville. During the 4th century, five dioceses were erected, followed by 10 dioceses during the 5th century, three dioceses during the 6th century and only two during the 7th century. By then the Roman Catholic Church was firmly established in the Spanish provinces.

In 1903 the Catholic religious orders in Spain numbered 597 communities of men and 2,463 communities of women. The number of male religious was 10,630 and the number of female religious 40,030. The most numerous religious orders for men were the Jesuits, Franciscans, Capuchins, Augustinians, Piarists, Missionaries of the Heart of Mary, Brothers of the Christian Schools, Marist Brothers and the Lazarists.

4HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY LEADERS

+ The so-called Catholic Monarchs, **Queen Isabel of Castile** and **King Ferdinand of Aragón** (who married in 1469) establishment a unified Catholic kingdom in Spain; in 1492 they conquered the Moorish kingdom of Granada, expelled the Jews from Spain, and financed the expedition of Captain Christopher Columbus to the Americas; in 1502 they expelled the remaining unconverted Moslems from Spain.

+ The mystic **St. Teresa de Ávila** (1515-1582) was a reformer of the Carmelite Order and founded the Sisters of the Barefoot Carmelites, whose discipline required great self-sacrifice; she established convents and monasteries, and had frequent visions and ecstatic experiences; she lived in the ancient walled city of Ávila, with its historic cathedral (construction was begun in 1091 and completed in the 13th century).

+ **San Juan de la Cruz** (1542-1591) is considered one of the most famous Spanish mystics. He was born Juan Yepes in a humble family in Fontiveros, Spain. At age 21 he entered the Order of the Carmelite Fathers and was ordained a priest in 1567. He asked God to keep him in a state of grace and without sin, and promised to support all manner of suffering with patience, which in fact he was called upon to do as he was small and frail. When a new convent was established at

Salamanca, he was named as rector and became known as Fray Juan de la Cruz. The author of many books and poems on Catholic spirituality, he was also a friend and colleague of St. Teresa of Ávila.

+ **San Juan de Ávila**, known as the Apostle of Andalucía (1500-1569), was beatified in 1894 and declared a saint in 1970; he is the patron saint of the secular clergy of Spain. He was born into a rich family, but when his parents died he gave his wealth to the poor and spent three years in prayer and meditation. He became a priest and studied philosophy and theology at the University of Alcalá. His life was mainly spent serving the people of Andalucía, where he gained a reputation as an excellent preacher.

+ **Inigo López de Loyola** (1534-1556), who later took the name **Ignatius**, was the youngest son of a nobleman in the Bosque region; he fought for Spain against the French in 1521 at the border fortress of Pamplona; while recovering from wounds suffered in the war, he read religious books, was converted, fasted, did penance and works of charity, including a visit to the Monastery of the Virgin of Montserrat, near Barcelona; he studied for the priesthood, became a scholar, wrote a famous book on *Spiritual Exercises*, and founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1540, which is now the largest religious order of the Roman Catholic Church, with 20,400 members worldwide as of January 1, 2003.

+ **Francisco Suárez** (1548-1617), a member of the Jesuit Order, author and professor of Canon Law, Philosophy and Theology in Spain and Italy. He is considered one of Spain's greatest philosophers and theologians.

+ **Melchor Cano** (1509-1566) was born in Pastrana and studied theology in Valladolid and Rome; he became a Dominican monk in Salamanca and later became a professor of theology and founded a school of thought known as Fundamental Theology.

+ **General Francisco Franco**, who ruled Spain from 1939 to 1975 as a military dictatorship, had a friendly relationship with the Roman Catholic hierarchy and supported Catholicism as the state religion.

+ The current **King of Spain is Juan Carlos I** (from 1975 to the present) of the Royal House of Bourbon.

+ The primal diocese of Toledo is led by the **Rev. Dr. Antonio Cañizares Llovera**, who was appointed Archbishop by Pope John Paul II in 2002; he had previously served as Bishop of Ávila (1992-1997) and as Archbishop of Granada (1997-2002); he has two earned doctorates, was a university professor and has authored several books.

+ The President of the Spanish government is a Catholic layman, **José María Asnar López** of the center-right Popular Party, who was elected in 1996 and reelected in 2000.

5MAJOR THEOLOGIANS AND AUTHORS

+ **Dr. Juan José Tamayo-Acosta**, secretary of the Juan XXIII Association of Theologians; director of the Cathedra of Theology and Sciences of Religion "Ignacio Ellacuría" of the Carlos III

University of Madrid; professor of the Cathedra of the Three Religions of the University of Valencia; he has written two doctoral dissertations, over 1,000 articles in communication media, more than 500 studies in specialized magazines, and more than 30 books.

+ **Father Jorge Loring, S.J.** (Society of Jesus), was born in Barcelona and grew up in Madrid; he has ordained to the priesthood at age 33; is author of several books and his latest, *Para Salvarte*, has sold more than 1.2 million copies in Spain.

+ **Father Domiciano Fernández** (a member of the Claretians - Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary) is author of *María en la historia de la Salvación: Ensayo de una Mariología narrativa* (Publicaciones Claretianas), *Ministerios de la Mujer en el Nuevo Testamento*, and many other books and articles.

6^{HOUSES OF WORSHIP AND HOLY PLACES}

In May 2002, the official government registry of religious organizations in Spain listed 11,705 entities created by the Catholic Church and 153 Catholic canonical foundations. The antiquity of Roman Catholicism in Spain means that there are many ancient churches, monasteries and shrines that are considered holy places by Catholics.

These sanctuaries include statues, paintings and other symbols of the Virgin Mary, Christ and the Catholic saints, but also included are display cases of small metal representations of men, women and children; human arms, legs, eyes and hearts; as well as animals, cars, boats and other objects. People have left these behind as a testimony to their faith, either in thanksgiving or in supplication for divine intercession to cure a disease or to bring about some special favor.

One of the most sacred places in Spain is the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Pillar, the patron of all Spain, which marks the site of the first recorded Marian apparition in Europe. According to Catholic tradition, St. John the Apostle spent the years following the crucifixion of Jesus preaching in Spain. St. John the Apostle arrived in Zaragoza in 40 CE and saw a vision of Mary who instructed him to build a church at that location. A chapel was soon constructed and it became a regional center for the conversion of the pagans. Other holy places include the tomb ("rediscovered" in 813 or 838) of the Apostle James the Elder, known today as Santiago de Compostela, located in Galicia; and the shrine (since 890) of the Black Virgin of Montserrat, near Barcelona, which is now one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in Spain, with an estimated one million visitors yearly.

7^{WHAT IS SACRED}

The concept of what is sacred among Roman Catholics in Spain is in keeping with similar practices in other Catholic countries of Europe and the Americas, where there are numerous shrines and sacred places, including caves, grottos, lakes, rivers, lagoons, crossroads, hills and mountains. Many of these were sacred places for the earliest inhabitants of the various regions prior to Roman colonization, but were clothed with Catholic symbols and renamed in honor of the Virgin Mary, Christ or a Catholic saint.

8^{HOLIDAYS/FESTIVALS}

Religious festivals are celebrated with long church functions, solemn Mass, music and sermons, besides processions and pilgrimages. Some processions have become widely celebrated,

drawing people from the entire surrounding region, such as to the festivities of Holy Week at Seville. The most popular devotion of the Spaniards is to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

National official religious holidays include Epiphany (January 6), Holy Thursday and Good Friday, Assumption of the Virgin Mary (August 15), All Saints Day (November 1), Immaculate Conception Day (December 8) and Christmas (December 25). Also, many communities celebrate local religious holidays, such as their patron saints' day. At the national level, although not official holidays, October 12 is celebrated as "Día de la Hispanidad" (Columbus Day) and Our Lady of the Pillar Day. The festival of the "Apóstol Santiago" (the Apostle James the Greater), the patron saint of Spain, is celebrated on November 9.

⁹MODE OF DRESS

Historically, the women of Spain dress very conservatively in keeping with local Catholic traditions, especially those of the older generation. Moreover, the members of the various Catholic religious orders for men and women have their own traditional dress codes.

¹⁰DIETARY PRACTICES

In general, there are no special dietary practices among Roman Catholics in Spain; the variations in diet that exist are due to local customs and practices, within the various ethnolinguistical regions.

¹¹RITUALS

One of the unusual Catholic rituals in Spain is that of the flagellants who march in the Holy Week processions and beat themselves in the back with a short whip. This is an ancient form of penitence and sharing in the sufferings of Jesus of Nazareth who endured beatings by Roman soldiers as he walked to the hill of Golgotha, outside of Jerusalem, where he was crucified and died for our sins, according to the Holy Scriptures. The practice began in the Middle Ages in Europe (notably in Italy, Germany, France and Spain) and spread to Spanish colonies in the Americas and in the Philippine Islands, where it is still observed in numerous locations.

¹²RITES OF PASSAGE

The traditional Roman Catholic rites of passage are practiced in Spain: baptism, confirmation, marriage and the last rights.

¹³MEMBERSHIP

There has been a gradual decline in Catholic affiliation in Spain since the 1970s in response to changes instituted by the Second Vatican Council and the Constitution of 1978. Today, only about 82 percent of the nation's population claim to be Roman Catholics, of whom only 19 percent attend Mass regularly. Also, 14.6 percent of citizens declare they have no religious affiliation: 10.2 percent are nonbelievers or agnostics, and 4.4 percent are atheists. Now that there is freedom of choice, many Spaniards are choosing to no longer identify themselves with the Catholic Church.

¹⁴SOCIAL JUSTICE

The first manifestation of religious tolerance by Franco's government was encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church as part of the modernization process advocated by the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s; this new opening produced the 1967 Law of Religious Freedom, which put

an end to religious intolerance in Spain and allowed other religious groups to acquire legal status.

¹⁵SOCIAL ASPECTS

In 1985, a public opinion poll taken by the Center for Sociological Research (SIS) revealed that Spaniards, although outwardly devoted Catholics, were in reality the most skeptical believers in Western Christianity regarding Catholic dogma. Only 37 percent of Spanish Catholics believed in the infallibility of the Pope, 40 percent in the existence of Hell, 41 percent in the resurrection of the dead, 46 percent in the existence of an eternal soul, 46 percent in the virginity of Mary, 50 percent in the existence of Heaven, 56 percent that Jesus Christ is God, and 59 percent that God created the world.

¹⁶POLITICAL IMPACT

Traditionally, the Catholic Church was aligned with the political right and dictated its political preferences to its congregants. However, this situation changed after the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and during the rightwing dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1939-1975) when many Catholics reacted against the limitation of human rights and abuses of power for four generations; consequently, they became more liberal minded and supporters of a democratic system of government. Many Catholics resented the support given by the Catholic Church to the repressive Franco dictatorship, which strongly favored the Church. After Franco's death in 1975, the long tradition of mutual support between Church and State suffered a crisis with the adoption of the 1978 Constitution, which recognized the freedom of conscience and religion, and forbade the establishment of an official state religion. In the 1982 general election, over half of the nation's Catholic population voted for the Socialist Party, of which 70 percent professed to be Catholics.

¹⁷CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Beginning in 1968, Clemente Domínguez y Gómez (1946-), an insurance broker from Seville, claimed that the Most Holy Virgin Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, appeared to him over a small mastic-tree outside the small, whitewashed village of El Palmar de Troya in Andalusia, in the Province of Seville. Amid a host of alleged healings, stigmata, prophecies, and other signs and wonders, Domínguez said that the Virgin Mary instructed him to rid the Roman Catholic Church of "heresy and progressivism."

In 1970, the Archbishop of Seville denounced these apparitions, prophetic visions, and signs and wonders as lacking any validity, and warned people to stay away from this site. Nevertheless, the maverick Vietnamese priest Pierre Martin Ngo-Dinh Thuc (former Catholic archbishop of Hue) visited El Palmar de Troya in 1975-1976, and ordained Clemente and his four associates to the priesthood and consecrated Clemente as a bishop. During 1976, Domínguez and his associated bishops ordained and consecrated other priests and bishops from among followers of the movement. In September 1976, Thuc, Domínguez and all the affiliated priests and bishops were formally suspended from performing their priestly offices and then were excommunicated by the Vatican.

Although chastised and persecuted, Domínguez claimed that his mission was to convert the "heretics" of Rome. He set up his own "Holy See" in Seville, and, after the death of Pope Paul VI in 1978, he elected himself "pope" and named his own cardinals. He now calls himself "Pope

Gregory XVII" of the One, Holy, Palmarian Catholic Church of Spain. The self-styled pope "excommunicated" John Paul II and denounced the Roman Catholic leader as "corrupt and an apostate." In June 2003, the Holy Palmarian Church claimed to have 60 priests (all of whom are bishops), 70 nuns, 2,000 followers, and affiliated churches in Britain and Latin America.

This radical traditionalist group rejects the current order of the Mass and the reforms approved by Vatican II, and it claims that the real rulers of the Catholic Church are "a clique of Freemasons and Communists." Not surprisingly, the number of Catholics who have become followers of this radical sect is relatively small.

During the 1980s, the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, as an institution, showed signs of becoming more conservative than liberal. Conservative bishops, after decades of being a minority in the Spanish hierarchy, reasserted their power and influence and began to wrestle power from the liberal bishops. One indicator of this was the battle in late 1987 over the editorial policy of the nation's leading Catholic weekly magazine, *Vida Nueva*, which ended with the liberal editor being replaced with a conservative one.

Part of the reason for this ideological shift is due to the Catholic Church's declining influence in Spanish society as a result of the modernization of the Church since the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, and to the secularization of society in general. One important indicator of this trend is the decline in the number of men and women in the priesthood and the religious orders, and the decline in the number of seminarians who are preparing for the priesthood in Spain. This is part of a general crisis in religious vocations throughout the world among Roman Catholics since Vatican II as seen in the decline of young men entering the priesthood and in an increase in the number of priests leaving the Holy Orders.

At the same time, there were forces at work that brought fundamental changes regarding the role of the Catholic Church in the general society. After World War II there was a marked improvement in the economic situation of a majority of Spaniards, which made society more materialistic and less religious. Another force was the demographic shift from rural to urban areas, where the Catholic Church had less influence and control over the opinions and values of its membership. This is seen in the Archdiocese of Madrid that had one of the lowest percentages of Catholics in the country in 2002, along with the Archdiocese of Barcelona.

18CULTURAL IMPACT ON MUSIC, ART, LITERATURE

The Catholic Church has had a profound influence on Spanish culture in terms of music, art and literature during its 2,000-year history on the Iberian Peninsula, as well as on Hispanic culture in the Americas. The presence of Spanish art in every Catholic church in every town and village of the Spanish-speaking world bears testimony to this fact. The importance of the Spanish language and Spanish literature is universally recognized. Spain has produced many excellent architects, sculptors and painters, especially during the medieval period.

The Spanish people are, as a rule, religious and naturally inclined to the traditional practices of Catholic worship. In their popular festivals secular diversions hold an equal place with religious observances. The morning is devoted to magnificent church functions and the afternoon to dances, bullfights and other secular amusements, which are carried on into the night. A great variety is observed in the character of the popular diversions in the different

regions of the country, while the religious activities tend to be uniform and universal.

OTHER RELIGIONS

In 2002, only about two percent of the total population of Spain were followers of other religions, which included Judaism, Islam, Protestantism, Margin Christian Groups, and other non-Christian groups.

+Judaism. There were important settlements of Jewish people in the Iberian Peninsula at least since the late first century CE, after the great Diaspora following the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem in the year 70 by the Roman Emperor Titus. The Hebrew name for Spain, *Sepharad*, explains the origin of the Sephardic branch of Judaism in Spain and Portugal. During the Arian period of the Visigoth monarchy in Spain there was a period of relative tolerance of Jews, but after 589 when the kingdom adopted Roman Catholicism new persecutions and measures against Jews came into being. During the first period of Moslem rule in Spain, from the 8th to the 11th centuries, the Jews were able to live and develop peacefully, particularly in the southern region of Al-Andalus.

After the fall of the Caliphate of Cordoba, there was an intensive immigration of Jews to the Christian kingdoms in Spain where they could find better living conditions. Some Jews fled from Spain, as did the Jewish philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204), one of the leading figures of the 12th century. In Catholic kingdoms, until the late 15th century, the situation of Jews fluctuated between tolerance and persecution, with intolerance and discrimination being the order of the day. Nevertheless, some Jews occupied important positions in Spanish society in the world of culture, finance and politics as had occurred during the Caliphate of Cordova. However, due to pressure from Catholic authorities, an anti-Semitic policy prevailed in Spain during the 12th to 15th centuries.

In 1492, after the marriage of Queen Isabel of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragón and the establishment of a unified Catholic kingdom in Spain, the Jews were expelled from Spain, followed in 1502 by the expulsion of Moslems. Consequently, the Jews and Moslems had to choose between exile and conversion to the Catholic Faith, with the resulting exodus of an estimated 70,000-100,000 Sephardic Jews, some of whom migrated to the Americas and hid their identity in order to avoid punishment from the Office of the Holy Inquisition. From about 1500 to 1920, there were virtually no Jews in Spain. The Jewish population in Spain today is probably not more than 50,000; there are 19 known synagogues in the country, distributed among at least 11 cities.

+Islam. The Moslem armies and their rulers from North Africa ruled Spain from 711 to 1031. They were finally expelled from Spain at the end of the 15th century, when the last Moslem stronghold of Granada fell in 1492. There were few Moslems in Spain until the beginning of the 20th century. In 2002, the Federation of Spanish Islamic Entities (FEERI) reported about 450,000 Moslems in Spain, many who were recent immigrants from Islamic countries; the official government registry of religious organizations in Spain showed 159 Islamic entities.

+Protestantism. The first Protestants in Spain (after 1519) were Roman Catholics, mainly university professors and educated professions, diocesan priests and members of religious

orders (both men and women), who agreed with the arguments presented by the Augustine friar Martin Luther and other Protestant reformers. But the development of the Protestant Reformation in Spain was impeded by the Office of the Holy Inquisition (1478-1835), which eliminated them or forced them to flee to other countries. Coinciding with the liberal Revolution (The First Republic) of 1868, Protestants began to appear again: the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church and the Spanish Reformed Church in 1868 (later known as the Spanish Evangelical Church), and the Congregationalists of the Ibero-Evangelical Union in 1890. In 2002, the Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities (FEREDE) estimated there were 350,000 Evangelicals in Spain, along with about 1,800 local congregations. In May 2002, the official government registry of religious organizations in Spain showed 604 Protestant entities.

+Marginal Christian Groups: The Jehovah's Witnesses report about 104,000 affiliates, whereas the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) only number about 16,000. Other groups have a total of about 2,500 adherents.

+Other Non-Christian Religions: about 100 such groups are known to exist in Spain, 54 of which are classified as "Satanic groups" by a leading Catholic researcher, Manuel Guerra, who is a professor at the Faculty of Theology of Northern Spain; most of the Satanic groups are located in the cities of Madrid and Barcelona, according to Professor Guerra. Some of the older non-Christian religions founded in Spain are the following: the Theosophical Society (1889), the Gnostic Church of Jules Doinel (1895), the Ordo Templi Orientis (1919). However, the majority of these groups have been established in Spain since 1970, following government approval of the 1967 Law of Religious Freedom. In May 2002, the official government registry of religious organizations in Spain showed 21 entities: Baha'i Faith (2), Hindu (3), Buddhist (13 entities and approximately 9,000 adherents) and others (3).

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