

Brian Conway

Sacred Callings

**An Eventful Analysis of the
Global Catholic Priesthood**



HUP HELSINKI
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Brian Conway

Sacred Callings

**An Eventful Analysis of the
Global Catholic Priesthood**

HUP HELSINKI
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Published by Helsinki University Press
www.hup.fi

© Brian Conway 2025

First published in 2025

Cover design by Ville Karppanen
Cover photo by JannHuizenga
Print and digital versions typeset by Jukka Lauhalahti.

ISBN (Paperback): 978-952-369-127-8

ISBN (PDF): 978-952-369-128-5

ISBN (EPUB): 978-952-369-129-2

<https://doi.org/10.33134/HUP-31>

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License (unless stated otherwise within the content of the work). To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>. This license allows sharing and copying any part of the work, providing author attribution is clearly stated. Under this license, the user of the material must indicate if they have modified the material and retain an indication of previous modifications. This license prohibits commercial use of the material.

The full text of this book has been peer reviewed to ensure high academic standards. For full review policies, see <http://www.hup.fi/>



Suggested citation:

Conway, Brian. *Sacred Callings: An Eventful Analysis of the Global Catholic Priesthood*. Helsinki University Press, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.33134/HUP-31>

To read the free, open access version of this book with your mobile device, scan this QR code:



To my parents and in memory of Joe

Contents

Figures and Tables	vii
Abbreviations	x
Preface	xi
Acknowledgements	xv
Introduction	1
Case Selection	9
Empirical Approach	11
Organisation	14
Chapter 1: Towards an Event-Led Theory of Catholic Male Workforce Trends	21
Introduction	21
Catholic Workforce Frameworks	22
Centring Critical Events	33
Chapter 2: Argentina: Eroding Monopoly Catholicism	53
Introduction	53
Descriptive Trends	58
Contexts of Trends	62
Summary and Discussion	83
Chapter 3: Malta: Traditional Heartland Catholicism	85
Introduction	85
Descriptive Trends	91
Contexts of Trends	95
Summary and Discussion	116

Chapter 4: Nigeria: Engaged Minority Catholicism	119
Introduction	119
Descriptive Trends	126
Contexts of Trends	130
Summary and Discussion	154
Chapter 5: Philippines: Organic Faith Catholicism	157
Introduction	157
Descriptive Trends	161
Contexts of Trends	165
Summary and Discussion	190
Conclusion: Critical Events and Religious Change	193
Introduction	193
Future Research	200
Practical Import	203
Appendix: Methodology	209
Terminology	209
Quantitative Research	210
Qualitative Research	237
Notes	241
Bibliography	253
Index	291

Figures and Tables

Figures

Figure 1: Diocesan Priests in India, Ireland, and Nigeria, 1970–2020	6
Figure 2: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in India, Ireland, and Nigeria, 1970–2020	6
Figure 3: A Conceptual Outline of Critical Events Theory	35
Figure 4: Church Attendance in Argentina, 1984–2013	56
Figure 5: Participation in Church Sacraments in Argentina, 1970–2015	57
Figure 6: Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1950–2010	58
Figure 7: Religious Priests in Argentina, 1950–2010	59
Figure 8: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Argentina, 1950–2010	59
Figure 9: Religious Brothers in Argentina, 1969–2010	60
Figure 10: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1969–2010	60
Figure 11: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina, 1969–2010	61
Figure 12: Church Attendance in Malta, 1983–2008	89
Figure 13: Participation in Church Sacraments in Malta, 1970–2015	90
Figure 14: Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1950–2010	91
Figure 15: Religious Priests in Malta, 1950–2010	92
Figure 16: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Malta, 1950–2010	92
Figure 17: Religious Brothers in Malta, 1969–2010	93
Figure 18: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1969–2010	94
Figure 19: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Malta, 1969–2010	94

Figure 20: Church Attendance in Nigeria, 1990–2012	124
Figure 21: Participation in Church Sacraments in Nigeria, 1970–2015	125
Figure 22: Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1950–2010	126
Figure 23: Religious Priests in Nigeria, 1950–2010	127
Figure 24: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Nigeria, 1950–2010	127
Figure 25: Religious Brothers in Nigeria, 1969–2010	128
Figure 26: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1969–2010	128
Figure 27: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria, 1969–2010	129
Figure 28: Church Attendance in the Philippines, 1950–2012	160
Figure 29: Participation in Church Sacraments in the Philippines, 1970–2015	161
Figure 30: Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1950–2010	162
Figure 31: Religious Priests in the Philippines, 1950–2010	162
Figure 32: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in the Philippines, 1950–2010	163
Figure 33: Religious Brothers in the Philippines, 1969–2010	163
Figure 34: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1969–2010	164
Figure 35: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines, 1969–2010	164

Tables

Table 1: Testing Critical Events Theory in Argentina	66
Table 2: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1950–2009	67
Table 3: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina, 1970–2009	77
Table 4: Testing Critical Events Theory in Malta	99
Table 5: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1950–2009	100
Table 6: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in Malta, 1970–2009	104
Table 7: Testing Critical Events Theory in Nigeria	136
Table 8: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1950–2009	137

Table 9: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria, 1970–2009	137
Table 10: Testing Critical Events Theory in the Philippines	168
Table 11: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1950–2009	169
Table 12: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines, 1970–2009	181
Table 13: Overview of the Statistical and Historical Results Across the Four Case Studies	196
Table A.1: Descriptive Information on <i>Annuario Pontificio</i> and <i>Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae</i>	211
Table A.2a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Argentina, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions	224
Table A.2b: Resignations among Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	225
Table A.2c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	226
Table A.3a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Malta, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions	228
Table A.3b: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	229
Table A.3c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Malta, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	229
Table A.4a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Nigeria, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions	232
Table A.4b: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	232
Table A.4c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	233
Table A.5a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in the Philippines, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions	235
Table A.5b: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	236
Table A.5c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions	237

Abbreviations

AMRSP	Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines
AP	<i>Annuario Pontificio</i>
ASE	<i>Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae</i>
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CARA	Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
CELAM	Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano y Caribeño (Latin American and Caribbean Bishops' Council)
CONADEP	Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons)
EDSA	Epifanio de los Santos Avenue
EVS	European Values Study
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
MUSEUM	Society of Christian Doctrine
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
PCP II	Second Plenary Council of the Philippines
SECAM	Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators
WVS	World Values Survey

Preface

My curiosity about the topic of Catholic priests arose from a mixture of personal and intellectual factors.

Growing up in Ireland, I served as an altar boy (in the pre-altar girls era) and received my first communion and confirmation in my local parish church, a modernist one that was opened (in 1965) as Vatican II closed out.

Catholicism was represented too in concrete, everyday symbols. In our home were Catholic objects, including a holy water font by the front door, a picture of Jesus lit by a red votive light upstairs, and a picture of Our Lady in the kitchen. This material culture was reinforced through regular religious participation. For example, I attended Catholic schools for my early education, where I was taught by nuns and brothers. As a teenager, I was a member of the Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland (now Scouting Ireland).

Within my extended family, I had an uncle who was an Irish bishop, and I spent some of my childhood holidays in his house. This was during the period of the bishops' moral activism associated with the fraught divorce debates of 1980s Ireland, in which my uncle himself played a key prophetic ministry role. Indeed, among the pictures in our sitting room is a photograph of my uncle in 1979, the same year as the historic Papal visit to Ireland by Pope John Paul II.

At the same time, my childhood partially overlapped with the scandal era in the Church, which broke out in 1992. I can still remember hearing the announcement of Bishop Eamonn Casey's¹ resignation on the one o'clock radio news. I also remember hear-

ing the well-known priest Father Michael Cleary,² whose personal life also became the subject of scandal, giving a homily at the Marian shrine in Knock, County Mayo, in the late 1980s. For the Church scandal generation, a seemingly unending number of sexual scandals followed right up to the present.

I now work in a medium-sized public secular university in Ireland that is the offspring of a co-located Catholic seminary. A main road cutting through the campus physically and symbolically separates the “Church” from the “state”. At the same time, the university shares its grounds with a Catholic seminary and pontifical university, where the bureaucratic headquarters of the Catholic Church in Ireland is also based. When I began working here in the mid-2000s, my interest in studying Catholicism sociologically, especially in different parts of the world, intensified.

This spurred me to conduct research on episcopal claim-making and organisational structures, sexual scandals, religious transmission, and beliefs/practices, all in an international comparative perspective. Over the years, I came to personally know more clergy than before and to become increasingly interested in their lives and what drew them to the seminary in the first place. Daily encounters with the material culture of the adjacent Catholic seminary reinforced this interest in the appeal of the Church, prompting me to develop a new line of inquiry: Catholic workforce trends.

Overall, my early experience of education and of life in general has mostly been, for better or for worse, within a Catholic setting. Although I only realised this towards the end of the research and writing, the critical events theory put forward in this book (with Vatican II, prophetic ministry, Church scandals, and Papal visits in the mix) almost reflects aspects of my own biography back to me.

Aside from personal background, the motivation for *Sacred Callings* stemmed from the fact that I was bothered by certain aspects of existing research and scholarship on this topic. As I became more acquainted with the Catholic workforce literature, I noticed that it was mostly understood within a secularisation–

modernisation framework. By this is meant that analyses tended to rely on assessing the impact of long-term secular change, arising from such things as increased economic opportunity on workforce patterns and taking place relatively slowly over time horizons of decades. Although helpful and important, this approach seemed poorly equipped to assess the impact of new, exceptional, or recent developments in the Church – such as increasingly frequent sexual scandals – on the short- and long-run evolution of the workforce, “critical events” that call for new ways of theorising about religious change.

I was also bothered by the fact that existing scholarship was mostly conducted in the developed world (typically in the United States (US) and Western Europe, with a smaller number of studies of Latin American societies). Very few studies – apart from rare examples (e.g. Augustyn 2006; Leung and Wittberg 2004) – included non-Western African or Asian societies. It was also apparent that most studies had been carried out on a case-by-case basis with very little direct comparison of cases. Put otherwise, the literature could do with being more international and comparative. Thus, these theoretical and empirical gaps in past research also inspired this book.

My first study of Catholic workforce trends – which I began in 2010 – was published in the journal *Social Science History* in 2016 under the title “Contexts of Trends in the Catholic Church’s Male Workforce: Chile, Ireland and Poland Compared”. These three Catholic-majority societies provided a useful test of my initial sketch of critical events theory and showed empirical support for it. But I still wondered whether the critical events perspective advanced in this article and its empirical application could be developed further, especially regarding other national settings and world regions of Catholicism. Thus, *Sacred Callings* is an attempt to broaden and deepen this earlier line of research.

Acknowledgements

Researching and writing a book is so demanding that it would be difficult to undertake on one's own. Here, I would like to acknowledge and thank colleagues who shared their insights and expertise to help make this book a better study than it would otherwise be, as well as others who provided encouragement and support along the way.

I owe my first debt to my graduate school mentors at the University of Notre Dame, who taught me about the importance of research and scholarship. These include Professors Kevin J. Christiano, Robert M. Fishman, David S. Hachen, Eugene Halton, David Klein, Lyn Spillman, Michael Welch, and David Yamane. Professor Mary Jo Deegan and Dr Michael R. Hill, who taught me archival methods at Notre Dame, and are themselves model scholars, have been supportive to me in many ways over the years, and I've always looked forward to meeting them at academic gatherings. Sadly, Mary Jo died during the writing of this book.

Before Notre Dame, my scholarly mentor was Professor James V. Cunningham, University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, who taught me by example that book manuscripts require many long hours to bring to fruition. I thank Jim, his wife Rita (both now deceased), and their son Steve for their generosity, friendship, and support over many years.

I thank participants in academic meetings of the Albanian Sociological Association, the Association for the Sociology of Religion, and the Maltese Sociological Association, where I rehearsed some of the book's ideas. Their feedback helped me to think more clearly about this topic. Towards the end of this book project, I

presented my work at the University of Münster and would like to thank participants in the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” seminar – especially Professor Detlef Pollack – for their insightful feedback.

Several people helped with various technical aspects of the research and writing. I am grateful to Dr Bram Spruyt and Carlo Lazzaro for their advice on the quantitative data analysis. I thank Dr David Clark for translating Papal speeches from the original Spanish into English.

Staff at Helsinki University Press brought professionalism to the preparation of this book for publication. I thank Anna-Mari Vesterinen and Leena Kaakinen for overseeing the processing of the book manuscript with care, efficiency, and attention to detail. Thanks to Helsinki University Press’s three anonymous reviewers and editorial board for their very thoughtful comments and suggestions, which helped to significantly improve the final manuscript. I am also grateful to Gráinne Treanor for copyediting the manuscript, Matleena Sopanen for managing the production process, Ville Karppanen for designing the cover, and Kate McIntosh for preparing the index.

I acknowledge and thank my brothers Gerard, Noel, and Paul for their support and encouragement over the years. My brother Joe, to whom this book is part dedicated, died during the writing of it. In Joe’s case, death made no accommodations for being fit and athletic. Of course, my greatest debt is to my parents, who now know the answer to the “How is the book going?” question.

Finally, the ideas for this book first took shape over ten years ago. Even so, at the end of the writing it was difficult to let go of it. And yet, as the saying goes, the best book is a finished book. As is standard, I bear responsibility for any errors.

Introduction

On 11 May, 2014, Pope Francis ordained thirteen new priests in St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, coinciding with the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Eleven of the priests were ordained for the diocese of Rome, while the remaining two were from Pakistan and Vietnam. The ordination was conducted with the high ceremony typical of Vatican liturgies. Encircled by rows of priests and a smaller row of bishops, the thirteen white-alb³-wearing ordinands lay prostrate during the ordination rite on a large beige and red carpet before the high altar. Behind the clergy were the ordered and docile rows of the assembled faithful dressed in formal clothes, the women wearing modest dresses and the men mostly black or grey suits. The Pope, flanked by his master of ceremonies and several seminarians serving as acolytes, sometimes stood in prayer with his back to the congregation and at other times facing it. The lyrics of the ceremony were provided by the choir, which stood to the rear of the altar singing the hymns with reverence and energy.

In his homily, the Pope spoke of the ordained ministry as a service to God through the sacraments of the Church. He cited the example of the Good Shepherd as a guide for priestly life, and he asked the would-be priests to "let the delightful fragrance of your life be a joy and support to Christ's faithful, so that by word and example you may build up God's house which is the Church". This echoed the call of Jesus himself to his disciples Simon and Andrew as they longingly cast out their nets to sea: "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."⁴

This ordination ceremony reflected something of the global character of the Church's male workforce, exercising active public ministry among devotees in diverse cultural settings in one of the world's largest, oldest, and most globalised religious traditions. This workforce comprises a number of categories, including diocesan priests, religious priests, and religious brothers. Diocesan priests – also known as secular clergy – serve as priests within dioceses and undergo a period of training or formation (usually seven years) in an institution called a seminary, where they are termed seminarians. This training involves human, intellectual, pastoral, and spiritual aspects (Marmion 2019), after which seminarians are ordained for service within their diocese under the authority of their bishop. Ordination provides a kind of capital within the Church that does not apply to the non-ordained (e.g. religious brothers) or the laity. At their ordination, diocesan priests make a commitment to obedience and celibacy and thereafter usually serve in parishes, but they sometimes hold non-parish appointments too, such as in schools or universities.

Religious priests – also known as regular clergy – belong to one of the Church's diverse religious orders and congregations (e.g. Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits),⁵ where they are trained within the order's formation structure. Candidates studying towards ordination as a religious priest are sometimes termed novices rather than seminarians. Unlike diocesan priests, they take a vow of poverty in addition to vows of chastity and obedience (Clevenger 2020). Upon ordination, they are usually assigned to work in areas related to their order's charism (i.e. dominant area of ministry or pastoral work), which is typically tied to the early concerns of its founder (Clevenger 2020). They serve there under the authority of the order's leader or superior. For example, priests belonging to the Jesuit order commonly serve as teachers in their order's network of schools and universities. Another less well-known example is the order of Saint Camillus, whose ministry is focused on the sick. Compared to their diocesan counterparts, religious order priests tend to be more likely to work outside their own country, in one of their order's globally distributed institu-

tions. Taken together, diocesan and religious priests make up the “clergy”⁶ in the Church (Allen 2014).

Religious brothers constitute a third category. They belong to a congregation solely of brothers (e.g. Christian Brothers) or a congregation comprising both priests and brothers (e.g. Pallottines). While not ordained and thus classed as laypeople, religious brothers also take vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and serve to advance their order’s ministry or apostolate (Allen 2014).

Beyond this male workforce, the Church’s workforce is also composed of a numerically larger category of female personnel (Clevenger 2020; Johnson et al. 2014) who have a basically similar status and vowed life within the Church as do religious brothers. Within this category, a distinction can be made between nuns and sisters. Nuns belong to an order whose ministry is focused on prayer, with limited interaction with the external social world, while sisters belong to an order with a ministry involving everyday engagement with the society, such as education or healthcare (Wallace 1992). In practice, the terms nuns and sisters are often used as synonyms. Together, religious order priests, brothers, nuns, and sisters are often termed “religious” (Clevenger 2020).

Although the Catholic Church is not only, or primarily, its clergy and religious, and recent shifts in Church doctrine and practice – such as new lay ministries (Schuth 2019; see also Wallace 1992) – have rendered them less important than previously (Conway 2016), there are good reasons for studying male clergy and religious.⁷

Sociologist Richard A. Schoenherr and others have highlighted the centrality of male clergy to sacramental celebration, parish organisation, and institutional decision-making (Allen 2014; Schoenherr 2002). For example, only priests can currently celebrate the Mass, the central ritual in the Catholic tradition, and perform other sacraments of the Church. Without priests, the Church’s ritual future is in danger. Yet, it is also the case that parishes with fewer or no priests at all are becoming increasingly common in Catholic countries in advanced Western contexts, reflecting

growing priest shortages (Schuth 2019) and an attendant “cohort replacement dilemma”.

Additionally, notwithstanding recent efforts by Pope Francis to create a more expansive role for women within the global Church by appointing, for example, female religious to top-level positions within the Vatican’s bureaucracy (Vatican News 2022), as well as the broader growth in female pastoral ministry and leadership (Wallace 1992), the clergy remains an all-male one. It is priests, bishops, archbishops, and cardinals who exercise the most power and authority in the Church as its key decision-making actors empowered to steer its future course and direction.

Even from a methodological perspective, the male workforce has a distinct advantage over the female one, as the Vatican sources employed in this book provide cross-national data about ordinations and resignations among diocesan clergy, while the equivalent for the female workforce (i.e. professions and resignations) are not available.

Studying trends and patterns in priests, then, has important consequences for the ritual and structural aspects of Catholicism, emphasising its substantive relevance.

Unsurprisingly, the titles of several works written in the last 30 years or so, including Laurie Felkner’s *The Crisis in Religious Vocations* (1989), Jan Kerkhofs’s *Europe Without Priests?* (1995), and Richard A. Schoenherr’s *Goodbye Father* (2002), all reflect a declinist or crisis narrative about Catholic male workforce trends. To take just one example, Schoenherr’s observation that “chronic poor recruitment and retention of clergy along with steady growth in lay membership mean that the Catholic priesthood cannot reproduce itself at a rate high enough to meet the increasing demand for priestly services” (Schoenherr 2002, 18) distils a view shared across these different Western world-oriented studies.

Indeed, in much of the Western world the picture is one of vanishing clergy and religious. Trends in callings in St Patrick’s National Seminary, Maynooth – the traditional centre of intellectual life in the Irish Church and once the world’s largest Catholic diocesan seminary (Corish 1995) – are no throwback to earlier

times. In 2020, there were just four ordinations and sixty-three diocesan seminarians in the Irish Church as a whole (ASE 2020). By contrast, there were 296 diocesan ordinations in Ireland in the peak year of 1959 (Annuario Pontificio 1961), after which there was a strong downward trend line that picked up pace after Vatican II (Fishman and Jones 2007; Conway 2016). But even within Western Europe, there are important differences, with growth in new callings after Vatican II and in recent years in other Catholic-majority countries such as Poland (Davie 2000; Conway 2016).

However, the dominant Western pattern does not ring true for other world regions such as parts of Africa and Asia, where it is a story of seminaries operating to full capacity. Just as there are priest shortages in some places, there are priest surpluses in others. The largest seminary in the world today is not in Western Europe but in sub-Saharan Africa. Bigard Memorial Seminary, located in three campuses in Enugu, Nigeria (Allen 2014; Jenkins 2011), had nearly 600 diocesan seminarians across its formation years in the 2022–2023 academic year.⁸ To put this figure in context, the Nigerian Church as a whole had 4,499 diocesan seminarians in 2021 (*Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae* 2021).

In Asia, the case of India is instructive. An emerging Catholic stronghold, India's figures for callings are impressive, especially in southern areas such as Kerala. For example, in 2019 St Joseph Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha, boasted about 275 callings at various stages of formation.⁹

To place these trends in a wider context, [Figure 1](#) reports trends (at 10-year intervals) in the diocesan priest workforce (per 10,000 Catholics) in India, Ireland, and Nigeria in the 1970–2020 time period. [Figure 2](#) does the same for ordinations to the diocesan priesthood in each country.¹⁰ [Figure 1](#) shows a downward trend line for diocesan priests in Ireland and an upward trending one in both India and Nigeria. Similarly, [Figure 2](#) shows that ordinations to the diocesan priesthood have dropped dramatically in Ireland, grown in Nigeria, and declined moderately in India.

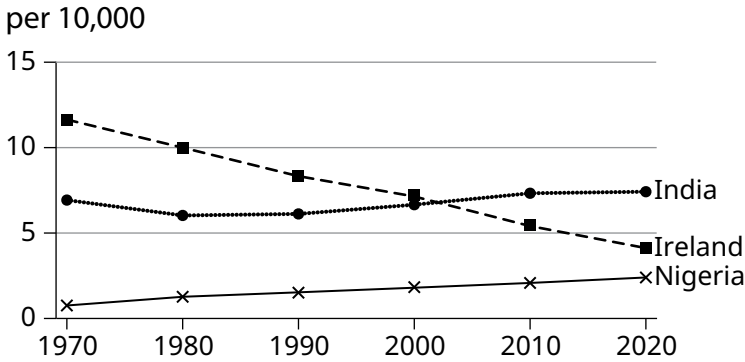


Figure 1: Diocesan Priests in India, Ireland, and Nigeria, 1970–2020

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

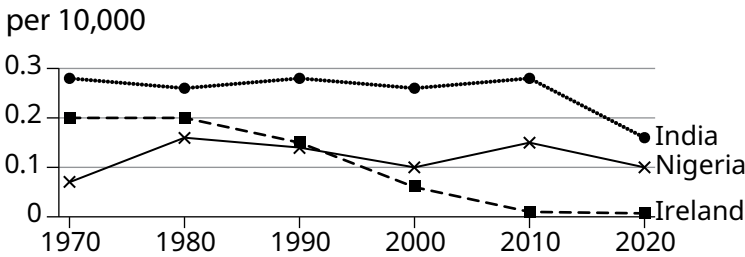


Figure 2: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in India, Ireland, and Nigeria, 1970–2020

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

Taken together, some of these new Nigerian and Indian callings will likely serve as reverse missionary priests in the Western world, emblematic of a shift in the Church's growth away from Western societies.¹¹

What of the global picture? According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate 2023), there were 419,728 Catholic priests in the global Church in 1970 compared to 410,510 in 2020. While

the absolute figures have not changed very much, the relative numbers (per 10,000 Catholics) have, reducing from 6.42 to 3.01. Disaggregating the male workforce into diocesan and religious priests, the figures show that while there has been an increase in the absolute number of diocesan priests from 270,924 to 280,521, their relative number (per 10,000 Catholics) has reduced from 4.14 in 1970 to 2.06 in 2020. As for religious priests, their numbers have declined from 148,804 (2.27 per 10,000 Catholics) to 129,989 (0.95 per 10,000 Catholics). Turning to the non-ordained workforce of religious brothers, this too has declined from 79,408 in 1970 to 50,569 in 2020, a reduction in the relative figures from 1.21 to 0.37.¹² Important variation exists, therefore, in terms of the timing and pace – or temporality – of structural change in the Catholic Church. But exactly what accounts for this global variation in callings is insufficiently understood, especially regarding the Church's male personnel. Explaining this puzzle is the focus of this book.

In *Sacred Callings*, I argue that growth or decline of the Catholic male workforce is a story about four interrelated critical events: ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, sexual scandals, and Papal visits in evolving societal contexts. I chose to study these four events because past research emphasises their importance in shaping Catholic identity in a secular world (e.g. Bullivant 2019; Wilde 2007; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989; Stevens-Arroyo 2002; Berry 2000), even though we know relatively little about their impacts on the workforce.

This explanation rests on the importance, when explaining the dynamic evolution of male workforce trends, of taking account of events, incidents, or happenings in a country's past – or in the past of the Catholic Church in a country – that are one-off, immediate, or suddenly occurring, and that tend to occur over a relatively quick or short time frame. In addition, this theory calls attention to the interaction effects that are likely between these analytically distinct events. Not to focus on these interactions would, in a way, be ahistorical, going against the argument advanced about the importance of historical context for understanding workforce

trends. To take just one example of this interaction, the outbreak of sexual scandals in the global Church contributed to the erosion of the authority of the Catholic leadership among devotees which, in turn, likely led to a reassessment of the Church's historic prophetic ministry, as more and more adherents read this heritage against the backdrop of recent internal scandals.

Grounded in an eventful sociology approach (Sewell 1990, 1996; Steinmetz 2004; Wilde 2007), I argue that this critical events theory,¹³ and attention to historical contingency and context, should be taken seriously alongside alternative explanations such as modernisation in accounting for the longitudinal development of the Catholic male workforce. While such “big, slow-moving, and ... invisible” explanations (Pierson 2003, 177) are important, they cannot account for short-run, sudden, or quick shifts in workforce dynamics unfolding over time horizons of a year or a few years – changes that call for a more historically sensitive perspective based on contextual factors in particular societies, which has received little attention in the existing literature.

It is worth pointing out that the decision to focus on these Catholic-specific, “inside-out” factors – the entrails of Catholicism itself – is partly bolstered by the upward trending of the personnel trend lines for non-Catholic groups (at least in the case of most Protestant denominations in the US case) (Hoge 2011; Schoenherr 2002; Schoenherr and Young 1990; Sullins 2016), which were subject to a basically similar set of sociocultural changes from the 1960s (Schoenherr 2002). By contrast, Catholic trend lines skew the other way. As sociologist Dean R. Hoge succinctly observed, “the Catholic priest shortage has no counterpart among American Protestant denominations” (Hoge 2011, 587).

Beyond the specifically Catholic case, this study carries lessons for students of religion and society in general about the importance of paying attention to contextual influences, short-term religious change, and legitimacy challenges facing religious institutions. More broadly, I attempt to build on existing eventful sociology theory and research by bringing in consideration of events

that are not necessarily earth-moving ones and highlighting interaction effects between different critical events.

Case Selection

This book attempts to substantiate critical events theory via an in-depth study of a few select cases using a small-N comparative approach (Lange 2013). These four cases represent different corners of global Catholicism in the 1950–2010 time range: Argentina, Malta, Nigeria, and the Philippines. Catholicism is especially suitable for such an analysis, as it is one of the world's largest religious traditions with a long-standing presence in a very heterogeneous range of societies and regional contexts (Linden 2009). At the same time, since this book compares case studies not frequently investigated together, the criteria for their selection should be made clear. In other words, why these four cases and not some other four or a different selection entirely?

First, I selected cases representing different world regional settings, as a response to the Western-centric (especially the US) focus of most prior studies (e.g. Stark and Finke 2000; Schoenherr and Young 1993; Schoenherr 2002) or the tendency to take the US case as the point of reference for understanding other societies (Fishman, Gervasoni, and Jones Stater 2015). Thus, Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America are all represented in the cases included in this book.

Second, I chose to focus on these four cases because they showcase different varieties of the Catholic case, ranging from majority contexts (Malta) to minority ones (Nigeria). In addition, I sought to include overlooked and lesser-known cases in research on Catholicism and go beyond a sole focus on traditional heartlands of the Church. Even with regard to historic strongholds, I wanted to move away from an emphasis on popular, “classic” cases such as Ireland, Italy, and Poland towards less-studied ones (in this case, the small island context of Malta). Thus, by focusing on frequently studied cases (i.e. Argentina, Philippines), I employ a “logic of

model cases”, and by focusing on lesser-known ones (i.e. Malta, Nigeria) I also employ a “logic of coverage” (Krause 2021, 25).

I use Eroding Monopoly Catholicism (Argentina), Traditional Heartland Catholicism (Malta), Engaged Minority Catholicism (Nigeria), and Organic Faith Catholicism (Philippines) as shorthand for the cases.¹⁴ Three of the cases (Argentina, Malta, Philippines) are Catholic-majority societies, while one (Nigeria) is a Catholic-minority one. Even though this study does not represent the full range of Catholic societies in the global Church, it does provide an intensive study of a select number of cases that is also extensive across multiple world regions.

Third, each of the four country cases represents either a settled or unsettled context.¹⁵ By (un)settled, I mean the extent to which the Church faces legitimacy challenges from the state and wider society regarding its sociomoral agenda and religious persecution.¹⁶ Regarding the issues of abortion, divorce, and same-sex marriage, the Philippines – which does not allow any of these – aligns more with Church teaching than the other three cases, where at least two of the three issues are allowed (Emery 2013; Center for Reproductive Rights 2011; Htun 2003; Pew Research Center 2019). Similarly, the countries vary regarding the presence or absence of religious persecution in each society, with “low” levels in Argentina and Malta and “high” and “concerning” levels in Nigeria and the Philippines respectively (Aid to the Church in Need 2016).

Thus, the case studies included in this book bring out plurality in three elements: world region, Catholic identity, and Church–state interactions. Although I considered limiting the present study to two or three cases, this would not have allowed the same world regional coverage. Together, investigating these four locations responds to relatively recent pleas for greater attention to non-US settings in sociology of religion research (e.g. Bender et al. 2013; Olson 2014), and provides an interesting test of critical events theory. If this perspective can help explain workforce trends in these four different cases, this may bolster its application to other contexts as well.

While the four empirical cases diverge in several ways, it is also clear that they share some similarities, especially regarding economic development, cultural openness, and political history. For example, Argentina, Malta, and the Philippines are now more advanced economically than they were fifty or sixty years ago, and even the developing society of Nigeria has experienced some economic growth. Similarly, all four cases have become more culturally open, through exposure to secular values carried by modernising processes that are often at odds with those of the Catholic tradition. And all four cases have a relatively recent political legacy of colonial, military, or authoritarian government that resulted in the “fusion” of Catholicism and collective identity in some cases (i.e. Malta and the Philippines) and lack thereof in others (i.e. Nigeria) (Grzymała-Busse 2015). The fusion cases are ones “where religion doubled for an absent state in nations under alien rule” (Martin 2005, 59).

Empirical Approach

This book relies on statistical and historical analyses to evaluate the expected impacts of critical events across time and space (for more detail on the book’s methodology, see the Appendix).

On the quantitative side, I created a unique dataset from Church statistics – the *Annuario Pontificio* (hereafter, *AP*) and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae* (hereafter, *ASE*) – of trends in four categories of Church personnel (diocesan priests, religious priests, religious brothers, and diocesan seminarians) in each country in the 1950–2010 time range. In the 1950–1968 span, these data are available at the diocesan level, and from 1969 to 2010 they are available at the national level. This sixty-one-year temporal boundary was chosen because it covers a relatively long period of time and embraces the decade before Vatican II (1962–1965) – a key institutional change event in the global Church (Wilde 2007) – as well as more than four decades afterwards. With these two sources in hand, I entered the diocesan-level data (from the *AP*) and national-level data (from the *ASE*) into Excel spreadsheets and then pooled these to create a

single dataset for the four countries over time. An important distinction can be made here between flow data (i.e. the number of new personnel) and stock data (i.e. the total number of personnel at a given time). The former are sometimes referred to as leading indicators and the latter as lagging ones.

Beyond workforce data, this book also relies on data on individual religiosity and the Church's institutional strength in each country, which come from large-scale social surveys such as the European Values Study (EVS) (1981–2017) (EVS 2022) and World Values Survey (WVS) (1981–2017) (Inglehart et al. 2022), as well as national surveys and Church sources. I relied on the EVS and WVS for data relating to religious service attendance and confidence levels in churches.¹⁷ I also relied on the *ASE* for trends over time in life-cycle sacramental rituals (i.e. baptisms, first communions, confirmations, and marriages).

Although some of the data presented in this book are at a descriptive level, I also attempt to explain workforce variation. Thus, in order to assess the impact of each critical event on the Catholic male workforce across the four cases, I employ OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) regression models with time-series data (i.e. data measured over time) (Schroeder et al. 2017), in this case, in the 1950–2010 and 1969–2010 time periods.

OLS regression is a statistical technique used to test the independent effects of different independent variables on a continuous dependent variable, after controlling for or “holding steady” the effects of other possible factors. A continuous variable is one whose values can take on any numerical value (Schroeder et al. 2017). A good example of this is age, which can run from 0 to almost any value, though in practice it often has a ceiling at about 120. I ran the statistical analyses using Stata (version 15), a quantitative data analysis software program.

Because studies suggest that a number of factors may influence religiosity in general or callings in particular, I included controls (or covariates) for these in the models. As previous research suggests that regime changes may be consequential for callings (Fishman and Jones 2007), I include regime type as a control for this.

Also, because past work links declines in callings to Pope Paul VI's controversial 1968 birth control encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (Fichter 2009), I include birth control encyclical as an additional control variable.

By including these covariates (regime type and birth control encyclical) in the cross-country analysis, I sought to isolate the impact of the critical events net of any influence these factors might have on the workforce. The inclusion of other control variables would have been useful, but data availability for the time span of the study or violations of regression assumptions meant that this was not possible. Because of this, the regression results should be seen as more suggestive than definitive of the statistical impacts of the critical events across the four case studies.

In each empirical chapter, I report the headline results of the regression models, focusing on a full model including the independent variables (ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, sexual scandals, and Papal visits) and the two covariates. By this, I mean that I present the statistically significant results, and I also include reflection on their substantive significance. A more complete account of the regression modelling is presented in the Appendix, where I report the results of a step-by-step approach to adding the covariates. Specifically, I began with a crude model (Model 0) with the independent variables only and without any covariates, and then added each covariate one at a time (Models 1–2), followed by the independent variables and the two covariates together in a full model (Model 3).

The regression models were supplemented by visual inspection of trend lines (for example, before and after a Papal visit in a given country), summary measures such as decadal averages (e.g. for the decade before and after Vatican II), and peak-to-2010 changes (e.g. the difference between the peak year for ordinations and their relative levels in 2010), which provide a measure of the tempo of change over time (Grzymała-Busse 2011).

On the qualitative side, this book leverages secondary sources from a wide range of disciplines, including anthropology, political science, sociology, and theology, to develop a portrait of the

evolving and quite unique history of the Church in each locale, especially regarding the four critical events. While social scientific studies of the Church in Argentina, Malta, and the Philippines are relatively common (e.g. Buckley 2016; Gill 1998; Vassallo 1979), there are considerably fewer relating to Nigerian Catholicism. As a result of this asymmetry, for the Nigerian case I relied somewhat more on Church-sponsored studies (e.g. Makozi and Ojo 1982). I also draw on Church writings such as pastoral letters¹⁸ of national bishops' conferences.¹⁹ My reliance on different disciplinary sources made corroboration of different views possible, helping to mitigate possible biases present in any single source.

Regarding the Papal visits perspective, I draw on archival visual footage of Papal visits to the different settings as well as Church and Papal speeches and writings (for more detail, see the Appendix). These visual data were accessed via the social media channel YouTube. Papal speeches, homilies, and writings were obtained from the website of the Holy See,²⁰ which collates various public discourses of each Pope. Select quotes from these homilies and speeches were chosen as representative examples of the remarks expressed by the Pope on a particular occasion. To help gain a better sense of what a real-life Papal visit looks like, I also attended public events associated with Pope Francis's visit to Ireland in 2018, including the Pope's journey in the Popemobile through the streets of Dublin and the Papal Mass in the city's Phoenix Park.

Combined, I employed the qualitative data to map the unfolding of the critical events across time and space and the quantitative data to statistically investigate their workforce impacts.

Organisation

This book is organised as follows. In the Introduction, I present an overview of the book's argument, cases, and empirics. In [Chapter 1](#), I introduce and develop the analytical framework of the book: critical events theory. While [Chapter 1](#) carries more theoretical freight than the others, it sets the stage for the event-driven perspective advanced in the book by assessing competing explana-

tions to this theory, with particular reference to the secular opportunity, mandatory celibacy, and regime transitions approaches. Drawing on insights from the sociology of religion and the eventful sociology literatures, I then develop a theory of how the four critical events potentially influence workforce dynamics, beginning with a working definition of a “critical event”.

In Chapters [2](#) to [5](#), I present the empirical findings. These chapters represent the four country case studies, one chapter per case, and evaluate the impact of the four critical events – and their interactive effects – on the Catholic workforce in parallel analyses across each national setting. These four chapters represent the empirical spine of the book. Each chapter begins by presenting descriptive trends in religiosity and workforce personnel and then moves on to contextualising the workforce trends using historical and statistical analysis. The geographical arc of the book begins in Latin America, followed by Western Europe. After this, I turn to Africa, before finally ending up in Asia.

As we will see, Argentina is the focus of [Chapter 2](#). While Vatican II’s reforms washed up on Argentina’s shores, the Church hierarchy was not very favourably disposed to them, especially regarding prophetic activism. At the same time, the council’s stress on serving the poor and needy appealed to certain segments of the Church, especially “committed” Catholics with a strong preference for non-state-aligned, socially concerned prophetic activism (Morello 2015, 13). The hierarchy’s prophetic ministry in this society in the 1970s and 1980s for the most part avoided direct criticism of the military government, in line with the stance of other elites in the society. This lack of prophetic leadership, unlike their episcopal counterparts in other Latin American churches, may have created an unfavourable context for new callings. However, from the 1990s the Church’s leadership increasingly highlighted gaps in social needs fulfilled by the state, which may have helped to bolster its legitimacy in the society after the democratic transition.

Argentina’s two Papal visits in 1982 and 1987, both by Pope John Paul II, came during an unsettled time (Swidler 1986) in the

country, against the backdrop of the Falklands War and significant sociocultural change, to which the Pope's public discourse sought to respond. The Pope was generally well received on each visit, but his journeys may have simultaneously bolstered and eroded new callings by highlighting the chasm between Church doctrine and social forces on the one hand and the long-standing appeal of deepened commitment to the Church's value system on the other. The election of Argentinian Jorge Bergoglio to the papacy in 2013 spotlighted the Church in this country as never before, including its history of sex abuse. This came to light from the early 1990s, undermining Catholic authority and ministry performance, and likely dampened the appeal of the priesthood.

[Chapter 3](#) turns to the case of Malta, one of the traditional heartlands of the Church. Malta's geographical closeness to and historic links with Italy meant that it did not experience Vatican II's reforms as those of a distant, faraway religious centre, which was truer for the other three cases. Some local clergy reacted positively to the liturgical reforms even as others were dissatisfied with their loss of authority vis-à-vis a more educated laity. Over the years, Catholic elites have exercised significant prophetic ministry, rallying against the left-leaning groups in the 1970s, whose political programme sought to dislodge the Church's influence, through to more recent conservative moral activism against divorce. The impact of this moral leadership on the male workforce may not have been straightforward and could have gone either way. On the one hand, it may have alienated devotees by highlighting the Church's distance from contemporary realities, especially those committed to less traditional values. On the other hand, it may have highlighted the Church's willingness to take a strong stand against the drift of Maltese culture away from its religious-based roots, and thus bolstered callings.

Despite being a small island state, Malta was visited three times by a Pope, twice (1990, 2001) by John Paul II, and once (2010) by Benedict XVI, highlighting the historic connection between the Church and Maltese culture and its outsized weight in the global Church. In 1990, Pope John Paul II entered Valletta port on a

boat, symbolic of this small island state but also of St Paul's own journey to the island centuries before. How the Pope arrived mattered. Pope Benedict's remarks during his later 2010 visit echoed a motif of his papacy in general by stressing the centrality of marriage and family in Catholic faith as a bulwark against the inroads of secular modernity in the local society. As with the other cases, Malta experienced an outbreak of publicised sexual scandals in the 2000s that highlighted deficits in the ministry performance of its clergy and the Church's historic abuse of power. In 2010, the Pope's visit was tainted by these scandals, spotlighting how the Papal visits perspective plays into the sexual scandals one.

In [Chapter 4](#), I stretch the cross-regional comparison even further by moving to a different part of the world, in this case, Nigeria. Unlike some of the other cases, the reforms of Vatican II were generally positively received in this setting once initial restricted awareness was overcome, especially in the areas of lay participation, ecumenism, and social justice. The latter two concerns featured strongly for African Catholic leaders in the deliberations of Vatican II itself (Wilde 2007). The Church hierarchy in Nigeria has a long-standing record of speaking out against the national government regarding macropolitical issues such as corruption – prophetic ministry that could have resonated among adherents and made joining the Church attractive. This attentiveness of the Catholic leadership to local realities highlighted the “Nigerianisation” of the Church, which aligned well with post-conciliar reforms. Relatedly, the bishops' more recent moral activism against issues such as same-sex marriage, while placing it out of step with growing international developed-world cultural approval of this issue (Adamczyk 2017), may have appealed to would-be callings by highlighting the Church's alignment with local conservative cultural values on this issue.

The visits by Pope John Paul II in 1982 and 1998, themselves indicators of the Nigerian Church's coming of age in the global Church, brought to the fore growing threats to Catholic culture from the secular world and underwrote the prophetic voice of the Church in combating them, highlighting interaction effects

between the prophetic stances and Papal visits frameworks. Papal leadership also emphasised the contribution of Nigerian Catholicism to the global Church, including missionary efforts upending traditional clerical mobility from Europe to Africa. Like the other cases, scandals relating to the sexual behaviour of Church personnel occurred (mostly in relation to adults rather than children) but had less legitimacy-eroding impacts than the other three cases, likely as a result of factors such as the preponderance of non-Nigerian clergy among offenders.

[Chapter 5](#) further expands the geographical scope of the book by bringing in the case of the Philippines. Vatican II evoked mixed emotions in this Asian country, especially regarding its stress on commitments to the poor and needy. While some sectors within the Church welcomed these changes, others viewed them as not going far enough or as unduly prophetic. Divergent interpretations of the council emerged among the hierarchy, which resulted in some disunity about its proper approach to prophetic ministry and brought out an interaction effect between the ecumenical councils and prophetic stances perspectives. Some individual bishops were not afraid to speak out in the 1970s and 1980s against the Marcos regime, but the Church hierarchy in general was somewhat restrained in its prophetic leadership.

Things began to change in the late 1980s and 1990s, when senior Church personnel such as Cardinal Sin played a direct role in mobilising against the Marcos regime and also managed political relations in the post-regime transition. During this period, the Church basically operated as an institutional surrogate for the Philippines' distant state. In the absence of a strong state infrastructure, this mostly involved providing core social services for the general populace (Grzymała-Busse and Slater 2018). Remarkably, the Philippines received three Papal visits, the first by Paul VI in 1970 and two more by John Paul II in 1981 and 1995. Each visit involved Papal reflection on evolving social realities and a reminder to devotees of the Church's teachings as a response to them, which may have made the priesthood more attractive. At the same time, this may have alienated others willing to embrace

more secular lifestyles in which religion has little or no place. In the 1990s and 2000s, sexual scandals came into the public domain in the Philippines, an “honour culture” with a strong sense of shame about past sufferings (Schwartz and Kim 2010, 6; see also Tagle 2012), reminding the Church of its history of sinning rather than of being sinned against and calling into question the ministry performance of its religious superiors.

I conclude the study by providing an overall assessment of critical events theory in light of the empirical findings from the four settings. The concluding chapter also offers reflection on three broader takeaways, focusing on the importance of contexts of religion, short-term religious change, and institutional legitimacy. Additionally, I reflect on how the study contributes to existing work in eventful sociology. The chapter closes by exploring some avenues for future research on this topic.

The priests ordained by Pope Francis in St Peter’s Basilica, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, represent some of the relatively recent callings in the Church’s core ministry serving in diverse contexts in the world today, each local outposts of a global religious tradition. This worldwide, four-country comparative historical study examines growth and decline dynamics in this workforce, showing how it responds to critical events and their interactions in and through time, and what general lessons this carries for religion and society in the modern world.

CHAPTER 1

Towards an Event-Led Theory of Catholic Male Workforce Trends

Introduction

What factors help explain variation in Catholic religious vocations? Since the 1960s, research and scholarship have specified three basic determinants of priestly vocations: economic conditions, religious regulations, and political arrangements. These three approaches advance our understanding of this topic but also have gaps and shortcomings that invite more research. A relevant analytical distinction can be drawn here between perspectives regarding internal Church (“inside-out”) factors, which are subject to change by religious elites, and external social (“outside-in”) factors, which are much less so. Ecumenical councils may be taken as representative of the former and long-term secular trends of the latter.

These former perspectives have mostly been tested with reference to the US case (e.g. Schoenherr and Young 1993; Schoenherr 2002; Hoge 1987), with a smaller number of studies involving a cross-national research design bringing in other countries and world regions (e.g. Ebaugh et al. 1996; Fishman and Jones 2007). Following earlier studies stressing the significance of institutional agency in explaining religious dynamics (e.g. Sullins 2013), I have chosen to focus on endogenous “inside-out” factors, an approach that is arguably buttressed by the *upward* trending of the personnel trend lines for non-Catholic groups in the US context (Hoge 2011; Schoenherr 2002; Sullins 2016). Note that these religious groups also pushed up against the same wider sociocultural changes from

the 1960s as Catholicism (whose trend lines went *downward* in the same time period) in this Western setting (Schoenherr 2002). Even if these Catholic-specific critical events did *not* have the expected impact on workforce trends (either eroding or bolstering), this “null finding” alone would be worth unpacking.²¹

Catholic Workforce Frameworks

The study of variation in the Catholic workforce has received a good deal of attention in past research, especially since the 1960s, when anxiety about workforce shortages became an increasingly practical problem in the Church (Linden 2009; Hoge 2011). Some of this early burst of research activity tended to be carried out by Church personnel, usually priest–sociologists (e.g. Kerkhofs 1995), but as these have declined in number it is now mostly conducted by lay sociologists. One of the earliest efforts to understand this phenomenon was instigated by the Vatican itself (Augustyn 2006), in the form of an international congress (1961) on “Vocations to the States of Perfection”, whose deliberations were published in an edited volume under the title *Today’s Vocation Crisis* (Poage and Lievin 1962). This collection, with contributions from clergy and religious, included a helpful opening chapter on “The Sociology of Vocation” by priest–sociologist Francis Houtart, but offered little by way of assessing the significance of rival theoretical approaches. Prefacing the work, the then Pope John XXIII noted the “very delicate and urgent problem” of attracting new callings (John XXIII 1962, 3), a recruitment problematic that has not gone away.

Over the years, subsequent research has sought to adjudicate between rival social science explanations of Catholic vocation trend lines (e.g. Conway 2016; Ebaugh et al. 1996; Fishman and Jones 2007). In what follows, I introduce the major theoretical perspectives in the literature, focusing on the secular opportunity, mandatory celibacy, and regime transitions perspectives. While these frameworks are insightful, each also has deficiencies that undermine our ability to reach a better understanding of global

variation in the Catholic workforce. After setting out and critiquing these alternative explanations in the *opposing* part of my argument, I then present the *proposing* part by introducing my event-informed theoretical approach as a competitive rival to existing frameworks, with special attention given to ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, sexual scandals, and Papal visits. I also specify the mechanisms or modes of influence linking each critical event with workforce dynamics. These events motivate a series of propositions that are tested in the empirical chapters of the book.

The Secular Opportunity Perspective

Perhaps Helen Rose Ebaugh and colleagues' secular opportunity argument has been the most influential theory explaining Catholic vocations, being mostly applied to the female workforce (i.e. sisters or nuns). According to this perspective, the Catholic female workforce is shaped by the available secular opportunity structure in terms of finding a job and gaining an education in non-religious fields of study (Ebaugh et al. 1996; Wittberg 1994; Stark and Finke 2000). As Ebaugh and colleagues put it, "we suggest an explanation for the impact of modernization upon the collective that we believe to be an additional factor in the recruitment and retention of women in Catholic orders: the effects of changing employment and educational opportunities for women in industrial societies" (Ebaugh et al. 1996, 172). Thus, this theory is strongly aligned with sociology's modernisation framework, whereby economic expansion is associated with the draining of religious influence in society (Buckley 2016).

Within this framing, new callings are seen essentially in competitive terms (Schoenherr and Young 1993), because joining the Church's workforce is theorised as one choice in an "opportunity space" consisting of a range of competing options created by economic development. By contrast, in developing societies one would expect the opportunity costs of joining the Church's work-

force to be relatively low, and thus to increase amid improving levels of economic development.

Empirically, using data for 50 industrialised and non-industrialised societies in the 1960–1990 span, Ebaugh and colleagues found significant variation between societies in their secular opportunity structures, as measured by female participation in the professionalised labour market and in higher education. Moreover, they found statistically significant effects for the employment opportunity structure on female callings – measured in relative terms (per 1,000 Catholics) – in societies with higher levels of industrialisation but not in societies with lower levels of industrialisation. They also found that while the relative number of female callings declined in both sets of societies, sharper declines were evident in more industrialised societies.

Other studies provide less empirical support for this perspective. For example, using absolute rather than relative numbers of nuns as their dependent variable, Stark and Finke found that the effects of female opportunity structure were washed out once economic development was controlled for. Buttressing their “null finding” further, Stark and Finke show that secular opportunities for females increased slowly in the US in 1948–1995, while the female workforce trended downward very quickly in the mid-1960s (Stark and Finke 2000).

Some of the new employment opportunities that became available for women from the 1960s arose as a result of increasing state-led occupational professionalisation in areas such as nursing, social work, and teaching, and the associated displacement of the role of religious, thereby devaluing their work among the laity (Wittberg 1994).

Clearly, this theory implies stronger decline in the Catholic female workforce than in the male workforce as secular employment opportunities for women became significantly more favourable from the 1960s onwards, with the rise of the women’s movement. In contrast, these avenues for mobility for men were generally more numerous prior to the 1960s. Indeed, Ebaugh and her colleagues are clear that this argument applies only to women,

as traditionally women had been excluded from Catholic middle-class professional careers and were able to move into the professions through their joining of Catholic orders and congregations. Additionally, in her work Ebaugh (1993) recognises that these changes in the opportunity structure interacted with, and cannot easily be unhinged from, other religious and non-religious dynamics and events – including Vatican II, feminism, and growing professionalisation – to produce decline in female callings.

Although this argument mainly concerns change in the female workforce, its application to the Catholic male workforce should not be totally discounted, as the secular opportunity structure for men in advanced industrial societies also opened up from the 1960s, albeit to a lesser extent than it did for women. Before this, when university education was not as widespread as it is today, entering the seminary was one of the few – and most revered – pathways to higher education for men (Vilariño and Tizón 1998). Similarly, constricted social mobility in today's developing societies likely makes a calling an attractive life option, bolstering the appeal of the priesthood (Allen 2014).

However, this theory assumes that the satisfaction of human needs can be reduced to material well-being and security provided by secular opportunities (Vaidyanathan 2019), missing how other non-material human needs (e.g. for belonging and connection to others) may go unfulfilled by economic development and inspire new callings. For example, past studies show that economic development may prompt its own existential insecurities such as contingent footloose employment,²² competitiveness, and work–family imbalances, as well as economic inequalities, which some may compensate for through religiosity. This contradiction may help explain why India is a high-callings country in today's Church; it is a quickly expanding emerging economy symbolised by hyper-capitalistic cities such as Bangalore (Vaidyanathan 2019). Thus, modernity itself may operate as a generator of callings.

Another shortcoming of this perspective is that it overlooks contextual variation in the attractions of entering the female workforce (Clevenger 2020), which may not always be the same

across developing and developed societies. For example, Clevenger's comparative research on US and Congolese Catholic sisters suggests that constrained opportunities do not loom large for Congolese women in their stories about what attracted them to the female workforce in the first place. Instead, they are often attracted to joining it by the charism of a particular order, revealed by the sisters they encountered in their lives, even as they disavow more socially approved pathways for expressing womanhood in this local context (Clevenger 2020).

Overall, the secular opportunity perspective brings out the significance of broader non-religious dynamics in influencing workforce patterns, and its empirical assessment rests on large-N cross-national research of societies reflecting a wide range of variation in modernisation levels. While such research is useful, it lacks in-depth historical analysis necessary for assessing complex social realities in specific contexts.

The Mandatory Celibacy Perspective

Apart from secular opportunity, a second significant perspective accounting for workforce change, and one of the most common and well publicised, is the centuries-old mandatory requirement of life-long celibacy among an all-male ordained Catholic clergy (Hoge 2011; Greeley 1972; Schoenherr 2002), which is a Church rule rather than an article of faith (Smith 2011; Sullins 2016). This contrasts with the clergy in some non-Catholic religious groups such as the Lutheran tradition, where a married clergy exists (Cosser 1967). In recent times, the celibacy rule has come to the fore more in its breaking than in its fulfilment, as reflected in numerous sexual scandals relating to clergy.

This rule has notable operational consequences for the Church, allowing its personnel to provide long-term service in often hard-to-reach parts of the Catholic world, reduce direct labour costs (Calderisi 2013), remove alternative draws on the commitment of the Church's workforce such as marriage and family (Cosser 1967; Schoenherr 1972; Sullins 2016), and close off the development of

clerical dynasties (Sullins 2016). Thus, this “greedy” (Coser 1967) disciplinary requirement mandating self-control of the male body (Kalbian 2014) involves high costs on the part of individual priests even as it serves well the Church’s organisational interests (Sullins 2016), especially in developing societies where kin-based cultures increase the disadvantages of giving up married life (Linden 2009).

Although this rule applies in general, there are some numerically small and little-known post-Vatican II personnel categories for whom it does not apply, bringing out ambiguities in its application. As a recent review has noted, “Catholicism’s complex organizational history is as much a history of exceptions, shortcuts, and leniencies as it is a history of rigor and discipline” (Mayblin et al. 2017, 16–17). These exceptions include married priests who have converted from the Anglican to the Roman Catholic tradition and permanent deacons who, as married men with their own independent income from a secular job, are ordained to carry out sacramental rituals in parishes alongside their celibate priest colleagues. Also, formerly married men can also be ordained as priests after the death of their spouse. In this case, second-order celibacy applies, whereby the priest commits to celibacy upon ordination (Sullins 2016).

Since mandatory celibacy has always applied in the Church (or at least since the fifth century), how could it account for recent changes in workforce trends?

One explanation is rooted in Vatican II, which delegitimised celibacy by equalising marriage and the celibate or vowed life as life options, moving away from an earlier position privileging the latter over the former as a life choice that is closer to God. Practically, this was reflected in the jettisoning of traditional practices: wearing secular dress instead of habits or clerical garb, living independently in ordinary houses rather than communally in convents and presbyteries, and exercising greater autonomy as opposed to following rules and regulations. Stated simply, it became more difficult to see the difference between clergy/religious and the laity (Stark and Finke 2000).

Another explanation relates to cultural values. In a social world that increasingly emphasizes “new” values of individual independence and self-expression (Vilariño 1997; Vilariño and Tizón 1998; Sullins 2016) over “old” ones like sacrifice and self-discipline, it is more difficult to accept a celibate life. Additionally, the celibate male workforce has come under pressure from feminist activism rooted in values of gender equality (Vilariño and Tizón 1998). Put another way, shifting understandings of normative human behaviour makes the celibacy rule more difficult now than before. A man’s decision to opt for priesthood in this context may be seen as going against the cultural norm, a life choice fewer men in Western societies seem willing to take nowadays.

Richard A. Schoenherr’s provocatively titled *Goodbye Father*²³ (Schoenherr 2002), the magnum opus of the mandatory celibacy perspective, provides perhaps the most systematic treatment of it. This work can be twinned with Schoenherr and Young’s earlier, more empirically oriented, *Full Pews and Empty Altars* (Schoenherr and Young 1993), which investigated trend lines in recruitment and retention in the US Church in the 1966–1984 (and beyond) time span using an advanced statistical–demographic method. As implied by its very title, it found that the US Church faced a priest shortage dilemma and that the downward trending of priests would continue into the future.

Adopting a more theoretical approach²⁴ in *Goodbye Father* to account for this, Schoenherr argues that a complex set of factors, involving interaction effects between institutional, social psychological, and organisational shifts operating at the local and global levels, have come together over a long time period to produce a sociocultural context, or “tipping point”, prompting change in the Church’s ministry (cast in exclusively male celibate terms) and, more broadly, in patriarchal systems. Within this framing, the priest shortage problem is the key determinant of the interaction effects between the different factors, thus serving as its anchor point. Unlike the other two perspectives, this view thus has clear “where we might go” implications for the Catholic leadership.

Put more concretely, Schoenherr implicates such factors as pluralistic ideas, geographical reorientations, theological shifts, feminist agitations, and lay involvements in accounting for the slow-moving build-up of a cultural momentum for change in Catholic ministry, which undercuts mandatory priestly celibacy. Schoenherr's dialectical analysis of these factors (e.g. Europe-heavy Church versus global Church or lay autonomy versus clerical control) suggests the Church is moving towards some kind of transformative moment.

In the face of an "inherited" priest shortage problem, there is also an element of "choice" (Yamane 2002). In this context, a strong inertial conservative current in the Church, hesitant to alter a millennium-old tradition, is ranged against a more progressive one that holds out the possibility of married and female priests, each claiming to defend proper institutional Catholicism. Ultimately, the outcome of this internal struggle may well turn on the stance of a future Pope, making this aspect of Schoenherr's model perhaps the most speculative element (Schoenherr 2002).²⁵

What empirical support exists for this perspective? *Goodbye Father* draws on previous studies suggesting celibacy operates as a "push" factor for both seminarians and priests (Schoenherr 2002). At the same time, other research provides more ambiguous findings. For example, Greeley found that a desire to marry was not a strong one among either US diocesan priests or religious priests surveyed in 1969/1970, with only about a fifth and a tenth respectively indicating they would definitely or likely marry if celibacy were voluntary. At the same time, this study found that difficulties with living within the Church and a desire to marry were the dominant factors prompting resignations (Greeley 1972).²⁶ Other studies beyond the US context point to celibacy's role in motivating resignations. For example, Schoenherr and Vilariño found that among priests in Spain celibacy is an important factor influencing their commitment to priesthood, even if variation exists between older and younger priests (Schoenherr and Vilariño 1979).

More recently, studies of US priests have found that where celibacy predominates as a motivating factor among priests who

resign within the first five years of ministry, it typically operates in combination with feeling lonely or not appreciated enough (Hoge 2002). In other words, both celibacy and loneliness or under-appreciation tend to prompt resignations. This “both-and” dynamic – even if its empirical support is limited largely to the US case – suggests that celibacy is not a mop that hoovers up all elements of clerical discontent, making it difficult to assume a simple or straightforward relationship between mandatory celibacy and priest shortages.

Although the celibacy argument appears to be bolstered by the fact that the personnel of non-Catholic religious traditions without this requirement is growing, because the celibacy rule applies to nearly all Catholic clergy and has always been implemented in the Church (or at least from the fifth century (Coser 1967)), it is unable to adequately explain the recent growth of religious orders and congregations with a traditionalist orientation, nor why Catholic vocations are growing in some parts of the world but not in others, where the same rule applies (Conway 2016). To the extent that it does trigger resignations, it is often more in conjunction with other factors such as loneliness than as a stand-alone factor. Additionally, the numerically small workforce of married convert priests casts doubt on this rule as a significant dampening factor for new callings in the global Church (Sullins 2016). Thus, this straightforwardly understood argument is not as promising or persuasive in theorising about variation in the Catholic male workforce as is sometimes assumed.

The Regime Transitions Perspective

While the secular opportunity and mandatory celibacy perspectives focus on economic and religious factors, the regime transitions perspective emphasises the influence of political dynamics on workforce change.²⁷ Developed by sociologists Robert M. Fishman and Keely Jones (Fishman and Jones 2007), the basic insight of this more recent approach is that political regime changes may be consequential, though not in a uniform way, for explaining

trends in the Catholic male workforce, by altering the relationship between religious and political sources of authority. These changes, in turn, may augment or decrease openings for men to engage in civic activism (e.g. the Catholic priesthood).

More specifically, whether clerical inflows are dampened or bolstered by regime transitions depends on the nature of the political context and circumstance, of which there are three varieties. In contexts where authoritarian government involves civil society suppression that also hampers religiously based recruitment, Catholic vocations should be expected to increase following democracy as men find an outlet in the Church for their civic activism that was previously dampened.

Alternatively, in contexts where political repression does not take religious forms, a transition to democracy may dampen vocations by increasing secular opportunities for the expression of civic solidarity. A third scenario involves contexts in which the Church lends its support to politically repressive government, where it could expect an uptick in callings in the wake of its more favourably evaluated public ministry performance under democracy.

Empirically, Fishman and Jones evaluate their regime transitions argument based on an analysis of descriptive trends in seventeen national cases in the 1945–1995 time span, as well as a series of four paired comparisons, two involving regime transitions (i.e. Poland/Chile, Spain/Portugal) and the other two representing continuous or established democracies (i.e. Canada/US, Netherlands/Italy) in the 1969–2000 time period. In the first part of their analyses, they focus on assessing the Vatican II effect reported in other research, which they find partial support for. They then move on to provide empirical evidence for their main theoretical approach, finding decreases (e.g. Poland/Chile) and increases (e.g. Spain/Portugal) in callings after a regime transition, based on correlation analyses of vocation rates at ten-year intervals as well as visual inspection of trend lines. By comparison, Fishman and Jones found decreases in trend lines for long-standing democra-

cies Canada and the US and an uptick in vocations for a time in Italy and the Netherlands.

Clearly, this interesting theory aligns well with the theoretical perspective of this book, by correctly emphasising the significance of shifts in state structures. It is suggestive of the approach developed here by highlighting the role of political events in influencing vocation trends. Even so, it does not consider other events or how they may interact together to influence priestly recruitment or retention and does not develop an event-driven approach. Nor has this perspective been empirically tested beyond mostly Western developed settings.

The earlier discussion looked at three of the most important alternative explanations for Catholic workforce variation, all of which are insightful. Combined, these canonical frameworks advance economic, religious, and political explanations for vocation trends. For example, structural approaches suggest that wider social factors, such as the secular opportunity structure or macropolitical environment, exert an important influence on new callings. Other perspectives such as the mandatory celibacy argument are also important, because they draw attention to the role of “inside the Church” factors in accounting for workforce change.

At the same time, the secular opportunity approach posits change as unfolding gradually over relatively long periods of time, in temporal spans (Pierson 2003) of many decades. Only the regime transitions argument considers the possibility of religious dynamics taking place over different periods of time, but even so does not look beyond changes in state structures. Furthermore, most of these theories are not well positioned to explain short-term or sudden changes in workforce trends or how they may be impacted by more abrupt historical circumstances. Second, these approaches cannot account for why the Catholic case uniquely suffers from few new callings (in advanced Western societies) while other religious groups, which are subject to basically the same ongoing sociocultural dynamics, do not (Schoenherr 2002). This suggests that other factors in the “Catholic world” itself are at work and that a theory that can handle quick-moving or sudden

shifts rooted in specific historical contingencies is needed to better understand Catholic workforce dynamics.

Centring Critical Events

Grounded in eventful sociology theory and research (e.g. Altinordu 2017; García-Montoya and Mahoney 2019; Meyer and Kimeldorf 2015; Sewell 1990, 1996; Wagner-Pacifici 2010), this book's theory, which I call "critical events theory", focuses on the influence of four specific factors (and their points of interaction) – ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, sexual scandals, and Papal visits – on the evolution of Catholic workforce trends. Although these four events are not the only ones that could potentially impact workforce trends, previous research has highlighted their influence on Catholic religiosity: ecumenical councils (e.g. Sprows Cummings, Matovina, and Orsi 2018; Fishman and Jones 2007; Wilde 2007), prophetic stances (e.g. Smith 1982; Williams 1989; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989), Papal visits (e.g. Bruneau 1982; Stevens-Arroyo 2002; Zubrzycki 2006), and sexual scandals (e.g. Greeley 2004; Shupe 1998; Keenan 2012). Together, these four events make up my critical events theory about cross-national variation in Catholic callings.

There is a strong precedent in sociology, albeit mostly in a non-religious domain, for an eventful perspective, revealing how historical events shape social change. For example, McAdam and Sewell have emphasised the importance of critical events – such as Bastille Day (July 14, 1789) in the case of the French revolution – and a sensitivity to contingency and temporality more broadly, in making sense of political movements, as a corrective to the preoccupation in the literature on long-run processes in explaining the origins and development of collective mobilisation (McAdam and Sewell 2001). Within the study of religion, eventful sociological research also exists (e.g. Wilde 2007), but mainly in relation to a single event (in this case, Vatican II).

Fortunately, sociologists have also specified the basic qualities of events: they involve the singling out of certain happenings from

the ordinary flow of time, which become filled with certain meanings through symbolic dynamics, and then make a big splash on society, serving as a touchstone for a significant number of people afterwards (Sewell 1996; Altinordu 2017). Put more formally, Sewell defines a historical event as “(1) a ramified sequence of occurrences that (2) is recognized as notable by contemporaries, and that (3) results in a durable transformation of structures” (Sewell 1996, 844).

While events often bring about some significant changes that alter the course of human history (Sewell 1996), they need not always be earth-moving or epic ones (Berezin 2012; Moore 2011). In the Catholic case, ecumenical councils (in this case, Vatican II) clearly meet all three criteria. Other critical events such as sexual scandals or Papal visits meet the first two criteria but not necessarily the third, a set of dynamics invested with symbolic meaning but usually not leading to large-scale historical change. Put otherwise, their transformative capacity is relatively low.²⁸

Events may also vary in terms of their internal temporality (Sewell 1990; Abbott 1992; Wagner-Pacifici 2010; Erikson 2019). Some may be relatively bounded (Wagner-Pacifici 2010), taking place over a few days (e.g. Papal visits) or having a predetermined timeframe (e.g. ecumenical councils). Others are more open-ended or “restless” (Wagner-Pacifici 2010, 1356), involving occurrences spread over a relatively longer time frame (e.g. sexual scandals) or being more ad hoc in nature (e.g. prophetic stances) (see [Figure 3](#)). It is also the case that events can overlap in time (Abbott 1992), as illustrated by the co-occurrence of a Papal visit and sexual scandals in Malta in the late 2000s.

[Figure 3](#) presents critical events theory, with each event making up the four quadrants and transformative capacity and internal temporality representing the two axes of comparison. Although it could be argued that this conceptual device simplifies the social world, it also helps to bring out salient differences between the events under study. Transformative capacity ranges from high to low and internal temporality from bounded to non-bounded. The

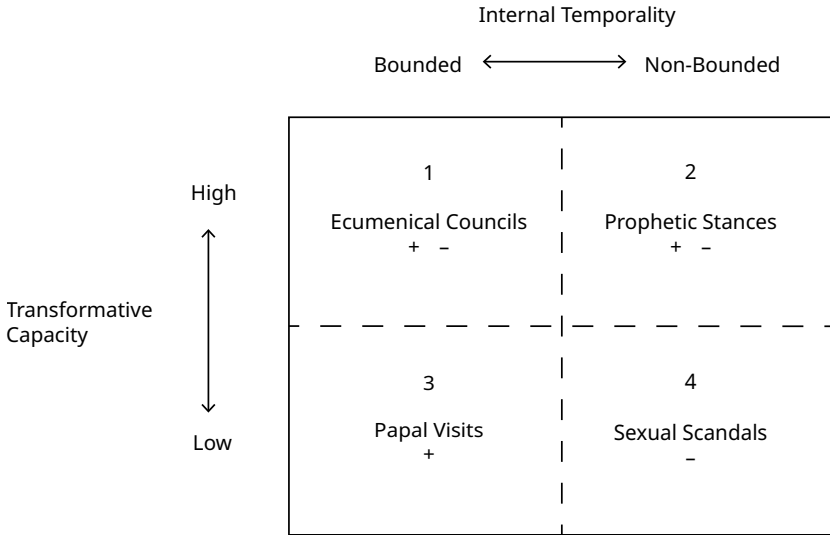


Figure 3: A Conceptual Outline of Critical Events Theory.

plus and minus signs represent expected increases or decreases (or both) in the male workforce after each critical event.

To help guide the critical events theory advanced in this book, I also developed a working definition of a “critical event”. Thus, I operationally define a “critical event” as *a collective incident, activity or moment occurring in the national Church in a given society that is one-off, sudden, or novel in nature, or reoccurs over a relatively short time span (years or one or two decades rather than centuries) and that has the capacity to generate changes in established Catholic male workforce trends*. Of course, I would expect these critical incidents to have quite varying disruptive effects, depending on the national context or world region, and that their impact could be either in a positive or negative direction (or both). These events are described in the next section.

Ecumenical Councils Argument

An important explanation of workforce trends is the effect of an ecumenical council of the Church, in this case, Vatican II. Ecumenical councils are rare Church events, taking place once a century or even less frequently. They represent occasions when the Church engages in innovation, deals with specific crises, or buttresses the authority of the Pope (Burns 1994; Bullivant 2019; Finke and Wittberg 2000). More generally, they bring together the Pope, bishops, and other Church personnel to discuss the future direction of Catholicism (Wilde 2007; Pham 2004). To date, twenty-one ecumenical councils have been held, the most recent being the Second Vatican Council or Vatican II (1962–1965) (Pham 2004), which has been the only one to occur in the age of the mass media (Quiñonez and Turner 1992).

Scholars agree that Vatican II, established in 1962 by Pope John XXIII, was a key turning point for the modern Catholic Church, involving important changes in ideas and institutions. It has been characterised by sociologists as “the most significant example of institutionalized religious change since the Reformation” (Wilde 2007, 2) and by historians as “the most important religious event of the twentieth century” (O’Malley 2008, 1). It wasn’t, however, an exercise in unrelenting Church bureaucracy: some bishops managed to see the lighter side of things too by penning interesting and humorous limericks about their experiences (Knapman 2020).

At the same time, there are ongoing debates within the Church, neatly summed up in the “hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture” versus the “hermeneutic of reform” interpretations (Benedict XVI 2005), about the extent to which Vatican II represented an abrupt break with the past (and the selling out of its traditions to liberal-minded interests) or the continuance of past traditions (and fewer reforms than is usually assumed). Conservative critics express nostalgia for the perceived certainties of the past, while liberal advocates praise the Church’s accommodations to modernity (Ebaugh 1991; Baggett 2009).

Notwithstanding these varying interpretations, Vatican II resulted in significant changes to almost every aspect of the Church, although it is most often associated with reforms in the liturgy such as the priest facing the congregation and the placing of the altar in the centre of the Church (Linden 2009; Martin 1978; Pollard 2014). It involved “reaching in” and “reaching out” elements: it addressed issues to do with Papal authority, Church structures, and liturgical reform on the one hand and the social orientation of the Church, Church–state unions, and ecumenical efforts on the other (Burns 1994, 18; O’Malley 2008, 2).

As an event, Vatican II involved not just the deliberations of the world’s bishops in Rome in 1962–1965 – *what happened* – but the post-1965 experienced reality of Vatican II – *what happened afterwards* – in different national churches. Confronting their own local situation, bishops in varying world regions of the Church faced quite different challenges in contextualising these reforms in the months and years after Vatican II (Smith 1991; Sprows Cummings, Matovina, and Orsi 2018), a “long Vatican II” experience I attempt to bring out in the country chapters.

One of the most important “reaching in” changes related to clergy–laity relations (Stark and Finke 2000). Prior to Vatican II, a priest’s clothing, training, and education tended to set him apart from ordinary laypeople. Within this view, the laity occupied a subordinate position.

After this, a “dialogic view of authority” developed (Coleman 1978, 89) that sought to equalise clergy–laity relations (Finke 1997). The clergy’s loss of authority and prestige relative to the laity was reinforced by general increases in education and literacy among the Catholic laity in comparison to their former priest superiors (Hoge, Shields, and Griffin 1995; Levine 2012; Coleman 1978).

Clerical authority was further eroded by the energising of laypeople’s capacity in the Church, which resulted in a more demanding laity. In *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Pope Paul VI spoke of lay Catholics’ role in the “sanctification . . . of the temporal order” (Paul VI 1965a). Thus, laypersons began to fulfil some of the functions

of the clergy (and religious), such as providing the workforce in Catholic social welfare institutions (Wallace 1992; Ebaugh 1993).

One of the unintended consequences of Vatican II, therefore, was the erosion of “boundary maintenance” (Wittberg 1994, 200) between clergy and laity. This led to a shift in the cost–benefit balance, whereby the benefits associated with becoming a priest were dampened while the costs remained basically the same (Stark and Finke 2000). As Stark and Finke put it, “many of the most distinctive aspects of Catholic liturgy, theology and practice abandoned by the Council turned out to have been crucial for generating and sustaining vocations, especially vocations sufficient to meet the high costs of Catholic religious life” (Stark and Finke 2000, 135). In this context, it is not surprising that some clergy resigned from the Church or were discouraged from joining it in the first place.

Thus, one of the unintended consequences of Vatican II reform was to decrease clerical recruitment and retention. In this view, “the collapse of Catholic vocations was self-imposed, not merely incidental to the process of modernity” (Stark and Finke 2000, 143).

To what extent does empirical evidence provide support for a Vatican II effect regarding the Church’s workforce? Here, the evidence is somewhat ambiguous. Some studies suggest that Vatican II only had a partial eroding impact on the male workforce, as declines in this workforce in most countries began *before* it took place (Fishman and Jones 2007). Other studies regarding the female workforce show a quite sudden downward trending right after 1965 in several advanced Western countries (Stark and Finke 2000). And even where this did not apply (e.g. Portugal), this may have been due to a pushback against Vatican II by a traditionalist Catholic leadership (Stark and Finke 2000).

Thus, one conceptual mechanism linking ecumenical councils to Catholic workforce dynamics is *identity ambivalence*, whereby would-be/existing priests experience role confusion vis-à-vis the Catholic laity.

As mentioned, Stark and Finke acknowledge Vatican II’s dampening impacts, but this is not the whole story. The impact

of Vatican II on workforce patterns may be seen to be negative, but, then again, it may not. Consider the impact of “reaching out” changes inspired by Vatican II, such as a new emphasis on local Church autonomy, lay activism, and identification with the poor and needy (Fleet and Smith 1997), all of which may have increased rather than dampened the appeal of a calling.

Therefore, a second conceptual mechanism linking ecumenical councils to Catholic workforce dynamics is *religious worldview affirmation*, whereby would-be/existing priests experience support for their values and concerns.

Thus, either position suggests that Vatican II has an effect on the Catholic workforce. This leads to **Proposition 1a**: The Catholic workforce increases after Vatican II; and **Proposition 1b**: The Catholic workforce decreases after Vatican II.

Prophetic Stances Argument

Another important factor likely to influence Catholic workforce trends is the relationship between religious and political institutions. By this is meant the extent to which the Church speaks out against state activities, either having to do with social action issues such as social justice, political violence, or the repressive policies of authoritarian regimes, or faith and morals issues applied at the micro level of individuals and families (Grzymała-Busse 2015; Conway 2014a), including abortion, divorce, and same-sex marriage.

While the prophetic stances argument thus has to do with the organisation of power and domination in a given society and does not relate to a critical event per se, it is often expressed in the form of critical events that take place in public settings. To take an example from the Philippines, Cardinal Sin used Catholic media to urge the general populace to engage in street protests in Manila in February 1986 against the Marcos regime, which ended a few days later. While these public interventions by Cardinal Sin on their own did not bring about the regime’s collapse, they nonetheless had significant political import (Hanson 1987).

Following earlier research, prophetic ministry can involve different levels of involvement in politics, ranging from relatively low levels of engagement, such as making public statements and defending human rights, to higher and more committed types of ministry, such as organising protest activity that may bring the Church into direct conflict with the state. Borer usefully categorises these varieties of prophetic ministry as “sympathetic”, “human rights involvement”, and “overt political activity” (1998, 4–5).

Such a “political entrepreneurship” role (Warner 2000, 40) has always been present in the Church. However, it was given special impetus by Vatican II (Morello 2015), which in the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” (*Gaudium et Spes*) expressly urged Church leaders to “work for the rightful betterment of this world in which all alike live” and to “teach her social doctrine” (Paul VI 1965b). When the Church leadership exercises this voice, it increasingly appeals to secular as well as religious legitimations in order to appeal beyond its own Catholic base (Yamane 2005).

Thus, one conceptual mechanism linking prophetic stances to Catholic workforce dynamics is *religious worldview affirmation*, whereby would-be/existing priests are inspired by the example of Church leaders who speak out about Catholic values.

At the same time, certain features of the Church, such as its hierarchical organisation, may sometimes dampen prophetic ministry. As bishops exercise their pastoral ministry in conformity with Vatican directives, this creates an inertia that makes it difficult for Church elites to develop sudden or quick responses to changing social contexts. Put another way, centralisation increases co-ordination but tends to reduce flexibility (Vaughan 1999).

For example, during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, the Church symbolically distanced itself from certain currents of Catholicism (i.e. liberation theology), especially within the Latin American Church in the 1980s, which it viewed as operating outside official Church structures (Borer 1998). In its place, the Church promoted conservative lay groups such as Opus Dei, an

institutional carrier of neoliberalism (Moreton 2021). In practical terms, this dampening of liberation theology was achieved by withdrawing the teaching faculties of university-based theologians and enforcing penalties under canon law (the Church's own moral code) against non-conforming clergy. This Vatican disapproval, interacting with transitions to democratic governance in a number of Latin American countries, led to the falling out of favour of this doctrine (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989). Even so, in other Latin American contexts such as Mexico, there are examples of more decentralised versions of Church authority that helped to empower political engagement among devotees (Hale 2020).

Sometimes the prophetic stances of the Church can be contradicted or impinged by pastoral activity. For example, some Church elites well known for their commitment to marginal groups in society may promote pastoral care that brings the local Church into conflict with Vatican directives. A good example of this was the former archbishop of Seattle, Raymond Hunthausen, whose outreach to people seen as "others", such as homosexuals, drew criticism from Rome. Archbishop Hunthausen was later replaced by a more conservative prelate who was more in line with Vatican policy (Schoenherr 2002).

In other non-US situations, pastoral care sometimes dampened prophetic leadership, as when the Chilean bishops moderated their anti-government public stances in the early 1970s in return for autonomy to carry out the Church's various apostolates (Smith 1982).

Another complication is that pastoral ministry can also prompt or challenge prophetic leadership. For example, some liberation theology-inspired clergy working with the poor became radicalised by their experiences and helped spur the Catholic leadership towards prophetic activism, as occurred in some Latin American countries in the 1980s, including Chile and Peru (Levine 2012; Smith 1982). Similarly, clergy and laity mobilised against the hierarchy's pro-Vichy stances in 1940s France, and some prelates even directly challenged the Church's own approach (Luft 2020).

A second conceptual mechanism linking prophetic stances to Catholic workforce dynamics is *identity ambivalence*, whereby would-be/existing priests experience confusion about the proper role of Church leadership.

Thus, the effect of prophetic ministry on the Catholic workforce may be either in a positive or negative direction, but in any case could be impactful. This leads to **Proposition 2a**: The Catholic workforce increases as a result of the Church's prophetic stances; and **Proposition 2b**: The Catholic workforce decreases as a result of the Church's prophetic ministry.

Sexual Scandals Argument

The third element of the critical events theory relates to scandal. Just as there are triumphal critical events such as Papal visits, there are also tragic ones like clerical child sexual abuse scandals and other sexual scandals involving Catholic clergy and religious – scandals that have negatively impacted the Church's legitimacy (Calderisi 2013; Yamane 2005). Although not unique to this religious tradition (e.g. Langenberg and Gleig 2020), the shorthand for the many cases that came to light within it – “the scandals” – attests to the problem's now commonplace occurrence in the Catholic world (Yamane 2005; Bullivant 2019).

The clerical child sexual abuse scandals involved clergy abusing positions of trust to abuse children, often in Catholic institutions. In most countries this abuse occurred from the period from the 1950s up to the 1980s, though its coming to light occurred mostly in the 1990s, and in some settings in the 2000s, as a result of mass media attention and victims' activism (Bruce 2011; Greeley 2004).

Apart from the publicised scandal of abuse prompted by the behaviour of individual offending clergy, the scandal was also a leadership one involving the administrative practices of Church elites that enabled this behaviour (Keenan 2011; Yamane 2005; Conway 2014b). Typically, Church authorities saw victims' stories more as an issue to be internally managed than as experiences to

be listened to (Warner 2019). Even in the absence of any organised transnational approach, an almost formulaic response by religious authorities developed across the world: victims (or their family members) made a direct complaint to the Church; complainants were not listened to and didn't take their case any further; and the priest or religious concerned was sent by Church leaders for therapeutic help and then returned to ministry (Bullivant 2019; Warner 2019).

Another type of sexual scandal does not involve clerical child sexual abuse but rather the breaking of the vow of celibacy as a result of male priests or religious having adult heterosexual relationships, sometimes resulting in children. In some African countries, male clergy have had sexual relationships with female religious, sometimes out of fear of contracting AIDS from the local population (Linden 2009).

A third category of sexual scandal involves the coming into the public domain of homosexual behaviour by clergy. For example, in 2018 US media alleged that the then Cardinal Theodore McCarrick had sexual relations with seminarians, which prompted further allegations of abuse (Bullivant and Sadewo 2022; Bullivant 2019).

Previous research has examined the causes of sexual scandals within the Church, pointing to Catholic-specific factors such as its theology and organisational life (Keenan 2012). Other research implicates non-Catholic-specific factors such as a sacred, inspired moral order that contributed to a sense of detachment from outside scrutiny, a commonality shared with secular institutions such as the military (Warner 2019). It is also the case that factors operating in the wider society, such as growing sexual liberalisation from the 1960s onwards, also likely contributed to the scandal and perhaps even interacted with Church-related changes such as Vatican II (Sprows Cummings, Matovina, and Orsi 2018).

As examples of "clergy malfeasance" (Shupe 1998, 1), these scandals had eroding impacts on the workforce, even allowing for the estimated less than 5 per cent of active clergy who offended (Linden 2009; Warner 2019). By prompting negative assessments

of ministry performance, they undermined the image of clergy and religious in the eyes of the general populace (Grzymała-Busse 2015). Indeed, of the four critical events considered in this book, sexual scandals have had perhaps the most significant impact on the Church's legitimacy, leading to a sense of crisis in the institution (Jenkins 1996).

Collateral damage to after-scandal Catholicism is reflected in the findings of large-scale social surveys showing declining levels of public confidence in churches and religious leadership. For example, a 2004 national survey in the US found that clerical abuse and Church responses to sexual scandal were identified by Catholics as the top two problems in the Church, with 85 per cent and 77 per cent respectively rating them as "serious" problems (Baggett 2009).

Similarly, other US studies have shown that the scandals operated as a "push" factor in Catholic disaffiliation, even if it was less significant than other factors such as dissatisfaction with Church teachings (Hungerman 2013). Elsewhere, social surveys suggest that many Catholics are largely indifferent to the Church's moral authority, which may be partly scandal related. A YouGov/University of Lancaster 2013 survey based on a nationally representative sample of British Catholics found that a surprising 0 per cent of Catholics relied on their "religious leaders, local or national" most when it came to guiding their life decision-making, with "own reason and judgement", "own intuition or feelings", and "family" being relied upon more (YouGov/University of Lancaster 2013).

Where the Catholic Church emphasises adherence to a strong sexual moral code among the laity, as was the case in Ireland where "within the sacred form of the Catholic Irish nation, sexuality became a touchstone of the moral purity of the nation" (Lynch 2012, 68), the influence of these scandals on workforce trends is likely to be greater. This compares to settings such as Germany and Vietnam, where the Church is either in a minority position or a more politicised local context and Catholic sexual ethics have tended to be given less attention, in which case sexual scandals

may have a weaker impact on the Church's legitimacy (Conway 2016).

It is also likely to be greater in contexts where there is a demanding laity, as occurred in the US context where organisations such as the Voice of the Faithful mobilised around the issue of abuse and the Church's response (Bruce 2011). This social movement element of sexual scandal is likely to raise greater public awareness of the Church's lack of legitimacy.

Faced with their tainting brought on by scandal, national churches have sought to respond to issues of trust, accountability, and blame (Bruce 2011) by offering official apologies and making structural changes such as appointing new bishops, reforming seminary formation, and institutionalising child protection norms and support services for victims. For example, the Irish bishops instituted "Towards Healing", a counselling service for abuse survivors (Conway 2014b). In this view, "healing" has become the Church's goal, though this is more complicated than is often assumed (Orsi 2017). At the same time, these developments took place slowly as bishops struggled to respond to the Church's past abuses. Today, child protection is a frequent agenda item for discussion at meetings of national episcopal conferences across most parts of the global Church, vying for attention with more long-standing social justice, pro-life, and education issues (Yamane 2005).

Together, sexual scandals contributed to the eroding of the Church's legitimacy in society. Unlike prophetic stances, the impact of sexual scandals on the workforce should be in one direction only.

The conceptual mechanism linking sexual scandals to workforce dynamics is *avoidance of shame*, whereby would-be/existing priests feel discouraged by an institution tainted by a negative image of its recent past.

Thus, this leads to **Proposition 3**: The Catholic workforce decreases as a result of sexual scandals.

Papal Visits Argument

Writing in 1988 about variation in the “impact of the papal icon” in different world regions, sociologist David Martin wrote that “a lot could be gained from a study of these variations in papal impact and from the undoubted sociological and political rationales underlying the planning and the sequence of papal visits” (Martin 1988, 32) – an invitation sociologists have not taken up very much.

Critical events can also take the form of triumphal incidents involving a significant person, in this case, the visit of a Pope. Within Catholicism, the Pope is the symbolic centre of authority and pastoral care in the Church. He is at once the commander-in-chief and managing director of an international religious tradition and a religious icon (Duffy 2011; Calderisi 2013; Andes 2014). This means that the Pope is a global actor who matters. As sociologist Grace Davie puts it, “the Pope goes nowhere without plane-loads of the world’s media accompanying him, his health is the subject of constant and minute speculation in the international press; his global influence – whether approved or otherwise – is indisputable” (Davie 2002, 22).

Papal visits (officially known as “Apostolic Journeys”²⁹) to national churches give concrete expression to this and bring the Pope into direct contact with the general populace. As such, they contribute to the creation of a “cult of personality” around the Pope (Pollard 2005, 467). Likewise, Pope Benedict XVI referred to the Papacy as a “place of encounter” and mentioned Papal visits as an embodiment of this (Benedict XVI 2006).

Usually, a Papal visit takes place as a stand-alone religious occasion, but in more recent times has sometimes taken place to mark another Catholic occasion such as World Youth Day (Hoover 1998) or the World Meeting of Families, festival-like global gatherings of Catholic youth and families, respectively, which are held about every three years. Thus, one big Catholic incident shapes another as part of a bundle of events (Norget 2017). Even without this bundling, Papal visits, like other large-scale Catho-

lic occasions, “bring together the effects of public visibility at the level of society as a whole, the effects of mutual reinforcement at the community level, and the effects of religious experience at the individual level” (Pollack and Rosta 2017, 430–431).

To be sure, Papal visits are a relatively recent phenomenon in the modern Catholic experience and thus likely only began to exert an influence on workforce trends from the early 1960s. They have been made possible by the advent of modern modes of transportation such as air travel (Pollard 2005; Kollman 2013). Whereas before the people tended to visit the Pope, increasingly the Pope visits the people. As a “prisoner of the Vatican”, to use Pope Pius IX’s (1846–1878) memorable phrase (Pham 2004, 38), Papal ministry for a long time was quite socio-spatially constrained. The first modern Pope to travel outside Rome was John Paul XXIII, who visited Assisi and Loretto in Italy in 1962 (O’Malley 2008). Pope Paul VI’s visit to the Holy Land in 1964 was perhaps the first globally televised Papal visit (O’Malley 2008). Since then, the growing frequency of Papal visits is suggestive of their rising social importance. For example, during his long pontificate (1978–2005), (now saint) Pope John Paul II made 104 Papal visits (Pham 2004), making him the most globally travelled Pope of modern times. The only modern-era Pope who did not make Papal visits was Pope John Paul I, owing to the brevity (about a month) of his pontificate (Lipka and Webster 2014).

A Papal visit usually takes place at the invitation of the national government and episcopal conference of a given society, though sometimes it will take place without state support, as in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s (Zubrzycki 2006). During a visit, the Pope usually addresses four distinct audiences: state elites, Church elites, elites of other non-Catholic faith traditions, and the general public (or a sector of it, such as young people), with each sub-event (Sewell 1996) involving different meeting formats and a high level of choreography (Stevens-Arroyo 2002; Levine 2012). In addressing the Church audience, the Pope typically articulates a set of binary distinctions (Alexander and Smith 2003) – for example, peace versus violence, faith opposing secularism, and

justice against inequality. Very rarely does the Pope finish without calling for long-term cultural evangelisation.

More recently, Pope Francis has made a personal visit to disadvantaged groups, such as prisoners, immigrants, or the homeless, as a key audience of his Papal visits (e.g. Vatican News 2018), revealing the Papacy's social care ministry.

During a Papal visit, the Pope will also frequently visit a Catholic seminary, in a semi-public context. There he will meet with and encourage seminarians and usually call for more vocations. This is likely to contribute to an increase in the status of Catholic personnel and inspire young women and men to join its workforce. This is buttressed further when the Pope visits a religious site of national historical importance, such as a place of pilgrimage, and celebrates a televised public open-air Mass, attended by large sectors of the population (Maunder 2016). Together, these examples of "Papalese" (Stevens-Arroyo 2002, 11) involve the "emotional mobilisation of memory" (Hervieu-Léger 1994, 130) and help to identify the Pope with the general populace.

Thus, these public or semi-public addresses are public performances that mobilise emotions and symbols to convey certain religious meanings. They involve "the power to put meanings and narratives into the public realm" (Lynch 2012, 78). Together, they will frequently result in the largest public assembly of people in a nation's recent history (Payne 1984), as occurred in Ireland in 1979 (Turpin 2022).

At the same time, Papal visits are not necessarily equivalent events. For example, the Papal visit to Ireland in 1979 attracted a very large public attendance, but the second Papal visit in 2018 by his successor Pope Francis drew much smaller crowds (Turpin 2022) amid a re-evaluation of the Church's historic role in society brought on by scandal. This means that Papal visits are not "empty" events but rather are invested with particular meanings at different points in time.

Of course, this public crowd at a Papal visit is usually a social gathering with mixed motivations. As Tweed notes, "ritual requires only a minimal level of consent about beliefs and values" (Tweed

1997, 132). Some people might participate in the Papal visit as pilgrims taking part in a Catholic world reflected through the Mass, public speeches, and religious atmosphere associated with yellow and white Vatican flags, even if they do not necessarily follow the Pope's direction in their everyday moral decision-making (Martin 2005). Others may participate as onlookers who experience the visit more as a kind of spectacle, perhaps even as a form of tourism, but not one they are personally invested in very much. Still others may be present as social protestors registering their grievances with Catholic doctrine and practice. It is also the case that participants could have a mix of these motivating factors.

Although Papal visits may vary in their duration, intensity, and geographical coverage, they usually entail a bolstering by the Pope of the Church's legitimacy (Bruneau 1982; Stevens-Arroyo 2002). Even so, the influence of a Papal visit on workforce trends is likely to be greater when the general populace largely agrees with such an event and with the Pope's stances during it, and when the image of the Church in a given society is not tainted by scandal. Consider, for example, Pope John Paul II's visit to the Netherlands in 1985, which drew relatively few devotees onto the streets during the first day of the visit, because of ongoing tensions concerning the proper post-Vatican II direction for the local Church, especially between conservative and liberal groups (Derks 2018).

When the local Church is associated with sexual scandal, the Papal visit may serve to further highlight this and thus dampen the workforce impact of the visit, suggesting an interaction between the Papal visits and sexual scandals perspectives. For example, the Pope's 2008 visit to the US was largely interpreted through the prism of ongoing sexual scandals in the US Church, with the Pope being asked by the media about the scandals and meeting with victims of clerical abuse (Pew Research Center 2008).

It is also the case that when the reaction of the populace to the Pope's public pronouncements during his visit is negative, or when the Pope himself poorly engages with his audiences (Linden 2009, 148), the visit may be less successful and have less of a bolstering impact on workforce trend lines. For example, during a 2006

lecture at the University of Regensburg, Pope Benedict XVI made some controversial remarks about the apparent endorsement of violence by Islam, which prompted significant media attention, strong reactions among Muslims, and later a Papal apology (Linden 2009).

The impact of a Papal visit is also likely to vary depending on who is the Pope at a particular time: if the Pope, as in the case of Pope John Paul II, is viewed as a globally charismatic figure as compared to a somewhat less charismatic personality such as Pope Benedict XVI, the impact on the workforce of a Papal visit is likely to be stronger.

More specifically, Pope John Paul II embodied a rare combination of high intelligence, personal warmth, and charismatic ministry, increasing his appeal to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. He was at ease embracing babies and shaking hands wherever he went (Duffy 1997). In his later years, Pope John Paul II was an increasingly frail figure, but the John Paul II effect was arguably no less appealing for this (Davie 2000).

In national religious histories, Papal visits are significant incidents when they occur, but in the following years they are also constructed as such by Church actors, adding to their significance over time (Sewell 1990). Thus, the question of how long the impact of a Papal visit might last is an important one. In general, one would expect a Papal visit to have a relatively short-term workforce impact, perhaps limited to a year or two after a visit, though this could vary depending on the individual personality of the Pope. Once the Pope departs, the burst of enthusiasm around a visit typically wanes, even if its memory is sustained over time. This means that one would expect a “natural” decrease over time of any Papal visit–driven spike in callings.

Finally, the timing of Papal visits is also significant. Although they may occur after periods of religious fervour, Papal visits usually generate rather than follow greater religious commitment and bolster the popularity of the Church in the local society.

The conceptual mechanism linking Papal visits to workforce dynamics is *imitation*, whereby would-be/existing priests see in the Pope an embodiment of Catholic piety worth following.

This leads to **Proposition 4**: The Catholic workforce increases after a Papal visit.

So far, I have discussed each critical event on its own, but in practice they often interact as clustered or nested events. For example, the impact of a Papal visit on workforce trends can be dampened by continuing public scandals in the Church. In the following chapters, I bring out interaction effects between the different critical events in specific contexts. Additionally, the mix of mechanisms – identity ambivalence, religious worldview affirmation, avoidance of shame, and imitation – identify the processes or mode of influence of each of the events' impacts (either bolstering or eroding or both) on workforce trends, even if these mechanisms are not explicitly tested here.

Having developed critical events theory in this chapter, the next chapter evaluates this perspective in the first country case study, Argentina.

CHAPTER 2

Argentina: Eroding Monopoly Catholicism

Introduction

The election of Jorge Bergoglio to the papacy in 2013 has illuminated the place of Argentina in global Catholicism as never before. In choosing the name Francis in homage to the Church's beloved saint, the new Pope sought to embody and popularise a papacy of simplicity, one aligned with the disadvantaged and needy and unconstrained by bureaucratic tradition (Chamedes 2019; Morello 2019). At the same time, the Church in this nation from "the ends of the earth" (Francis 2013) – as Pope Francis declared in addressing the faithful for the first time from the balcony of St Peter's Basilica – has colluded with a sometimes politically violent state, especially during the populist and nationalist Peronist era (1940s–1960s) (Morello 2017; Samuel Gregg in Gill 2017, hereafter Gill 2017; Nepstad 2019). This has created significant legitimacy challenges as the Argentinian Church has sought to respond to modernity. Even so, the election to the papacy of "one of their own" has helped to empower Argentinian Catholicism (Morello 2019).

This chapter focuses on the Argentinian case. It proceeds in four steps. After briefly sketching the religious background of this society, I present some descriptive trends in relation to the male workforce. Third, I put critical events theory to the test by providing an in-depth historical account of the four events in this geographical context. Finally, the chapter closes with an overall assessment of this Latin American case.

Stretching back to the arrival of Catholic missionaries from Western Europe in the 16th century, Argentina – a large, populous country in Latin America – has a long association with the Catholic tradition. Indeed, Catholicism was declared the official state religion of this society, where its prophetic role in the society was given constitutional protection under the state's first constitution (1819), later softened to protecting its interests in the second constitution (1853) (Fox 2008; Gill 1998). Catholic education became obligatory in state schools in 1946, during the Peronist era (1946–1955) (Morello and Mallimaci 2018). In 1966, the state gave symbolic expression to this close throne and altar relationship (Pollard 2014, 276) in its dedication of the country to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary (Barrett et al. 2001a). Today, Catholicism retains its status as the official religion of Argentina (Morello 2017) and, compared to other Latin American countries such as its more secularised neighbour Uruguay (Soper and Fetzer 2018; Morello 2021a), it still exerts a relatively strong influence in the society.

At the same time, more expressive versions of the faith such as Catholic Charismatic Renewal compete with traditional Catholicism (Althoff and Thorsen 2018), and diverse identities are present within the all-Catholic-majority group, including combining Catholicism with other confessional traditions (Morello 2021a) or with secular practices or objects such as yoga (Rabbia and Gatica 2017) and animals (Morello 2021a).

Growing competition for Catholicism also exists in the form of other non-Catholic religious groups such as Evangelicals and Pentecostals (Gill 1998; Barrett et al. 2001a; Mallimaci and Cruz Esquivel 2015) as well as from the growing popularity of secular identities, which are often a classed phenomenon (Morello 2021a). According to Argentinian psychologists of religion, even ex-Catholics often rely on Catholicism as a point of reference in narrating their religious experiences (Rabbia and Gatica 2017).

As with Nigeria, Argentina is a large, natural resource-rich society and among the most developed in this world regional context (Barrett et al. 2001a). Even so, it has evolved in a rela-

tively short span from a prosperous and settled society in the early twentieth century to a deeply divided and unstable one today (Gill 2017; Perelli 1992). According to the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), it represents a moderately stable political system with a WGI figure (for 2010) of -0.08 (on scale ranging from -2.5 meaning weak to 2.5 meaning strong political stability) (Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024). In political science terms, it is a "consolidated democracy" (Lupu, Oliveros, and Schiumerini 2019, 5). Perhaps because of its checkered political history in the twentieth century, it is characterised by strong structural inequalities (Barrett et al. 2001a), symbolised by the country's *villas miseria*.

The Church in this Catholic-majority society has fulfilled a prophetic leadership role in public life – speaking out more recently against the introduction of same-sex marriage and liberalisation of abortion laws (Goñi 2010; Morello 2017, 2019; Morello and Mallimaci 2018) and before this against divorce (Bonnin 2013), by appealing mainly to religious-based arguments, which brought the hierarchy into conflict with the state (Htun 2003).

At the same time, the Church has a history of co-operation with authoritarian government, especially in the 1966–1983 time period, when it supported the regimes of military leaders (Gill 1998), the most violent in this regional context (Hanson 1987). In only a few highly publicised incidents – such as the alleged murder of three Pallottine clergy by the military government in 1976 – did the Church take a stand against the state (Gill 1998).

Although Argentinian religiosity has been characterised historically by relatively high levels of commitment, today religiosity – as evidenced by practice and sacramental participation levels – is considerably weaker. In a rank order of country religiosity across the globe, Argentina is a mid-tier country on most indicators (Smith 2009). Among the general populace, belief in God is very high (above 90 per cent) (Morello 2017; Mallimaci and Cruz Esquivel 2015) and has remained relatively stable over time, perhaps even increasing slightly (Smith 2009).

At the same time, social surveys show that just a fifth of Argentinians attend church weekly or more than weekly (see [Figure 4](#)). Increasingly, Catholics in Argentina reject certain tenets of the Church (e.g. regular practice and birth control), even while still identifying as Catholic (Morello 2017; Rabbia and Gatica 2017; Mallimaci and Cruz Esquivel 2015).

Similarly, confidence in the Church as an institution wavered in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, from about 21 per cent (percentage expressing “a great deal” of confidence in churches) in 1984, to about 23 per cent in 1995, and then up to about 36 per cent in 1999. In 2006, confidence dropped to about 24 per cent.³⁰ Unsurprisingly, younger age groups report higher declines in trust in churches compared to older age groups (Smith 2009). Even so, past surveys show that the Church retains higher levels of trust among the general populace than other public actors such as politicians (Morello 2017).

Church attendance (weekly or more) decreased in the 1990s, from around 31 per cent in 1991 to about 24 per cent in 1999. It then reduced again – to about 21 per cent – in 2006. This decrease

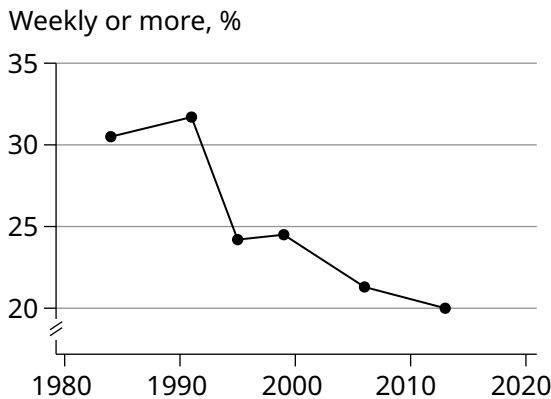


Figure 4: Church Attendance in Argentina, 1984–2013

Note: Weekly or more, in %

Source: World Values Survey, 1981–2022

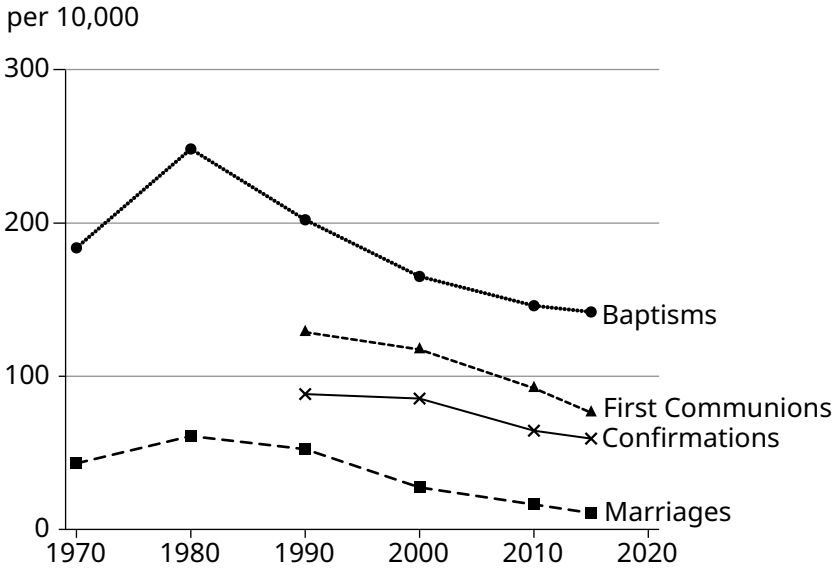


Figure 5: Participation in Church Sacraments in Argentina, 1970–2015

Note: Data are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

took place after the decline in priestly ordinations ([Figures 4 and 8](#)). [Figure 5](#) presents trends in participation in the Catholic sacraments of baptism, first communion, confirmation, and marriage (per 10,000 Catholics) in the 1970–2015 time period. The most significant reduction in this forty-five-year span is in participation in baptism. This figure also shows that fewer adherents receive their first communion than are baptised and fewer still receive their confirmation or marry in the church. Overall, this figure points to a quite significant erosion over time of participation in the Church's sacraments across the life-course in Argentina.

Descriptive Trends

[Figures 6–11](#) present the data relating to Catholic workforce trends in Argentina with reference to the three categories of male religious professionals.

[Figure 6](#) shows that the number of diocesan priests per 10,000 Catholics peaked in 1956 and then went into a quite dramatic decline until the late 1980s, when it began to increase again up until the mid-1990s. Similarly, the religious priest workforce peaked in 1956 and then went into a continuous decline (see [Figure 7](#)).

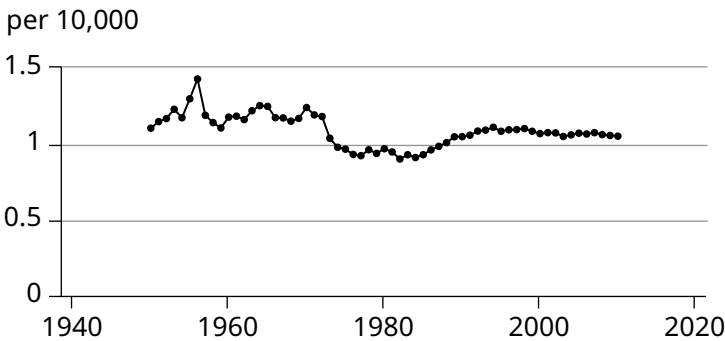


Figure 6: Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1950–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

While ordination and resignation data for religious priests are not available in the official Church data relied upon in this study, the similarity in the diocesan priest and religious priest trend lines is noteworthy.

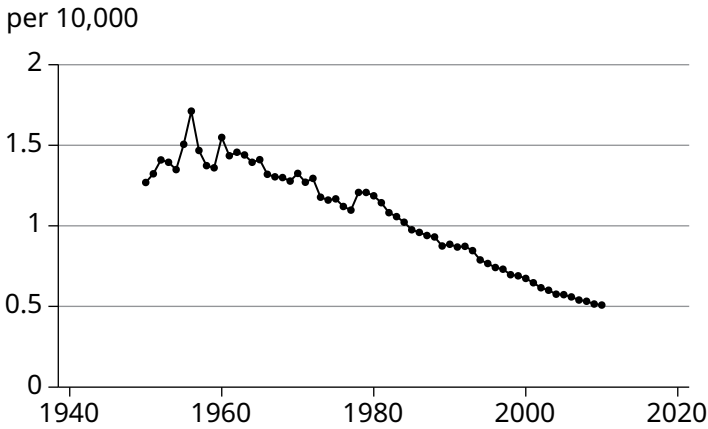


Figure 7: Religious Priests in Argentina, 1950–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

[Figure 8](#) reports data relating to newly ordained diocesan priests in Argentina.

In Argentina, the number of ordinations per 10,000 Catholics peaked at 0.066 in 1955 and declined to 0.025 in 2010 (0.041 decline from peak). In the late 1970s, the trend line shows an uptick in ordinations, which continued through to the early 1990s.

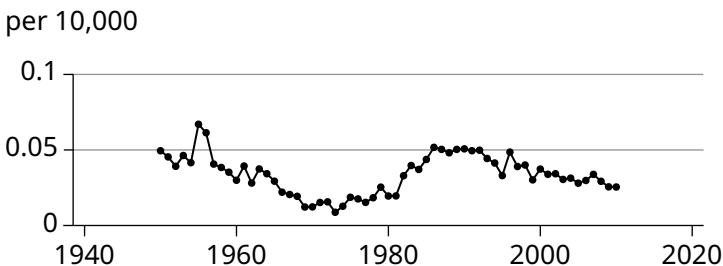


Figure 8: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Argentina, 1950–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics. Papal visits in Argentina (1982, 1987)

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

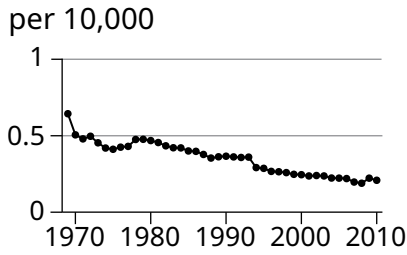


Figure 9: Religious Brothers in Argentina, 1969–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

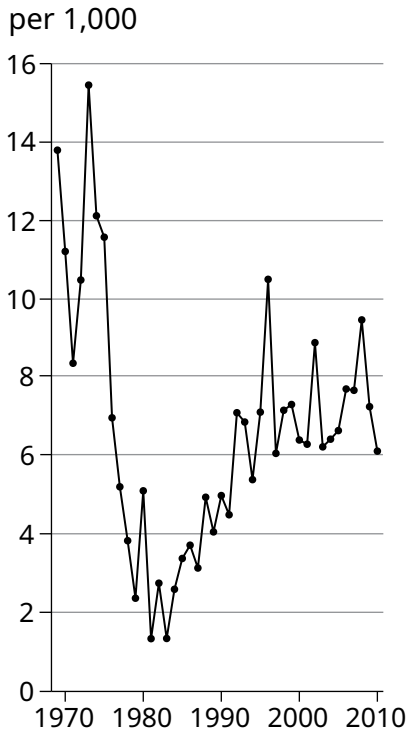


Figure 10: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1969–2010

Note: Figures per 1,000 diocesan priests. Papal visits in Argentina (1982, 1987)

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

A look at [Figure 9](#), which presents data about the number of non-ordained religious brothers per 10,000 Catholics, shows their number dropped from the late 1960s. The number of religious brothers in Argentina peaked at 0.64 in 1969, compared to 0.20 in 2010. This represents a peak-to-2010 change of 0.44.

[Figure 10](#) presents data regarding the number of resignations among diocesan clergy (per 1,000 diocesan priests) in the 1969–2010 time period. [Figure 11](#) does the same with respect to seminarians for the diocesan priesthood (per 1,000 seminarians).

The trend line shows three quite high peaks in a relatively short period. Resignations among diocesan priests spiked in the early 1970s, the late 1990s, and again in the late 2000s. This post-Vatican II increase in resignations may reflect disappointment with the Church's non-critical orientation towards the state system in Argentina during this time, especially amid well-documented cases of state political violence (Morello 2015).

Turning to [Figure 11](#), resignations among diocesan seminarians for the diocesan priesthood peaked in 1972 at 186.88. This compares to a rate of 128.20 in 2010. Thus, the peak-to-2010 change is 58.68.

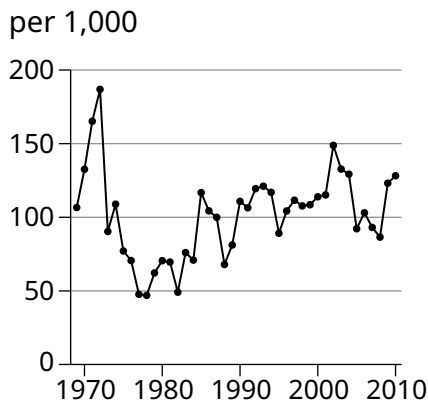


Figure 11: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina, 1969–2010

Note: Figures per 1,000 diocesan seminarians. Papal visits in Argentina (1982, 1987)

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

Contexts of Trends

Ecumenical Councils Argument

As in other national churches, the reforms of Vatican II washed up in Argentina and sparked discussion at every level of the Church, from parishes and dioceses right up to the episcopal conference. It was debated in the pages of religious magazines such as *Cristianismo y Revolución* [1966–1971] (a fortnightly publication aimed at leftist revolutionary-minded Argentinian Christians), with a wide readership across the country (Morello and Mallimaci 2018). It was reflected on in gatherings of Cursillo, Catholic Action,³¹ and parish groups, where the topic of bringing Catholic values to bear on the society during hard times was enthusiastically taken up. It was discussed by the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops' Council (CELAM)³² and by the bishops in collective meetings of the Argentinian Episcopal Conference (McGrath 1986; Morello and Mallimaci 2018).

Even so, there was no love-in between the Argentinian hierarchy composed of thirty-two bishops,³³ led at the council's four sessions by the archbishop of Buenos Aires Cardinal Antonio Caggiano,³⁴ and the new ideas circulating at Vatican II, which it saw as contributing to fracturing within the Church (Morello 2015). This reflected the conservative orientation of the Argentinian Church – which at the time of Vatican II represented a “crisis” field of Catholicism (Wilde 2007) – in general,³⁵ a reaction that went against the progressivism of the Latin American Church more generally (Gill 1998; Wilde 2007).

For example, the Argentinian Church was not particularly strong on lay participation, especially in comparison to other Latin American churches (Cleary 2011). Neither did the bishops take a stand against the state, which was legitimised in Vatican II documents such as *Gaudium et Spes* for global Catholicism (Keogh 1991) and by the Medellín conference for Latin American Catholicism (Morello 2012; Martin 1988). Bishops in general – led by Cardinal Primatesta – adopted an anti-modernity orientation in the 1970s, even as some other bishops diverged from this

stance (Morello 2012). This reaction may have appealed to “anti-secular” Catholics who sought religious “capture” of the state, or to the numerically larger “institutional” Catholics who viewed the Church as reliant on the state but distinct from it (Morello 2015, 12–13, 182–183; Morello 2017), and thus prompted new callings.

A key blockage to the council’s reforms is that they bumped up against a political situation in Argentina – the transition in 1966 to a politically violent military government under General Juan Onganía seeking Church support – which was at odds with many of the conciliar changes, especially regarding Church–state–society interactions (Morello 2017). Although legitimised in Vatican II documents such as *Gaudium et Spes* (Keogh 1991), as well as the Medellín conference for Latin American Catholicism (Morello 2012; Martin 1988), the Argentinian bishops did not take a strong stand against the state. What the Argentinian bishops heard at Vatican II may well have made them feel like they were outsiders in their own Church.

Compared to the cases of Nigeria and the Philippines where, as we will see, inculturation³⁶ was a key post-Vatican II issue, this was much less true in the Argentinian case, where Church–state interactions became the focus.

This was also a time when various currents in the Church and in the society – such as Peronism,³⁷ liberation theology, Marxism, and military authoritarianism – all jostled with one another for legitimacy in the creation of the country’s moral order (Gill 2017; Morello and Mallimaci 2018; Morello 2021b; Dodson 1974; Nestad 2019).

For example, in the early 1970s liberation theology was the subject of much debate in various fora, as in other national churches in Latin America at the time. The priests’ organisation Movement of Priests for the Third World (Tercermundismo),³⁸ a “lead” group of the liberation theology movement, was formally established in Argentina in 1967 and held meetings with members of the hierarchy to discuss the Church’s future direction in light of Vatican II. Energising young people especially (Carassai 2014), this move-

ment competed with others such as Peronism, which also sought to make its perspective the dominant one in politics and society.

Later episcopal support for this priests' group would be less enthusiastic (Dodson 1974; Smith 1991), in keeping with the hierarchy's conservative posture. Most individual bishops stood back from *Tercermundismo* and did not give their personal backing to its activities, though a few did support it (Dodson 1974). For its part, the leadership of *Tercermundismo*, such as Lucio Gera, adopted a this-worldly stance by eschewing a sacristy-bound model of Church ministry and developing a strong social critique that was closer to Peronism than Marxism. Even so, within *Tercermundismo* there was disunity about the direction of evolution of the organisation regarding Peronism, and it began to fade as an entity following the killing in 1974 of prominent member Father Carlos Mugica (Dodson 1974).

Thus, this political context resulted in different actors and groups appropriating (or not) different aspects of Vatican II's reforms to underwrite their own particular variety of the faith (Morello 2015, 2017), reflecting strong divisions within Argentinian Catholicism (Martin 1988) (as with the global Church) about the proper interpretation of Vatican II.

The Argentinian Church's inoculation effect regarding much of Vatican II's reforms extended to other units within the Church, including religious orders and congregations. Consider, for example, the Jesuit order, itself going through a difficult period of internal self-reflection and management of opposing currents such as liberation theology and nationalist ones (Gill 2017). It reacted against some of the innovations of the council, particularly in regard to seminary spiritual formation, by returning to older traditionalist ways. For instance, under the relatively young Father Jorge Bergoglio as Jesuit Provincial (1973–1979), perhaps then a representative of “institutional Catholicism” (Morello 2015, 180), Jesuit seminarians jettisoned secular clothing in favour of clerical garb (Vallely 2013; Morello 2017). Even so, there was also some ideological churning within the Jesuit order in Argentina. As early as the 1940s, two priests disgruntled with the pro-state stance of

the hierarchy were expelled from the order³⁹ (Morello and Mallimaci 2018).

In the 1970s, state political violence carried out by the Peronist military government, which seized power in a military coup in 1976, provoked further debate within the Jesuits about realising Vatican II's commitment to prophetic leadership, especially on behalf of the poor (Vallely 2013), with some Jesuits preferring more vocal prophetic ministry than others.

This within-group heterogeneity was not, however, limited to clergy. For example, the 1960s saw the emergence of "committed" Catholics (involving mostly young lay Catholics) sympathetic to the interests of the poor and needy, which competed with alternative Catholic identities for legitimacy within the Church (Morello 2012, 2015, 2017) and may have encouraged potential new recruits with similar motivations to join the clergy. This is suggested by past research showing that Catholic men who worked directly with the poor, a frequent practice in the Argentinian Church in the 1960s (Gill 2017), tended to be attracted to entering the seminary (Morello 2015, 2017).

Montoneros, which espoused violence-driven socialism as its goal (Morello and Mallimaci 2018), also represented an approach with Catholic support that was different from the stance of the hierarchy. Paralleling Catholic activism in other Latin American national churches like Chile (Serrano and Díaz De Valdés 2018), such approaches were legitimised by Papal documents such as *Populorum Progressio* (1967) urging commitment to the poor (Morello and Mallimaci 2018), and thus likely increased the appeal of the Church for potential callings (Morello 2015).

Overall, Argentinian Catholicism *as a whole* largely distanced itself from Vatican II's reforms, even as certain elements within the Church sought to advance them.

[Table 1](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the critical events in the Argentinian case, controlling for the regime type and birth control encyclical covariates. I find support for the ecumenical council's perspective suggesting that Vatican II may have had an eroding or bolstering impact on the

Table 1: Testing Critical Events Theory in Argentina

	Model 1 Ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, 1950–2010	Model 2 Resignations among diocesan priests, 1969–2010	Model 3 Resignations among diocesan seminarians, 1969–2010
Ecumenical Councils	–0.010*** (0.003)		
Prophetic Stances	–0.012*** (0.004)	1.420 (1.186)	7.005 (6.914)
Sexual Scandals	–0.001 (0.004)	–0.205 (1.377)	11.251 (7.152)
Papal Visits	0.010*** (0.002)	–3.107*** (0.950)	–26.583 (25.972)
Regime Type: Electoral autocracy	0.009* (0.005)	1.991 (3.568)	–18.761 (25.149)
Regime Type: Electoral democracy	0.008 (0.006)	1.739 (2.200)	10.018 (26.607)
Birth Control Encyclical	–0.006 (0.003)	7.792*** (1.747)	12.611 (28.145)
Observations	61	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.348	0.107	0.011

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Note: Table reports OLS time-series regression coefficients with Newey-West standard errors in parentheses. Each of the explanatory variables was entered in the models as a dummy variable (1 meaning event, 0 meaning non-event). The dependent variable refers to the relative number of ordinations (per 10,000 Catholics) and resignations (per 1,000 diocesan priests or per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). All of the models include controls for regime type (ref: closed autocracy) and birth control encyclical.

Catholic male workforce. Looking at the regression for ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1), one can see that the ecumenical councils coefficient (–0.010) is negative and statistically significant, suggesting that Vatican II had a dampening impact on ordinations. However, its substantive effect is small, as a one-unit increase in ecumenical councils leads to a 0.010 decrease in ordi-

nations. As mentioned earlier, this may be due to the Argentinian Catholic leadership's lack of engagement with the new model of prophetic activism legitimised by Vatican II.

Another way of evaluating the ecumenical councils perspective is to look at ordination averages in the decade prior to Vatican II, the prehistory of the event, and the decade after (see [Table 2](#)). This shows that there was a decline from 0.04 to 0.01. At the same time, visual inspection of ordinations in the 1950s shows that 1955 was the peak year for ordinations, suggesting that Vatican II may have accelerated an already existing trend of decline rather than being the direct cause of it.

Table 2: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1950–2009

Time period	Ordination rate among diocesan priests (per 10,000 Catholics)
T1 ^a (1952–1961)	0.04
T2 ^b (1966–1975)	0.01
1950–1959	0.04
1960–1969	0.02
1970–1979	0.01
1980–1989	0.03
1990–1999	0.04
2000–2009	0.03

Note: ^a T1 (Time 1) denotes decade prior to Vatican II. ^b T2 (Time 2) denotes decade after Vatican II

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

Prophetic Stances Argument

As in the three other national churches included in the present study, the Argentinian bishops exercised prophetic ministry through the publication of pastoral letters and communiqués as well as meetings with political elites. However, unlike their episcopal colleagues in Valletta, Abuja, and Manila, the Argentinian bishops' prophetic voice was not as disruptive as it could have been, especially concerning military rule during the violent "Dirty War" (Gill 1998; Levine 2012; Morello 2015; Nepstad 2019), when the state sought to dampen a growing Marxist and guerrilla movement through a society-wide authoritarian suppression of leftist groups, including clergy (Perelli 1992). By mostly siding with the state, the bishops (who numbered about eighty) hoped that the regime would eventually be able to suppress the turbulent political violence of the war and prevent a guerrilla-led state takeover, which would likely have brought institutional costs for Catholicism (Nepstad 2019; Perelli 1992).

This is not to imply that in other domains, such as faith and morals, the bishops did not provide more vocal prophetic leadership. For example, in the 1950–1955 period the bishops published a number of pastoral letters on topics such as Catholic Action and marriage and family (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1951, 1952, 1955). Later, in the 1980s, the bishops spoke out against abortion, divorce, and a perceived erosion of values in the mass media (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1982a, 1982b).

Argentina's Church–state interactions during the time period of this book are a story of a struggle for legitimacy to define the future direction of the society. Before the reforms of Vatican II, which included an emphasis on prophetic leadership against authoritarian rule, the Argentinian bishops' ministry did include a critique of state actions. For example, an incident in 1952 involving the arrest of Catholic Action members protesting against an erotic film reflected a tension between the bishops and the then government led by Juan Perón regarding perceived state efforts to displace the Church's organisational entities with secular alter-

natives. This Church–state tension was ramped up in the 1954–1955 period as Perón sought to drain the Church’s influence by bringing in divorce and seeking to weaken Church–state interactions (Gill 1998). However, in the following decade, the Church’s approach steered much more towards providing legitimacy to an authoritarian state.

As mentioned earlier, the Argentinian bishops adopted a non-conflictual approach to the military government in the 1966–1983 time period, even as liberation theology–inspired prelates in other Latin American contexts challenged the human rights violations of authoritarian regimes (Morello 2015; Dodson 1974). To take just two examples, bishops met with some of the leaders of the military regime around the time of the coup in 1976, lending it legitimacy (Keogh 1991). Also, in 1983 the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP, Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas) was established, but without the support of the Church (Levine 2012; Morello 2017).

At the same time, it should be noted that some individual bishops, such as Bishop Hesayne of Viedma, challenged the state’s past human rights record following the publication in 1983 of the *Final Document of the Military Junta on the War Against Subversion and Terrorism*, which downplayed its repressive actions (Perelli 1992), against the more conciliatory position of most of his episcopal colleagues (Bonnin 2013).

In his study of the decision-making of national hierarchies in Latin America, political scientist Anthony Gill characterised the Catholic leadership’s approach during this very fraught time as “complicity with the Devil” (Gill 1998, 149). Based on a rational choice market logic, Gill attributes this support for authoritarian rule largely to the absence of non-Catholic competitor groups in the national religious arena, which removed a reason for addressing the interests of its own Catholic base. By contrast, in other Latin American countries such as Chile, growing numbers of Pentecostal converts prompted the bishops there to side with the poor and needy (Gill 1998).

Other scholars are somewhat less critical of the Church's prophetic voice in general, citing the hierarchy's Declaration of San Miguel in 1969 that supported pro-justice work by clergy and religious, but they still view the overall approach of the hierarchy as one allied with the military state (Levine 2012). The hierarchy itself defended its own prophetic ministry as being on the side of the disappeared (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1982c). Overall, the stance of Catholic authorities regarding political violence increased its past-related "symbolic debts" in the eyes of devotees (Morello 2019, 11).

Past research also explains the reserve of the hierarchy's prophetic leadership less in terms of competitive interests (Gill 1998) than in terms of historic Church-state unions (Morello 2015; Nepstad 2019) and religious group influence (Morello 2015). This meant that the Church was reluctant to disturb its history of close co-operation with the state, including material, political, and symbolic support (Nepstad 2019; Morello 2015), or risk fracturing within its own ranks and thereby the diluting of its symbolic weight (Morello 2015) by speaking out against the state.

Yet, it is also the case that religious meaning-making, partially Vatican II-inspired, mattered in understanding Catholicism's approach to political violence, especially in terms of the Church as a whole rather than the episcopate per se (Morello 2015). In this regard, sociologist Gustavo Morello usefully distinguishes between different currents within Catholicism including "antiseccular", "institutional", and "committed" Catholics, each with mutually exclusive understandings of legitimate Church-state interactions and "correct" Catholicism in Argentina at this time (Morello 2015, 12-13).

For "committed" Catholics, the Church's social teachings were an important source of inspiration for making direct demands on the state (especially in regard to meeting the needs of the poor in society), contrasting with the stances of "antiseccular" and "institutional" Catholics (Morello 2015, 12-13). The latter category was representative of the majority of bishops, with the exception of a handful (Nepstad 2019). Even so, some Argentinians, including

some Catholics, were largely untouched by the political violence that characterised the 1970s (Carassai 2014), and thus do not neatly fall into one or other of these analytical categories.

To take a concrete example, these variable expressions of Catholicism played out in different responses to the kidnapping and torture of seminarians – one instance among many experienced by Catholic clergy – by representatives of the military government in 1976. While the local bishop of Córdoba declined to take up their cause, the regional superior of the La Salettes order Rolando Nadaeu did by drawing the attention of the local media to their case (Morello 2015). In this example, the Church hierarchy appealed to “institutional Catholicism” (Morello 2015, 177), which stood in opposition to socially aware currents of this faith tradition, to legitimise their (in)action in the face of state violence. More generally, the Catholic bishops did not give their approval to human rights advocacy organisations acting on behalf of victims of political terror (Morello 2015), an estimated 30,000 being among the “disappeared”, including Catholic personnel, between 1976 and 1983 (Levine 2012; Morello 2012).

The beginnings of the country’s transition to democracy in the early 1980s, realised in 1983 (Carassai 2014), marked a change in the national Church’s orientation to the state and society. The bishops, perhaps “institutional” Catholics in former times (Morello 2015, 12–13), began to amplify a “committed” Catholic (Morello 2015, 12–13) voice that had been more muted previously. This shift in prophetic leadership partly reflected the Church’s changing position within the society, where its moral dominance increasingly faced legitimacy challenges from groups reflecting opposing ideological perspectives in a heterogenous public sphere (Htun 2003; Morello 2015, 2017), including Marxist currents.

A signal of this prophetic ministry change can be found as early as the beginning of the 1980s, in a 1981 document entitled *Church and National Community*, in which the bishops committed to addressing the failings of the past and working with secular elites and the laity to achieve this. Notably, the bishops rejected any claim to privileged treatment by the state (Argentinian Episcopal

Conference 1981), a clear disavowal of “institutional Catholicism” (Morello 2015).

Increasingly, this moral activism was directed against social dislocations occurring in this decade – such as poverty and unemployment (Carassai 2014) – and took different forms, including publishing documents, organising protest marches, letter writing to political elites, and direct appeals from the pulpit (Htun 2003). Even children were not untouched by these issues, and their well-being became a concern of prelates (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1988).

Even so, change came slowly in the 1980s, and a macroeconomic crisis developed by the end of that decade (Carassai 2014), threatening the basic survival needs of the general populace (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1989). At the same time, for the majority of Argentinians it appears that, as sociologist Sebastián Carassai put it, “the worst political leadership was preferable to the best military coup” (Carassai 2014, 272).

From the 1990s onwards, the hierarchy’s moral activism continued to show greater distancing from the state and willingness to take public stands against it in the wake of a worsening economic context.

President Carlos Menem initiated a liberalisation of economic policies in the 1990s, including the privatisation of state industries (Smith 1998; Gill 2017), and the development of an open-trading, global-facing economy, paralleling the experience of other countries in this world region (Morello 2017). The project of privatisation, in particular, was marked by high levels of corruption, which eroded its support among the general populace (Gill 2017). Additionally, high levels of public debt began to make Argentina an increasingly unattractive place for foreign investment in the late 1990s, leading to significant economic distress and an unsettled political climate (Gill 2017).

Against this background, bishops spoke out against poverty, unemployment, and the plight of retirees (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1994a). At the level of faith and morals, Catholic elites continued their prophetic ministry against abortion, the death

penalty, and assisted human reproduction (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1990, 1994b, 1995a). For example, in 1990 the bishops, allied with Catholic lay groups, opposed legislation to legalise abortion in instances of rape (Smith 1998).

Apart from public Catholic claims-making, prophetic leadership in the mid-1990s extended to direct aid to the poor through its social welfare relief services such as *Cáritas Argentina* (Morello 2017; Bonnin 2013; Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1995b), as well as the mobilisation of Church personnel to help address the ill-treatment of marginal groups such as prisoners (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1997). In early 1997, the bishops negotiated with political elites on behalf of the poor and needy, who organised protests against the government's then economic approach (Smith 1998).

This moral activism helped to address the country's social needs and create national unity during an unsettled period (Calderisi 2013, 160), and thereby bolster the Church's moral authority (Rabbia and Gatica 2017).

Together, these prophetic stances fitted well with national surveys showing about 75 per cent of the general populace favouring the Church's social concern agenda (Morello 2017). Further evidence for the Church's bolstered authority comes from WVS data revealing an uptick in confidence in churches at the end of the 1990s mentioned earlier, from about 23 per cent in 1995 to about 36 per cent in 1999 reporting "a great deal" of confidence in them. Perhaps the bishops' 1995 plea for forgiveness for their earlier backing of military dictatorship (Gill 1998) went some way towards enhancing public perceptions of their ministry performance.

During the 2000s, contested faith and moral issues competed with social justice concerns for the attention of Argentina's prelates, including the strongly emotive issues of reproductive health, abortion, sex education, and same-sex marriage. An early intervention came in 2000 in response to legislative moves in reproductive health, in the form of a defence of traditional teaching on human sexuality (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 2000).

Regarding social concern, in 2001–2002 Catholic authorities, under the leadership of then archbishop of Buenos Aires and president of the episcopal conference, Jorge Bergoglio, participated in a national conversation with the state and the United Nations (UN) entitled *The Panel for Argentine Dialogue* (Calderisi 2013, 160; Gill 2017; Bonnin 2013), an interesting forum for Church–state cooperation in addressing the country’s socio-economic distresses. In 2005, the bishops’ attention turned to abortion (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 2005), to help dampen enthusiasm for planned liberalisation of the country’s laws (Morello 2019). At other times, individual bishops took stands on faith and moral issues, as in 2004–2005 when Bishop Baseotto challenged government sex education policies in the school system (Hagopian 2006).

During the 2009–2010 debate about same-sex marriage, the Church was also morally active. Led by Archbishop Bergoglio, it weighed in against extending the legal right to marry and adopt children to homosexuals by appealing to a natural law position⁴⁰ (Pentin 2010), while continuing to support civil recognition of same-sex unions (Romo, Rodriguez, and Shoichet 2013).

Overall, the Church’s moral activism evolved over time, from reticence in the 1970s and early 1980s towards more vocal leadership in the 1990s and 2000s, as Argentina’s political system evolved from military rule towards democratic governance.

[Table 1](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effect of the prophetic stances perspective on the three dependent variables, suggesting that the Church’s moral leadership can potentially lead to increases or decreases in its workforce. I find a negative and statistically significant effect for prophetic stances on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1). The prophetic stances coefficient (–0.012) indicates that a one-unit increase in prophetic stances leads to a 0.012 decrease in ordinations. Substantively, this is a small effect. I did not find statistically significant effects for prophetic ministry on the resignation indicators.

This suggests that the Church’s prophetic ministry did not prompt men to join its workforce. It may be that the Church’s

moral leadership during this time disappointed would-be seminarians expecting a clearer and more direct expression of the Church's moral teachings from the hierarchy, especially in light of the well-publicised human rights abuses perpetrated by the military regime. Also, it may be that when the Church seeks to draw on its religious capital to authorise or sanctify other kinds of capital such as political capital (Morello 2019), it is perceived by ordinary adherents as overreaching its proper role in society.

Sexual Scandals Argument

As in other national churches, sexual scandals involving Catholic clergy and religious broke out in Argentina. Unlike other national churches (e.g. Ireland), most of the scandals that came to light were more recent than historic, relating to abuse that occurred from the 1990s onwards.⁴¹ It is also the case – as with the complex quality of events more generally (Grzymała-Busse 2011) – that the “sexual scandal” story involved less a single discrete event than several linked ones: media reportage, victims’ activism, legal cases, and Church responses. Compared to other critical events such as prophetic stances, sexual scandals were more “restless” (Wagner-Pacifici 2010, 1356).

In general, the Church in Argentina, as elsewhere, was not quick to acknowledge the extent of the problem and respond adequately to it, taking many years to tackle it. The Church's document on procedures for dealing with abuse was put together, for Vatican approval, in the early 2000s, and a Pastoral Council for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults was established by the Argentinian Episcopal Conference in 2017.⁴²

External events also influenced the unfolding of the scandal. The election in 2013 of Argentinian Jorge Mario Bergoglio to the papacy as Pope Francis heightened attention to sexual scandals in the Church in this local context in the recent past, and prompted more victims to come forward to tell their story. For example, victims directly contacted the Pope about past abuses in the 2000s.⁴³ These scandals brought costs for Catholicism, including an ero-

sion of the status of its personnel. Three articles carried in the Argentinian press relating to the well-known Father Grassi case attest to the growing public attention to the issue:

- “Don’t Protect that Monster” (*Página*, June 9, 2006).
- “The Very Long Case of Father Grassi” (*Página*, May 10, 2009).
- “Bergoglio Puts Father Grassi’s Foundation under Microscope” (*Clarín*, May 22, 2009).⁴⁴

Allegations of sexual abuse of seminarians in the archdiocese of Santa Fe de la Vera Cruz came to light in 1994, when a Vatican-inspired investigation began into allegations that Archbishop Edgardo Storni abused a seminarian in Santa Fe in the early 1990s. In 2009, Archbishop Storni was given a prison sentence. Another prelate, Bishop Juan Maccarone, was implicated in 2005 in a sexual scandal involving an adult male. Other cases involving priests came to light in the late 1990s. However, most child sexual abuse cases came into the public domain in Argentina in the 2000s.

Perhaps the most well-known case of clerical child sexual abuse relates to Father Julio César Grassi, whose case came to light in 2002 after allegations of abuse against children were publicised in the secular media. Father Grassi, who ran a charitable foundation for vulnerable children entitled Fundacion Felices los Niños, went on trial for abuse in 2008 and was found guilty on some charges in 2009. At the time, the Argentinian Episcopal Conference led by then Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio adopted a somewhat defensive position, criticising attempts to taint its public image. In 2010, it commissioned an in-depth investigation of the case, which was among the legal materials included in Father Grassi’s unsuccessful appeal against his conviction (Associated Press 2018). Another priest, Father Mario Sasso, was imprisoned in 2007 for abuse of children in the 2000s, following another highly publicised case.⁴⁵

In all, about seventy clergy and religious have been implicated in historic child abuse cases in Argentina, in most cases owing to the truth power of victim testimonies rather than journalistic exposés. A Survivors’ Network of Ecclesiastical Sex Abuses is an

active representative body for over a hundred abuse victims. As in Malta, the majority of cases involved personnel from Argentina, though about fifteen non-Argentinian personnel have also been accused.⁴⁶

[Table 1](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that sexual scandals will have a dampening impact on recruitment and retention in its male workforce. As this table shows, I did not find statistically significant effects for this perspective on any of the three dependent variables.

At the same time, visual inspection of ordination data (see [Table 2](#)) in the 2000s shows that the decadal ordination rate was lower (0.03) in the 2000s compared to the 1990s (0.04), pointing to the eroding impact of scandal on Church recruitment. Similarly, [Table 3](#) shows that the decadal resignation rate among diocesan priests increased from 6.70 in the 1990s to 7.30 in the 2000s. As for resignations among diocesan seminarians, these increased from 109.60 in the 1990s to 113.80 in the 2000s.

Table 3: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina, 1970–2009

Time period	Resignation rate among diocesan priests (per 1000 diocesan priests)	Resignation rate among diocesan seminarians (per 1000 diocesan seminarians)
1970s	8.76	98.85
1980s	3.24	80.65
1990s	6.70	109.60
2000s	7.30	113.80

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

Papal Visits Argument

A Papal visit to this large, populous country, one of Latin America's Catholic majorities, signalled an "Argentinian moment". Pope John Paul II's two-day visit in June 1982, the first ever by a Pope, was to Buenos Aires, including the shrine to Our Lady of Luján, patron saint of Argentina, reflecting the pontiff's personal devotion to the Marian tradition (Jenkins 2011). This visit played out against the backdrop of an unsettled period arising from the outside challenge of the then ongoing conflict between the Argentinian military government and Britain over the status of the Falklands Islands, when nationalist sentiment was likely running high. In this context, the Argentinian and English bishops published a joint letter to help overcome tensions (Hanson 1987). In his homily on the first day of his visit, the Pope made direct reference to this conflict in his papal discourse:

I commend to you Lord all of the families and this nation. May they all partake in man's rising in Christ proclaimed in today's liturgy. May they live in the true fullness of faith, hope and charity as adopted sons and daughters of the Eternal Father and the Son of God.

Through your intervention, Queen of Peace, may they find a way to resolve the current conflict through peace, justice and respect for the dignity of each nation. (JOHN PAUL II 1982A)

This visit also occurred at a time when the Pope adopted a critical stance towards the human rights record of the military government. Thus, the military regime was initially unfavourable towards the visit, but later encouraged engagement with it among the general populace (Solomon 1982). This may have increased its local impact.

At the same time, the Pope's decision to visit Britain just prior to his Argentinian visit, pointing to an interaction effect between Papal visits in different national contexts, may have alienated some Argentinian Catholics disaffected by the legitimacy the visit may have given to Britain's involvement in the Falklands (Willis 1982). Notably, the Pope made reference in Buenos Aires to his

earlier Papal visit to Britain, by sharing a message of peace from young people in Cardiff with their Argentinian counterparts:

Unite also with the young people of Great Britain, who in recent days have both applauded and welcomed the call for total peace and harmony. I very happily pass on their message to you today as they have asked me personally, particularly during my visit to Cardiff, that I convey to you their most sincere desire for peace.

Please do not allow hatred to destroy either the strength or the capacity for understanding that they all possess within them. Make the bonds of unity, hand-in-hand with the youth of Latin America – and in particular to the young people in Puebla to whom I entrusted the special care of our Church – far stronger than the chains of war. By doing so, you will be the young composers of a better future; by doing so, you will truly be Christian.
(JOHN PAUL II 1982B)

Pope John Paul II's second visit to Argentina, in April 1987, marked World Youth Day in Buenos Aires, which attracted about one million devotees from around the globe.⁴⁷ The Papal visit also involved celebrating Masses in several different venues, where he addressed audiences as varied as the sick and people with disabilities, Jews, Ukrainians, workers, Polish people, prisoners, business leaders, Muslims, and young people.

As with the first Papal visit, this lengthy six-day visit involved speaking to current political debates. In this case, the Pope emphasised in his homily in Mendoza – and against the background of the country's then debate about the introduction of divorce, led by "issue networks" of liberalising elites (Htun 2003, 5) – the importance of an ethically grounded social system, one in which the family and marriage would play a focal role (Suro 1987). This echoed the bishops' criticism of Catholic political elites for the mismatch between their private ethics and public position-taking of voting in favour of divorce (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1986a). In this context, the Pope stated:

This primacy of personal change over structural change (cf. Congr. pro Doctr. Fidei, *Libertatis Conscientia*, 75), is not simply a doctrine aimed merely to appease minds. On the contrary, it is a clear call to the Christian ‘unity of life’ because the projection of personal virtue within structural reform is not something automatic any more than it is characteristically human. Constant internal reform, to which the Christian is called, goes hand-in-hand with the effort he should make, depending on his circumstances, to making change in society: “our social behaviour is an integral part of our following of Christ” (Puebla, 476).

I would also like to remind you that, in this societal transformation, the family plays a vital role. How could peace ever truly exist in a nation in which its families are divided amongst themselves and are not even capable of overcoming conflict within the basic unit of the household and, also, in which marriage breakdown is accepted. (JOHN PAUL II 1987A)

This linkage between traditional family norms and the flourishing of human development is strongly emphasised in Papal writings more generally, stressing how one is bound up in the other (Kalbian 2014).

Additionally, the Pope’s stance provided backing to the prophetic leadership of the episcopate, which strongly opposed divorce, even though this ministry was tainted among the general populace by its support for earlier military government (1976–1983) (Htun 2003). In his homily in Cordoba, the Pope returned to the issue of marriage and the family, one warranting pastoral support from the Church (John Paul II 1987b).

Notwithstanding the emphasis on family norms, the Pope also addressed the needs of rural workers, the poor, and migrants during this visit, especially in his homilies in Viedma (John Paul II 1987c) and Paraná (John Paul II 1987d). Against the interests of the Alfonsín government (Drosdoff 1987), this Papal ministry may also have inspired socially aware young men to join the Church amid a country experiencing deep economic stress. It is noteworthy that the theme of work had been a focus, among oth-

ers, of the Argentinian bishops' preparations for the Papal visit, rooted in the Pope's own biography (Argentinian Episcopal Conference 1986b). For example, in Viedma the Pope stated:

To all those in need, the Mapuche people, immigrants and so many others both in the countryside and the cities, I want to express my special affection and remind you all that it is you alone who have the great responsibility for your own progression. Be resilient to indifference and discouragement. Work with perseverance and determination to achieve the conditions of true wellbeing for you and your families and get ever more involved in the gifts of education and culture. However, never employ weapons of hatred and violence to achieve these ends but, rather, use the arms of love and solidarity, which are the only ones that will bring you to real justice and change. (JOHN PAUL II 1987C)

Expanding on this social justice apostolate – echoing the emphasis in his own writings on “structures of sin”, especially in his encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (John Paul II 1987e) published in the same year – in his homily in Rosario on the second last day of his visit, the Pope reflected on the importance of the lay apostolate in realising it, as envisaged by Vatican II, bringing forth an interaction effect between the ecumenical councils and prophetic stances perspectives:

“You are the salt of the Earth ... you are the light of the world” (Mt 5, 13-14). Jesus describes his disciples' mission using the metaphors of salt and light. His words are directed at all of his disciples across all the ages. However, they take on special importance for those lay disciples that build their specific vocation in the realm of temporal realities to where they are called and sent by Christ so that “they contribute to the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven” (*Lumen Gentium*, 31)...

The Pope has faith in the laity of Argentina and awaits great things from them for the glory of God and in the service of their fellow man! (JOHN PAUL II 1987F)

A Papal visit rarely takes place without the Pope making a direct appeal for new callings, as he did in his homily in Corrientes:

I ask the Lord that he send to us many priests, full of internal life and missionary spirit that with great apostolic zeal will faithfully spread the Divine Word and promote those great sources of grace: the sacraments. (JOHN PAUL II 1987G)

Addressing global Catholic youth in his final homily in Buenos Aires, the Pope closed out his visit with a plea to them to live their lives according to Christian values (John Paul II 1987h).

[Table 1](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the Papal visits perspective, suggesting that pastoral visits to a national Church by the Pope as leader of this global religious group will have a bolstering or eroding impact on the male workforce. I find statistically significant effects for the Papal visits perspective on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1) and resignations among diocesan priests (Model 2). Regarding ordinations, the Papal visits coefficient (0.010) indicates that a one-unit increase in Papal visits leads to a 0.010 increase in ordinations. Regarding resignations among diocesan priests, the Papal visits coefficient (-3.107) indicates that a one-unit increase in Papal visits leads to a 3.107 decrease in resignations among diocesan priests. Substantively, these are small effects. I did not find a statistically significant effect for Papal visits on resignations among diocesan seminarians (Model 3).

Evidence for the bolstering impact of the 1982 Papal visit on workforce trends comes from the uptick in ordinations from 89 in 1982 (0.03 per 10,000 Catholics) to 109 in 1983 (0.03 per 10,000 Catholics) (see [Table 2](#)). Also, in 1989, seven years after the visit, the typical duration of seminary formation, ordinations rose to 146 (0.05 per 10,000 Catholics). As for resignations among diocesan priests (see [Table 3](#)), these dropped from 6 in 1982 (2.75 per 1,000 diocesan priests) to 3 in 1983 (1.35 per 1,000 diocesan priests). However, resignations among diocesan seminarians increased from 66 in 1982 (49.14 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 107 in 1983 (76.04 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

A glance at the ordination data shows that the 1987 Papal visit may not have been as significant as the earlier 1982 visit in terms of bolstering recruitment or retention, as the number of ordinations dropped marginally from 146 in 1987 (0.05 per 10,000 Catholics) to 140 in 1988 (0.04 per 10,000 Catholics). Additionally, in 1994 – seven years after the visit – ordinations declined to 128 (0.04 per 10,000 Catholics). As the Pope did not strongly condemn the previous military regime (Hebblethwaite 1991) and intervened in controversial sociomoral debates, this may have disappointed some Catholics expecting a more positive response from the Pope to changing cultural dynamics in the society.

Turning to resignations among diocesan priests, these increased from 8 in 1987 (3.14 per 1,000 diocesan priests) to 13 in 1988 (4.95 per 1,000 diocesan priests). However, resignations among diocesan seminarians declined from 148 in 1987 (100 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 116 in 1988 (67.95 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). Thus, regarding resignations the impact of the Papal visit was not clear-cut.

Summary and Discussion

To summarise, the Argentinian case provides support for critical events theory, especially regarding the ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, and Papal visits perspectives. The effect for the ecumenical councils perspective fell within the range for statistical significance in the regression models, albeit with a small substantive effect. Additionally, the decadal averages for ordinations show a drop after Vatican II, suggesting that the conciliar changes partially contributed to discouraging men from pursuing a calling in the Church. I also find support for the prophetic stances perspective, substantiating the idea that the Church's moral activism had an eroding impact on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood.

An issue worth consideration in this context relates to the social class background of would-be priests. To what extent are callings uniformly distributed across different class groupings in Argentina? Past studies suggest that callings tend to be clustered

within the middle-class category rather than being dispersed more widely⁴⁸ (Barrett et al. 2001a), partially linked to the Roman education of clergy.⁴⁹ This could potentially shape the effect of the prophetic stances variable examined in this study, as callings with more middle-class backgrounds may be less susceptible to “hearing” the Church’s moral activism, especially regarding the poor and needy.

Another interesting result relates to the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that scandals erode the legitimacy of the Church as a religious system and thus reduce vocations. Although I did not find statistically significant effects for sexual scandals, the decadal averages for ordinations and resignations in the 1990s and 2000s suggest that scandals likely dampened callings in the Argentinian context.

My fourth perspective suggested that visits to national churches by the head of the world’s Catholics would bolster or erode callings depending on the context of the visit, such as whether it co-occurred with sexual scandals. I find statistically significant effects for this perspective in the regression models, with a positive effect on ordinations and a negative one on resignations. Additionally, visual inspection of the trend lines around the time of the 1982 visit shows an uptick in ordinations and a downward trend in resignations, providing support for this perspective. When ordination and resignation data regarding the 1987 visit are considered, there is less support for this perspective, which may be due to frustration with Pope John Paul II’s prophetic leadership.

Having investigated Argentinian Catholicism as representative of “Eroding Monopoly Catholicism”, in the next chapter I turn to a different context, Malta, as a case study of “Traditional Heartland Catholicism”.

CHAPTER 3

Malta: Traditional Heartland Catholicism

Introduction

In global Catholicism today, the Maltese case is one of “Traditional Heartland Catholicism” in Southern Europe, where Catholic religiosity, as in the Philippines, is strongly fused with the national culture. Apart from perhaps the Irish, Lithuanians, and Poles, few other European peoples are more closely associated in the public imagination with Catholicism than the Maltese, a connection going back nearly two thousand years. This is reflected in the mix of churches, parish buildings, and statues in towns and villages (Vassallo 2017; Frendo 1979; Sultana and Baldacchino 1994), as well as the Catholic nomenclature of public services such as schools and hospitals (Deguara 2018). Maltese Catholicism is also well known for its local parish *fiesta*. *These* are street festivals where village saints are commemorated and celebrated with a curious merging of religious devoutness and secular pageantry, each parish vying with others for its preferred saint (Boissevain 2004; Martin 1978) or occasionally without any saintly focus at all (Vassallo 2017).

At the same time, there has not always been a straightforward or simple association between being Maltese and being Catholic. In this context, a notable feature of this case is the existence of strong internal religious–secular fault lines characteristic of traditional heartlands of Catholicism more generally (Martin 1978). As Maltese sociologist Mario Vassallo notes, *Malta Kattolicissima* (translated as “Malta the most Catholic”) was the banner call-to-arms slogan in Church struggles against the counter-cultural

political programme of left-leaning, anti-clerical groups such as the Labour Party from the 1960s onwards, pitting farmers against factory workers (Vassallo 2017; Martin 1978). Only carnivalesque-like parish *fiesta* seem to transcend these political cleavages (Falzon 2007).

This chapter focuses on the Maltese case. It advances in four steps. After giving a brief overview of the religious background, I present some descriptive trends in relation to the male workforce. Third, I put critical events theory to the test by providing an in-depth historical analysis of the four events. Finally, the chapter assesses how well the theoretical framework developed in [Chapter 1](#) fits this Southern European case. Unlike its larger and more populated neighbour Italy, Malta has received relatively little attention in the extant literature on Catholicism. Its smallness, relative lack of symbolic weight, and geographical remoteness make it more marginal, though not unimportant, compared to other national churches. Yet, the study of overlooked cases can help to broaden our understanding of Catholic religiosity and provide a useful point of comparison with other cases not usually analysed together.

Catholic pedigree in Malta dates to the steering off course of a Rome-bound ship with St Paul on board and his unexpected landing on the island in unfavourable weather conditions nearly two thousand years ago, the origin event in Maltese Christian history (Vassallo 1979). From his shipwreck, St Paul pivoted to evangelising the Maltese (Mitchell 2002).

Catholicism is the official religion, where it is given constitutional protection (Fox 2008; Mitchell 2017). As formally stated in the 1964 constitution:

The religion of Malta is the Roman Catholic Apostolic Religion. The authorities of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church have the duty and right to teach which principles are right and which are wrong. Religious teaching of the Roman Catholic Apostolic faith shall be provided in all State schools as part of compulsory education. (CONSTITUTION OF MALTA 1964).

Thus, this underwrote the Church's prophetic leadership and role in prolonging Catholicism in the society. Interstitially located between Christian Europe and Islamic Africa (Mitchell 2017; Martin 1978), Maltese Catholicism is arguably further bolstered by facing Islam as a frontier faith (Martin 1978).

Unsurprisingly, this "religious nationalism" (Soper and Fetzer 2018, 11) gave Catholic authorities an important role in Malta: providing social services, organising civil society, and speaking out on sociomoral issues. However, this has not necessarily translated into Catholic lay support for Church influence in political affairs. Indeed, Maltese Catholics' high levels of religious commitment are co-present with recent equally high levels of disapproval of religious organisations influencing political life, with nearly 90 per cent of Maltese people reporting in the 2000s that churches should not influence politics (Grzymała-Busse 2015, 6). Regarding change over time, when asked whether they had confidence in churches, 86 per cent of Maltese people said they had "a great deal" and "quite a lot" in 1981 compared to 77 per cent nearly 30 years later in 2008 (Pollack and Rosta 2017, 68).

Although a Catholic-majority case, it is worth noting that since 1991 non-Catholics have enjoyed the same religious freedom protections as Catholics (Fox 2008), and their numbers have grown in recent times (Baldacchino 2014). Today, Muslims comprise the largest non-Catholic religious group, whose presence has occasionally stoked tensions. For example, protests in 2009 about the public holding of Muslim prayers clustered around two views of public space being properly neutral as regards religion on the one hand and perceived threats to Maltese Catholic identity on the other (Baldacchino 2014).

Despite or perhaps because of its small size and local culture rooted in its own language (Frendo 1979), Malta has a strong outward-facing orientation (Abela 2000; Rountree 2014). As sociologist Anthony Giddens notes, "Malta cannot be studied, it is demonstrated over and over again, as though it were an isolated unit. It is part of a wider global society and the influence of the wider global order appears almost everywhere" (Giddens 1994, xxix).

This global focus is reflected in its small open economy's heavy reliance on mass international tourism as a source of economic development, which brings locals into contact with outsiders (Abela 2000; Vassallo 2017), and, more recently, its status as a global node in the gaming industry (*Malta Today* 2024). This owes in large part to state-driven growth pursued since the late 1950s, involving the displacement of the “high ranking British naval officer” by the “continental industrialist” (Vella 1994, 67). At the same time, Malta retains strong connections with Britain, its former colonial authority. For example, much of the country's scientific elite has been educated in British universities (Falzon 2007), and aspects of modern British culture such as soccer are strongly present in daily local life (Rountree 2014). Even traditional red phone boxes remain on Valletta's streets as traces of the British colonial legacy.

According to the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, it represents a stable political system with a WGI figure (for 2010) of 1.25 (on scale ranging from -2.5 meaning weak to 2.5 meaning strong political stability) (Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024). Malta became a European Union member in 2004 (Harwood 2014).

Catholicism in Malta has been characterised by historic high levels of religious commitment. In a rank order of country religiosity across the globe, Malta is consistently at or close to the top on most indicators (Smith 2009). Within Western Europe, it has above average religiosity levels, which merits its traditional heartland status (Pollack and Rosta 2017). Among the general populace, belief in God is very high (about 99 per cent) and has remained stable over time (Smith 2009; Pollack and Rosta 2017).

While there is a historically strong church attendance norm in Malta (Frendo 1979), church attendance levels declined moderately in the 1980s, and then more slightly more in the 1990s (Smith 2009). More specifically, weekly or more church attendance declined from about 92 per cent in 1983 to about 88 per cent in 1991 before dropping further to about 82 per cent in 1999 (see [Figure 12](#)) and to about 77 per cent in 2008 (Smith 2009; Pollack

and Rosta 2017), still a high level. And these declines appear to be patterned by age. For example, on a visit to a church in Valletta in 2017, I was struck by the predominance of older people in the pews and the relative absence of the young.⁵⁰

The Church in this Catholic-majority society has fulfilled an important prophetic leadership role in public life, speaking out more recently against the introduction of same-sex marriage (Associated Press 2017) and in earlier periods against divorce and abortion – a function underwritten by a recent Papal visit – and female suffrage (Pirota 2006).

As mentioned, confidence in the Church as an institution dropped from the 1980s through to the 2000s (Pollack and Rosta 2017). Unsurprisingly, younger age groups report higher declines in confidence in churches, as compared to older age groups (Smith 2009). Younger people are also less likely to self-identify as a religious person compared to older age groups (Smith 2009).

Interestingly, the number of people who self-identify as not belonging to religion decreased from 2.5 per cent in 1990–1993

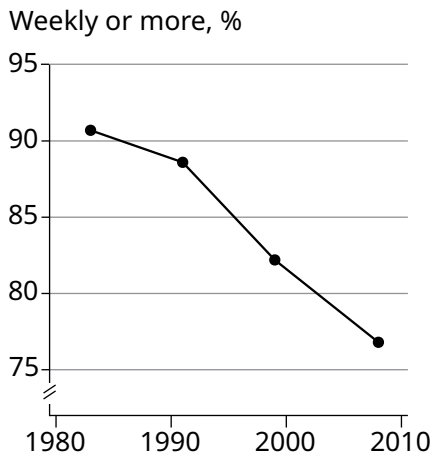


Figure 12: Church Attendance in Malta, 1983–2008

Note: Weekly or more, in %

Source: European Values Study 1981–2017

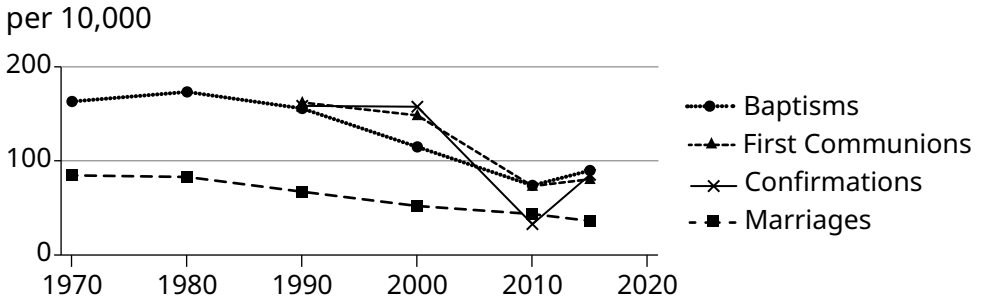


Figure 13: Participation in Church Sacraments in Malta, 1970–2015

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

to 1.5 in 1999–2004 (Smith 2009). In line with this, more recent research suggests that Malta may be one of a handful of European countries that have experienced a slight upswing in religious service attendance (Brenner 2016) and religiosity in general (Pollack and Rosta 2017).

Notably, in the Maltese case declines in church attendance (weekly or more) took place after the decline in priestly ordinations (Figures 12 and 16). Figure 13 presents data about trends in participation in Catholic baptisms, first communions, confirmations, and marriages (per 10,000 Catholics) in the 1970–2015 time period. What does this figure tell us? First, the most significant reduction in this forty-five-year span is in participation in baptisms and confirmations, likely due to the declining birth rate from the 1960s (Boissevain 2013; Martin 1978). Second, this figure shows that in the 1990–2005 time period surprisingly more adherents received their first communion and confirmation than were baptised, but first communions lagged behind baptisms in the 2010–2015 period and confirmations did so from the mid-2000s. Third, many fewer adherents marry in the church compared to those who are baptised in it. Overall, this figure points to a quite significant erosion of participation in the Church's sacraments across the life-course in Malta.

Descriptive Trends

[Figures 14–19](#) present the data relating to Catholic workforce trends in Malta with reference to the three categories of male religious professionals.

[Figure 14](#) shows that the number of diocesan priests per 10,000 Catholics peaked in the 1980 and from the mid-1980s went into a quite dramatic decline. Similarly, the religious priest workforce went into decline (see [Figure 15](#)), beginning in the early 1980s. Many of these religious served as educators in the school system, which became a recruitment ground for orders and congregations such as the Augustinians, the De La Salle Brothers, and the Dominicans (Vassallo 1979). The peak year for the religious priest workforce was 1976.

While ordination and resignation data for religious priests are not available in the data sources relied upon in this book, the similarity in the religious priest and diocesan priest trend lines – anticipated in earlier research (e.g. Vassallo 1979) – is noteworthy.

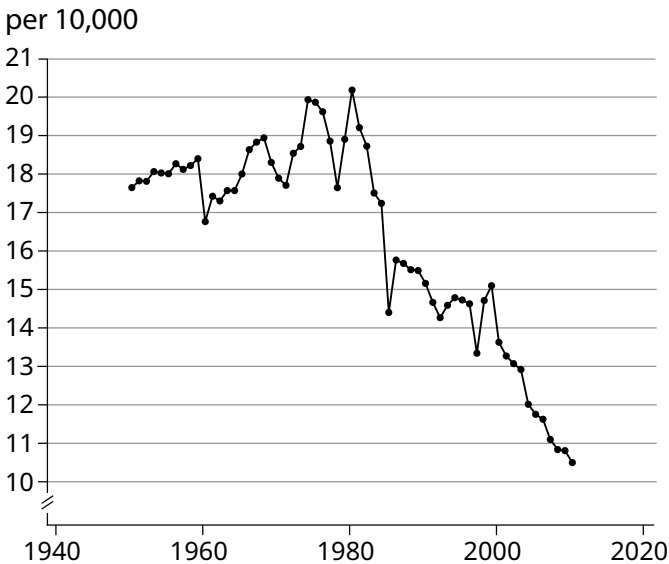


Figure 14: Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1950–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

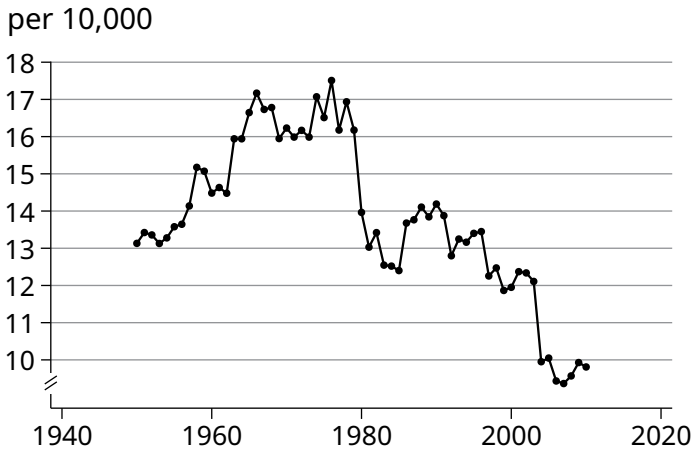


Figure 15: Religious Priests in Malta, 1950–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

[Figure 16](#) reports data relating to newly ordained diocesan priests in Malta.

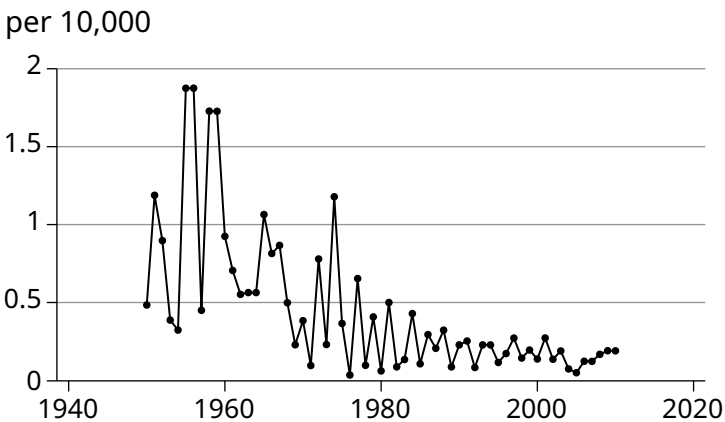


Figure 16: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Malta, 1950–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics. Papal visits in Malta (1990, 2001, 2010)

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

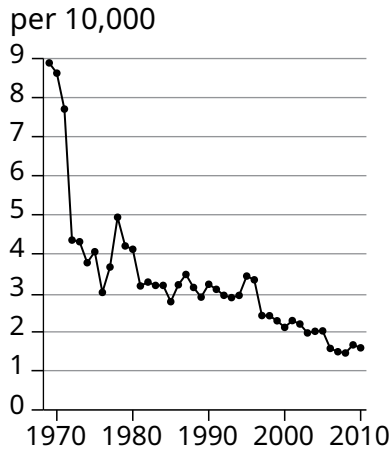


Figure 17: Religious Brothers in Malta, 1969–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

In Malta, the number of ordinations per 10,000 Catholics peaked at 1.87 in 1956 and declined to 0.19 in 2010 (–1.68 decline from peak). In the late 2000s, there is evidence of a slight uptick in ordinations.

A look at [Figure 17](#), which presents data about the number of religious brothers per 10,000 Catholics, shows their number dropped from the late 1960s. The number of religious brothers in Malta peaked at 8.88 in 1969, as compared to 1.59 in 2010. This represents a peak-to-2010 change of 7.29.

[Figure 18](#) presents data about the number of resignations among diocesan clergy (per 1,000 diocesan priests) in the 1969–2010 time period. [Figure 19](#) does the same with respect to seminarians for the diocesan priesthood (per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

Because there were no resignations recorded in several years in this timespan, the trend lines show three quite high peaks in a relatively short period, spiking in the late 1970s, the early 1990s, and again in the late 2000s. This post-Vatican II increase in resignations may have reflected the gradual decline in the status of the

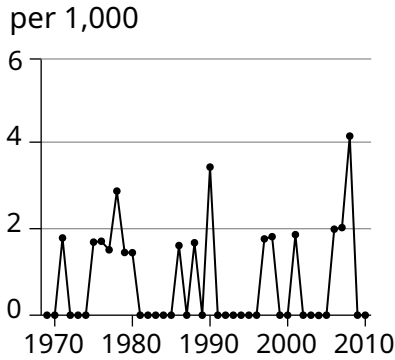


Figure 18: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1969–2010

Note: Figures are per 1,000 diocesan priests. Papal visits in Malta (1990, 2001, 2010)
 Source: Author’s calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

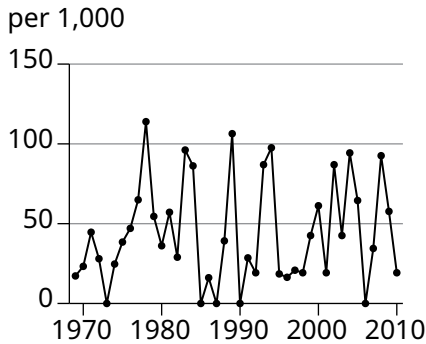


Figure 19: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Malta, 1969–2010

Note: Figures are per 1,000 diocesan seminarians. Papal visits in Malta (1990, 2001, 2010)
 Source: Author’s calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

priest as the “local big man”⁵¹ (Boissevain 2013, 176), owing to the rise of secular professions and educational opportunity among the laity, as well as the attendant growth of state social welfare capacity (Boissevain 2013; Falzon 2007).

Another possible explanation is suggested by Vassallo’s socio-logical study of 1970s Malta, which found that some older clergy

lamented the loss of traditional social controls, especially in relation to human sexuality, and the advent of new more secularised ways of living among the young and urbanised (Vassallo 1979). Additionally, some older clergy were disappointed with the council's liturgical reforms, especially regarding the translation of Biblical materials into Maltese (Vassallo 1979).

Turning to [Figure 19](#), resignations among seminarians for the diocesan priesthood peaked in 1978 at 113.92. This compares to a rate of 19.23 in 2010. Thus, the peak-to-2010 change is 94.69.

Contexts of Trends

Ecumenical Councils Argument

Coming from a traditional heartland, the Maltese bishops likely arrived in the Vatican in 1962 seeing their country as a model national Church with little or no need for innovation. Malta's three attending bishops were led at the council by the long-serving archbishop of Malta Michael Gonzi.⁵² Gonzi was appointed bishop of Gozo in 1924 and archbishop of Malta in 1944 (Frendo 1979; Grech 2022). Ordained to the priesthood in 1908, he briefly served as a politician in the 1920s before his episcopal appointment, an unusual early career pathway for a bishop (Smith 2014; Grech 2022). Along with auxiliary bishop Emmanuel Galea and Gozo Bishop Joseph Place, Archbishop Gonzi attended all four sessions of the council,⁵³ making the Maltese prelates from a "monopoly" field (Wilde 2007) a very small group among their conservatively oriented European Catholic monopoly counterparts from Italy and Spain (Wilde 2007).⁵⁴

As in the other countries included in this book, the council's reforms co-occurred with other important changes in Maltese society, including the diffusion of mass media and new technologies, political autonomy, and economic modernisation (Vassallo 1979; Sultana and Baldacchino 1994; Boissevain 2013). For example, the time period covered in this book was one of significant economic growth in Malta, with Gross Domestic Prod-

uct (GDP) per capita increasing from 2.419 in 1962 to 27.206 in 2010 (Coppedge et al. 2024). The politics of Malta changed from a colonial system under British rule to independence (in 1964). Enrolment in tertiary higher education increased from about 6 per cent in 1970 to about 37 per cent in 2010.⁵⁵ Another notable change was the increase in female labour force participation in the 1990–2010 period, from nearly 28 per cent to about 34 per cent.⁵⁶ As sociologist David Martin put it, “learning, work and play were together the agents of secularity” (Martin 1978, 270).

As emigration to the city increased, the Maltese became more exposed to new lifestyle options that competed with religiosity and became less subject to the social control of their family and neighbours in their former towns and villages (Boissevain 2013; Martin 1978). Lacking the constraints of before, it became easier to give up one’s religious identity. Even Maltese priests and religious were not untouched by this new outlook, with more of them travelling abroad for formation than before.⁵⁷

Against this background, it fell to Archbishop Gonzi to manage the local adaptation of Vatican II’s innovations, and he took up this challenge, among other ways, in a fifty-page pastoral plan published in 1966 with eighty projects organised under the four general themes of survey, formation, reflection, and organisation (Tonna 1995). The document’s statement in the opening pages, “the scope of the Pastoral Plan is to *activate* the conclusions of the Second Vatican Council in Malta” (Tonna 1995, 1, emphasis mine), indicated a strong episcopal commitment to local implementation of the council’s changes. Institutionally, these were driven by a Pastoral Council – one of the earliest national churches to establish one – and an Interdiocesan or Presbyterial Council (Grech 2022). Even so, the 1966 plan received a critical reception from the Catholic media as dampening local innovation (Tonna 1995). Later pastoral plans published in 1976 and 1985 sought to further embed the theology of Vatican II at the local level (Tonna 1995).

One such area related to openness to ideas from the social sciences in informing Church practices. In 1967, just two years after the council, the Church commissioned an in-depth empiri-

cal study by its Pastoral Research Services, which sought to measure trends in religious participation. Although it found quite high levels of commitment (Sansone 2015), it highlighted the Church's own concern about the sociocultural changes taking place in the wake of Vatican II and their potential unfavourable impact on devotees' long-standing piety.

Other similar Pastoral Research Services studies carried out around the same time, including *What is happening to Religion in Malta?*, *Reaction to the Liturgical Renewal* and *Report on the Sunday Mass Census*, also reflected these focal concerns. The latter 156-page study reported an 82 per cent Sunday Mass attendance rate, but paid more attention to examining the demographic correlates of the non-attending 18 per cent, including gender, age, and marital status. It left the drawing out of the pragmatic implications of this to the Church's personnel (Tonna and Depasquale 1969).

While many clergy welcomed the adoption of new ritual forms, others (especially older clergy) as well as laity lamented the erosion of traditional Catholic practices such as the annual *festa* (Vassallo 1979, 159). For example, parishioners in St George's parish in Gozo were disgruntled by the ending of the annual *festa*, including a Good Friday procession, and expressed this dissatisfaction to their bishop (Boissevain 2013). Generational differences among priests emerged around these issues and became a source of polarisation (Vassallo 1979). In addition, some clergy were disappointed with the process of appointing new bishops, especially regarding the degree of local consultation (Vassallo 1979). This came to light in 1973, when the appointment of a successor to the then bishop of Gozo, Emmanuel Gerada (future Papal Nuncio), was being considered (Vassallo 1979). These discontents among local clergy may have disappointed some potential callings.

Other conciliar changes, however, may have had the opposite effect on callings, especially the emphasis on priest-led organisations catering to the needs of emigrants, married couples, and disadvantaged youth, as well as devotional movements such as Char-

ismatic Renewal and the Neo-Catechumenal Way (Abela 2000; Vassallo 2017; Martin 1978).

To take one example, the Church's emigrants' commission, which paralleled similar commissions established in other national churches (Spencer 2012), helped would-be emigrants with language and other adaptation issues prior to leaving, as well as securing their social needs in host societies such as the UK and US (Vassallo 1979). Notably, new Church entities were typically founded by socially attuned priests. Priests Victor Grech and Philip Calleja exemplify this direct work today, in areas such as drug addiction and migration (Falzon 2007). In other domains too, such as the media, the Church sought to establish a stronger presence (Grech 2022).

Overall, the Maltese Church sought to implement the council's reforms across a wide range of domains, which prompted a mix of responses among laity and clergy alike.

[Table 4](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the critical events in the Maltese case, controlling for the regime type and birth control encyclical covariates. As this table shows, I did not find support for the ecumenical councils' perspective, suggesting that Vatican II may not have had an eroding or bolstering impact on the male Catholic workforce. One can see that the ecumenical councils coefficient (0.234) is positive but not statistically significant in the model for ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1).

[Table 5](#) shows that the ordination rate in the 10-year period before Vatican II (1.08) was higher than in the decade after it (0.54). However, the dampening of callings appears to have been underway before Vatican II, as diocesan priest ordinations peaked in 1956. This points to a partial Vatican II effect, whereby the council likely accelerated a trend already underway.

Table 4: Testing Critical Events Theory in Malta

	Model 1 Ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, 1950–2010	Model 2 Resignations among diocesan priests, 1969–2010	Model 3 Resignations among diocesan seminarians, 1969–2010
Ecumenical Councils	0.234 (0.156)		
Prophetic Stances	0.026 (0.152)	-0.484 (0.407)	-10.042 (13.553)
Sexual Scandals	-0.324*** (0.107)	0.163 (0.507)	7.404 (9.721)
Papal Visits	-0.049 (0.111)	1.054 (0.873)	-35.388*** (8.251)
Regime Type: Electoral autocracy	-0.827*** (0.248)		
Regime Type: Electoral democracy	-0.631*** (0.215)		
Birth Control Encyclical	-0.136 (0.143)	-0.275 (0.311)	-19.336 (14.359)
Observations	61	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.119	0.009	0.021

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Note: Table reports OLS time-series regression coefficients with Newey-West standard errors in parentheses. Each of the explanatory variables was entered in the models as a dummy variable (1 meaning event, 0 meaning non-event). The dependent variable refers to the relative number of diocesan ordinations (per 10,000 Catholics) or resignations (per 1,000 diocesan priests or per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). All of the models include controls for regime type (ref: closed autocracy) and birth control encyclical.

Table 5: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1950–2009

Time period	Ordination rate among diocesan priests (per 10,000 Catholics)
T1 ^a (1952–1961)	1.08
T2 ^b (1966–1975)	0.54
1950–1959	1.09
1960–1969	0.67
1970–1979	0.42
1980–1989	0.22
1990–1999	0.19
2000–2009	0.14

Note: ^a T1 (Time 1) denotes decade prior to Vatican II. ^b T2 (Time 2) denotes decade after Vatican II.

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

Prophetic Stances Argument

As with the Philippines, the Church in Malta has historically been “fused” with national identity. This meant that when the Church did take a public stand it often spoke on behalf of or represented the views and opinions of the whole society, legitimised by high levels of Catholic piety (Grzymała-Busse 2015). However, from around the 1950s the Church in Malta could rely less and less on a straightforward connection between the general populace and the Church amid the development of a modern secular state (Vassallo 1979). This state was characterised by ongoing polarisation (Veenendaal 2014; Harwood 2014; Frendo 1979), which was a by-product of the country's duopoly party system (Frendo 1979) involving contestation between the Labour Party (party of skilled/semi-skilled workers) on the one hand and the Nationalist Party

(party of professionals and farmers) on the other (Pollard 2014). This political configuration typifies the Mediterranean model of party systems (Laver 1992).

Much of the Church's moral activism was directed against the quite rapid social changes occurring in Maltese society, as political elites advanced a twin-track approach of economic development on the one hand and cultural liberalisation on the other. Against this background, the Church saw its task as one of "cultural defence"⁵⁸ (Martin 1978, 192). In practical terms, this involved a long-run struggle between the big personalities of Dom Mintoff, the charismatic Labour Party leader, on the one hand, and Archbishop Michael Gonzi on the other (Smith 2014). Pastoral letters, meetings with political elites, Catholic media, boycotts of political rallies, public announcements – and even episcopal sanctions⁵⁹ – were all used in this prophetic ministry (Smith 2014).

One of the earliest examples of this contestation was the jettisoning of a traditional courtesy call on Archbishop Gonzi following the Labour Party's fresh win over the Christian Democratic-styled⁶⁰ Nationalist Party in the 1955 election. Dom Mintoff attempted to show that his party's clear distancing from Catholic authorities, even extended to informal elite interactions (Boissevain 2004).

But it was with regard to formal state policies that these tensions were most strongly felt. In 1956, when a referendum on alignment with the UK took place, Archbishop Gonzi articulated his concerns about the safeguarding, or lack thereof, of the Church's position in the government's proposals (Boissevain 2004). In the same year, the Church published Lenten pastoral letters affirming the importance of its prophetic leadership and rallying against attempts by political elites to alter Church-state interactions. These concerns were likely amplified by Vatican worries, and by the anxieties of the local Maltese Church (Boissevain 2004), about the existence of Protestant, Masonry, and Communist currents within the Labour Party (Pollard 2014; Smith 2014). Similarly, in 1957 the Church opposed Prime Minister Mintoff's proposal to establish a licensed

casino, with Archbishop Gonzi arguing that it would be harmful to the interests of the Maltese family (Grech 2022).

The Church continued to mobilise against the Labour Party in the early 1960s. For example, the Church's Diocesan Joint Council of Catholic Lay Associations discouraged the electorate to vote for the Labour Party and was successful in bringing its perspective to bear on them in the 1962 parliamentary elections (Vassallo 1979, 105–106; Boissevain 2004). Notably, the Labour Party's 1962 election manifesto included mention of the right of the individual to “fulfill his civic duty without pseudo-religious interference” (Boissevain 2004, 97). These political priorities were advanced further in 1964 as the Labour Party revealed its plans for a new constitution based on left-wing values, which mostly concerned draining religious influences from the political system through provisions such as civil marriage (Vassallo 1979; Pirota 2006), an agenda the Church opposed.

Significantly, just four years after Vatican II, a resolution to this symbolic struggle between the Church and the Labour Party came in 1969, following meetings between the Labour Party and Emmanuel Gerada⁶¹ (Baldacchino 2002; Vassallo 1979; Pirota 2006), with a significant Vatican II-inspired public statement by the bishops underwriting Church–state separation (Barrett et al. 2001c; Vassallo 1979).

This softening of many years of religio-political tension may have appealed to some new callings in the 1970s attracted by the Vatican II call for a less defensive Church with regard to the surrounding society (Vassallo 1979), pointing to an interaction effect between the ecumenical councils and prophetic stances perspectives.

Although the political landscape in the early 1970s was less polarised than before, further Church activism took place in this decade in relation to macroeconomic issues. For example, in 1972 Archbishop Gonzi intervened in the dispute with Britain regarding the proper rent due for its military headquarters, which helped forge an agreement between the British and the Maltese on this issue (Vassallo 1979).

State actions during this decade increasingly sought to disrupt the Church's influence bit by bit by advancing the differentiation of religion from the collective life of the society, especially in class- and cultural-related areas. Typically, this took place beneath the constitution through the process of legislative change. As Künkler and Madeley observe, "constitutional religion-state relations are often significantly modified in their implementation below the level of state constitutions" (Künkler and Madeley 2018, 367–368).

For example, political elites sought to secularise public life by reducing the number of publicly marked Church holidays from eleven to three (Brown 2019). Even Malta's long-standing religious *fiesta* were not immune to infiltration by consumer culture. In 1975, the Labour Party government introduced regulations seeking to diminish the Church's control over parish *fiesta* by requiring police-issued permits for the paraphernalia (e.g. fireworks) associated with them while, at the same time, promoting *fiesta* as recreational cultural events to an expanding tourism sector. Although these regulations were not as radical as appropriating church buildings, they did spark Church opposition to the growing inter-parish rivalry prompted by them, as well as the draining of the *fiesta*'s religious elements (Boissevain 2013; Martin 1978).

As in Argentina, education was a significant class-related issue area around which polarisation between Church and political elites took place. For example, as an exercise in "cultural defence" (Martin 1978, 192), the Church led by Archbishop Joseph Mercieca⁶² opposed the Labour government's efforts in the 1980s to drop fee-paying arrangements in Catholic schools staffed mainly by religious order personnel (Fenech 2010a).

Delivering on its 1981 electoral promise of society-wide free education, the government argued that the Church's significant physical infrastructure assets precluded it charging additional student fees (Fenech 2010a). This move galvanised parental support for the Church and helped to reinforce its role as the repository of collective values (Vassallo 2017), setting off a controversy from 1982 to 1985 (Fenech 2010a). Public rallies brought thousands of citizens into street politics to defend Catholic schools.

Even teachers went on strike in protest (Fenech 2010a). The disagreement was resolved in April 1985 following discussions with the Vatican. These resulted in agreement around free tuition in Catholic schools, as well as a forum to manage the Church's assets (Pirotta 2006; Fenech 2010a), each side conceding some ground on the issue. In 1991, a Church–state accord formalised changes to Catholic schools, including the vexed issue of removing fees and their replacement by a lot-driven approach to allocating school places. This was not without costs for the Church: it involved the taking over by the state of unused church buildings for the provision of public services (Fenech 2010b).

Dissatisfaction among clergy seemed to abate in the 1980s: resignations among diocesan priests fell from 1.10 in the 1970s to 0.47 in the 1980s (see [Table 6](#)). Even so, despite apparent approval of public claims made by the bishops against political elites, such as in the educational domain, public confidence in churches declined around this time, from about 69 per cent in 1983 to around 55 per cent in 1991 reporting “a great deal” of confidence in them (Smith 2009).

Table 6: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in Malta, 1970–2009

Time period	Resignation rate among diocesan priests (per 1000 diocesan priests)	Resignation rate among diocesan seminarians (per 1000 diocesan seminarians)
1970s	1.10	43.95
1980s	0.47	46.63
1990s	0.70	34.98
2000s	1.00	55.35

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

The Church also took a strong stand in the late 1990s in relation to the then Labour government of Alfred Sant, and especially its attempts to bring in divorce in 1997 (Abela 2013). In 2006, the Church criticised Sant's family-related reforms, which sought to develop a more expansive understanding of the category of "family" to include single parents and perhaps gay partners (Falzon 2007).

Similarly, in 2010 the Church spoke out against a Private Members Bill to introduce divorce, and it actively participated in the anti-divorce campaign in 2010–2011 (Ellul 2014; Pace 2012). Three years earlier, a European Union-inspired proposal for its legalisation had been put forward but failed to gain sufficient support (Falzon 2007), reflecting a clash between Maltese values and European ones. A notable feature of this fraught debate was the participation of Catholic lay groups (e.g. *Kristu Iva Divorzju Le* and *Catholics: Yes because it is a right*) with autonomy from the institutional Church, signalling the multivocality of Maltese Catholicism (Vassallo 2011; Pace 2012). Interestingly, this plurality was also apparent within official Catholicism.

In a 2010 homily to the country's legal elites to mark the beginning of the law year, Monsignor Arthur Pullicino characterised support for divorce as a sin against the Church. At the same time, other Church elites stressed the role of individual conscience in moral decision-making, implying that Catholics could vote against divorce while still being good Catholics (Vassallo 2011). The bishop of Gozo, Mario Grech, went further by stating that the denial of the sacraments could be a penalty for those who voted in favour of divorce (Pace 2012). While the passing of the referendum in May 2011 was a symbolic defeat for the Church, the restrictive divorce introduced still reflected its dominant influence (Kmiec 2015).

Overall, Maltese religion–state relations have evolved according to societal and doctrinal changes, from the "crashing waves" of the 1960s–1980s to the "ongoing process" of the 1990s–2000s period (Falzon 2007, 67). Instead of capturing the culture for Catholicism, the Maltese Church's post-Vatican II stance involves

making Catholic values present in the secular world (Levine 1981). Most recently, this is reflected in Monsignor (now archbishop) Charles Scicluna's observation in the wake of the 2010–2011 divorce debate that the task of the Church is to put forward rather than insist on its value system (Scicluna 2012).

[Table 4](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effect of the prophetic stances perspective on the three dependent variables, suggesting that the Church's public leadership can potentially lead to increases or decreases in its workforce. As this table shows, I did not find statistically significant effects for prophetic stances on the three dependent variables in Malta.

Sexual Scandals Argument

Sexual scandals involving Catholic clergy and religious broke out in Malta in the 2000s. Three headlines carried in the Maltese print media bring out this (then) emerging story:

- “Gozitan Clergy Abuse Scandal Rocks Maltese Church's Omertà” (*Malta Today*, October 22, 2006).
- “International Media Say Maltese Back Accused Priest” (*Malta Media News*, October 22, 2006).
- “Curia Silent on Paedophile Priest's Appointment in Malta” (*Malta Independent*, January 31, 2010).⁶³

It took a while for the Church to respond to this issue. Amid the emergence of abuse cases within global Catholicism, its internal deliberations on the issue began in the late 1990s, resulting in 1999 in the formulation of a set of procedures for dealing with abuse (Maltese Ecclesiastical Province 1999). As cases came to light in the 2000s and Vatican child protection stances shifted, these guidelines were revised in 2014. In addition, the Church established a commission on safeguarding in the same year (Maltese Ecclesiastical Province 2014). But it was not just abuses in Malta that began to be publicised. A 2001 Parliament of Australia report brought to light a transnational aspect to Malta's treatment of children, involving Maltese Church and state involvement in a

colonial state-sponsored child migration programme. Under this scheme, about 300 orphaned or unwanted children were sent to Australia in the 1950–1965 time period, where some were abused in Catholic institutions (Parliament of Australia 2001). Overall, these scandals likely contributed to the tainting of the Church's legitimacy, bringing out an interaction effect between the sexual scandals and prophetic stances perspectives.

As the newspaper reportage mentioned suggests, most of the scandals came into the public domain in the 2000s. In 2003, ten male abuse victims took a case against a number of priests who allegedly abused them in an orphanage in the 1980s. One of these victims, Lawrence Grech, met with the Pope when he visited Malta in 2010 (Donadio 2010). The priests involved, Father Scerri and Father Pulis, were sentenced in 2011. Another case involving Gozo priest Father Dominic Camilleri was investigated by the Church in 2003 (Massa 2015). These legal cases put a spotlight on the wrongdoing of Church personnel in Malta – and the lengthy time lag in responding to them – in a way that was not visible before.

In 2009–2010, the transnational dimension of the abuse of children was brought into focus again with further public discourse about child migrants who were abused in Catholic institutions in Australia, which was the subject of an official government as well as a Church apology by Archbishop Paul Cremona in 2010.⁶⁴ In 2009, a monument commemorating the victims was erected in Valletta's harbour (Plowman 2010; N.K.C. 2010).

Notably, Malta's president made direct reference during the Pope's 2010 visit to Malta to court proceedings against Catholic clergy accused of abuse, which brought out the secular nature of the Maltese state, one that enjoys relative autonomy from the Church (Vassallo 2017). Heavy media coverage of the sexual abuse scandals outbreak prefigured the visit,⁶⁵ pointing to an interaction effect between the Papal visits and sexual scandals arguments with a likely dampening impact on callings.

Even on the Papal flight for his Maltese visit, Pope Benedict XVI made indirect reference to the clerical child sexual abuse

scandals in the Church, pointing to the Church's "wounded" nature and capacity for redemption in the face of this (Squires 2010), which coloured the media coverage of the visit. The Pope's private in-person meeting with eight male victims of abuse in the apostolic nunciature in Rabat also attracted media publicity. A Vatican-issued public statement following the meeting expressed the Pope's strong personal feelings about the victim's experiences, as well as the Church's commitment to advancing child protection (Benedict XVI 2010a). Prayers for young victims of abuse were also incorporated into his visit (Vatican 2010).

[Table 4](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the sexual scandals perspective, which argues that the experience of sexual scandals in a national Church will have a dampening impact on workforce recruitment and retention. As this table shows, I find a negative and statistically significant effect for sexual scandals on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1). The sexual scandals coefficient (-0.324) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 0.324 decrease in ordinations. Substantively, this effect is small. I did not find a statistically significant effect for sexual scandals on resignations among diocesan priests or diocesan seminarians.

A glance at decadal ordination and resignation rates in [Tables 5](#) and [6](#) also suggests a negative sexual scandals effect, as the ordination rate was 0.14 in the 2000s period, compared to 0.19 in the 1990s. As for resignations, these were higher for both diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians in the 2000s than in the 1990s, an acceleration likely linked to the deteriorating post-scandal Catholic image during this time. The Church's abuse of power, as revealed through sexual scandals, likely contributed to the questioning among devotees of its past and present prophetic activism (especially in the faith and morals domain), highlighting an interaction effect between the sexual scandals and prophetic stances arguments.

Papal Visits Argument

As one of Europe's Catholic heartlands with close geographical proximity to the Vatican centre in Italy, it is not surprising that a number of Papal visits have been made to this small nation, bringing out the significance of Maltese Catholicism within the global Church. Even so, the rarity of Papal visits to Malta is perhaps a reminder of the historic strength of the Catholic faith in this society. During the first ever such visit by a Pope in May 1990, Pope John Paul II, who visited Malta and Gozo, emphasised the close historic connection between the Church and Maltese society. Interestingly, the Pope travelled to St Paul's Island and entered Valletta port on a boat,⁶⁶ symbolic of this small island state but also of St Paul's own journey to the island centuries before. How the Pope arrived mattered.⁶⁷

This association went back to the apostle Paul, who stayed on the island for three months in the first century (Barrett et al. 2001b; Vassallo 2017). For example, in his opening remarks at the Shrine of our Lady Ta' Pinu in Gozo, the Pope centred Christianity (Hervieu-Léger 1994) in the Maltese experience:

How appropriate it is that *the Church in Gozo should echo Mary's song of praise* at this Shrine of Our Lady Ta' Pinu, as we celebrate the ancient faith of the Maltese and Gozitan people and rejoice in the bonds of ecclesial communion which have always united them to the Apostolic See! (JOHN PAUL II 1990)

At the same time, the Pope spoke directly to the contemporary context in Malta, and the challenges created by it. For example, in the same homily he held up the example of Mary as a model for Maltese adherents amidst the struggles of daily family life, for clergy in their pastoral ministries, and for public legislators charged with responsibility for protecting family and human life (John Paul II 1990). As for families, the Pope spoke of Mary in these terms:

Today, Malta's families must still rely upon Mary's motherly protection and care, as they face new challenges to the fulfilment of their vital mission to individuals and all society! ... May the families

of Malta and Gozo never hesitate to look to Mary, the Mother of the Holy Family of Nazareth and the Mother of all mankind in the order of grace (Cfr. *Lumen Gentium*, 62), as a sure guide amid life's challenges and trials! (JOHN PAUL II 1990)

Over ten years later, Pope John Paul II made a second visit to the island in May 2001, to mark the beatification of three members of the Maltese faithful (Gorg Preca, Nazju Falzon, Adeodata Pisani) and the final step on his Jubilee pilgrimage including Greece, Syria, and Malta. A notable feature of this visit, which this time did not include a visit to Gozo, was the Pope's physical decline compared to the earlier visit, marked by his use of a walking stick, his difficult speech, and his slightly slumped posture. In the Popemobile, the Pope sat rather than stood as he greeted the public crowds.⁶⁸ This may have attracted callings, especially those drawn to the Pope's witness in the face of physical weakness.

In his homily at the beatification Mass in Floriana, John Paul II invoked the three beatified figures, and St Paul in earlier times, as examples to Maltese people into the future. Large-scale pictures of the figures were unveiled at the Mass. "Malta, Malta! You have received so much through the ministry of Saint Paul and the witness of Blessed Dun Ġorg, Blessed Nazju Falzon and Blessed Adeodata. As you move into the future, be faithful to the legacy they have left!", the Pope said (John Paul II 2001).⁶⁹ This helped to remind his audience of the historic connection between Maltese history and Catholicism, and how individual actors contributed to cementing it.

Echoing remarks made in Argentina, the Pope directly invoked Vatican II, bringing out a point of interaction with the prophetic stances perspective:

On the Vigil of Pentecost the Archdiocese of Malta will inaugurate its Synod Assembly and in Gozo Bishop Cauchi has begun a new pastoral visitation. It is my fervent hope that these and other initiatives will help to foster the Second Vatican Council's vision of the Church as *a communion of the whole People of God*, a vision which the "new evangelization" demands of Maltese Catholics. (JOHN PAUL II 2001)

Pope Benedict also visited Malta in 2010, almost ten years after his predecessor's last visit in 2001. This two-day visit in April of that year was undertaken to mark the landing of St Paul on the island nearly two thousand years earlier (Vatican 2010), and included visiting St Paul's grotto in Rabat, where the Pope knelt in silent prayer. He also met with Maltese youth in Valletta.⁷⁰ Notably, the Pope travelled from Kalkara port to Valletta's harbour by boat, recalling St Paul's own mode of transportation.⁷¹ The visit took place against the background of growing immigration to the island, including the intake of about 3,000 "boat" migrants in 2008,⁷² which sometimes prompted local opposition (Calleya 2015).

Even in the relatively short time frame since the earlier visit, the position of Maltese Catholics vis-à-vis their clerical superiors had widened, especially regarding the institutional dominance of the Church. Consider, for example, that the 2010 Papal visit brought out public debate about minority faiths and the teaching of religion in the school system as well as contested issues such as divorce (Ayling 2010), a sign of the Church's diminishing influence on public policies. This was legitimised by growing calls by international religious leaders for greater attention to the plurality of Maltese culture and the significance of mutual respect for different belief systems (Ayling 2010).

Thus, the Papal visit may have disappointed some Catholics hoping to hear greater acknowledgement by the Church of growing value preference differences between ordinary adherents and clerical authorities, especially among the young (Tabone 1994). The context of a Papal visit matters in understanding its workforce influence.

Going back to previous decades, Maltese social scientists have reported evidence of Maltese people practising religion according to their own preferences, especially regarding sexual ethics. In Carmel Tabone's⁷³ small-scale study of Maltese university students in the 1990s, one young adult informant spoke of this changing dynamic among the Maltese populace:

The Church presents itself as a perfect institution ... and then we notice that there is a net separation between clergy and laity. Some priests look down upon us as inferiors and at times as ignorant ... We are in full bloom of our sexual life ready for every kind of adventure, and as Church members we feel restrained by religious precepts “you should not do this” and “you should not do that”, because it is a sin. We cannot see founded reasons for such restrictions. (TABONE 1994, 297).

Similarly, a twenty-year-old bus conductor in anthropologist Jeremy Boissevain’s much earlier 1960–1961 study of Maltese Church–state interactions remarked upon the increasing distance between devotees and their religious superiors arising from educational attainment: “The Church is in favour of keeping people ignorant, and limiting their education. Why? Because when people are educated they think for themselves and can judge” (Boissevain 2004, 100).

It is also the case that Church leaders themselves were increasingly tuned into these dynamics. For example, the Pope’s speech to young people at Valletta’s harbour mentioned growing cultural support for non-religiosity, or in Bergerian terms, the rise of a Maltese secular “plausibility structure” (Berger [1967]1990, 45). It is noteworthy that this “faith versus secularity” discourse coincided with the emphasis on pagan influences in Christianity noted in his early writings (Ratzinger 1958):

Today’s culture, like every culture, promotes ideas and values that are sometimes at variance with those lived and preached by our Lord Jesus Christ. Often they are presented with great persuasive power, reinforced by the media and by social pressure from groups hostile to the Christian faith ...

Here in Malta, you live in a society that is steeped in Christian faith and values. You should be proud that your country both defends the unborn and promotes stable family life by saying no to abortion and divorce. I urge you to maintain this courageous witness to the sanctity of life and the centrality of marriage and family life for a healthy society. (BENEDICT XVI 2010B)

The Church's own society-wide Cana movement, which is partially state funded, did much of this work of supporting marriage and family (Falzon 2007; Vassallo 2017), even as it faced growing pressures from secular non-governmental organisations advocating constitutional reform on issues such as abortion (Falzon 2007). Similarly, lobby group Gift of Life mobilised in the mid-2000s to push back against liberalisation (Falzon 2007).

Even in the face of long-run secular trends, the Pope still asked for more callings to the Church, reiterating a similar call for missionary priests at St Paul's grotto the previous day:

In this Year for Priests, I ask you to be open to the possibility that the Lord may be calling some of you to give yourselves totally to the service of his people in the priesthood or the consecrated life. Your country has given many fine priests and religious to the Church. Be inspired by their example, and recognize the profound joy that comes from dedicating one's life to spreading the message of God's love for all people, without exception. (BENEDICT XVI 2010B)

Towards the end of his visit, the Pope's homily during Mass in Floriana, which was peppered with references to the local language,⁷⁴ appealed to Maltese collective memory, and the landing of St Paul in particular, to inspire Maltese in the present. Echoing the words of his predecessor Pope John Paul II in Malta in 1990, Benedict urged his audience not to jettison their Catholic faith amidst secularity:

It is tempting to think that today's advanced technology can answer all our needs and save us from all the perils and dangers that beset us. But it is not so. At every moment of our lives we depend entirely on God, in whom we live and move and have our being. Only he can protect us from harm, only he can guide us through the storms of life, only he can bring us to a safe haven, as he did for Paul and his companions adrift off the coast of Malta. They did as Paul urged them to do, and so it was "that they all escaped safely to the land" (*Acts 27:44*). (BENEDICT XVI 2010C)

These remarks reflected Pope Benedict XVI's concern in his own writings, such as his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, about “sin in social conditions and in the structure of society” (Benedict XVI 2009b). It is also notable that the Pope reminded his audience of the country's sole saint, St Gorg Preca (1880–1962) – canonised in 2007 (Baldacchino 2011; Mitchell 2017) – as the embodiment of Christian living. This is represented in the island-wide catechetical work of the Maltese lay association best known by its acronym MUSEUM (Society of Christian Doctrine), which the then priest founded (in 1907) and continues to operate today (Baldacchino 2011; Mitchell 2017; Falzon 2007):

No visitor to Malta could fail to be impressed by the devotion of your people, the vibrant faith manifested in your feast-day celebrations, the beauty of your churches and shrines. But that gift needs to be shared with others, it needs to be articulated ... This was well understood by Malta's first canonized Saint, Dun Ġorġ Preca. His tireless work of catechesis, inspiring young and old with a love for Christian doctrine and a deep devotion to the Incarnate Word of God, set an example that I urge you to maintain. (BENEDICT XVI 2010C)

St Gorg Preca was a populist saint “of the people”, especially the working classes, and a figure of unity amidst a polarised political system (Baldacchino 2011). Even so, his honouring in 2007 brought out a fraught public debate about the apparent contradiction between Maltese interest in their newly canonised saint on the one hand and their apparent lack of national outrage about the ill-treatment of African boat migrants on the other (Falzon 2007).

Not surprisingly, in his farewell speech at Malta's international airport, the Pope amplified Catholicism's role in creating Maltese collective identity:

My journey has given me a deeper appreciation of how the Gospel preached by Saint Paul has shaped the spiritual identity of the Maltese people. As I leave you, let me encourage you once more to cultivate a deep awareness of your identity and to embrace the

responsibilities that flow from it, especially by promoting the Gospel values that will grant you a clear vision of human dignity and the common origin and destiny of mankind.

Be an example, at home and abroad, of dynamic Christian living. Be proud of your Christian vocation. Cherish your religious and cultural heritage. Look to the future with hope, with profound respect for God's creation, with reverence for human life, and with high esteem for marriage and the integrity of the family! Kunu wlied denji ta' San Pawl! (BENEDICT XVI 2010D)

However, this Papal rhetoric may have increased alienation towards the Church among those disappointed with the relatively slow progress in decoupling Maltese identity from Catholicism and recognising the equal place of secular values alongside religious ones.

[Table 4](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the Papal visits perspective, suggesting that pastoral visits to a national Church by the Pope as leader of this global religious tradition will have a bolstering or eroding impact on the male workforce. I find a negative and statistically significant effect on resignations among seminarians for the diocesan priesthood (Model 3). The Papal visits coefficient (-35.388) indicates that a one-unit increase in Papal visits leads to a 35.388 decrease in resignations, a relatively large substantive effect. This suggests that Papal visits can increase the legitimacy of the Church for would-be priests. This may reflect a tendency of seminarians nowadays to be more conservative in orientation compared to earlier priest generations,⁷⁵ who may be more satisfied with a Pope's traditionalist claims-making and thus more likely to be confirmed in their callings by a Papal visit. I did not find a statistically significant effect for Papal visits on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood or on resignations among diocesan priests.

A glance at the ordination data (see [Table 5](#)) shows that there was an uptick in ordinations from 8 (0.22 per 10,000 Catholics) in 1990 to 9 (0.25 per 10,000 Catholics) in 1991. Also, ordinations in 1997 – seven years after the visit, the typical formation period for

seminarians – rose to 10 (0.27 per 10,000 Catholics), the highest level in the 1990s. This ordinations spike points to a Papal visits effect. As for resignations among diocesan priests (see [Table 6](#)), there were just two in 1990 (3.42 per 1,000 diocesan priests) and none in the following six years. There were no resignations among diocesan seminarians in 1990 and there was just one resignation in 1991 (28.57 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) and 1992 (19.23 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

In 2001, there were 10 ordinations (0.27 per 10,000 Catholics), the highest number in that decade. Ordinations fell to 5 in 2002 (0.13 per 10,000 Catholics) and stood at 7 in 2003 (0.18 per 10,000 Catholics). Seven years after the visit, in 2008, there were 7 ordinations (0.16 per 10,000 Catholics). As for resignations among diocesan priests, there was one in 2001 (1.86 per 1,000 diocesan priests) and none in the following four years. Resignations among diocesan seminarians increased from 1 in 2001 (19.23 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 4 in 2002 (86.95 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians), before dropping to 2 in 2003 (42.55 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

As for the third Papal visit in 2010, it is more difficult to assess its impact, as this study includes ordination and resignation data up to 2010. In the year of the Pope's visit, there were eight ordinations (0.19 per 10,000 Catholics), compared to the same number in 2009 (0.19 per 10,000 Catholics) and seven (0.16 per 10,000 Catholics) in 2008. There were no resignations among diocesan priests in the year of the Pope's visit, nor in the previous year. Similarly, just one seminarian resigned in 2010 (19.23 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians), compared to 3 in 2009 (57.69 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). This suggests that the Papal visit had a partial bolstering impact on the male workforce.

Summary and Discussion

To summarise, the Maltese case provides support for the theory of religious change rooted in the idea of critical events, especially regarding the sexual scandals and Papal visits perspectives. While

I did not find significant effects for the ecumenical councils perspective in the regression models, the decadal averages for ordinations show a drop after Vatican II, pointing to a partial Vatican II effect.

Another interesting result relates to the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that scandals erode the legitimacy of the Church as a religious system and thus reduce vocations. The negative and statistically significant sexual scandals effect on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood highlights the legitimacy-eroding impact of scandal that makes it more likely that would-be priests will give up their calling. The reduction in ordinations and increase in resignations in the 2000s compared to the 1990s also point to this dampening effect of scandal.

My fourth perspective suggested that visits to national churches by the head of the world's Catholics would bolster or erode callings depending on the context of the visit, such as whether it co-occurred with sexual scandals. I find statistically significant effects for this perspective in the regression model for diocesan seminarians. It may be that the conservatism of more recent would-be priest generations compared to earlier ones means that they are more likely to be receptive to traditionalist Papal discourse, especially when this may collide with increasingly dominant secular values. What is driving this conservatism? Perhaps it can be viewed as a form of "Catholic defence" (Martin 1978, 192) driven by stronger opposition to Catholic values in contemporary culture than before. It is worth mentioning, too, that visual inspection of the trend lines around the time of the 1990, 2001, and 2010 visits provides partial support for this argument. Also of note is that I did not find statistical support for the prophetic stances perspective.

In this chapter Malta is considered as an example of "Traditional Heartland Catholicism", where there has been a historic association between being Maltese and being Catholic. In the next chapter I move to Nigeria, as an instance of "Engaged Minority Catholicism" in which this kind of ethno-religious linkage does not exist.

CHAPTER 4

Nigeria: Engaged Minority Catholicism

Introduction

Even though Nigeria is not often associated in the public imagination with Catholicism, the Catholic Church in this West African country is an active minority one in a no-majority-religion country (Lu and Yang 2018), estimated to claim 25,500,000 adherents (about 13 per cent of the general population) in 2025 (Barrett et al. 2001c). Here, the Church faces strong inter-religious competition, from Christian and non-Christian groups, which has been raised to a violent level in recent years (Dowd 2015). It also faces significant human development challenges stemming from weak state capacity. Although there are some unusual cases where a religious minority occupies a privileged position (Lu and Yang 2018), this is not the case for Catholicism in Nigeria. Unlike in the other cases, nationalism and Catholicism do not broadly overlap: in this country one does not find the Catholicism of the general populace found in Malta or the Philippines.

Perhaps best known for its impressive record as a civil society entity bringing public welfare goods (or “goodies”) such as health and education to the local population and being a socially minded, prophetic force confronting state elites, it is distinctive among the four cases in being a growth Church (Allen 2007). Indeed, the Church in Nigeria is making a bigger splash in global Catholicism than ever before (Martin 1988).

Some of this growth can be attributed to the Church’s social service involvement (Gifford 2015), which helps establish a high

degree of connection between the Church and devotees (Okure 2009) and reduce the bureaucratic burden of the state (Lu and Yang 2018). At the same time, demographic expansion (Hastings 1988) and conversions from other faith traditions including Islam, Protestantism, and African traditional religion (Miller and Johnstone 2015; Okure 2009) also contribute to the growth of Catholicism.⁷⁶

Unlike the other three cases, the Nigerian Church faces organisational concerns about violence against Christians and Muslims by extremist Islamic groups such as Boko Haram, which has sought to “Islamise” Nigerian society. Catholic leaders have spoken out against this violence and the lack of an appropriate response by the state,⁷⁷ an expressly secular one that guarantees freedom of religion (Sampson 2014). This religiously driven political violence, including that against Western-influenced schools (Dowd and Sarkissian 2017; Manglos and Weinreb 2013), highlights the delicateness of the country’s “secular nationalism” (Soper and Fetzer 2018, 11), perhaps even buttressing it.

Nigerian Catholicism, as with African Catholicism more generally (Gifford 1998), is further complicated by the existence of long-standing tribal identities (Laitin 1986), whereby groups identifying with certain tribes such as the Igbo contest other rival ethnic groups. A recent example of this “tribal Church” (Gifford 1998, 137) was the controversial appointment in 2017 by Pope Francis of a non-Mbaise rather than a co-ethnic bishop to the Mbaise-dominated diocese of Ahiara, which provoked the ire of laity and clergy alike (Allen 2017). This social boundary complexity represents an important divergence from the other case studies, where Catholicism is not closely linked to ethnic divisions.

This chapter focuses on the Nigerian case and involves four steps. After giving a brief overview of the religious background, I present some descriptive trends in relation to the male workforce. Third, I put critical events theory to the test by providing an in-depth historical account of the four events. Finally, the chapter closes with an overall assessment of this sub-Saharan African case.

Stretching back to the arrival of expansionary Christian male missionaries from Western Europe in the fifteenth century

(Barrett et al. 2001c), Nigeria – a very large, populous, and diverse country in sub-Saharan West Africa (Dowd 2015; Manglos-Weber 2017) – has a long association with Christianity. A second phase of missionary activity, in the nineteenth century, had a heavy Catholic involvement, involving male personnel from religious orders and congregations such as the Society of African Missions, Spiritans (Holy Ghost Fathers), and St Patrick’s Missionary Society (Kiltegan Fathers) (Barrett et al. 2001c; Okure 2009). Being of European origin and inflected with Counter-Reformation ideas,⁷⁸ these religious orders and congregations tended to import a top-down model of the social world.⁷⁹

As in other African contexts (Clevenger 2020), female personnel from orders such as the Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, usually ministering in a specific region of the country (Okure 2009; Ngundo and Wiggins 2017), arrived later than their male counterparts (mostly from the late nineteenth century). A strong social ministry among the disadvantaged characterised their work (Clevenger 2020).

While Catholicism is a minority ethnic Church in this Christian–Muslim society, it is characterised by high levels of religiosity. Within the Christian tradition, numerically it is the largest group (about 37 per cent) (Pew Research Center 2010) along with the Anglican Church (about 9 per cent) (Dowd 2016; Pew Research Center 2010). The Ibo, which predominates in Eastern Nigeria, is a tribal group with the largest number of Catholic converts, with a historically strong Mass attendance norm (Cogan 1966).

The country’s two major religious traditions cluster in specific geographical areas, in the north (Muslim-majority) and the south (Christian-majority) respectively (Laitin 1986; Jenkins 2011), linked to the regionalised focus of early missionary activity (Dowd 2015). Frequently, inter-religious clashes have taken place (Fox 2008; Dowd and Sarkissian 2017; Manglos-Weber 2017) over the proper role of religion in the Nigerian state (Obadare 2007), with Christians tending to favour Church–state separation and Muslims religious capture of the state (Obadare 2007).

More recently, Islamic group Boko Haram has bombed Christian churches, including Catholic ones, in the northern region (Dowd 2016; Dowd and Sarkissian 2017; Sampson 2014), as well as schools. This has brought out inequalities in religious group experiences of the important resource of education (Manglos-Weber 2017; Sampson 2014).

In this national context, there is also a notable presence of African traditional religions and Pentecostal groups, which have been an important source of converts to (O'Connell 2006) and from Catholicism (Gifford 2015), in common with other sub-Saharan African countries (Agadjanian 2018). At the same time, Nigerian Catholicism has sought to respond to the loss of adherents to other religious groups by bringing in aspects of traditional religion, as when devotees use Catholic devotional practices to prevent witchcraft (Allen 2007).

Being such a large and expansive country, it is not surprising that important sub-national diversity exists within confessional traditions, including Catholicism (Dowd 2016). For example, where the Catholic market share is lower, Catholic leaders tend to make stronger efforts to make their presence in the society known to political elites, as compared to regions where the Church enjoys a majority share (Dowd 2016). Does this activism from “above” translate into engagement from “below”? Interestingly, at the individual level of ordinary Catholics, political engagement (measured by interest in politics) is actually slightly lower than for Protestants and Muslims (Manglos and Weinreb 2013).

Nigeria is a natural resource-rich society and among the most developed in this world regional context (Barrett et al. 2001c). At the same time, Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in global terms (Norris and Inglehart 2004). It faces the challenge of creating collective unity and advancing human development in the wake of its earlier British colonial past (which ended in 1960) and subsequent experience of military regimes (Hanson 1987; Norris and Inglehart 2004; Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005), but predating this colonial legacy as well (Herbst 2014).

According to the Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index, Nigeria ranked 14th (out of 178 countries) in 2010 in its global scoring of the capacity of state systems,⁸⁰ with a higher ranking indicating greater fragility. Similarly, it skews towards a fragile political system with a WGI figure (for 2010) of -2.21 (on scale ranging from -2.5 meaning weak to 2.5 meaning strong political stability) (Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024). Weak state capacity in this postcolonial country (Obadare 2007) – in parallel with other African societies – means that this is an ongoing challenge, even as relative stability and peace have taken hold in this world region in the last nearly two decades (Herbst 2014).

While Catholics represent a minority in the country, they are also very religious. A recent study of Nigerian Catholics reported that 58.8 per cent attend church weekly or more, with even higher levels of weekly or more church attendance (85.8 per cent) reported for Catholics who belong to Charismatic Renewal (Dowd and Sarkissian 2017). Nigerian Catholics also report high levels of participation in other religious activities such as prayer groups, inter-faith groups, and small Christian communities (Dowd and Sarkissian 2017). Additionally, there is relatively little Catholic disaffiliation in Nigeria (Pew Research Center 2010). It may be that being in a minority bolsters Catholic religiosity, as this faith tradition is ranged against a non-Catholic political elite (Martin 2005).

In this case of “secular nationalism” (Soper and Fetzer 2018, 11), the Church has a history of contestation with the state, and it has regularly challenged military and civilian leaders (since 1999) to advance the well-being of the society as a whole (Dowd & Sarkissian 2017). In the faith and morals domain, the Church has spoken out more recently against the introduction of same-sex marriage (Asue 2018) and in previous times against perceived corruption (Benedict XVI 2009) and divorce (Okure 2009), by appealing to religious-based arguments (Conway 2014a; Okure 2009). Existing data suggest there is relatively strong support for this prophetic ministry, with 66 per cent of Nigerian Christians saying religious leaders should express views on political ques-

tions and 34 per cent indicating a preference for them keeping out of politics altogether (Pew Research Center 2010, 91).

In a rank order of country religiosity across the globe, Nigeria is a top-tier society on most indicators (Smith 2009). Among the general populace, belief in God is very high (above 90 per cent) and has remained relatively stable over time (Smith 2009). Notably, weekly or more church attendance levels increased from about 83 per cent in 1990 to about 92 per cent in 2000 (see [Figure 20](#)) (Smith 2009). In 2012, about 87 per cent of devotees attended church weekly or more, a slight reduction of regular attendance.⁸¹

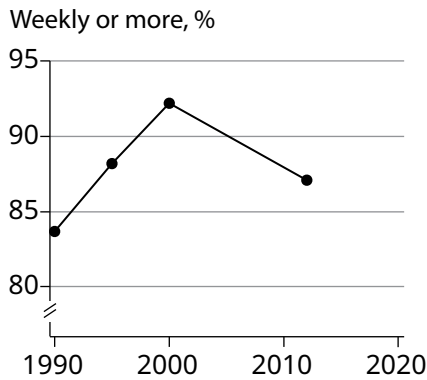


Figure 20: Church Attendance in Nigeria, 1990–2012

Note: Weekly or more, in %

Source: World Values Survey 1981–2022

Similarly, confidence in churches as institutions wavered in the 1990s and 2000s, from about 75 per cent (percentage expressing “a great deal” of confidence in churches) in 1990, to about 65 per cent in 1995, and then up again to about 83 per cent in 2000. In 2012, the proportion of the general population reporting “a great deal” of confidence in churches reduced to about 72 per cent.

[Figure 21](#) presents data about trends in Catholic baptisms, first communions, confirmations, and marriages (per 10,000 Catholics) in the 1970–2015 time period. Like the other four cases,

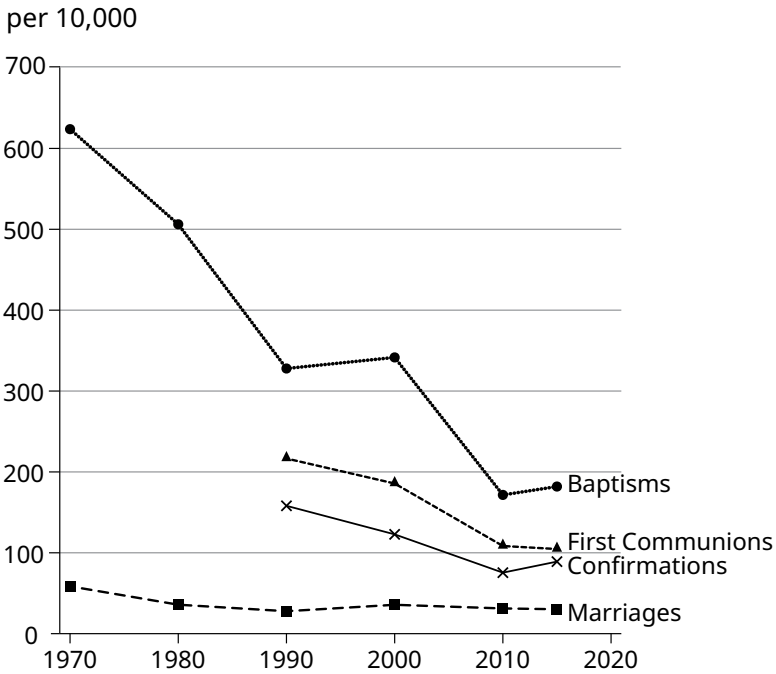


Figure 21: Participation in Church Sacraments in Nigeria, 1970–2015

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

participation in all four sacraments of the Church has declined over time in Nigeria, with the greatest decline evident in baptisms (even as their absolute number has more than doubled from 1970 to 2010). Fewer devotees receive their first communion than are baptised and fewer still receive the sacrament of confirmation. And much fewer devotees than are baptised marry in the church. Taken together, this points to the existence of a larger pool of nominal Nigerian Catholics than committed ones, a weakness of the Church in this social context dating back at least to the 1960s (Hastings 1967, 152).

It is worth mentioning, however, that the Church in Nigeria has grown its adherents quite dramatically, from 2,856,000 in 1969 to 23,779,000 in 2010 (ASE 1969–2010), which represents more than

an eightfold increase. This compares to just 18,900 devotees (0.1 per cent of the general populace) in 1900 (Barrett et al. 2001c).

Descriptive Trends

[Figures 22–27](#) present Catholic workforce trends data in Nigeria regarding the three categories of male religious professionals.

[Figure 22](#) shows that the number of diocesan priests per 10,000 Catholics peaked in 2010. By contrast, the religious priest workforce peaked in 1951 and then went into a continuous decline (see [Figure 23](#)).

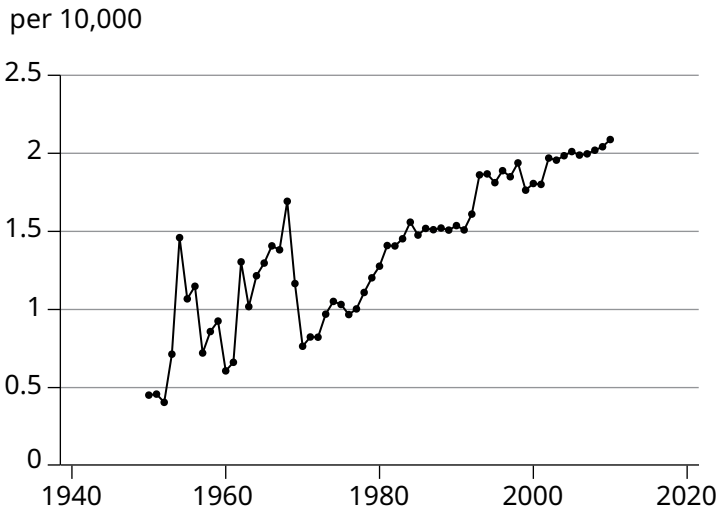


Figure 22: Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1950–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

While ordination and resignation data for religious priests are not available in the data relied upon in this study, the divergence in the diocesan priest and religious priest trend lines is noteworthy. This reflects the growth in Nigerian clergy and the parallel decline in missionary religious priests from abroad.

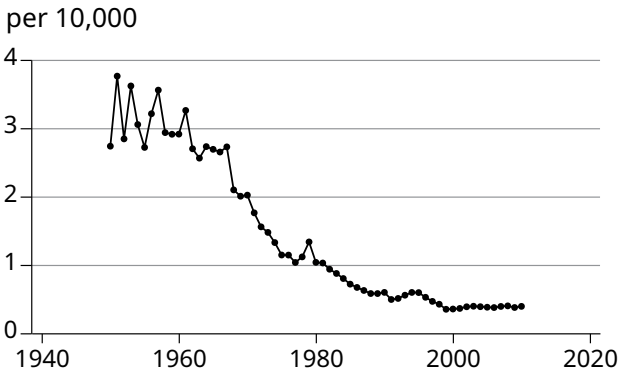


Figure 23: Religious Priests in Nigeria, 1950–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

[Figure 24](#) reports data relating to newly ordained diocesan priests in Nigeria.

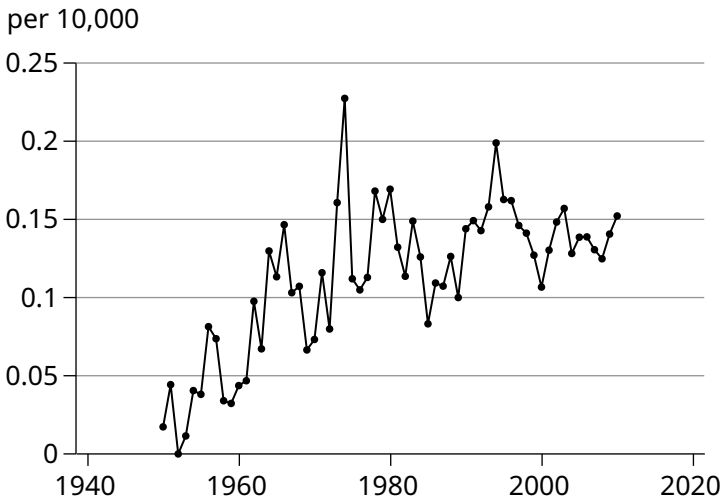


Figure 24: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Nigeria, 1950–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics. Papal visits in Nigeria (1982, 1998)

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

In Nigeria, the number of ordinations per 10,000 Catholics peaked at 0.22 in 1974, compared to 0.01 in 1950. Unlike the other cases, Nigeria experienced a post-Vatican II growth in ordinations.

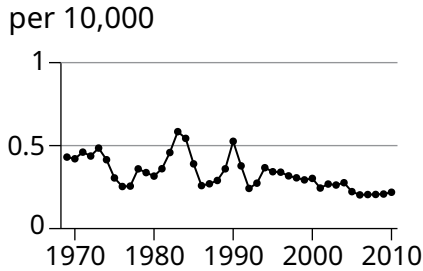


Figure 25: Religious Brothers in Nigeria, 1969–2010

Note: Figures are per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

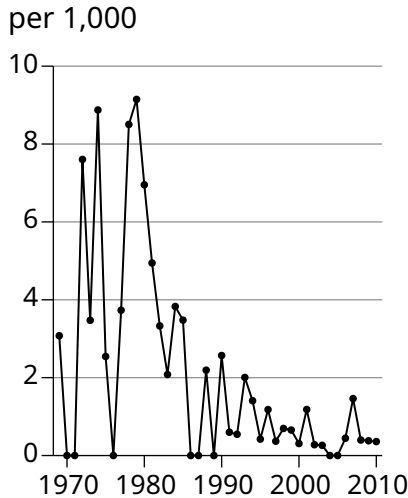


Figure 26: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1969–2010

Note: Figures are per 1,000 diocesan priests. Papal visits in Nigeria (1982, 1998)

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

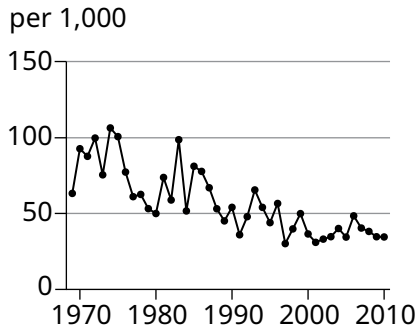


Figure 27: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria, 1969–2010

Note: Figures are per 1,000 diocesan seminarians. Papal visits in Nigeria (1982, 1998)
 Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

A look at [Figure 25](#), which presents data about the number of non-ordained religious brothers per 10,000 Catholics, shows that their number peaked at 0.58 in 1983, as compared to 0.21 in 2010. This represents a peak-to-2010 change of -0.37 .

[Figure 26](#) presents data regarding the number of resignations among diocesan clergy (per 1,000 diocesan priests) in the 1969–2010 time period. [Figure 27](#) does the same with respect to seminarians for the diocesan priesthood (per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

The trend line shows that resignations among diocesan priests peaked at 9.14 in 1979 and then trended downward. This post-Vatican II increase in resignations (up until the late 1970s) may have reflected disappointment with the lag in becoming acquainted with – and thus implementing – the council's reforms.

Turning to [Figure 27](#), resignations among seminarians for the diocesan priesthood (per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) also peaked in the 1970s, at 106.50 in 1974. This compares to a rate of 34.44 in 2010. Thus, the peak-to-2010 change is -72.06 .

Contexts of Trends

Ecumenical Councils Argument

As bishops from “the missions”⁸² arriving for the council in 1962, Nigerian prelates may well have felt a certain ecclesiastical dissonance towards their episcopal counterparts from elsewhere, most of whom were not accustomed to thinking about Catholic doctrine and practice in then “Third World” terms. Represented at the sessions of the council by fourteen prelates,⁸³ they reflected a strong non-Nigerian (Aba 2016, 6; Wilde 2007), non-Black (Hastings 1986), and Irish-influenced leadership, including Archbishop of Kaduna John MacCarthy, Bishop of Yola Joseph Dalton, and Bishop of Benin City Joseph Kelly.⁸⁴ In common with other national churches in Africa, Nigerian prelates did not exercise a very vocal voice at the council, playing more of a walk-on than leading role in its deliberations⁸⁵ (Gannon 1988; Orobator 2013), perhaps befitting their Church’s then “emerging” field status (Wilde 2007). Even so, a stand-alone document on the missionary Church – *Ad Gentes* – did result from it (Lamont 1986), and Vatican II’s reforms were generally favourably viewed by the Nigerian Church (Dim 2003; Aba 2016). Additionally, the Church in this world regional context was influenced in significant ways by the council, especially as regards ecumenism (Wilde 2007), and the realisation of a strong sense of corporate identity among African prelates (Kalilombe 1991).

Past studies show the voting behaviour of African bishops – including Nigerian prelates – at Vatican II reflected a progressive orientation (Hastings 1986; Wilde 2007), and that as bishops ministering in missionary societies with significant human development challenges and large non-Catholic populations, issues such as inculturation,⁸⁶ social activism, and ecumenical values were their focal concerns at the council (Wilde 2007; Sprows Cummings, Matovina, and Orsi 2018; Hastings 1988), as well as ones they took up afterwards.

As with the other cases included in this book, Vatican II overlapped with other significant non-religious changes in Nigeria,

including growing urbanisation, the diffusion of new lifestyle choices, and increasing structural inequalities. Unlike the other cases, the outbreak of a 30-month civil war (1967–1970) in Biafra, as this eastern region sought to break away from the rest of the nation, brought an additional source of fragmentation that made achieving unity more challenging. During this war, Catholic relief agencies such as Caritas Internationalis,⁸⁷ the local hierarchy, and Pope Paul VI played a key role in alleviating the suffering of ordinary people and exercising prophetic leadership against it (Okure 2009; Makozi and Ojo 1982; O’Connell 2006), having previously supported the independence struggle of the Igbo people (Martin 1988).

Arising from this local and international moral activism, the state under General Gowon expelled about 300 Biafra-based Catholic missionary clergy and religious after the war, significantly disturbing the organisational capacity of the Church (Okure 2009).

Nigerian Catholicism in the 1960s, then, faced a “perfect storm”. On the one hand, there were basic development challenges facing the society in the wake of the war, the Church’s “resource mobilization” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 15) and theological firepower⁸⁸ were relatively weak, and a clear long-term pathway for implementing the council’s more “hard-sell” reforms beyond the liturgy had yet to materialise (Hastings 1988).

On the other hand, Nigeria was freshly independent (just five years prior to the council) from its colonial legacies, and the conciliar changes articulated with this society’s openness to beginning afresh (Hastings 1986, 1988; Orobator 2013).

Against this background, it is important to point out that it took considerable time and effort to acquaint devotees and Church personnel alike in Nigeria with what Vatican II actually entailed (Chima 1983; Hastings 1986), which meant that the Nigerian Church’s response to Vatican II, as in Africa more generally (Hastings 1986, 1988), did not come very early or very fast.⁸⁹

In this regard, historian-cum-theologian Adrian Hastings’s work in publishing capsule summaries in English of the council’s complex documents – which were originally in Latin, the official

language of the Church – as well as the publication of the Uganda-based *African Ecclesiastical Review* (a theological journal established in 1959) were noteworthy. In the latter, almost every aspect of Church life was discussed between its covers, in articles such as “Will the Success of the Church Continue in Africa” (O’Connell 1966) and “Ibo Catholicism: A Tentative Survey” (Cogan 1966). Intellectual projects like this were important in making their readership more familiar with Vatican II (Orobator 2013; Hastings 1986, 1988),⁹⁰ even if this was to take many years.

As the sociology of organisations reminds us, the more some cultural innovation is understood and articulates with already existing practices the more likely it is to be adopted (Levitt and Merry 2009). Here, I focus on changes in liturgy, lay activism, and ecumenism, which resonated with the local context.

Perhaps the greatest impact of Vatican II came – mainly due to the relatively straightforward nature of the change – in the area of the liturgy (Hastings 1986, 1988, 1991). Here, the drum became a symbol of the adoption of local cultural forms (e.g. languages and musical styles) (Hastings 1986), giving concrete expression to Vatican II’s stress on inculturation⁹¹ or “Nigerianisation” (Aba 2016). At the same time, resources and enthusiasm for liturgical change waned during the later 1980s period of civil unrest, when the basic survival needs of the Church absorbed much of its time and effort (Hastings 1986, 1991).

It is noteworthy that inculturation represented a particular challenge in the Nigerian context, as in other settings (Clevenger 2020; Vaidyanathan 2018), given the wide range of diversity in spoken languages. Even so, African churches made significant strides in translation and polyglot Masses, so much so that they ran ahead of their European counterparts (Hastings 1986, 1988). Indeed, some studies suggest that after the council some devotees felt that too many concessions were made, resulting in a perceived loss of the liturgy’s authenticity (Aba 2016).

It is also the case that challenges to conciliar innovation in liturgical practices came from the growing popularity of Pentecostalism among Nigerians after Vatican II. This group’s stress

on the Holy Spirit was sometimes in competition with Catholic worship styles (Aba 2016) such as Charismatic Renewal, which began to develop in Nigeria in the mid-1970s, especially in the southeast region where the Igbo group predominates (Csordas 2011). Stressing the Holy Spirit's capacity for personal healing and sometimes involving prophecies about the future, this movement was promoted by female and male lay members as well as clerical healers, even without support in some cases from the Catholic leadership (Csordas 2011).

Beyond the liturgy and inculturation more broadly, lay activism was another important post-conciliar change. In 1972, just seven years after Vatican II, the Nigerian bishops emphasised – in a memorandum in February of that year – the co-responsibility of laity and clergy in bringing a Christian perspective to bear on the whole society (Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria 1972; Okure 2009), a point frequently repeated by senior clergy over the years (Makozi and Ojo 1982). Indeed, this memorandum included a direct call to the Catholic laity, echoing earlier episcopal sentiments as well as the work of big lay Catholic personalities such as Anthony Laotan pre-dating Vatican II (Makozi and Ojo 1982):

Laymen should take up as their own proper task the renewal of the temporal order ... it belongs to the laity without waiting passively for orders and directives, to take the initiative freely and to infuse a Christian Spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which they live. (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF NIGERIA 1972)

While there is evidence of pushback by some individual bishops against Vatican II's emphasis on lay participation (Makozi and Ojo 1982), it was embraced by the Church as a whole, as evidenced by the establishment of new organisational forms (Sprows Cummings, Matovina, and Orsi 2018) such the National Laity Council for Nigeria in 1972, which resulted in nationwide meetings and seminars attracting thousands of participants throughout the 1970s and 1980s as well as publications aimed at fostering lay activism (Makozi and Ojo 1982; Ezeakacha 2014), even if this was

often more difficult to realise in practice than envisaged (Makozi and Ojo 1982).

The Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, the Lagos-based organisational entity of the bishops' conference, added a new lay apostolate department in the mid-1970s to develop communications with diverse lay groups (Makozi and Ojo 1982). Bishops also worked hard to involve the Catholic laity in day-to-day liturgical life. A notable expression of this lay apostolate was the flourishing of associations such as the Legion of Mary (established in Dublin in 1921), which sprang up throughout the Nigerian Church as a vehicle for ordinary devotees to bring the Church's message to others (Makozi and Ojo 1982) and a sign of the strength of the Marian tradition in African Catholicism (Jenkins 2011). More recently, the Nigerian Catholic bishops' conference published a manual for the laity (Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, 2009).

These pastoral efforts may have encouraged callings in the Church, especially among men with a commitment to a less hierarchical Church. At the same time, the reforms of Vatican II in relation to clergy–laity relations may have disappointed others – and thus discouraged callings – especially those who saw evangelisation as a task best performed by religious professionals, who viewed the reforms coming from Rome as a “hard sell”, or who felt lay participation undermined the authority of bishops (Makozi and Ojo 1982, 81–82), especially in light of its emphasis in African Catholicism generally (Jenkins 2011).

Given Nigeria's religious duopoly, it is not surprising that a third area of innovation related to relations with non-Catholic groups. The council's stress on ecumenical values found enthusiastic expression in the Church in Nigeria, as among African bishops more generally at Vatican II (Wilde 2007). This was reflected in the establishment in 1971 – in a co-operative arrangement between the leaderships of the Catholic and Protestant traditions – of the National Institute for Training-in-Moral-Education for the preparation of teachers of all faiths, Christian and Muslim, in the school system (Makozi and Ojo 1982, 97).

The bishops' first pastoral letter in 1960 pledged the Church's commitment to fostering ecumenical Catholic–Muslim relations (Schineller 1960). Over the years, bishops reaffirmed this commitment to inter-faith interactions (Schineller 2002). For example, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) (established in 1976) promoted Catholic–Protestant co-operation to advance the well-being of Christians (Dowd 2015; Makozi and Ojo 1982, 97; Okure 2009), though in more recent times, Catholic–Pentecostal divisions have emerged in CAN over the proper approach to Christian evangelisation (Dowd 2016).

While advances in this area may have been disappointing in other national churches such as Uganda (Gifford 1998), Pew Research Center data provide support for the relative success of these inter-faith efforts in Nigeria, with 53 and 63 per cent of Christians and Muslims respectively expressing an overall positive view of the other religious group (Pew Research Center 2010).

Thus, these ecumenical efforts may have attracted callings who favoured stronger Christian unity as well as improved relations with non-Catholic traditions in a religiously fractured society.

Although enthusiasm for Vatican II dampened somewhat in the Church in Africa in the 1980s as resource and basic survival constraints took hold (Hastings 1967, 1986; Orobator 2013), in Nigeria – and even amid growing political instability (Hastings 1991, 312) – the Church continued to exercise Vatican II-inspired prophetic leadership into this decade and beyond, as discussed in the following section on the prophetic stances perspective, often reflecting a conservative orientation (Allen 2007).

[Table 7](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the critical events in the Nigerian case, controlling for the regime type and birth control encyclical covariates. I did not find support for the ecumenical councils perspective suggesting that Vatican II may have had an eroding or bolstering impact on the Catholic male workforce. Although this result was surprising, it may indicate the slow pace at which ordinary Catholics became acquainted with Vatican II in this context.

Table 7: Testing Critical Events Theory in Nigeria

	Model 1 Ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, 1950–2010	Model 2 Resignations among diocesan priests, 1969–2010	Model 3 Resignations among diocesan seminarians, 1969–2010
Ecumenical Councils	0 (0.017)		
Prophetic Stances	-0.001 (0.012)	0.659 (0.806)	2.545 (6.500)
Sexual Scandals	0.004 (0.01)	-3.346** (1.573)	-22.319** (9.357)
Papal Visits	0.009 (0.026)	-1.111 (1.160)	-13.940 (10.337)
Regime Type: Elec- toral autocracy	0.034** (0.016)	1.313 (1.440)	-6.509 (11.496)
Birth Control Encyc- lical	-0.013 (0.013)	0.279 (1.074)	-4.552 (9.063)
Observations	61	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.041	0.050	0.179

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Note: Table reports OLS time-series regression coefficients with Newey-West standard errors in parentheses. Each of the explanatory variables was entered in the models as a dummy variable (1 meaning event, 0 meaning non-event). The dependent variable refers to the relative number of diocesan ordinations (per 10,000 Catholics) or resignations (per 1,000 diocesan priests or per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). All of the models include controls for regime type (ref: closed autocracy) and birth control encyclical.

[Table 8](#) shows ordinations in the decade prior to Vatican II (1952–1961) were lower – 0.03 – than in decade after Vatican II (1966–1975), when they were 0.11. Similarly, [Table 9](#) shows that resignations among diocesan priests and resignations among seminarians for the diocesan priesthood were higher in the 1970s than in any of the other three succeeding decades, suggesting that the conciliar changes contributed to a reduction over time in resignations from the Church over time. For example, the resignation rate among diocesan priests was 4.38 (per 1,000

diocesan priests) in the 1970s compared to 2.68 in the 1980s, 1.04 in the 1990s, and 0.47 in the 2000s. A similar pattern is observed in relation to seminarians for the diocesan priesthood.

Table 8: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1950–2009

Time period	Ordination rate among diocesan priests (per 10,000 Catholics)
T1 ^a (1952–1961)	0.03
T2 ^b (1966–1975)	0.11
1950–1959	0.03
1960–1969	0.09
1970–1979	0.13
1980–1989	0.12
1990–1999	0.15
2000–2009	0.13

Note: ^aT1 (Time 1) denotes decade prior to Vatican II. ^bT2 (Time 2) denotes decade after Vatican II.

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

Table 9: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria, 1970–2009

Time period	Resignation rate among diocesan priests (per 1000 diocesan priests)	Resignation rate among diocesan seminarians (per 1000 diocesan seminarians)
1970–1979	4.38	81.73
1980–1989	2.68	65.70
1990–1999	1.04	47.75
2000–2009	0.47	37.08

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

This descriptive analysis suggests that Vatican II may have had a bolstering effect on ordinations and an eroding one on resignations, going against the trend in other mostly advanced Western societies. Thus, Nigeria represents an interesting case of a developing society that embraced Vatican II's changes and experienced an uptick – and not a downturn suggested by past research (e.g. Stark and Finke 2000) – in new callings.

Prophetic Stances Argument

Paul Gifford's observation that the Catholic leadership in Uganda "has no great history of involvement in or concern with public life" (Gifford 1998, 149) hardly applies to Nigerian Catholicism. Here, the Church historically has played a strong prophetic leadership role, while accepting the basic separation between the secular and religious realms (Sampson 2014). This moral activism has been prompted by weak state capacity (Hertzke 2016), but also by the appointment of Nigerian prelates and the Church's own social service role, which helped to move Nigerian Catholicism from being a somewhat elite colonial religion to one closer to the masses (Meyer 2004; Obadare 2007). At the same time, this leadership was complicated by postcolonial state actions that sought to drain the Church's influence (Okure 2009; Soper and Fetzer 2018), perhaps itself an indicator of the Church's historic strength.

The Nigerian bishops began meeting as a corporate grouping in 1956, with the establishment of the Catholic Welfare Conference of Nigeria (Okure 2009). The publication of pastoral letters and official statements addressed to civil society actors (Casanova 1994) was one of the means through which the hierarchy exercised its prophetic ministry. At other times, this leadership took the form of face-to-face meetings with political elites or direct public appeals (Schineller 2002). In taking these stands, the Catholic bishops were not afraid, despite Catholicism's minority position, to make strong and explicit demands on the state, their own devotees, or non-Catholics, even if they did not find a receptive audience (Okure 2009).

As the hierarchy itself put it in their 1985 pastoral letter *Listen: The Church Speaks*: “We have not failed to ‘proclaim moral principles even in respect of the social order.’ ... The prophets of old were often ignored. They did not for that matter sheath their tongue. Neither did we nor ever will” (Schineller 2002, 97). Although lacking fusion between a singular religion and the state found in countries such as Malta (Grzymała-Busse 2015), the Nigerian bishops nonetheless saw themselves as speaking in the interests of the whole society. “The Church must continue to play her prophetic role of being the conscience of the society”, the bishops declared in a communiqué published following their plenary meeting in September 1999 (Schineller 2002, 235). Compared to the Maltese bishops, the Nigerian bishops spoke out against entrenched corruption and the lack of existential security among the general populace, problems that hardly troubled the consciousness of prelates from traditional heartlands in advanced Western contexts.

In the early 1950s, the bishops noted the importance of freedom to national well-being (Okure 2009). The bishops’ first pastoral letter under the title *The Catholic Church in an Independent Nigeria* (Okure 2009) spoke directly to this context. Published in 1960, the year of Nigeria’s independence from British rule, it was one part of a wider process of parting company with colonial legacies in this world regional context around this time (Pollard 2014). Calling on the newly independent state to implement a balanced approach to the development of the nation’s resources, the document also addressed individual-level moral issues such as family planning (Calderisi 2013, 194).

Appealing to Papal discourse, it drew a clear distinction between proclaiming its value system on the one hand and providing technical solutions on the other:

It is not the function of the Church, as a later Pope, Pius XI, pointed out in the Encyclical, *Divini Redemptoris*, to propound a definite technical system in the sphere of social economies. But it is the function of the Church to state principles of truth and

justice and keep them before men's minds by informing public opinion and never fearing to speak for the moral conscience of the country. (SCHINELLER 2002, 1–2)

While challenging the new state, this letter also pledged the bishops' willingness to co-operate with it as far as possible in addressing the major problems facing Nigeria. In the 1960s, bishops also spoke out in relation to issues such as human sexuality and political violence (Okure 2009). The end of this decade saw the outbreak of the Biafra War (1967–1970), when the Church played an important role in relief efforts (Conway 2014a; Okure 2009) even as its own institutional presence came under threat (Barrett et al. 2001c).

Against this background, just two years after the war the bishops' 1972 pastoral letter *The Church and Nigerian Social Problems* addressed governance and development issues and the Church's role, in co-operation with the centralised state,⁹² in providing public services such as schools and hospitals. It appealed to Vatican II and Papal writings as well as to secular international organisations such as the UN to underwrite this. At the same time, the Church ran up against hostile state actions in the 1970s, involving the appropriation of Church institutions, as part of a state centralisation project aimed at fostering stronger national unity (Okure 2009), and repeatedly called on the state to return them to the Church. The issues of ecumenism and evangelisation were also the focus of prophetic ministry in the 1970s (Okure 2009).

The hierarchy felt that addressing developmental issues called for lay involvement, a topic the bishops referenced in their earlier 1972 letter but took up more directly seven years later in their 1979 pastoral letter entitled *Civic and Political Responsibility of the Christian*. Addressing the then efforts to transition towards non-military government, it linked discipleship and citizenship by urging devotees to vote, put themselves forward for public office, and uphold basic ethical standards. These appeals likely found a favourable hearing among ordinary Nigerians, as past research shows high levels of support for democratic forms of governance

as a public good among the general populace (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005).

Throughout the 1980s, the bishops spoke out on faith and morals issues such as birth control practices and marriage and family (Okure 2009; Schineller 2002). At the same time, governance challenges did not go away during this decade. Military leader General Babangida's coming to power in 1985 bore this out. Although this regime change (1985–1993) marked new efforts to spur the national economy, they yielded little or no success (Gifford 1998), as long-standing corruption issues continued (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005). Perhaps reflecting this sense of the stickiness of problems, the bishops' 1985 *Listen: The Church Speaks* pastoral letter took a reflective look back at their prophetic leadership since Nigerian independence in 1960 (Okure 2009).

The bishops also worried about the status of Nigeria's secular state in the late 1980s and the place of religion within it, which ostensibly supported freedom of religious expression and secular-religious differentiation on the one hand while privileging some religious groups on the other, especially through the implementation in some northern states of *Shari'a* Law, as well as Nigeria's membership of the then Organization of the Islamic Conference (Okure 2009; Sampson 2014; Obadare 2007). A memorandum on a constitutional review process in 1987 put the bishops' concerns about this perceived shift toward (Muslim) "religious nationalism" (Soper and Fetzer 2018, 11) squarely into the public domain, including a plea for a secular state where no single religious group would be treated more favourably than another (Schineller 2002). Likewise, the bishops' 1987 public statement entitled "The Nation Is in Jeopardy" made a strong plea for peace in the wake of Christian-Islam intergroup violence (Schineller 2002).

In the 1990s and 2000s, the Nigerian bishops continued to take public stances in pastoral letters, including *The Nigerian Church: Evangelisation through Inculturation* (1991), *Be Holy ... Be Reconciled* (1998), *Restoring the Dignity of the Nigerian Woman* (2002), and *That Our Oil and Gas Wealth May Serve the Common Good* (2008) (Conway 2014a). As indicated by their titles, these letters

addressed a broad issue spectrum. They sought to respond to the social realities of Nigeria, including continuing day-to-day survival challenges for many ordinary people and the lack of an appropriate political response. Such ministry likely bolstered the Church's moral clout. According to the WVS, an uptick in confidence in churches occurred in the 1995–2012 span among the general populace, from about 65 per cent in 1995 to about 72 per cent in 2012 reporting “a great deal” of confidence in them.

Reading the bishops' public statements at this time (Schineller 2002), one is struck by the recurrent nature of the bishops' collective pleas, especially regarding the perceived gap between social conditions and state actions as the country moved in and out of frequent regime changes over the years.

At the same time, its prophetic leadership has not always been uncontroversial, as in 2003 when the then president of the national episcopal conference, Archbishop John Onaiyekan, did not follow the bishops' own agreed script regarding that year's elections. Instead, Archbishop Onaiyekan chose to depart from the assessment of on-the-ground Church personnel overseeing the fairness (or lack thereof) of the elections (Gifford 2015).

Stretching back to the 1970s, the proper management of this natural resource-rich country, especially regarding oil, has been a major economic as well as political issue. Over the years, the state has struggled to harness oil development for the benefit of the whole society rather than enriching sectional interests, as in the mid-1990s when General Abacha filled leadership positions in the oil industry with personal appointees (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005), a patrimonial-based rule that General Abacha cultivated more widely (Obadare 2007).

The bishops explicitly engaged with this debate in a 2008 pastoral letter emphasising the use of oil resources in the interests of the common good. This twenty-five-page letter was characterised by its directness, echoing earlier prophetic leadership:

We challenge every Christian, especially every Catholic to develop a moral obligation to ensure good practices and just operations

in the petroleum industry ... Christians in leadership positions must recognise that there is an interrelationship between their religious belief and official conduct. (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF NIGERIA 2008, 17)

Towards the end of the letter, the bishops provided equally clear direction to the state, including an itemised series of actions: "The Federal Government must establish and faithfully implement a comprehensive, precise and dynamic petroleum policy to maximise the benefits to the nation" (Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria 2008, 22).

Prophetic ministry regarding human sexuality in the late 2000s was also direct, especially against perceived Western-driven ideologies. For instance, at the 2009 Synod of Bishops on "The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace", Nigerian bishops spoke out against externally imposed values on Nigerian society viewed as at odds with its local culture, especially related to family and gender (White 2014a, 2014b). Frequently, important foreign aid to help address pressing needs such as AIDS prevention is tied to commitment to a Western value system, adding to pressure on Nigerian bishops to comply (White 2014a). In this example, the Nigerian bishops' prophetic activism was expressed in cooperation with other African bishops through a synodal document, which may have helped to bolster its symbolic weight. More recently, the Church's same-sex marriage stance, and its support in 2014 for the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Bill (Asue 2018), also signalled the Church's affinity with traditional cultural norms (Allen 2014; Adamczyk 2017; Murdock 2013; Pew Research Center 2010).

This conservative claims-making aligned the Church with the broader culture, as among Catholics – and Nigerians in general – there is a very high level of disapproval of homosexuality (Allen 2007, 2014), which may have resonated with potential callings. At the same time, the impact of the Church's prophetic stances on this issue may not have been clear-cut. Against the rise in LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) mobilisation (Luft 2016), which

began in the mid-2000s (Anonymous 2006), as well as growing cultural acceptance and legal approval of same-sex relations in developed world regions (Grzymała-Busse 2015; Adamczyk 2017), it could be that the Church's sociomoral position frustrated some potential callings committed to a more Western-influenced approach to people perceived as "other".

It is difficult to directly assess the effectiveness (or not) of the bishops' prophetic leadership in the 2000s, but WVS data, which reported a dip in confidence in churches among the general populace from about 83 per cent expressing "a great deal" of confidence in 2000 to about 72 per cent in 2012, suggest that it led to an erosion in evaluations of the bishops' ministry performance.

[Table 7](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effect of the prophetic stances perspective on the three dependent variables, suggesting that a prophetic Church–state configuration can potentially lead to increases or decreases in the Church's workforce. As shown in this table, I did not find statistically significant effects for prophetic stances on any of the three dependent variables.

Sexual Scandals Argument

Sexual scandals involving Catholic clergy and religious broke out in Nigeria in the early 2000s, later than in other national churches. The early cases involved the publicising in the Nigerian news media of alleged abuses by Nigerian clergy serving abroad (in the US) (*ThisDay* 2002).

Three headlines in the Nigerian print media reveal the attention to the ministry performance of priests brought on by sexual scandals:

- "Irish Priest Resigns over Sexual Abuse" (*Next*, June 1, 2010).
- "The Priest as a Predator" (*Next*, June 4, 2010).
- "Celibacy, Sexual Abuse and Other Stories" (*The Punch*, March 28, 2010).⁹³

Most of the scandals related to priests or religious having relationships with adult women or sexually abusing vowed religious sisters, or nuns, in convents and other Catholic institutions (Openibo 2019; McDonald 2001; O'Donohue 2001), reflecting gendered asymmetries of power and authority in the Church. In a societal context with high levels of HIV/AIDS prevalence, nuns were perceived as “friendly” (Allen 2014; Linden 2009; Gifford 1998). It is also the case that this scandal is relatively common in the African Church in general (McDonald 2001). The recent disclosure of abuse of female religious is linked to secular social movements such as the relatively recent #MeToo movement targeted at male abuses of authority in society as a whole (DeGeorge 2019), and to feminism more broadly (Linden 2009). Empowered by secular world changes, a new #NunsToo movement is developing in the Church (Poggioli 2019).

Although the exact scale of this abuse cannot easily be gauged, it is frequent enough to warrant mention in scholarly treatments of African Catholicism (e.g. Allen 2014). At the same time, scandals have been less frequent here compared to national churches in Western settings and have had mostly to do with adults rather than children. Laxity around the celibacy rule in the African Church, including Nigeria (Allen 2014; Allen and Schaeffer 2001; Gifford 1998), culture-specific constructions linking masculinity with offspring (Allen and Schaeffer 2001), and the normalisation of sexual violence in conflict-ridden societies (Malzac 2019), all may have contributed to the overlooking or under-reporting of the problem.

Frequently, scandals took place in foreign countries or involved foreign clergy. In 2007, a sexual scandal involving a Nigerian priest of the Missionary Society of St Paul ministering in the US came to light in the tabloid media in Nigeria. In addition, around the same time the Nigerian media reported about a sexual scandal involving a missionary priest (also belonging to the Missionary Society of St Paul order) serving in Nigeria (Askia 2010).

Still other scandals related to Catholic leaders. For example, in 2009 Irish-born Archbishop Richard Burke, a member of St

Patrick's Missionary Society (Kiltegan), resigned following the exposé in the media by his former female partner of their long-term relationship.⁹⁴ Thus, a notable feature of the scandals was the involvement of religious orders and congregations (The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland 2013).

The Church's own document on procedures for dealing with abuse, entitled "Called to Love: Ethical Standards for Clergy and Seminarians in Nigeria", which included a pledge by the Nigerian bishops to exercise stronger leadership on the issue of sexual abuse by clergy (Askia 2010), was published in 2006. Over a decade later, in 2017 the Church published its child protection guidelines (Openibo 2019). Unlike "first mover" national hierarchies in other cultural settings such as Ireland, where institutional responses were more developed (Conway 2014b), the episcopal conference did not establish an office expressly dedicated to child protection issues. This reflects the assessment of the Vatican's own Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors that a child protection culture is not currently well embedded in the African Church (Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors 2024). Unsurprisingly, a recent Vatican conference on child protection in the global Church noted a dearth of literature on the topic in this setting (Openibo 2019).

In general, the Church in Nigeria, as in other national churches, did not acknowledge the extent of the problem or put in place an adequate response to it overnight. It has only relatively recently begun to increase awareness-raising around the issue (Ede and Kalu 2018), and in this respect may even be running ahead of other national churches in this world region (Malzac 2019). Even so, the scandals have tainted the ministry performance of Church personnel and likely contributed to the erosion in their status among adherents and non-adherents alike.

[Table 7](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that the experience of sexual scandals in a national Church and its attendant tainting will have a dampening impact on recruitment and

retention in its male workforce. As this table shows, I did not find a statistically significant effect for sexual scandals on ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1), suggesting that the scandal experience did not impact callings. At the same time, I find a negative and statistically significant effect for sexual scandals on resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians (Models 2 and 3). The sexual scandals coefficient (-3.346) for diocesan priests indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 3.346 decrease in resignations, a small substantive effect. Similarly, the sexual scandals coefficient (-22.319) for diocesan seminarians indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 22.319 decrease in resignations, a relatively large substantive effect.

[Table 8](#) shows that the decadal ordination rate was lower (0.13 per 10,000 Catholics) in the 2000s compared to the 1990s (0.15 per 10,000 Catholics). This suggests a partial sexual scandals effect on recruitment. By contrast, the decadal average for resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians (see [Table 9](#)) was lower in the 2000s than in the 1990s. To take the example of resignations among diocesan priests, the rate was 1.04 in the 1990s, compared to 0.47 in the 2000s.

It may be that the impact of sexual scandals on Catholic male workforce trends will be considerably weaker where the Church's historic prophetic ministry places less emphasis on sexual morality and more on responding to macropolitical issues such as corruption or governance (Allen 2014) – thus pointing to an interaction effect between the sexual scandals and prophetic stances perspectives. The impact may also be weaker where, as a result of the historical experience of being a missionary Church, most scandals related more to non-local clergy and religious than to local ones, thus sparing the local Church from reputational damage.

Also, it could be that in cultural contexts – such as African societies where being married is a strong cultural norm (Hastings 1972; Clevenger 2020) – greater laxity exists in the enforcement of the mandatory celibacy rule (Allen 2014), or violations of it

may be viewed as less consequential and less a source of shame and embarrassment to religious authorities and adherents compared to contexts where the celibacy rule is more strongly applied. Moreover, earlier research suggests that within Nigerian culture, including the Igbo grouping, there is a certain reticence about publicly discussing sexuality (Askia 2010), which may have contributed to the silencing of abusive aspects of it. Finally, where a critical investigative media is lacking (Malzac 2019; Conway 2014b) or there is restricted diffusion of mass media (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005) – as in some African societies – these scandals may be highlighted less, and thus less likely to enter the public’s consciousness in the first place.⁹⁵

Papal Visits Argument

As one of Africa’s largest Catholic populations, it is not surprising that Papal visits have been made to this state. In the 1982–1998 time period, Nigeria received two Papal visits, an indicator of the Vatican’s recognition of the growing influence and status of African Catholicism in the international Church. There was also a notable personal connection, as Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Francis Arinze⁹⁶ had a close working relationship (O’Connell 2006). Memoirs of Catholic prelates speak of these Papal visits as important moments in Nigerian Catholicism (e.g. O’Connell 2006). In his February 1982 visit – the first ever by a Pope to Nigeria and in the same year as the Nigerian Eucharistic Congress (Makozi and Ojo 1982) – Pope John Paul II visited Lagos, Onitsha, and Kaduna. Notably, the Pope paid a visit to Enugu and Ibadan seminaries (O’Connell 2006), where he encouraged new callings.

Addressing the country’s bishops in Lagos, the Pope began by bringing out the positive qualities of the local Church, including numerous callings, lay activism, and theological orthodoxy, and ended his remarks by mobilising the collective memory of past missionaries:

Thank you for the spiritual preparation of your Church, of your people, for this special mission: your country, Nigeria, had many missionaries, especially from Ireland. We can now bless that land, having given so many of its sons to the missions of the whole Church, and particularly in your own land. Now, the Pope's visit is a special missionary experience: and I wish to thank all former generations of bishops, priests and missionaries who prepared this special experience, and together with you I thank our Lord through his Mother. (JOHN PAUL II 1982C)

Pope John Paul II brought out this distinctive missionary heritage more directly in his address to Lagos's Catholic laity three days earlier:

The acceptance of the Christian faith here in Nigeria has indeed been remarkable. With eager hearts, you have welcomed generations of zealous missionaries to your land. You have learned from them the excellent knowledge of Jesus and have received him into your lives through faith and the Sacrament of Baptism. Nourished by the Eucharist and the word of God, you have begun to live as Christ taught you to do. You have put your faith into practice in your private and public lives, in your families and homes, at work and in places of recreation. You have also offered your youth to Christ and the Church to be trained as priests, brothers, sisters and dedicated laity. (JOHN PAUL II 1982D)

In Onitsha, where the Pope spoke to families, he affirmed the importance of the traditional two-parent heterosexual family as the basic unit of society, describing it as the source of love that enables the human person to locate themselves within the social world. As the Pope put it:

The family comes from God. It is the Creator who has arranged the loving covenant of one man and one woman ... It is the family that takes each man and woman out of anonymity, and makes them conscious of their personal dignity, enriching them with deep human experiences and actively placing them, in their uniqueness, within the fabric of society. (JOHN PAUL II 1982E)

Later in his homily, the Pope did not shy away from drawing attention to the challenges facing the Church's family-related teachings in Nigeria:

There are however some shadows. Traditionally your culture did not exclude polygamy, even though most marriages were and are monogamous. Sometimes women were deprived of some of their rights. And the modern enemies of the family, the disturbing degradation of some fundamental values – divorce, contraception and abortion – have not spared your country. (JOHN PAUL II 1982E)

Notably, on the second last day of his five-day visit the Pope presided at an ordination ceremony in Kaduna of ninety-two new priests from different parts of Nigeria (O'Connell 2006), where he praised the numerous callings in the Nigerian Church and urged encouragement for more:

As we rejoice today at the ordination of these new priests, we see in their hearts, which are so eager to serve, a great hope for the future of the Church. At the same time, I appeal to the people of God to be mindful of the great need to encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life. (JOHN PAUL II 1982F)

Sixteen years later, the Pope returned to Nigeria for a three-day visit in March 1998, when he beatified a Nigerian Cistercian monk Father Cyprian Tansi (Chigere 2001, 447; Pham 2004), the first Nigerian to be declared "Blessed" by the Church. This visit helped to further bolster the Pope's connection to Catholics in Nigeria and African Catholicism more broadly. Now more physically frail than before and relying on a walking stick, the Pope nonetheless fulfilled an intense schedule. His slightly stooped posture contrasted with the strong, muscular John Paul II earlier in his pontificate. Arriving at Abuja airport, where he met General Abacha and made a brief ceremonial address, the Pope was flanked by Nigerian bishops wearing purple and white episcopal robes. Public crowds of laity and female religious, some bearing yellow and white Papal flags and the national green and white flag, sang and

danced joyously. Others carried banners of lay groups such as the Catholic Students' Association or held up large-scale pictures of the Pope.⁹⁷

The high point of his 1998 visit was the beatification Mass in Onitsha on the second day of his visit, where the Pope's homily to devotees presented Father Tansi – with his personal traits of selflessness, pastoral sensitivity, and spirituality – as an embodiment of the faith and example of the contribution of Nigerian Catholicism to the global Church, a message that did not change very much from the 1982 visit:

Blessed Cyprian Michael Tansi is a prime example of the fruits of holiness which have grown and matured in the Church in Nigeria since the Gospel was first preached in this land. He received the gift of faith through the efforts of the missionaries, and taking the Christian way of life as his own he made it truly African and Nigerian. So too the Nigerians of today — young and old alike — are called to reap the spiritual fruits which have been planted among them and are now ready for the harvest. In this regard, I wish to thank and to encourage the Church in Nigeria for her missionary work in Nigeria, in Africa and beyond. Father Tansi's witness to the Gospel and to Christian charity is a spiritual gift which this local Church now offers to the Universal Church.
(JOHN PAUL II 1998A)

Turning to macropolitical issues, the Pope emphasised the need for effective governance of Nigeria's rich resources and the eradication of perceived (and actual) corruption and human rights abuses (John Paul II 1998a), a significant issue for Catholics in Africa in general (Allen 2014) and Nigeria in particular (Dowd and Sarkissian 2017), but without directly naming specific targets of his rebuke:

God, in fact, has blessed this land with human and natural wealth, and it is everyone's duty to ensure that these resources are used for the good of the whole people. All Nigerians must work to rid society of everything that offends the dignity of the human per-

son or violates human rights. This means reconciling differences, overcoming ethnic rivalries, and injecting honesty, efficiency and competence into the art of governing. As your nation pursues a peaceful transition to a democratic civilian government, there is a need for politicians — both men and women — who profoundly love their own people and wish to serve rather than be served (cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, 111). There can be no place for intimidation and domination of the poor and the weak, for arbitrary exclusion of individuals and groups from political life, for the misuse of authority or the abuse of power. (JOHN PAUL II 1998A)

Clearly, the Pope's observations resonated with those of the Nigerian bishops over the years.

The second day of the Pope's visit also included a meeting with Muslim leaders, where the Pope stressed the points of commonality between Islam and Christianity, including respect for human dignity and an emphasis on the common good, even while acknowledging the existence of inter-religious tensions (John Paul II 1998b).

Meeting with an assembly of Nigerian bishops in Abuja on the last day of his visit, the Pope spoke to his colleagues of the challenges and possibilities of the "new evangelization"⁹⁸ in the Church, especially in relation to seminary training, pastoral planning, missionary religious, lay participation, marriage and family, and young people. Human development difficulties in Nigeria, the Pope noted, underlined the bishops' prophetic leadership in co-operation with other civil society actors. Notably, he characterised the Nigerian Church as having "come of age" (John Paul II 1998c).

To mark the Pope's 1998 visit, the Nigerian bishops themselves published a pastoral letter entitled *Be Holy ... Be Reconciled*, which highlighted an interaction effect between the prophetic stances and Papal visits arguments. As the bishops put it:

The coming of the Pope to Nigeria at a time of severe economic hardship and socio-political polarization and fragmentation, a time when the nation is on the verge of concluding yet another

process of transition to civil rule, calls for serious self-examination on the part of every Nigerian. His visit at this critical period in the life of our nation should elicit from all of us, Christians and non-Christians alike, a commitment to the values and principles that he champions around the globe. It is obvious that the absence of such values and principles has been the root cause of the multiple maladies that have afflicted our country to date. In a situation such as ours, the Pope should be seen as a rallying point and his visit should be a catalyst for genuine national reconciliation. (SCHINELLER 2002, 219)

[Table 7](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the Papal visits perspective, suggesting that pastoral visits to a local Church by the head of this global religious group will have a bolstering or eroding impact on the male workforce. I did not find statistically significant effects for the Papal visits perspective in the Nigerian case.

At the same time, ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (per 10,000 Catholics) increased from 67 in 1982 (0.11 per 10,000 Catholics) to 90 in 1983 (0.14 per 10,000 Catholics). In 1989, seven years after the visit, there were 92 ordinations (0.10 per 10,000 Catholics). Turning to resignations, the (absolute) number of diocesan priests who left the priesthood declined marginally the year after the first visit – from 3 in 1982 (3.32 per 1,000 diocesan priests) to 2 in 1983 (2.08 per 1,000 diocesan priests). Surprisingly, the (absolute) number of diocesan seminarians who resigned from the seminary increased substantially the year after the visit – reaching 133 in 1983 (98.73 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) – compared to 70 in 1982 (58.87 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

When the Pope returned to Nigeria for a second pastoral visit sixteen years later, ordinations to the diocesan priesthood increased from 195 in 1998 (0.14 per 10,000 Catholics) to 202 in 1999 (0.12 per 10,000 Catholics). In 2005, seven years after the visit, ordinations stood at 278 (0.13 per 10,000 Catholics). Also, resignations from the seminary increased substantially the year

immediately after the visit, growing from 122 in 1998 (39.77 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 153 in 1999 (49.88 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). However, in 2000 the (absolute and relative) number of exits – 126 (36.43 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) – was lower than in 1999. Overall, the historical data point to a partial bolstering and eroding effect of Papal visits.

Summary and Discussion

To summarise, the Nigerian case provides support for critical events theory, especially regarding the ecumenical councils and sexual scandals perspectives. Although I did not find significant effects for the ecumenical councils perspective in the regression models, the decadal averages for ordinations show an increase after Vatican II, and resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians declined after the 1970s, suggesting a partial bolstering Vatican II effect. Thus, the statistical and historical evidence suggests that the impact of Vatican II on callings in this context is not clear-cut. I did not find support for the prophetic stances perspective in the regression models.

Another interesting result relates to the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that scandals erode the legitimacy of the Church as a religious system and thus reduce vocations. I find a negative and statistically significant sexual scandals effect on resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians. It may be that the cultural conditions mentioned earlier – such as the dominance of non-Nigerian clergy among abusers – contributed to a partial inoculation effect against scandal in this context. In line with this, the decadal averages show a decrease in resignations in the 2000s compared to the 1990s. At the same time, the decadal average for ordinations declined moderately in the 2000s compared to the 1990s. This suggests that the impact of scandal on callings is shaped by the specific context in which it occurs. Because of this cultural specificity, sexual scandals in the Nigerian case may have had weaker legitimacy-eroding impacts as compared to other national churches such as Malta.

My fourth perspective suggested that visits to national churches by the head of the world's Catholics would bolster or erode callings depending on the context of the visit, such as whether it co-occurred with sexual scandals. While I did not find statistically significant effects for this perspective in the regression models, visual inspection of the ordination and resignation trend lines around the time of the Papal visits in 1982 and 1998 provide partial support for this argument.

How might the critical events perspective be expected to impact the Igbo community in Nigeria? Because of the relative absence of a strong eroding effect for events such as sexual scandals on callings in this context, it may well be that the Igbo community will continue to be a producer of significant numbers of new callings, at least in the short term.

At the same time, it is sometimes argued that high callings in developing countries such as Nigeria can be linked to the relative lack of secular opportunity, whereby the seminary has a certain appeal in the absence of educational options elsewhere (Fishman and Jones 2007). This means that growing secular opportunities from an expanding economy may increasingly operate as a competitor life choice for the sons of Catholic Igbo families, perhaps dampening any bolstering effect critical events such as Papal visits might have on callings. However, a study combining a short-term event-driven perspective with a long-term one focused on the impact of secularisation on callings is needed to better understand the dynamic interaction between these two approaches in this context.

Although not usually linked with Catholicism, Nigeria represents an interesting example of how a Church with a non-majority status nonetheless exerts a visible local presence. The next and final empirical chapter in the book turns to the quite different context of the Philippines, as a case study of "Organic Faith Catholicism".

CHAPTER 5

Philippines: Organic Faith Catholicism

Introduction

The Church in the Philippines stands out for being the numerically largest Catholic presence in Asia, amid a world regional context dominated by Eastern world religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Hinduism (Chupungco 2006). In the Philippines, one finds a clear “fusion” of religiosity and national belonging (Grzymała-Busse 2015) that did not rely on the Church acting as a focus of collective identity opposed to an outside entity. Instead, this fusion was based on the Church functioning as a kind of alternative to the state, rooted in a largely positive collective memory of colonialism (Grzymała-Busse and Slater 2018, 546). In this social order, clergy were as much public officials as religious leaders (Grzymała-Busse and Slater 2018).

As a case of “Organic Faith Catholicism”, it is distinctive among the four cases in Catholicism’s highly expressive, performative nature in this country, perhaps most visibly demonstrated in historic *pasyon*, Holy Week street processions ritually re-enacting Jesus Christ’s suffering on the cross (Chupungco 2006; Davie 2002; Grzymała-Busse and Slater 2018). Unlike the other three cases, Catholicism in the Philippines played a key mobilising role in political regime transition during the 1980s Marcos era, lending its legitimacy to popular protests against human rights violations by secular political elites.

Going back to the arrival of expansionary Catholic missionaries from imperial Spain in the sixteenth century (Youngblood

1990; Davie 2002; Jenkins 2011), the Philippines, a large, populous country in Far East Asia, has a long association with Catholic culture. During the Spanish colonial era (which continued until 1898, when American colonisers took over where the Spanish left off), Church missionaries belonging to the Augustinian, Dominican, and Jesuit orders engaged in significant evangelisation efforts, including the establishment of important institutions such as schools and universities (Buckley 2016; Barrett et al. 2001d; Grzymała-Busse and Slater 2018). These religious orders and congregations continue to exert a strong influence on Catholicism in the present, sometimes independently of the Church hierarchy (Buckley 2016).

A historical legacy of Church-state cooperation was one of the outcomes of Spanish colonialism (Buckley 2016). It is worth noting also that over the years individual clergy were active in opposing the colonial regime when opposition began to come to the surface in the nineteenth century (Grzymała-Busse and Slater 2018; Jenkins 2011). At the same time, the Church stood to benefit from co-operative religion–state interactions that carried over into American colonialism,⁹⁹ even if its limits were also tested in issue domains such as education (Buckley 2016).

This chapter focuses on the Filipino case. It is organised into four sections. Following a brief overview of the religious background, I present descriptive trends in relation to the male workforce. Third, I put critical events theory to the test by providing an in-depth historical analysis of the four events. Finally, the chapter closes with an overall assessment of this Asian case.

Despite Catholicism's numerical dominance, other non-Catholic religious groups are also present, including Muslims and indigenous groups such as the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Davie 2002; Francisco 2014; Buckley and Willcox 2017). Christian–Muslim tensions, especially in the south, where Muslims are geographically clustered, have risen to the level of civil war but are now less pronounced (Cherry 2014). Additionally, conversions to other Christian traditions such as Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism are increasing (from a low level) amid growing aliena-

tion from less expressive versions of Catholicism (Cornelio 2014; Davie 2002).

Although the Philippines is a developing country in this world regional context (Barrett et al. 2001d; Davie 2002), it is one of the poorest countries in global terms (Norris and Inglehart 2004). Moreover, the Philippines faces significant human development challenges in areas such as education, health care and housing (Cherry 2014; Barrett et al. 2001d), especially in the context of authoritarian government (Youngblood 1990). This means that ordinary Filipinos often struggle to meet their basic survival needs.

According to the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, it leans in the direction of a fragile political system with a WGI figure (for 2010) of -1.65 (on scale ranging from -2.5 meaning weak to 2.5 meaning strong political stability) (Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024). As with Argentina, the Philippines has a turbulent political history that has resulted in strong structural inequalities, especially between rural and urban areas (Barrett et al. 2001d; Youngblood 1990).

During the authoritarian Marcos regime in the 1970s and 1980s, the Church's activism was directed against the human rights violations of the regime, including state violence against Church personnel, but also its modernisation agenda underpinned by international resources (Youngblood 1990; Hanson 1987). However, after the Marcos regime ended in 1986, Church–state interactions were largely characterised by cooperation (Buckley and Wilcox 2017).

In the faith and morals domain, the Church has also fulfilled an important prophetic leadership role in public life, speaking out more recently against the introduction of contraception (Buckley 2014; Cornelio 2016; Francisco 2014) and in earlier periods against divorce, by appealing to religious-based arguments (Cornelio 2016). A notable feature of this ministry is a mobilised laity, especially during the Estrada years in the early 2000s (Buckley 2016). A good example of this is Couples for Christ, a family evangelisation movement and offshoot of Charismatic Renewal,

established in Metro Manila in the 1980s (Cherry 2014; Francisco 2014). Its membership, estimated at one million (Buckley 2016), has been politically active.

Today, levels of commitment to religiosity, as evidenced by belief, practice, and sacramental participation levels, mark the Philippines out as a strongly traditional society (Norris and Inglehart 2004).

In a rank order of country religiosity across the globe, the Philippines is a top-tier society on most indicators (Smith 2009). Among the general populace, belief in God is very high (above 90 per cent) and has remained relatively stable over time (Smith 2009). Weekly or more church attendance levels declined from 70 per cent in 1996 to about 58 per cent in 2001, but increased to about 65 per cent in 2012 (see [Figure 28](#)).

Similarly, confidence in churches as institutions has wavered in the 1990s and 2000s, increasing from about 64 per cent (percentage expressing “a great deal” of confidence) in 1996 and 2001 (Smith 2009) to about 73 per cent in 2012.

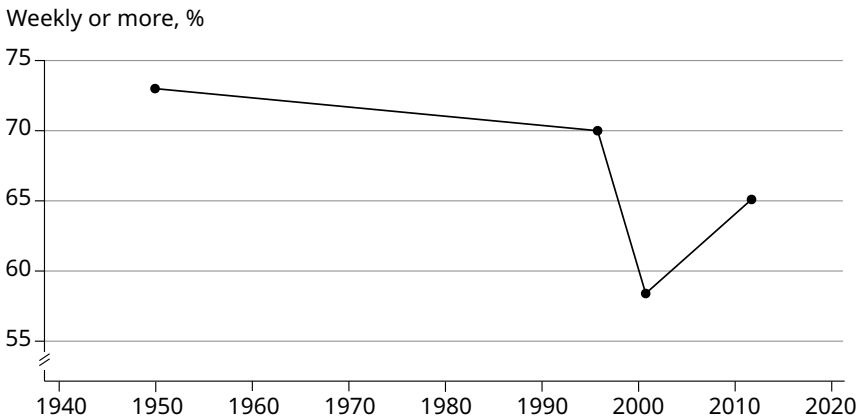


Figure 28: Church Attendance in the Philippines, 1950–2012

Note: Weekly or more, in %

Source: Iannaccone (2003) and World Values Survey 1981–2022

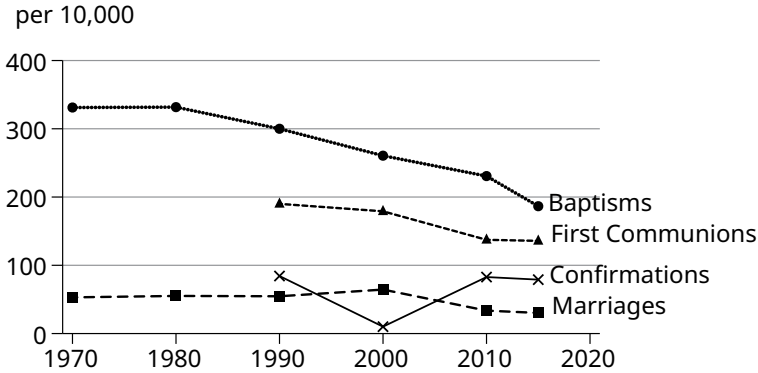


Figure 29: Participation in Church Sacraments in the Philippines, 1970–2015

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

It is noteworthy that changes in religious practices of Filipinos, such as declines in church attendance, took place after the decline in priestly ordinations ([Figures 28](#) and [32](#)). [Figure 29](#) presents data relating to trends in Catholic baptisms, first communions, confirmations, and marriages (per 10,000 Catholics) in the 1970–2015 time period. As with the other four cases, participation in all the sacraments of the Church has declined over time in the Philippines, with the greatest decline evident in baptisms. Fewer devotees receive their first communion than are baptised and fewer still receive the sacrament of confirmation. And much fewer devotees marry in the church than are baptised. Together, this points to a progressive disengagement from the Church across the life-course.

Descriptive Trends

[Figures 30–35](#) present data relating to Catholic workforce trends in the Philippines with reference to the four categories of male religious professionals.

[Figure 30](#) shows that the number of diocesan priests per 10,000 Catholics peaked in 1963 and then went into a quite dramatic

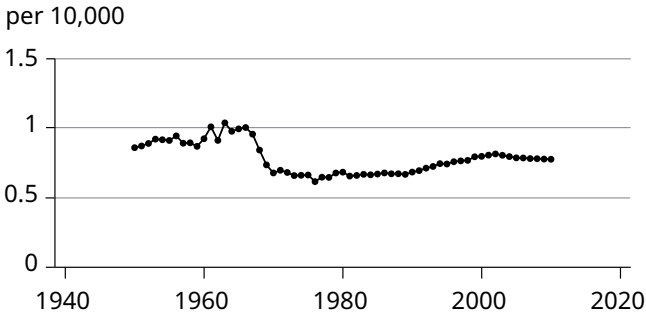


Figure 30: Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1950–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author’s calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

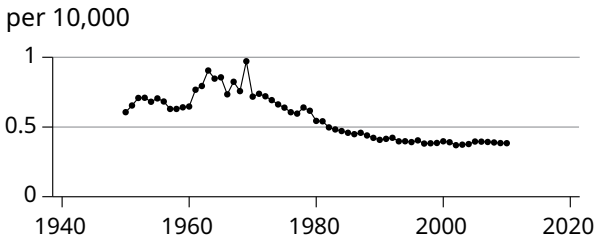


Figure 31: Religious Priests in the Philippines, 1950–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author’s calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

decline. Similarly, the religious priest workforce peaked in 1969, followed by a continuous decline (see [Figure 31](#)).

While ordination and resignation data for religious priests are not available in the data relied upon in the present study, the similarity in the religious priest and diocesan priest trend lines is noteworthy.

[Figure 32](#) reports data relating to newly ordained diocesan priests in the Philippines.

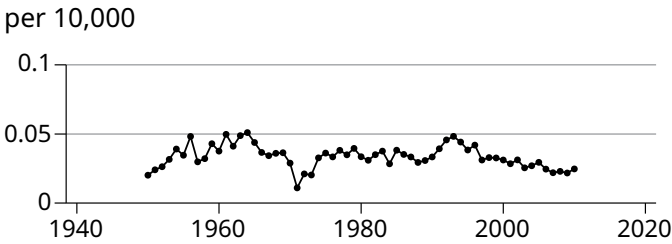


Figure 32: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in the Philippines, 1950–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics. Papal visits in the Philippines (1970, 1981, 1995)
 Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

In the Philippines, the number of ordinations per 10,000 Catholics peaked at 0.05 in 1964 and declined to 0.02 in 2010 (0.03 decline from peak).

A look at [Figure 33](#), which presents data about the number of non-ordained religious brothers per 10,000 Catholics, shows their number fluctuated and peaked at 0.20 in 1969, as compared to 0.16 in 2010. This represents a peak-to-2010 change of -0.04 .

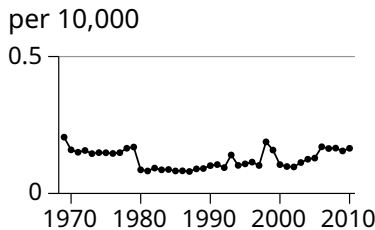


Figure 33: Religious Brothers in the Philippines, 1969–2010

Note: Figures per 10,000 Catholics

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

[Figure 34](#) presents data about the number of resignations among diocesan clergy (per 1,000 diocesan priests) in the 1969–2010 time period. [Figure 35](#) does the same with respect to seminarians for the diocesan priesthood (per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

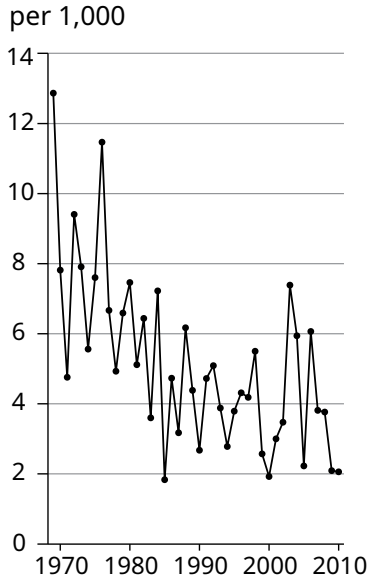


Figure 34: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1969–2010

Note: Figures per 1,000 diocesan priests. Papal visits in the Philippines (1970, 1981, 1995)

Source: Author’s calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

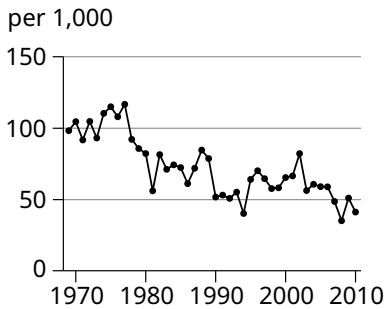


Figure 35: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines, 1969–2010

Note: Figures per 1,000 diocesan seminarians. Papal visits in the Philippines (1970, 1981, 1995)

Source: Author’s calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

The trend line shows that resignations among diocesan priests peaked in 1969 at 12.86, compared to 2.05 in 2010 (10.81 decrease from peak). This post-Vatican II increase in resignations may have reflected disappointment with the Church's critical orientation towards the state system in the Philippines during this time (Youngblood 1990).

Turning to [Figure 35](#), resignations among seminarians for the diocesan priesthood peaked in 1977 at 116.77. This compares to a rate of 41.27 in 2010. Thus, the peak-to-2010 change is 75.5.

Contexts of Trends

Ecumenical Councils Argument

If the Filipino bishops arrived at Vatican II to find strong support for Church engagement with society, most did not likely see themselves as prelates in this image. While proto versions of a social apostolate were not lacking within this national Church prior to Vatican II – for example, in the form of Catholic Action¹⁰⁰ – they were relatively marginal,¹⁰¹ especially compared to later developments. Led by the archbishop of Cebu Julio Rosales,¹⁰² who attended all four council sessions along with twenty-nine episcopal colleagues,¹⁰³ the Philippine hierarchy belonged to one of Catholicism's then “emerging fields” (Wilde 2007, 48). The bishops' focal concerns at Vatican II itself were issues such as inter-faith interactions and inculturation (Linden 2009).

To what extent can one speak of the episcopate as a unified group regarding their views of Vatican II's reforms? Political scientist Robert Youngblood usefully suggests that conservative, moderate, and progressive outlooks emerged among the bishops in the years after Vatican II, reflecting age and geographical differences (Youngblood 1990). Thus, within the Catholic leadership¹⁰⁴ there were varying interpretations about how the Church should engage with Vatican II afterwards. Among other ways, this played out in differing responses to authoritarian rule during the Marcos years, with Bishop Claver and later Cardinal Sin speaking out more than

some of their episcopal colleagues (Dionisio 2011). Additionally, points of divergence developed between bishops and female and male religious, with the latter perceived as running ahead of the social justice teachings of Vatican II (Youngblood 1990). Interestingly, in 1991 the Church came together to explicitly reflect on Vatican II's import for itself, with the establishment of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II) (Dionisio 2011).

More broadly, prelates from Asian countries were progressive in their Vatican II orientation, especially in terms of human development issues and relations with non-Catholic groups (Wilde 2007), but Vatican II played out differently in different Asian contexts, some of which were Catholic majorities in this world region (and thus more like their conservative European counterparts). A wider Church context, including theological developments in Latin America (e.g. liberation theology) and the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference, were also important shaping influences (Bacani 2005).

Of course, other significant socio-economic changes took place in the Philippines in the post-Vatican years, including an expansion in material security, economic inequality, and educational opportunity. Enrolment in tertiary higher education increased from 17.64 in 1971 to 29.61 in 2010.¹⁰⁵ Economic well-being, as measured by GDP per capita, rose from 2.321 in 1962 to 5.197 in 2010 (Coppedge et al. 2024).

Perhaps more than any other issues, liturgical innovation and the Church's approach to the poor and needy received the most attention in the Philippines after Vatican II, with other changes envisaged by the council receiving little attention or taking a relatively long time to take hold (Bacani 2005). Regarding liturgical reforms, these were enthusiastically embraced, though were also age stratified, with older devotees adapting more slowly (Chupungco 2006). Here, I focus on the second domain, which set this national Church apart from the other three cases included in this book.

Filipino bishops took up the social justice messages of Vatican II relatively quickly, as evidenced by their pastoral letter

writing on this topic from the late 1960s (Youngblood 1990), as well as their institutional infrastructure. For example, the Philippine's episcopal conference instituted significant organisational changes, including the establishment of the National Secretariat of Social Action (1966) and National Catholic Rural Congress (1967) (Carroll 1988, 354; Youngblood 1990, 77; Dionisio 2011), spotlighting the hierarchy's concern for the disadvantaged. This was accompanied by public claims-making, as in a 1967 pastoral letter on social action.¹⁰⁶

Unlike the Maltese Church, social justice Catholicism in the Philippines was quite radical, and extended beyond the Church hierarchy. For example, in the 1970s the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) promoted leadership development, based on community organisation principles, among the socially disadvantaged (Youngblood 1990, 85, 88), even at the cost of heavy repression from the Marcos regime's assault on "subversive" practices (Youngblood 1990, 101).

Similarly, the 1960s and 1970s saw the establishment of the new entities such as the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference promoting lay-clergy-religious interactions (Carroll 1988, 354) and an increase in liberation theology-inspired Base Christian Communities (Youngblood 1990; Arévalo 1988; Hornsby-Smith 1989), as expressions of "semidetached Catholicism".¹⁰⁷

These communities, which were not developed in other cases such as Malta, existed between ordinary adherents on the one hand and the Church leadership on the other, and fused locally driven worship and social justice functions (Carroll 2011).

Even so, divisions emerged between local and foreign religious over indigenisation and the resistance of the Church hierarchy to the convening of priest assemblies (Carroll 1988, 354).

Also, past research suggests that some Filipinos were critical of Vatican II reforms, as evidenced by protests in 1969–1970 against the perceived lack of social commitments of the then Cardinal Santos of Manila (Carroll 1988, 354; Youngblood 1990, 79).

Table 10: Testing Critical Events Theory in the Philippines

	Model 1 Ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, 1950–2010	Model 2 Resignations among diocesan priests, 1969–2010	Model 3 Resignations among diocesan seminarians, 1969–2010
Ecumenical Councils	0.014*** (0.003)		
Prophetic Stances	0.002 (0.002)	0.483 (0.689)	-1.432 (4.902)
Sexual Scandals	-0.005 (0.003)	-1.519** (0.677)	-32.259*** (7.415)
Papal Visits	-0.003 (0.002)	0.198 (0.969)	-2.800 (13.724)
Regime Type: Electoral autocracy	0.002 (0.003)	-0.784 (1.018)	-2.604 (10.060)
Regime Type: Electoral democracy	0.009* (0.005)	-0.875 (1.056)	-0.267 (10.518)
Birth Control Encyclical	0.003 (0.002)	7.057*** (0.485)	11.913 (7.177)
Observations	61	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.157	0.384	0.492

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Note: Table reports OLS time-series regression coefficients with Newey-West standard errors in parentheses. Each of the explanatory variables was entered in the models as a dummy variable (1 meaning event, 0 meaning non-event). The dependent variable refers to the relative number of diocesan ordinations (per 10,000 Catholics) or resignations (per 1,000 diocesan priests or per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). All of the models include controls for regime type (ref: closed autocracy) and birth control encyclical.

Overall, the impression one gets from the Philippines' experience is that the creation of a "Church of the Poor" (Dionisio 2011, 5), a term expressly used at Vatican II (Gutiérrez 1987) and adopted by the PCP II (Dionisio 2011), was one of its most significant impacts in this local context.

[Table 10](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the critical events in the Philippines case, controlling

for the regime type and birth control encyclical covariates. I find support for the ecumenical councils perspective, suggesting that Vatican II may have had an eroding or bolstering impact on callings. One can see that the ecumenical councils coefficient is positive and statistically significant in the model for ordinations to the diocesan priesthood (Model 1), suggesting that Vatican II had a bolstering impact on ordinations to the diocesan clergy. The ecumenical councils coefficient (0.014) indicates that a one-unit increase in ecumenical councils leads to a 0.014 increase in ordinations. Substantively, this effect is small.

As mentioned earlier, this bolstering effect may be due to the Filipino Catholic leadership's strong engagement with prophetic activism legitimised by Vatican II, bringing out an interaction effect between these two perspectives, which may have motivated new callings.

Table 11: Ordination Trends Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1950–2009

Time period	Ordination rate among diocesan priests (per 10,000 Catholics)
T1 ^a (1952–1961)	0.03
T2 ^b (1966–1975)	0.02
1950–1959	0.03
1960–1969	0.04
1970–1979	0.02
1980–1989	0.03
1990–1999	0.03
2000–2009	0.02

Note: ^aT1 (Time 1) denotes decade prior to Vatican II. ^bT2 (Time 2) denotes decade after Vatican II

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

At the same time, [Table 11](#) shows that ordinations were lower in the decade after Vatican II (0.02 per 10,000 Catholics) than in the decade prior to it (0.03 per 10,000 Catholics). This points to a partial Vatican II eroding effect on callings.

Prophetic Stances Argument

As in Malta, Filipino Catholic identity has historically been fused with national identity, placing the Church squarely in the role of defender of the nation in its relationship to the state (Grzymała-Busse 2015). As long as the Church could rely on high levels of religiosity among the faithful, the state could not easily ignore or dismiss its prophetic ministry on their behalf (Grzymała-Busse 2015).

The Church's prophetic leadership has taken different forms including writing pastoral letters, making public statements, organising mass protests, leading prayer vigils, and direct pastoral work among the poor and needy (Mananzan 1991; Cornelio 2016, 140; Hanson 1987; Youngblood 1990). Sometimes it also involved clergy working underground to challenge the state, as occurred during the Marcos regime (Calderisi 2013). Despite its numerical majority, the Church's prophetic ministry over the years often reflected a "cultural defence" mode (Martin 1978, 192).

For example, in 1956 the Church took a strong stand against a state proposal to make the teaching of the nationalist ideology of José Rizal, a frequent Church opponent, compulsory in the public school system (Barrett et al. 2001d; Francisco 2014; Rivera 2010). Similarly, in 1959 the bishops opposed efforts to prohibit non-Filipinos from leadership roles within the school system, seeing it as threatening the dominance of religious orders (Rivera 2010).

Energised by the reforms of Vatican II, Filipino bishops began to amplify a stronger social ministry commitment from the mid-1960s, as reflected in their 1967 pastoral letter (Rivera 2010). As mentioned, the Church's prophetic voice did not resonate with all sectors, resulting in large-scale protests against it in 1969–1970 (Barrett et al. 2001d).

The most fraught period of religious–secular interactions in the Philippines was during the President Ferdinand Marcos era, beginning with the introduction of martial law in 1972 and continuing up until the regime’s collapse in 1986 (Buckley and Wilcox 2017). At the same time, points of divergence frequently emerged within the Church during the Marcos years – between the hierarchy and individual bishops or the hierarchy and religious personnel – over the preferred degree of opposition (Hanson 1987; Buckley 2014). This resulted in conservative, moderate, and radical groups (Carroll 2004).

As in Argentina, this internal Church multivocality (Buckley 2016) was complicated by the presence of diverse secular currents within the broader society (dating to the 1950s and 1960s) with significant followings. These included communism, socialism, and militarism, each competing with the Church for legitimacy among the general populace (Carroll 2004; Dionisio 2011).

Apart from its political–military agenda, which included repressive activities such as the torture of ordinary anti-regime activists (Buckley 2016), the Marcos regime also introduced family planning in the 1970s, against the Church’s teachings (Calderisi 2013, 190). Faced with the country’s socio-economic modernisation, the prolonging of Catholic values became increasingly difficult for Church authorities (Hanson 1987).

Some sectors of the Church, especially individual bishops and religious belonging to the AMRSP, spoke out strongly against the human rights violations of the Marcos regime, which involved the torture and killing of ordinary civilians by state forces as well as the impacts of its policies on the poor (Carroll 1988, 355; Youngblood 1990; Buckley 2016). For example, through public statements in the mid-1970s the AMRSP criticised the state’s economic developmental programmes as detrimental to the interests of the poor in sectors such as sugar (Youngblood 1990).

Individual bishops, such as Bishop Francisco Claver, also directly challenged the state’s work, employment, and labour market policies regarding wages, strikes, and union organising (Youngblood 1990, 188; Dionisio 2011). Additionally, in 1975

Bishop Claver and some other bishops and religious order superiors criticised the regime's manipulative approach to referenda voting (Youngblood 1990, 191; Hanson 1987; Grzymała-Busse 2015). Unsurprisingly, these actions by some progressive bishops brought out tensions between them and their more conservative colleagues within the hierarchy in 1976 (Youngblood 1990).

For its part, the hierarchy tended to eschew strong early criticism of the regime, especially following the introduction of martial law in 1972 (Youngblood 1990). True, the bishops' 1973 pastoral letter entitled *Evangelization and Development* cautioned the regime about the denial of basic human rights (Youngblood 1990), and the bishops did take exception to Marcos regime raids against Church personnel in 1974 and 1976 (Hanson 1987). On the whole, however, the response of Catholic authorities was generally muted.

Things began to change in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Acting as a more cohesive corporate body than in the earlier 1973–1977 period, the hierarchy began to take a stronger stand against the Marcos regime. For example, the bishops' 1983 pastoral letter entitled *Dialogue for Peace* made a number of direct criticisms of repressive state actions, including the torture of ordinary people, amid a growing social crisis (Carroll 1988, 357; Carroll 2004). Interestingly, this delayed prophetic ministry is not without historical parallel within the Catholic world, as bishops in 1940s Vichy France similarly moved from initial support to later opposition to authoritarianism (Luft 2020).

The bishops' strong stances against the Marcos regime's policies, in the face of the state's use of force against its personnel (Youngblood 1990), may have appealed to potential callings. For example, after the ending of martial law in 1981, Cardinal Sin took up the issue of the expulsion of foreign clergy more forcefully than he had done before and more strongly criticised the regime's interference in the electoral system, including the coercion of voting behaviour (Youngblood 1990).

Following the assassination of Senator Ninoy Aquino in 1983, the Philippine bishops also took a stronger prophetic stance,

as evidenced by their pastoral letter – which Marcos sought to prevent (Hanson 1987) – speaking out against fraud in the 1986 [1985] elections (Mananzan 1991; Hanson 1987; Francisco 2014). After the election, the bishops also published a significant pastoral statement against electoral fraud (Carroll 2011; Rivera 2011) as Catholic activists allied with secular ones against electoral irregularities (Buckley 2016).

This moral activism culminated in 1986 in the participation of Church personnel, with the support of Cardinal Sin, in the well-known People Power Revolution/EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue), which led to the collapse of the Marcos regime in February that year (Davie 2002; Mananzan 1991; Nepstad 2013). Over a million citizens participated in the People Power Revolution sparked by the defection of two top military officers and Marcos's armed response to citizen support for them, with clergy and religious as front-line resisters against Marcos's tanks. As more and more military sent out to repress the crowds themselves defected over a few days, Marcos's power collapsed (Nepstad 2013).

Thus, this event prompted political change (Sewell 1996) and represented the high-water mark of the Church's role as an institutional carrier of opposition to the dictatorship (Sin 1988).

Eschewing the notion of a tabernacle-centric Church (Sin 1988), Cardinal Sin skilfully mobilised Church resources such as Radio Veritas (established in 1969) to push for non-violent civil opposition (Calderisi 2013; Carroll 1988, 2004; Hanson 1987), highlighting the use of modernity to advance religious goals (Davie 2002). Additionally, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, inspired by Cardinal Sin's rhetoric, trained devotees in non-violent oppositional tactics (Aguirre 2010). The episcopate also spoke out against perceived fraud in the 1986 elections (Mananzan 1991; Hanson 1987; Francisco 2014).

However, it is worth noting that other clerics such as Father Moraleta spoke out against this religious involvement in street politics (Arévalo 1988), reflecting some of the diversity within the Church.

In the post-Marcos era, Cardinal Sin also played an important role in bringing disparate groups with competing political visions together and cementing the legitimacy of Catholic President Cory Aquino (Hanson 1987; Carroll 2004; Buckley 2016). Interestingly, religious groups allying with secular ones was a significant feature of the 1986 Constitutional Commission established to revise the constitution (Buckley 2016).

But even after the regime change, pressing social issues such as poverty and human rights violations did not go away and inspired further prophetic activism (Carroll 2004). For example, the topic of ecological concern, especially as it affected the poor, became a focus of the bishops' leadership in a 1988 pastoral letter entitled *What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?* (Karaos 2011; Linden 2009).

More generally, the Church increasingly saw itself as a "Church of the Poor" (Dionisio 2011, 5), to use the words of the *Acts and Decrees* of PCP II (Dionisio 2011; Rufo 2013), amid a more settled political context (Rivera 2011) but still one with significant legacy problems (Thompson 1995) such as deficits in military support for the state's legitimacy.

During the presidency of Aquino's successor, Fidel Ramos (1992–1998), a non-Catholic who was endorsed by the Pentecostal-styled Catholic charismatic lay group El Shaddai (established in 1978) (Allen 2018; Jenkins 2011) but not by Church elites (Rivera 2011; Allen 2018), some of the repressive legacies of the Marcos era were overturned. However, the Church took exception to other public policies. For example, the hierarchy spoke out on moral issues including sex education and population control (Intengan 1996) as well as sociopolitical ones such as mining practices (Karaos 2011).

In August 1994, a Church-led, large-scale rally in Manila entitled "The March for Our Children and Our Families" brought an estimated crowd of 500,000 in protest against the human reproduction-related programme of the Cairo conference on population and development (Intengan 1996). The bishops' 1995 public statement on the topic also defended traditional family norms

(Francisco 2016). While this street politics was largely successful, there were also clear limits to the Church's moral activism, as evidenced by the election of Joseph Estrada as president in 1998 against its preferences (Rivera 2011).

Turning to the 2000s, the Church's prophetic ministry during this time likely had a bolstering impact on recruitment and retention. For example, in 2001 the Church's public stances and support for street protests at religious sites such as the EDSA shrine during President Estrada's impeachment trial contributed to his People Power II-driven departure from office in 2001 (Rufo 2013; Davie 2002; Carroll 2004).

This "drawing power" of the Church (Davie 2002, 115) appeared to buttress its moral influence, as evidenced by high confidence ratings in the Church among the general populace in the mid-1990s and into the early 2000s (Grzymała-Busse 2015).

Interestingly, in 2001 Cardinal Sin and the Papal Nuncio were present at the Our Lady of EDSA shrine in Quezon City where Estrada's successor President Gloria Arroyo, a pious Catholic, was sworn in (Pham 2004). During the Arroyo presidency, the Church was granted significant "institutional access" to political influence (Grzymała-Busse 2015, 8) through the appointment of Church elites to key national bodies (Odchigue 2016).

Social survey data from the WVS, noted earlier as reporting an uptick in confidence in churches in the 2000s, suggests that this People Power II activism may have helped to bolster the Church's "political credit" (Martin 2005, 159).

It should be noted that this time was marked by the emergence of other civil society groups (e.g. feminist and secular advocacy groups) jostling with the Church for legitimacy as well as growing internal pluralism within the Church itself, especially via politicised versions of charismatic Catholicism (Buckley 2014; Carroll 2004; Buckley and Wilcox 2017).

This civil society awakening meant that the Church hierarchy became less of a rallying point for devotees, especially around a central unifying leader, than was the case during the Cardinal Sin years. Put otherwise, the Church increasingly spoke with a greater

diversity of voices than before, not all necessarily in line with one another (Buckley 2016).

As democracy became cemented in the Philippines in the post-Estrada era, the Church increasingly turned its attention to faith and moral issues. For example, in 2006 Catholic authorities opposed an experimental sex education programme in schools as undercutting the natural authority of the family, even as social surveys reported growing reliance among young people on secular sources for information about human sexuality (Calderisi 2013, 190).

Similarly, in the 2008–2009 time period, Catholic leaders spoke out in pastoral statements against proposed legislation – more specifically, the Reproductive Health Bill – put before the Philippine Congress to legalise contraception (Cornelio 2016, 108, 87; Carroll 2011). Church banners, homilies, and direct contact with political elites also formed part of the Church's moral activism (Calderisi 2013, 123). At the same time, this ministry was weakened by the plurality of public opinion on the issue of contraception even among committed Catholics, as well as the need to look past this issue domain to achieve common ground with political elites on other social issues (Buckley 2016; Espina-Varona 2019). Even so, it is noteworthy that about 74 per cent of Filipinos in 2012 reported “a great deal” of confidence in churches, up from about 64 per cent eleven years earlier in 2001.

Overall, changes in the Church's public stances in the post-democratic transition period reflected growing functional differentiation in the society, whereby religion's claim over other areas of social life such as marriage and family came increasingly under challenge (Pollack and Rosta 2017). But it is also the case that there was a pushback against this in the 2000s in the form of a more politically active clergy and laity, even extending occasionally to competing in elections (Buckley 2016; Rivera 2011).

[Table 10](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effect of the prophetic stances perspective on the three dependent variables, suggesting that the Church's moral leadership can potentially lead to increases or decreases in its workforce.

not find a statistically significant effect for prophetic stances on any of the three dependent variables.

Sexual Scandals Argument

Like the other cases, sexual scandals involving Filipino Catholic clergy and religious broke out. Some of these scandals related to Filipino priests serving abroad (usually the US). Others related to priests serving in the Philippines, with cases occurring in the 1990s but most since the 2000s. Still others concerned “recycled” clergy who ministered in different national settings (Cahill and Wilkinson 2017, 190).

While some cases related to the abuse of children, some also had to do, as in Nigeria, with male clergy abusing non-ordained female religious (DeGeorge 2019; O’Donohue 2001) or having sexual relationships with adult women (Allen 2012). A book on male clerical abuse by a female religious, which signalled declining reticence among nuns about speaking out about the scandal compared to earlier times, was published in 2011 (DeGeorge 2019). Priests having relations with female partners have not always prompted scandal, though, owing to laxity among the laity regarding the celibacy rule (Rufo 2013). As with the other settings, the child sexual abuse scandal in the Philippines initially emerged as an abuse crisis and then became a leadership one, with attention focused on the accountability of bishops (or lack thereof) regarding the handling of abuse cases (Allen 2012; Conway 2014b; Rufo 2013).

These scandals contributed to the erosion in the status male clergy enjoyed among adherents and non-adherents alike. Some accounts linked the sexual abuse cases to a broader problem of actual or perceived corruption in the Church, involving a largely unspoken nexus of sex, politics, and money (Rufo 2013). In any case, the titles of books such as Earl K. Wilkinson’s, *Priestly Pedophiles* (Wilkinson 2003) and Aries Rufo’s *Altar of Secrets* (Rugo 2013) expressed a growing negative evaluation of the Church’s ministry performance.

Three headlines in the country's print media give a sense of the developing story:

- “A Burden Too Heavy to Bear: Dark Clouds Loom over the Philippines As Sex Scandals Plunge the Catholic Church into Crisis” (*Channel News Asia* [Philippines], June 30, 2003).
- “Priest in Sex Scandal Urged to Surface” (*GMA News* [Philippines], April 18, 2007).
- “4 of 30 Abusive Catholic Priests are Pinoys” (*Sun Star*, April 17, 2010)¹⁰⁸

The early outbreak of cases occurred in the 1990s. For example, in 1990 child sexual abuse claims were made against Father Agustin Cuenca (Likhaan – Child Justice League – Catholics for a Free Choice 2004). In 1998, Father Macario Apuya was accused of child sexual abuse and was the subject of the country's first legal case against a priest for abuse, which was publicised in the media (Likhaan – Child Justice League – Catholics for a Free Choice 2004). Four years later, in 2002, twenty-nine cases of abuses of female religious by male clergy were publicised in the national press – the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* carried two front-page reports on it in November of that year – following the submission of a study on the issue to the bishops' conference by an umbrella body representing female religious (DeGeorge 2019). A book published in 2011 on the subject, entitled *That She May Dance Again: Rising from Pain of Violence Against Women in the Philippine Catholic Church*, suggested the problem had a relatively broad reach within the Church (DeGeorge 2019).

The scandals were not confined to lower-level clergy. In 1996, Bishop Almarino of Malolos resigned for alleged abuse of seminarians, but at the time this was largely unknown (Rufo 2013). The Bishop Bacani scandal, which came to light in 2003 and involved one of the Philippines's best-known and most prominent bishops, concerned an accusation about the sexual harassment of his female secretary. Similarly, newly appointed Bishop Yalung of Antipolo resigned in 2002 following allegations that he was the

father of two children with a lay woman who sought his pastoral help. In the Bacani and Yalung cases, journalistic efforts in the magazine *Newsbreak* brought these episcopal scandals involving two previous auxiliary bishops of Manila and former seminary personnel into the public domain (Rufo 2013).

Other Catholic sexual abuse cases came to light in the late 2000s, as in the example of Father Gabriel Madangeng who was accused in 2007–2008 of sexual assaults against young girls. Overall, about seventy cases of sexual deviance involving Philippine clergy have been documented.¹⁰⁹

Unlike cases such as the US, a legal context that did not mandate reporting in Church settings closed off opportunities for victims to seek restitution (Rufo 2013).

But like other contexts, Church responses to sexual scandals occurred in fits and starts. One of the hierarchy's first responses to the developing crisis was to establish a committee on bishops' concern¹¹⁰ (established in 2001) within the episcopal conference, focused on mutual episcopal guidance on the issue (Allen 2012).

A year later, in 2002, the Catholic hierarchy apologised for child sexual abuse by priests and religious over the previous twenty-year period in a communication entitled "Hope in the Midst of Crisis" (Rufo 2013; Francisco 2014), echoing a Papal apology in 2001 for Catholic abuses in the Pacific world region (Rufo 2013). This statement recognised Church elites' shame in regard to abuse and committed the Church to doing more to address its leadership deficits, including the development of an abuse/misconduct protocol. Reflecting an ecological approach (Coley and Mai 2022), other "first mover" national episcopates (e.g. Ireland, US) were seen as a point of reference for the Philippine bishops' innovation and learning (Allen 2012). As Cardinal Tagle put it, "the sad experiences in Ireland and the United States, and some other places, really have taught us a lesson" (Allen 2012).

The bishops noted that this scandal contributed to the already existing crisis confronting the society, writing:

Many have a sense of despair or hopelessness. To the various crises in society, we must now, with great sorrow and shame, add problems in the Church. We confess that cases of grave sexual misconduct by clerics and religious in the Philippines have rocked the bark of Peter. (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES 2002)

The bishops also implicitly acknowledged deficits in the Church's previous sexual abuse responses: "We realize that forgiveness and apologies must flow into a commitment to be purified and renewed. That is what we resolve to do" (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines 2002).

Following up on its commitment a year earlier, the Church's document on official procedures for dealing with abuse was published in 2003. Entitled "Pastoral Guidelines on Sexual Abuses and Misconduct by the Clergy" (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines 2003), they were advisory and non-binding for individual bishops (Rufo 2013). Over the subsequent years, the Filipino episcopate sought to further develop its pastoral strategies for responding to clerical child sexual abuse (Tagle 2012), including unsuccessfully seeking Vatican approval for its guidelines (Rufo 2013).

In general, the Church's response in the Philippines, as in other national churches, was lazy monopoly-like (Seidler 1979): Catholic authorities did not quickly acknowledge the extent of the problem and were reluctant to put in place adequate policies. They were also slow to publicise the extent of the problem.¹¹¹ Beyond a few prelates, bishops have not spoken or written much about the issue.

Reflecting on the topic in 2012, the archbishop of Manila, Luis Antonio Tagle (created cardinal in 2012), noted that the outbreak of cases in Asian societies like the Philippines was much more recent, and perhaps less common, than in other world regions of the Church, owing to the culture of shame surrounding abuse in this honour culture, whereby concealing the shame around abuse could help uphold a family's honour (Tagle 2012). Along with the legal context, this may help explain the relative rarity of civil cases

against the Church in this setting, as well as convictions.¹¹² Archbishop Tagle also argued that some offending clergy given another chance could be effective priests and that the publicising of cases was not always beneficial (Cahill and Wilkinson 2017, 91).

[Table 10](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the effects of the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that the tainting of Catholic identity brought on by scandal will have a dampening impact on recruitment and retention in its male workforce. As this table shows, I find a negative and statistically significant effect for sexual scandals on resignations among diocesan priests (Model 2). The sexual scandals coefficient (-1.519) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a -1.519 decrease in resignations. Substantively, this is a relatively small effect. Also, I find a negative and statistically significant effect for this perspective on resignations among diocesan seminarians (Model 3). The sexual scandals coefficient (-32.259) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a -32.259 decrease in resignations, a relatively large effect. The dampening effect on resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians suggests that scandals may operate differently for these

Table 12: Resignation Trends Among Diocesan Priests and Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines, 1970–2009

Time period	Resignation rate among diocesan priests (per 1000 diocesan priests)	Resignation rate among diocesan seminarians (per 1000 diocesan seminarians)
1970–1979	7.27	102.27
1980–1989	5.01	73.47
1990–1999	3.95	56.64
2000–2009	3.96	58.44

Source: Author's calculations based on *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*

two categories compared to the newly ordained. It may be that the conservative orientation of seminarians nowadays (Hoge 2002; Schuth 2019) and of older priest cohorts creates a partial inoculation effect against scandal compared to the newly ordained.

Tables 11 and 12 present the decadal ordination and resignation rates for the Philippines. In the 2000s, the ordination rate (per 10,000 Catholics) was 0.02, compared to 0.03 in the previous decade. This points to a marginal dampening impact of scandal on new callings in the 2000s. Regarding resignations, the decadal average for resignations among diocesan priests increased from 3.95 in the 1990s to 3.96 in the 2000s, also pointing to a marginal negative scandal-related impact on the male workforce. Similarly, the decadal resignation rate among diocesan seminarians increased from 56.64 in the 1990s to 58.44 in the 2000s. Overall, the statistical and historical data suggest that the impact of sexual scandals on callings in the Philippines is not clear cut.

Papal Visits Argument

As a Catholic-majority society with Asia's largest Catholic population, it is not surprising that Papal visits have been made to this country. In the 1970–2010 time period alone, the Philippines received a remarkable three Papal visits.

The first visit by a Pope to the Philippines was by Pope Paul VI, who visited this nation of islands in November 1970 (Youngblood 1990) as part of a wider visitation to East Asia – including Iran and Pakistan – and Australia. A typhoon just before the visit made preparations for the Pope's arrival more difficult than expected (Tagle 2014). Even so, the impact of this three-day visit may have been greater in light of the attempted assassination of the Pope at Manila airport.¹¹³ This visit also included an ordination ceremony for new callings at Rizal Park in Manila, which may have prompted further callings by drawing greater attention to the priesthood than might otherwise have been the case.

In his homily at Mass in Manila, the Pope addressed himself to students, workers, the poor, and the rich, and centred Christianity (Hervieu-Léger 1994) as the source of human fulfilment:

Christianity can be salvation also on the earthly and human level. Christ multiplied the loaves also to satisfy the physical hunger of the crowds following him. And Christ continues to work this miracle for those who truly believe in him, and who take from him the principles of a dynamic social order, that is, of an order that is continually progressing and being renewed. (PAUL VI 1970A)

A Papal visit typically involves a meeting with the local hierarchy or different national churches from a world region, in this case the Asian bishops. At this meeting, Pope Paul VI's speech made direct reference to embracing Vatican II's changes, then just five years on from its ending, highlighting an interaction effect between the ecumenical councils and Papal visits perspectives:

The first thing that We would propose to you is this: let us make an effort to take as our guide the teaching of the recent Ecumenical Council. This teaching sums up and ratifies the heritage of Catholic tradition and opens the way for a renewal of the Church according to the needs and possibilities of modern times. This adherence to the teachings of the Council can establish a wonderful harmony throughout the Church, and this harmony can enhance the effectiveness of our pastoral activity and preserve us from the errors and weaknesses of the present time. (PAUL VI 1970B)

In this speech, as elsewhere (Paul VI 1970c), Pope Paul VI also affirmed the importance of inculturation for the Asian Church in general, led by Filipino clergy. As the Pope put it:

None better than an Asian can speak to an Asian. None better than he should know how to draw from the treasures of your rich cultures the elements for the building up in Asia of a Church which will be one and catholic, founded upon the Apostles and yet different in its life styles. (PAUL VI 1970B)

Significantly, this gathering of the Asian bishops represented the first meeting of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference, which in turn inspired a collective meeting in Taipei in 1974 and its declaration “Evangelisation in Asia Today” (Arévalo 1988; Tagle 2014).

At the same time, Pope Paul VI recognised the human development challenges in this world region, urging attention to the poor and needy as an especially significant aspect of the Church’s ministry, highlighting an interaction between the Papal visits and prophetic ministry perspectives:

The Church must support as best she can the struggle against ignorance, hunger, disease and social insecurity. Taking her place in the vanguard of social action, she must bend all her efforts to support, encourage and push forward initiatives working for the full promotion of man. Since she is the witness of human conscience and of divine love for men, she must take up the defence of the poor and the weak against every form of social injustice.
(PAUL VI 1970B)

This point was also echoed in the Pope’s radio communication to the people of Asia the following day, to mark the inauguration of the Vatican’s radio station, Radio Veritas (Paul VI 1970c), an instrument it increasingly used to bring the Vatican into contact with the global laity (Pollard 2014). It was reinforced further by the Pope’s visit to the poor and needy in Manila’s Tondo neighbourhood (Tagle 2014)

Just eleven years later, Pope John Paul II began his six-day visit in February 1981, mainly for the beatification of seventeenth-century martyr Lorenzo Ruiz (Hanson 1987). He visited Manila, Bacolod, Cebu, Davao, and other cities, where he celebrated Mass for different audiences including religious, farmers, families, and indigenous tribes. He also held meetings with, and delivered speeches to, groups as varied as female religious, bishops, priests, and seminarians, lay Catholics, refugees, the poor, and sugar cane plantation owners and employees, all part of a wider apostolic journey to Asia including Japan and Pakistan. Significantly, the

Marcos regime suspended martial law for the visit (Carroll 2004; Marchadesch 2014).

Addressing himself to religious in Manila's cathedral, the Pope encouraged them in their callings while also challenging them not to run ahead of Church teachings (John Paul II 1981a), perhaps a thinly veiled rebuke to more socially aware clergy:

You rightly seek additional ways of bearing witness to Christ and serving his people. The Church must indeed be attentive to the needs of the men and women of our time. She cannot be indifferent to the problems which they face or to the injustices which they suffer. As you seek new ways of furthering the Gospel and of promoting human values, I offer you my encouragement and the assurance of my prayers.

At the same time I ask you to observe this guideline: that each apostolic endeavor should be in harmony with the teaching of the Church, with the apostolic purposes of your individual Institutes and with the original charism of your founders. May I also remind you of my words at Puebla: "You are priests and religious; you are not social or political leaders or officials of a temporal power ... Let us not be under the illusion that we are serving the Gospel if we 'dilute' our charism through an exaggerated interest in the wide field of temporal problems". (JOHN PAUL II 1981A)

The following day, and this time speaking at the beatification ceremony, the Pope returned to the idea of centring Christianity (Hervieu-Léger 1994), especially in the Far East regional context:

I entrust the destiny of the Philippines and of all Asia to Mary, Queen of the Rosary, who with the title of "La Naval" is venerated as the guardian of freedom for the Catholic faith. This is the full *meaning of this beatification*: to animate all the Christians of the Far East and to *spread the word of the Lord*. In a special way I say this to you Filipinos, who form the only predominantly Catholic nation in the eastern part of the continent of Asia. (JOHN PAUL II 1981B)

Even so, in Cebu City the Pope acknowledged the gap between religious values on the one hand and secular ones on the other:

When the Church holds up before you the ideals of Christian marriage and the Christian family, when she insists that the love of husband and wife and the love of parents should be marked by generosity, she knows that there are many factors today that threaten family life and tempt the human heart. The selfish pursuit of pleasure, sexual permissiveness and the fear of a permanent commitment are destructive forces. (JOHN PAUL II 1981C)

But the Pope's discourses were not filled solely by faith and morals concerns. Celebrating a Mass for farmers in Legazpi, the Pope reminded them of their stewardship of the land, but also spoke directly to the responsibilities of political and economic elites:

Let us reflect together on the *dignity of work, the nobility of work*. Do I have to tell you about it? You know the dignity and the nobility of your work—you who work to live, to improve your life, to provide for your children's sustenance, education and well-being. Your work is noble because it is a service for your families and for the wider community, which is society. Work is a service in which man himself grows to the extent to which he gives himself for others. For this reason, a fundamental concern of one and all—rulers, labor leaders and businessmen—must be this: *to give work to everyone*. (JOHN PAUL II 1981D)

Similarly, the Pope called upon plantation owners in Bacolod City to be guided by social justice concerns:

The right of ownership is legitimate in itself but it cannot be separated from its wider social dimension ... The landowners and the planters should therefore not let themselves be guided in the first place by the economic laws of growth and gain, nor by the demands of competition or the selfish accumulation of goods, but by the demands of justice and by the moral imperative of contributing to a decent standard of living and to working conditions which make it possible for the workers and for the rural society

to live a life that is truly human and to see all their fundamental rights respected. (JOHN PAUL II 1981E)

Thus, the Pope addressed himself to the plight of the poor, praising their dignity and urging them to play an active role in their human development (Calderisi 2013; Marchadesch 2014; Youngblood 1990), alongside concern for traditional faith and moral issues.

During this visit the Pope also stressed the importance of defending human rights, in the direct presence of Imelda Marcos, and reaffirmed Church teachings on abortion. The Pope's remarks on human rights were an implicit rebuke to the state's martial law, which was relaxed in a symbolic act by the Marcos regime in the month before the Papal visit (Marchadesch 2014). At the same time, Pope John Paul II urged reform rather than radicalism as an approach to changing society (Youngblood 1990, 67).

Although there was a lag between the Papal visit and the ending of the Marcos years in 1986, nonetheless the Pope's prophetic leadership helped to erode support for the regime (Hanson 1987), in an interesting point of interaction between the Papal visits and prophetic stances frameworks.

Pope John Paul II visited the Philippines again in 1995, returning to a society marked by growing structural inequalities between rich and poor and the increasing inroads of materialism and consumerism. This three-day visit in January took place to mark four hundred years of Church activity in the Philippines and to celebrate World Youth Day in Manila, the global Catholic youth event usually held every three years (Hervieu-Léger 1994), where the Pope exhorted about five million young Catholics (Cornelio 2016) to be inspired by the guiding figure of Jesus. Notably, on the second day of his visit the Pope put before his young audience at the University of Santo Tomas the possibility of receiving a calling:

It is always Christ who sends. *But whom does he send?* You, young people, are the ones he looks upon with love. Christ, who says: "Follow me", wants you to live your lives with a sense of vocation. He wants your lives to have a precise meaning, a dignity. Most of

you are called to marriage and family life; but some will receive a call to the priesthood or religious life. (JOHN PAUL II 1995A)

Addressing a much larger youth gathering in Rizal Park two days later, the Pope returned to the binary of religiosity and modernity:

How many young people think they are free because they have thrown off every restraint and every principle of responsibility? How many of them think that because certain forms of behavior are socially accepted they are therefore morally right? They abuse the beautiful gift of sexuality; they abuse drink and drugs, thinking that such behavior is all right because certain sectors of society tolerate it. Objective moral norms are abandoned under peer pressure and under the pervasive influence of trends and fashions publicized by the media. (JOHN PAUL II 1995B)

It is customary, usually at the end of a Papal visit, for the Pope to meet with the national hierarchy. In meeting with the Philippine episcopal conference, the Pope highlighted the bishops' ongoing prophetic ministry, in both the faith and morals and social justice domains (Medina and Antonio 2014), as reflected in his own earlier homilies and speeches:

You know well the enormous challenges presented to you as Bishops: the loss of noble ideals, confusion of the moral conscience regarding good and evil, growing materialism and religious indifference, the injustices inherent in certain economic and political policies, the increasing gap between rich and poor ... Your firm stand against the pessimism and selfishness of those who plot against the splendor of human sexuality and human life (*Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, Conciliar Document*, n. 585) is an essential demand of your pastoral ministry and of your service to the Filipino people. (JOHN PAUL II 1995C)

[Table 10](#) presents the results of the regression models testing the Papal visits perspective, suggesting that pastoral visits to a national Church by the Pope as leader of this global religious system will have a bolstering or eroding impact on the male workforce. How-

However, ordinations dropped from 90 in 1970 (0.02 per 10,000 Catholics) to 34 in 1971 (0.01 per 10,000 Catholics). At the same time, ordinations rose to 140 in 1977 (0.03 per 10,000 Catholics), seven years after the visit, the typical length of Catholic seminary formation, which suggests a relatively strong bolstering impact of the visit on callings.

Resignations among diocesan priests dropped from 16 in 1970 (7.81 per 1,000 diocesan priests) to 10 in 1971 (4.75 per 1,000 diocesan priests) before rising again to 20 in 1972 (9.40 per 1,000 diocesan priests). Similarly, resignations among diocesan seminarians declined from 188 in 1970 (104.61 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 169 in 1971 (91.79 per 1,000 priests), increasing to 203 in 1972 (104.80 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians). Overall, the data point to a partial bolstering impact on callings of the 1970 Papal visit.

The Papal visit more than ten years later, in 1981, may help account for the increase in ordinations from 129 in 1981 (0.031 per 10,000 Catholics) to 150 in 1982 (0.035 per 10,000 Catholics) and to 165 in 1983 (0.037 per 10,000 Catholics). Interestingly, there were 146 ordinations in 1988 (0.02 per 10,000 Catholics), seven years after the visit.

Resignations among diocesan priests increased from 15 in 1981 (5.11 per 1,000 diocesan priests) to 19 in 1982 (6.43 per 1,000 diocesan priests), before dropping to 11 in 1983 (3.59 per 1,000 diocesan priests).

As for resignations among diocesan seminarians, these decreased from 195 in 1980 (82.27 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 147 in 1981 (56.14 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) and rose to 247 in 1982 (81.54 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

Overall, the data suggest the impact of the 1981 visit on callings was not clear-cut.

The third Papal visit to the Philippines in 1995 provides an additional test of this perspective. Ordinations increased from 226 in 1995 (0.03 per 10,000 Catholics) to 251 in 1996 (0.04 per 10,000 Catholics) and then dropped to 191 in 1997 (0.03 per

10,000 Catholics). In 2002, there were 204 ordinations (0.03 per 10,000 Catholics).

The resignation data show that resignations among diocesan priests increased from 17 in 1995 (3.78 per 1,000 diocesan priests) to 20 in 1996 (4.31 per 1,000 diocesan priests) and 20 in 1997 (4.18 per 1,000 diocesan priests).

Similarly, resignations among diocesan seminarians increased from 279 in 1995 (64.15 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) to 307 in 1996 (70.25 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians) and 312 in 1997 (64.67 per 1,000 diocesan seminarians).

Overall, the ordination data suggest that the third Papal visit had a partial bolstering impact on new callings. At the same time, it also had a bolstering impact on resignations. This resignation-related finding was somewhat surprising in light of the increased confidence levels in the Church in the mid-1990s among the general populace mentioned earlier.

Summary and Discussion

To summarise, the Filipino case study provides support for critical events theory, especially regarding the ecumenical councils, sexual scandals, and Papal visits perspectives. I find a positive and statistically significant effect for the ecumenical councils perspective in the regression model for ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, suggesting that the conciliar changes bolstered callings. Substantively, this effect is small. This may be because the council's emphasis on the poor and needy articulated in the episcopate's prophetic ministry appealed to socially aware Filipino men, bringing out an interaction effect between the ecumenical councils and prophetic stances perspectives. At the same time, the decadal averages for ordinations indicate a post-Vatican II reduction in callings. Thus, the impact of Vatican II on callings in this context is not clear-cut. I did not find statistically significant effects for the prophetic stances perspective.

Another interesting result relates to the sexual scandals perspective, suggesting that scandals erode the legitimacy of the

Church as a religious system and thus reduce vocations. The dampening impact of sexual scandals on diocesan priest and diocesan seminarian resignations in the statistical analysis was unexpected and suggests that the effect of scandals may operate differently for men at different stages of their callings, having a dissimilar impact on men at later stages of ministry and among seminarians than the newly ordained. Variability in the ideological orientation among older priests and would-be callings may help account for this. At the same time, the historical data pointing to a negative impact of sexual scandals suggests that the effect of scandals on callings in this context is not clear-cut.

The fourth perspective suggested that visits to national churches by the head of the world's Catholics would bolster or erode callings depending on the context of the visit, such as whether it co-occurred with sexual scandals. Although I did not find statistically significant effects for the impact of Papal visits on callings, the historical data provide partial support for this perspective.

This chapter closes out the case studies – four in all – included in this book. The next chapter concludes *Sacred Callings* by reflecting on the overall support for the theory put forward, the limits of the study, and where future research on this topic might go.

Conclusion: Critical Events and Religious Change

Introduction

Over the last sixty or so years, global Catholicism has undergone many significant institutional changes, and understanding these – and the challenges¹¹⁴ they create – is key to understanding the future of one of the world's largest religious traditions. One of the most significant shifts relates to Catholic priesthood shortages in Western contexts brought on by declines in new priests to replace priest cohorts that are dying off, prompting the redistribution of clerical labour from Africa and Asia to other world regions.

This change is reflected nowadays in media reportage about “importing” and “exporting” countries. For example, in a 2016 report and accompanying brief video in *The Irish Times*, a Ghanaian engineer-cum-priest Father Raphael Annan, whose father discouraged him from joining the Spiritan order in the first place, reflected on the challenges and satisfactions of priestly ministry in two south Dublin parishes, including adapting to different worship practices and commitment levels as compared to those prevailing among devotees in Africa (Pollak 2016). This story about an African priest ministering in Ireland represents a flipping of historical clerical mobility patterns, whereby priests from Ireland were sent to African countries to serve as missionaries there.¹¹⁵

An earlier 2008 article in *The New York Times* entitled “India, an Exporter of Priests, May Keep Them” revealed a similar dynamic. According to this article about India as a high-calling country, many of these callings serve as reverse missionary priests

in parts of the world with much fewer vocations. However, today this transfer option seems less appealing to Indian bishops as a long-term solution to clerical shortages elsewhere, especially as Kerala's Catholic priests, drawn to direct interaction with the laity at home rather than dutiful administration of the sacraments abroad, themselves increasingly choose ministry in their home country (Goodstein 2008).

Adding my own contribution to this journalistic reportage, in 2019 I was contacted by a reporter running an article for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on Catholic priesthood trends in Europe, one with a curious Indian inflection involving the increasing use by Irish dioceses of imported priests from Kerala (and elsewhere),¹¹⁶ notwithstanding already existing Indian episcopal reservations. Apart from reflecting the upending of traditional importing/exporting patterns, this flow of priests from India to Ireland reveals the declining ability of the Irish Church to attract new callings and the ageing out of an older generation of priests. Thus, as a result of this “demographic transition” (Vilariño and Tizón 1998, 25), it is not uncommon nowadays to see elderly Irish priests serving out their ministries in parishes alongside younger priests from other countries.

Across different contexts, these media stories invite one basic question: what are the drivers of Catholic male personnel trends that produce different clerical labour markets, where shortages prevail in one and surpluses in another? Attempting to answer this question, and showing what this reveals about religion more generally, has been the main focus of this book.

Using in-depth case studies and relying on statistical and historical analysis, *Sacred Callings* attempted to advance a theory of personnel change that relies on the impact of a combination of four relatively quick-moving and interactive critical events with inhibitive or supportive impacts on the Catholic workforce of religious specialists – measured in terms of percentage increases or decreases in ordination and resignation rates for diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians after critical events – in four distinct locations across multiple world regions. In this account, whether

the Catholic male workforce grows or declines depends on the impact of Vatican II, whether Catholic elites spoke out on faith and morals or social justice issues, whether sexual scandals broke out in the national Church, and whether the Pope visited a country or not.

In [Chapter 1](#), I looked at existing explanations for Catholic callings. Helen Rose Ebaugh and colleagues (Ebaugh et al. 1996) argue that cross-national variation in Catholic vocations, especially on the female side, can best be understood in terms of a secular opportunity framework. Yet, this explanation seems less applicable to the male workforce, which was not subject to the same labour market constraints as the female one prior to the 1960s. Perhaps male workforce trends can best be understood in terms of the mandatory celibacy rule? This explanation – arguably best represented by Schoenherr’s work (Schoenherr 2002) – is also limited, as it is unable to account for why vocations are declining in most advanced Western countries but are growing in others such as Nigeria, where the same disciplinary requirement applies. Also, to the extent that regime transitions against or towards democracy explain workforce trends (Fishman and Jones 2007), the empirical evidence presented in favour of this approach does not investigate national cases outside of the developed world.

As we saw earlier, [Chapter 1](#) introduced and developed my alternative four-part event-based theory. To recap, I expected that ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, sexual scandals, and Papal visits would make for either increases or decreases (or both) in the workforce.

In their earlier study of Catholic vocations, sociologists Rodney Stark and Roger Finke argued for the importance of this kind of analysis of workforce trends, even if they themselves did not investigate different categories of critical events or develop an event-led perspective, especially beyond the singular case of the US. Looking at trend lines in the labour market of nuns and female labour force participation in the US between 1948 and 1995, they wrote: “by far the most important feature of these curves is that together they strongly discourage any explanation based on *grad-*

ual social changes. The declines are *sudden* and *simultaneous*. This very strongly suggests that the explanation lies in a *causal event*” (Stark and Finke 2000, 133). Thus, the present study sought to take up the challenge of advancing an event-driven perspective of religious change.

The four case studies – Argentina, Malta, Nigeria, and the Philippines – showcase interesting points of similarity and difference with respect to the impact of the critical events on workforce trends. By way of summary of the effects of the different arguments across the four locales (see [Table 13](#)), it is useful to think of them in terms of a ranked order from the events with greater empirical support to the events with less empirical support. Overall, I find most support for the ecumenical councils, sexual scan-

Table 13: Overview of the Statistical and Historical Results Across the Four Case Studies

	P	M	Argen- tina		Malta		Nigeria		Philip- pines	
Ecumenical Councils	+/-	IA/RWA	-	-	0	-	0	+	+	-
Prophetic Stances	+/-	RWA/IA	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual Scandals	-	AS	0	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-
Papal Visits	+	I	+/-	+/-	-	+	0	+/-	0	+/-

Note: P denotes the proposition(s) related to each critical event. M denotes the mechanism(s) linking each critical event to workforce dynamics (IA = Identity ambivalence; RWA = Religious worldview affirmation; AS = Avoidance of shame; I = Imitation). For each case study, the column on the left (statistical results) indicates whether the variable reached statistical significance in the OLS regressions at or below the $p < .10$ threshold regarding one or more of the dependent variables. The plus sign (“+”) indicates a positive unstandardised coefficient for one or more of the dependent variables, the negative sign (“-”) a negative unstandardised coefficient for one or more of the dependent variables, and zero (“0”) no statistically significant effect. The column on the right (historical results) indicates an increase (“+”) and/or a decrease (“-”) in trend lines after the critical event. Zero (“0”) indicates no observed effect.

dals, and Papal visits perspectives, with somewhat less support for the prophetic stances perspective.

Common across all four country studies is evidence in support of the ecumenical councils perspective. I find statistically significant effects for this argument in Argentina and the Philippines. While this perspective failed to reach statistical significance in Malta, the decadal averages for ordinations indicate the council's eroding influence on callings in this context. Additionally, the ten-year averages for ordinations show a downward trend in ordinations in Argentina, Malta, and the Philippines in the decade after Vatican II as compared to the decade before. Even so, the prehistory of Vatican II showing diocesan priest ordination peaks in Argentina (1955) and Malta (1956) *before* the council – and in the Philippines (1964) *during* it – cautions against making overstated claims about Vatican II's impact. The ecumenical councils effect in Nigeria is the less straightforward of the four cases: here I find evidence from the historical data of the ecumenical council's bolstering impact on ordinations in Nigeria, where new callings were higher in the decade following the council than the one before, even as the statistical analysis did not find a statistically significant ecumenical councils effect on callings.

In Argentina, I find statistically significant effects for the prophetic stances framework, where the Church's muted prophetic ministry regarding political violence likely had a dampening impact on ordinations. In the other case studies, I did not find statistically significant effects for prophetic stances.

Regarding the sexual scandals perspective, I find statistically significant effects for this perspective in three of the four cases. I find *negative* effects for this perspective on resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians in Nigeria, suggesting that sexual scandals buttress recruitment. Owing to cultural conditions specific to this setting, these likely created an inoculation effect from the eroding impacts on callings brought on by scandal found in some of the other contexts.

This study also brings out support for the Papal visits perspective. I find statistically significant effects for this approach in

Argentina and Malta. Additionally, visual inspection of the ordination and resignation trend lines in all four cases, but especially in Malta and the Philippines, provides support for the bolstering impact on callings of visits by the Pope to a national Church.

Together, the ranked order of significance of the critical events was ecumenical councils, sexual scandals, and Papal visits, followed by prophetic stances. Put differently, there is a hierarchy of critical events in terms of their impact on Catholic workforce dynamics across time and space.

Looking beyond the relative influence of the critical events, the analytical framework developed in *Sacred Callings* also has broader significance for understanding religious change, a topic that has engaged sociologists going back to the discipline's founders (Molteni and Biolcati 2023). Three issues, in particular, are worth highlighting.

First, this book underscores a “contexts of religion” perspective by recognising the influence of institutional and contextual influences on religious organisations in general and on historically evolving workforce patterns in particular. While previous research has examined contextual influences on Catholic vocations in terms of the influence of diocesan ideological cultures (Stark 1998) and local sociocultural and political changes (Vilarino 1997), an event-centred perspective can be revealing about how critical events shape diverse expressions of Catholicism across different cultural contexts, as well as how plural forms of Catholicism themselves shape critical events.

Regarding how events shape diversity within Catholicism, this perspective showcased how variation in local settings impacted how Vatican II as a global event was contextualised in different national churches. For example, in the Philippines a greater emphasis on the Church's social teachings in the wake of Vatican II, partly owing to its local reality of poverty, contrasted with the Maltese context, where this issue was less salient. This meant that social justice was less likely to operate as a cue for callings in Malta as compared to the Philippines.

Concerning plurality within Catholicism shaping critical events, this book also reveals how events such as sexual scandals were impacted by specific local features of Catholicism. For example, because of the Nigerian Church's missionary character, most scandals were linked to non-Nigerian clergy and religious than to Nigerian ones, thus reducing the credibility challenges for the local Church, which may have partially contributed to the lack of sexual scandals in this context compared to the others. Thus, sexual scandals became less of a legitimacy cue for callings in this context.

Second, by emphasising the relevance of sudden, short-term, and immediate events in bringing about religious change, *Sacred Callings* challenges the emphasis in the Catholic workforce literature on invoking gradual, long-run structural processes (e.g. modernisation), or long-term demographic shifts interacting with other sociocultural changes, as explanations for secular trends (Ebaugh et al. 1996; Bezjak 2012). In contrast to this earlier literature, I also analyse intra-institutional events largely within the control of the Catholic Church rather than external social forces mainly beyond its influence.

Third, the critical events theory developed in this book emphasises the importance of the cultural legitimacy and symbolic weight of religious organisations in maintaining their institutional strength. This means that callings within Catholicism are rooted less in a feeling of being called by God or a desire to serve others than by a wider cultural context that legitimises the Church as a religious tradition. In this view, trends in callings – as “social facts”¹¹⁷ – are produced by event-driven institutional factors operating at the level of the national Church, which shape whether a calling is perceived as more or less appealing. I have argued that some events, such as Papal visits, usually buttress this legitimacy, while others, such as sexual scandals, erode it, and that these events have interactive effects and differently so, across time and space.

More generally, the Catholic Church suffers from what might be termed a legitimacy problematic. When the Church loses

legitimacy in the national context arising from “eroding” events, it is difficult even for short-term “bolstering” events to retain their effectiveness in attracting recruits and cohort replacements from the local environment, perhaps with the exception of settings where such events interact with a historical context in which the Church is opposing the state (Conway 2016).

Beyond the sociology of religion, this study also attempts to contribute to eventful sociology (Sewell 1990; Wilde 2007; see also Steinmetz 2004) in two significant ways. First, in contrast to Sewell’s focus on global-altering or epic events (Sewell 1996), this book investigated – following Berezin (2012) – historical events that do not necessarily have such impacts, such as sexual scandals and Papal visits. Thus, I expand the scope of historical events to these less culturally consequential events.

Second, I pay attention to the interaction effects between different critical events. For example, in Malta the Pope’s 2010 visit and remarks during it were influenced by the sexual scandals that came into the public domain in Malta around this time, thus helping to shape the meaning of this event. Similarly, in Nigeria the Papal visit in 1998 provided an impetus for the episcopate’s ministry encouraging Nigerians to work toward creating a better tomorrow inspired by Catholic values, bringing out an interaction effect between the Papal visits and prophetic stances perspectives.

Future Research

While this book provides empirical support for critical events theory, it should be interpreted in light of shortcomings relating to generalisability, gender, and integrating a short-term approach and a long-term one.

Although this study sought to investigate four corners of global Catholicism reflecting different varieties within the Catholic case, the countries under investigation do not represent the full range of Catholic societies. Thus, this comparative historical approach involving a “deep” investigation of a number of select cases could be extended to a broader set of cases. The fact that this study finds

support for critical events theory in four quite disparate contexts suggests that it might find support in other settings as well.

Regarding this transferability question, two secondary case studies from the less studied world regions of Africa and Asia are instructive as cases for enlarging the scope of this book's argument. Consider the South Korean case, another candidate for a growth Church in Asia, which could have taken the place of the Philippines. Korea's diocesan priest workforce increased from 556 (5.46 per 10,000 Catholics) in 1975 to 3,743 (6.69 per 10,000 Catholics) in 2015. While the absolute number of religious order priests increased from 271 to 689 in the 1975–2015 time frame, this represented a decrease in the relative numbers (per 10,000 Catholics) from 2.66 to 1.23. Similarly, the absolute number of religious brothers increased from 141 to 588 but declined from 1.38 to 1.05 in relative terms.¹¹⁸

Although Vatican II's liturgical reforms only began to take hold among Catholics in other parts of this world region such as China in the mid-1980s, when translations of its texts became more widely available (Madsen 1998), they occurred earlier in South Korea. Lacking this liturgical lag, Korean displaced Latin as the language of the liturgy in 1969. Even though the Korean Church stood back from taking prophetic stances during the Japanese colonial regime (1910–1945), after Vatican II it began to exert a stronger public influence than before, especially during the democracy activism of the 1980s (Pollack and Rosta 2017). The predominant basis of the Church in small, isolated rural communities also delayed the impact of Vatican II (Allen 2014).

Papal visits occurred in South Korea, most recently by Pope Francis in 2014, which likely bolstered Catholic identity in the national society, at least in the short-run. Towards the end of the 2000s, later than in other national churches, sexual scandals came to light in this case, leading to popular dissatisfaction with the Church's image and criticism of its ministry performance. For example, in 2018 a female victim of abuse inspired by the secular #MeToo social movement came forward by accusing a priest of

attempted rape earlier in the decade, prompting the episcopate to issue a public apology for clerical abuse.¹¹⁹

Beyond Asia, Uganda could have been an alternative case to Nigeria. Uganda is a young, quickly expanding country, and Catholics comprise about 40 per cent of the general populace (Jenkins 2011). Between 1970 and 2015, the workforce of diocesan priests in Uganda increased from 341 (1.01 per 10,000 Catholics) to 1,856 (1.04 per 10,000 Catholics). By contrast, the religious priest workforce reduced from 561 (1.67 per 10,000 Catholics) in 1970 to 335 (0.18 per 10,000 Catholics) in 2015. As for religious brothers, their absolute number increased from 328 in 1970 to 561 in 2015, representing a decrease in the relative number (per 10,000 Catholics) from 0.97 to 0.31.¹²⁰

Vatican II's reforms seemed to speak to a different world amid the massive challenges Uganda faced in the 1970s and 1980s arising from civil war, making it difficult to acquaint Catholics with it let alone embed it locally (Hastings 1988). At the same time, local implementation of liturgical changes, fostering inter-faith interactions, and exercising prophetic ministry were among the most notable impacts of the council over the years (Arua Diocese Bulletin 2012). Like their Nigerian counterparts, the Ugandan Catholic bishops addressed themselves to the human development challenges of the society (Gifford 2015), speaking out in pastoral letters on topics such as abortion, AIDS, and Church–state interactions (Arua Diocese Bulletin 2012). A Papal visit to Uganda took place in 1993 and 2015, when Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis, respectively, travelled to this African nation. Perhaps more significantly, Pope Paul VI visited Uganda in 1969 (Hastings 1988), just four years after Vatican II, when this event had barely taken hold in the country. There, he established SECAM in Kampala,¹²¹ a region-wide assembly of national hierarchies and one of the most significant Vatican II-inspired developments in this world region. Sexual scandals have also undermined the ministry performance of clergy in this society, especially abuses of adult women, which came into the public domain in the early 2000s (DeGeorge 2019).

A second shortcoming of this book relates to gender. Sociologists Rodney Stark and Roger Finke point to gender dualism as a limitation of past Catholic workforce research, noting that “the voluminous literature on the decline in seminarians and male religious seldom even mentions the decline in women religious, and vice versa” (Stark and Finke 2000, 133). While I do not argue that critical events theory is a gender-specific explanation and I do engage with the female workforce literature, I focused on the male workforce for the reasons mentioned in the introduction. At the same time, future research could fruitfully examine whether the critical events perspective holds for the female workforce, which underwent decline in most Western countries from the 1960s.

Third, sociologists would do well to pay more attention to integrating a short-term approach with a long-term one, complexifying the theory advanced here. Although this book argues for the importance of an event-driven approach as an alternative to long-run explanations, it may be that critical events operate alongside longer-term dynamics in shaping trends in callings. Perhaps critical events themselves can even be viewed as partly responses to these long-run factors. For example, Papal visits often bring out a faith versus secular discourse and thus become occasions for shoring up Catholic identity in the face of growing secularisation. Thus, combining a critical events perspective with a secularisation perspective could help to advance understanding of the relative contribution of Catholic-specific factors and wider ones in accounting for growth or decline in callings.

Combined, these limitations challenge scholars to recognise the complexity of understanding trends in Catholic callings across time and space.

Practical Import

Finally, what are the practical implications of this study for clerical mobility norms¹²² and managing the future of the Catholic workforce? Put differently, what lessons does this study carry for the Catholic religious leadership?

As mentioned earlier, some national churches, such as in India and Nigeria, have up to now been relatively immune to the downward trending in the workforce that most of their counterparts in Western Europe experienced since the 1950s. Against the backdrop of the uneven global distribution of the Church's workforce noted before, the findings of this book point to a labour force dilemma facing the Catholic Church. In contexts where the workforce is declining, the Church will likely become increasingly reliant on imported non-indigenous clerical labour and, in this scenario, runs the risk of further eroding the Church's legitimacy by increasing the cultural distance between clergy and laity as well as between local and foreign clergy (Gautier, Perl, and Fichter 2012).

Previous research highlights that foreign-born clergy sometimes face challenges in ministering in a new cultural context (Schuth 2019). For example, Irish dioceses have recently recruited Nigerian priests to fill clerical posts but not without controversy, as reflected in an Irish bishop's apology in October 2015 for alleged insensitive remarks by a Nigerian priest during a homily in Longford cathedral (Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference 2015).

This workforce dilemma may be particularly salient in Catholic-majority societies, where the historic connection between Catholic commitment and ethnic identity means that cultural clashes between imported clergy and the Catholic laity would be more likely to arise. By contrast, in more pluralistic religious settings, where the Church tends to rely less on appeals to national belonging to legitimise its organisational policies and practices (Dillon 1996), this workforce dilemma may be less significant (Conway 2016).

At the same time, the flexibility of the Catholic workforce and the Church's ability to export it from one part of the world to another as the need arises, underscores the global nature of the Catholic Church. Indeed, missionary activity, or evangelisation, is a defining feature of Catholic doctrine and practice (Conway 2016).

In the past, this religious "empire building" in Africa and Latin America relied on imported foreign clerical labour from West-

ern Europe during an important expansionary phase of Catholicism going back to the fifteenth century. During this time, literally thousands of priests and religious left their homelands to set up Catholic outposts in the “new world”, where they brought local people into contact with Christianity, sometimes at the expense of local religious traditions, and transmitted the Catholic faith through the institutional mechanisms of schools, hospitals, and other social services to meet the needs of the local population (Payne 1984). Nowadays, the Church in many parts of Europe (with the exception perhaps of the “successful” case of Poland) (Conway 2016) faces vocations shortages and financially constrained caring burdens amid the aging out of clergy and religious (see Katzenstein 1998).

Jettisoning any high vocation-era nostalgia, the Church in this world region is now turning to high-callings countries in Africa, Asia, and some parts of Eastern Europe to sustain its parishes via south-to-north clerical mobility (Augustyn 2006; Conway 2016; Ter Haar 2009), as the opening of this chapter attests. This reverse missionary process (Ter Haar 2009; Davie 2002) is symbolic of a larger shift from Western Europe to the global south as the centre of world Catholicism (Linden 2009; Allen 2014).

Not to at least partially address these workforce asymmetries and labour market shortages through global clerical flows – alongside boosting local, home-grown vocations – lays the Catholic Church open to the claim that its own proclaimed missionary imperative lacks legitimacy. Addressing this clerical labour force dilemma represents a significant future challenge for the Catholic Church (Conway 2016).

Although it is commonplace to assess the strength of the Church in terms of sheer numbers of clergy, this is not the whole story. While the priest shortage problem is a pressing one for the Catholic case given the centrality of the vowed male-only celebration of the Eucharist (D’Antonio, Dillon, and Gautier 2013; Schoenherr and Young 1993), it is partially tempered by a “fewer and better” argument, which frames callings more in qualitative than in quantitative terms. Past research suggests that today’s callings tend to

be characterised by higher levels of personal commitment (at least in the US context), as recent seminarians hold views more in line with official Church teachings (and out of step with the laity) than callings ordained in previous decades (Hoge, Shields, and Griffin 1995; Schoenherr and Young 1993; Sullins 2013, 2016).

This “sectarianisation” of Catholicism is enhanced by the celibacy rule, which acts as a kind of sorting device filtering out less committed callings (Sullins 2016; Finke and Wittberg 2000). Tainted by its own sexual scandals, changes in intake and formation processes in seminaries (Marmion 2019; Sullins 2016) also lean in this direction. In this view, a smaller, more committed clergy may well be more preferable to a larger but more loosely attached one, even if the aggregate number of Church personnel reduces. The remarks of Pope Benedict XVI in 2005 about the status-driven motivations of some new callings in Africa also express well this tension between quality and quantity: “they [bishops] must not merely be content with having many future priests but must see which really are the true vocations, discerning between the weeds and the good wheat”¹²³

Even so, the Church’s replacement and retention issues are not going to disappear overnight. Jan Kerkhofs’s 1995 observation in *Europe Without Priests?* that “the problem of an approaching shortage of priests has not completely penetrated the collective awareness of the church” (Kerkhofs 1995, 1) may have captured something about the then European situation, but seems less apt in relation to the contemporary global Church. Very few Church elites today are likely unconcerned by Western world personnel trends and the Church’s capacity to attract new callings from the laity.¹²⁴ Of course, inspiring new callings is not going to be easy, and as personnel numbers decline it becomes subject to a kind of slippery-slope-like dynamic: having fewer Catholic priests reduces direct contact with the laity, which erodes opportunities to encourage recruitment, which, in turn, likely reduces callings. Without being successful in attracting and retaining callings, however, the perpetuation of the Church is at stake (Schoenherr 2002).

How might the Church respond to this situation? Classical sociologist Max Weber – and, more recently, Pierre Bourdieu – made the point that the Church’s monopoly of religious power existed to defend its institutional interests vis-à-vis (ex)internal demands (Bourdieu 1991; Calhoun 1991). This gives this institution an inertial quality that makes change slow-moving, much like turning around an ocean tanker (Kollman 2013). Even so, clerical power is not absolute. Just as the clergy rely on the laity to bring in new recruits, there is no refuge for the Church in lack of access to the Eucharist and empty pews.

The recent example of Pope Francis shows that the Church is a flexible entity even as it remains bound to its historic teachings, open to responding to a changing social world (Kalbian 2014). Past research teaches us that the conditions under which religious institutional change is likely to take place has to do with legitimacy challenges and organisational resources, whereby the Church is likely to reform when it faces threats to its viability and when this is accompanied by strong organisation (Wilde 2007). Applied to the male workforce, this indicates that when the legitimacy of the sacraments is called into question and this is underpinned by well-organised effort to do something about it, this might prompt a change in the Church’s bureaucratic rules (Schoenherr and Young 1993; Schoenherr 2002).

Such legitimacy challenges are increasingly being brought to the fore. For example, hardly any discussion (popular or scholarly) nowadays of shortages of Catholic male callings in developed societies does not include reflection on the Church’s tainting in the wake of sexual scandal, whether priests should be allowed to marry, or whether the Church should ordain women as priests in the future (e.g. Barlow 2021; Schoenherr 2002). It is worth noting that claims-making around female priests has an organised aspect, reflected in social movements such as Roman Catholic Womenpriests (Mayblin 2017), though one which currently has a marginal presence within the global Church. Of course, allowing married or female priests would mean disturbing Catholicism’s current “strict” selection mechanisms, which preserve the priest-

hood for ordained male celibates. Without weighing in to these debates, the “enduring cultural symbol” (Deegan 1976, 77) of the Catholic male priesthood is increasingly seen as having wider sociological implications for such things as sexualised crime, gender (in)equality, and institutional change.

But even if change to the male celibacy rule does occur, this will not necessarily prompt a revitalisation of the Catholic priesthood, especially in advanced Western societies characterised by the growing inroads of secular modernity. For example, it is worth noting that recruitment of ordained clergy in some non-Catholic religious groups such as Anglicanism, where clergy are allowed to marry, has been trending downward, albeit not as dramatically as in the Catholic case (Davie 2000). Additionally, within the Catholic tradition itself, the relatively low figures for married convert priests (at least in the US case) (Sullins 2016) do not point to marriage as always operating as a significant draw for would-be priests.

As the priesthood’s “cohort replacement dilemma” is likely to remain one of the key challenges for the future trajectory of global Catholicism, sociologists of religion would do well to pay more attention to the potential relevance of an event-driven perspective in better understanding this phenomenon, even as the impact of critical events on trend lines in the Catholic priesthood may vary considerably from one context to another.

Appendix: Methodology

In this appendix, I provide fine-grained information about various aspects of the book's methodological approach, while avoiding inflicting this detail, in the earlier chapters, on the less seriously interested. This "underneath the bonnet" information helps to make the decisions taken during the study more open and transparent. After discussing the terms used in the book, the Appendix considers the quantitative and qualitative research in turn. The final part includes a brief reflection on positionality.

Terminology

It is useful to begin by making brief mention of the study's terminology. This book uses the term "callings" to denote men who choose the Catholic priesthood. This term derives from the Latin *vocare*, meaning "to call". Thus, it is closely linked to an alternative term "vocation", which generally refers to an individual's answer to the "What life pathway should I follow?" question, whether in a religious or secular setting (Weigert and Blasi 2007). In more Weberian terms, it refers to what an individual "lives 'for'" or "lives 'off'" (Weber 1970, 84).

Whether for secular reasons (e.g. to marry, follow a career outside the Church, or some other lifestyle reason) or religious ones (e.g. violation of the celibacy rule), or a mix of the two, some men choose to resign or are "released" from the priesthood or seminary. Resignations from the Church's workforce, an indicator of

ministry dissatisfaction (Sullins 2016), are sometimes referred to as “defections” or “desertions”, terms that are suggestive of betrayal or abandonment.

Past use of these terms reflected the Church’s sometimes judgmental approach toward “lapsed priests”, as they were then known (O’Malley 2008), who crossed the clergy–laity boundary, even though it was officially allowed under canon law (Allen 2014; Sullins 2016). However, this approach to resignations is much less common today (Sullins 2016). A more neutral designation is “resignations”, “departures” or, more colloquially, “dropouts”, “ex’s” or “quitters”. Following past studies (e.g. Hoge, Shields, and Griffin 1995; Hoge 2002; Schoenherr and Young 1990), my preferred term in this book is “resignations”. I use this term to denote a Catholic priest or seminarian who resigned from ministry or seminary.

Quantitative Research

Workforce Data Sources

The data employed to investigate the book’s propositions are derived from two denominational sources published annually by the Vatican – the *Annuario Pontificio* (hereafter, *AP*) and the *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* (hereafter, *ASE*) (see [Table A.1](#)). Combined, these sources represent a kind of “yellow pages” of Catholicism. As these publish workforce indicators across time and space, they help facilitate international comparison. Fortunately, the Catholic Church has been particularly sensitive to the need to collect data about itself, partly arising from its own institutional interest in being able to report its “success” as a global religious tradition (Augustyn 2006).

The *AP* is the annual directory or yearbook of the Holy See and includes retrospective data (by two years) on every titular and residential see or diocese in the universal Church going back to 1860. For example, the *AP* for 1952 reports data for 1950 (i.e. relates to the situation prevailing in each diocese on December 31 two years before the volume date (see [Table A.1](#)), which means that

the data are time-lagged. This unit of analysis reflects the significance of dioceses in the Catholic tradition, the key administrative unit in the Church led by a bishop who is directly accountable to Rome rather than the national Church for his pastoral stewardship (Sprows Cummings, Matovina, and Orsi 2018). In addition, the *AP* provides global data about the geographical organisation of national churches as well as data about previous Popes, the college of Cardinals, national episcopal conferences, and the Roman Curia (e.g. secretaries of state, sacred congregations, councils, commissions and committees, Papal nuncios, ambassadors to the Vatican, religious and secular institutes, universities and institutes of higher education, pontifical academies, and ecclesiastical institutes).

The residential see section of the *AP* provides elaboration – in English, Italian, and other languages – of the abbreviations used in the volume to denote different Church personnel. Regarding diocesan information, the *AP* lists the numbers of various categories of Church personnel – as well as units of Church organisation such as churches, parishes, schools/colleges, charitable institutions, and hospitals – in metropolitan and suffragan dioceses in each national Church. A metropolitan diocese is one headed by an archbishop or metropolitan, and the dioceses which make up the larger archdiocese are termed suffragan dioceses.

The data collection process was complicated by the fact that some dioceses in the case study countries were created during the

Table A.1: Descriptive Information on *Annuario Pontificio* and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*

	<i>Annuario Pontificio</i>	<i>Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae</i>
Years analysed	1950–1968	1969–2010
Level of analysis	Diocese	National Church
Data collection procedure	Questionnaire, completed by diocesan curia	Questionnaire, completed by (arch) chancery

period 1950–1968. This meant that the number of observations (dioceses) in each country changed during the six-decade or so period under investigation. For example, in 1950 there were just six observations (dioceses) in Nigeria; by 1968 this increased to twenty-four.

Another complication arose from the change from 1970 (in the *AP*) of the Latin abbreviations used to denote different Church professionals. For example, from 1970, secular priests, religious priests, newly ordained diocesan priests, and seminarians were denoted by the shorthands “sd”, “rs”, “dn”, and “sm” respectively. Before 1970, these personnel categories were indicated by “sac.d.”, “sac. r.”, “sac. n.” and “sem.” respectively. Practically, this data presentation made collecting the data for this study somewhat challenging.

Although it runs to about 1,700 pages, the *AP* provides relatively little information about its data collection procedures beyond stating in its front matter that the data are provided to the Vatican’s Central Statistics Office by diocesan curia personnel in national churches. Additionally, it notes that Church leaders (i.e. bishops, prelates, and superior generals of religious orders) may use their “visiting cards or otherwise” to indicate errors appearing in the volume for any given year, in the interests of a “more accurate and more complete publication” (*AP* 1957, 1735).

Like the *AP*, the *ASE* is a statistical yearbook of the Roman Catholic Church and contains annual data relating to national churches rather than dioceses. The *ASE* provides information about the physical plant of local churches (e.g. number of parishes, missions, pastoral centres, dioceses, seminaries, primary and secondary schools, universities and colleges, etc.) and human resources (male and female clergy and religious, baptised Catholics, permanent deacons, seminarians), as well as some data on religious commitment (e.g. baptisms, first communions, confirmations, marriages, and marriage annulments). It was first published in 1969 under the title *Tabularum Statisticarum Collectio*, becoming the *ASE* in 1970. From 1969 to the present, it has remained basically the same, presenting data in tabular form with

translations of descriptive titles and notes in various languages, but some new data have been included over the years. For example, beginning in 1990 the *ASE* began to report trends in life-cycle sacraments such as first communions and confirmations.

The *ASE* is a significantly better source of data for tracking diocesan priests than it is for religious priests, religious brothers, and nuns, whose training, ministries, and authority structures are organised quite differently compared to diocesan clergy (Allen 2014; Diotallevi 1999). Unfortunately, the *ASE* does not provide ordination, death, and resignation data regarding religious priests, religious brothers, and nuns. Data do exist regarding deaths and resignations for religious clergy belonging to religious institutes, but only summary data for the Church as a whole. As a result, it is not possible to examine recruitment/retention trend lines for religious orders and congregations or for religious brothers. Regarding the former, this may be owing to their sheer complexity, each with a distinctive mode of operation and ministering in many cases transnationally (Diotallevi 1999). Concerning the latter, this may reflect their subordinate, non-core status within the Church (Quiñonez and Turner 1992) or, put otherwise, that ordained clergy constitute the “technical core” of the workforce (Schoenherr and Young 1993, 15).

Data on national churches are collected each year via a general questionnaire distributed by the Central Statistics Office of the Church to chanceries or diocesan offices of individual dioceses or, in the case of religious clergy, via a form distributed to religious institutes. After completing the questionnaire, the (arch) diocese or institute returns it to the Central Statistics Office of the Church, which then checks the returned questionnaires and follows up with the reporting entity regarding any mistakes or omissions. These diocesan data are then used to create aggregate statistics which, in turn, are reported in tabular form, distinguishing between countries and continents. As with the *AP*, the data presentation is in English, Italian, and other languages.

Workforce Data

For the 1950–1968 time period, the data come from the *AP*, and for 1969 to 2010 I employ the *ASE*. As national-level data are not available in the *AP*, this necessitated aggregating the diocesan, sub-national measures up to the national level. For the four countries of interest, I assembled absolute figures for each diocese in each country for the following variables from the *AP*:

- Number of Diocesan Priests.
- Number of Religious Priests.
- Number of Ordinations of Diocesan Priests.
- Number of Catholics.

Likewise, I assembled absolute figures from the *ASE* for the following variables:

- Number of Diocesan Priests.
- Number of Religious Priests.
- Number of Ordinations of Diocesan Priests.
- Number of Professed Religious Men other than Priests/Religious Brothers.
- Number of Resignations among Diocesan Priests.
- Number of Diocesan Seminarians.
- Number of Resignations among Diocesan Seminarians.
- Number of Catholics.

These data from the *AP* were then pooled with data from the *ASE* into a single dataset in an Excel spreadsheet.

After assembling the data for the various workforce indicators for the four countries, I cross-checked the data against available research on the Catholic workforce relating to the chosen case studies (e.g. Fishman and Jones 2007), and also checked for basic data entry errors. In cases of missing data for the baptised Catholic population, I used the figure for the adjacent year. Using the number of baptised Catholics, I then computed the relative numbers for each workforce indicator.

Workforce Data Validity/Reliability

As with most official statistics, Church statistics come with health warnings. To give just one example, an unfortunate shortcoming of the data in the present study is that retired and sick clergy are included (Conway 2016).

Even so, there are good reasons to have considerable confidence in the data. First, given the lengthy period of training and formation and the high level of commitment (on the part of the individual as well as the institution) involved in becoming a member of the Church's workforce, it is unlikely that the Church's reporting of "costly" (Stark and McCann 1993, 115) new callings would suffer from significant measurement error. Similarly, given the complex and lengthy process involved in exiting the workforce, it is unlikely that the Church would over- or under-report resignations. Second, counting the number of serving priests in a diocese is a relatively straightforward matter, as incardination (taking up ministry in a specific diocese) and excardination (transferring from one diocese to another) is a formal bureaucratic procedure overseen by an Ordinary or bishop, which means that priests cannot make individual sovereign decisions to move across (arch) diocesan boundaries (Augustyn 2006).

Workforce Data Indicators

The indicators of the Catholic male workforce used in this book require brief consideration. Because previous research emphasises the importance of religious labour market segmentation within a single denomination (Chaves 1991), four categories of Catholic personnel were investigated: diocesan priests, religious priests, religious brothers, and seminarians for the diocesan priesthood. At the same time, the present study focuses on diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians.

Some disagreement exists in past research regarding the appropriate empirical indicator of the Church's workforce (Fishman and Jones 2007; Schoenherr and Young 1993; Stark and Finke 2000).

The absolute number of personnel is employed in some studies (e.g. Augustyn 2006), while other studies use relative numbers only (e.g. Schoenherr and Young 1993). A drawback of absolute figures is that they do not take account of changes in the base population size, making comparisons across countries with varying baptised Catholic populations more difficult (Ebaugh et al. 1996; Schoenherr and Young 1993). In other words, the use of absolute figures masks the ratio between clergy supply and lay demand (Schoenherr and Young 1993).

I used the number of Catholics in each society obtained from the *AP* and the *ASE* to compute the number of each personnel category per 10,000 Catholics, thus standardising the workforce indicators and allowing for comparison across time and space. The use of this relative measure, however, has not gone uncriticised. For example, Stark and Finke challenge the reliability of Catholic population measures (Stark and Finke 2000).

Regarding the relative figures, it is worth noting that a preferred indicator to the Catholic population as a whole would be the young adult male population, as a register of the likely base population of callings (Diotallevi 1999; Stark and McCann 1993). The growing phenomenon of “late” callings in more recent times may warrant lengthening the age range up to under 65. Either way, this would allow one to investigate workforce trends per 1,000 males in the 18–39 (or 18–65) age category. However, these data are not available in the Vatican sources relied upon in the present study.

Some studies use lagging indicators such as the number of diocesan priests (e.g. Schoenherr and Young 1991). Other studies use leading indicators such as the number of ordained priests (entrances) (e.g. Fishman and Jones 2007; Vilariño 1997) or resignations (exits) (e.g. Schoenherr and Young 1990; Seidler 1979). Still other studies look at ordinations and resignations together (e.g. Schoenherr and Young 1993).

Because the number of serving clergy (lagging data) tend to react slowly to exogenous events, I used flow figures (leading data) – numbers of ordinations and resignations – to assess the influence of critical events on the workforce in each country.

At the same time, some debate exists in the literature about gauging the numerical strength of the Church's workforce based on the number of seminarians or the number of ordinations. Fishman and Jones (2007) argue that because many seminarians do not become priests (either because they leave voluntarily or are "discharged"), it may overestimate the workforce, and that the ordination measure is more sensitive to conditions in the national society that change quickly. At the same time, using only ordinations misses the fact that the interaction between ordinations, deaths, and resignations determines the size of the available workforce (Schoenherr 2002).

Non-Workforce Data

I also relied on the *ASE* to assemble data about trends in life-cycle sacramental rituals (i.e. baptisms, first communions, confirmations, and marriages) in the four countries. Specifically, I assembled absolute figures for the following variables:

- Number of baptisms.
- Number of first communions.
- Number of confirmations.
- Number of marriages.

Using the number of baptised Catholics, I then computed the relative numbers for each sacrament for each case.

Regarding religious service attendance, I draw on economist Laurence R. Iannaccone's historical church attendance data (Iannaccone 2003). These data provide estimations of historic church attendance levels at the individual level based on retrospective questions about religious behaviour from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). This survey asked respondents, "When you were around 11 or 12, how often did you attend religious services then?" and, "When you were a child, how often did your father [mother] attend religious services?". The response categories for these questions ranged from "never" to "several times a week". Here, I used the parental religious service attendance figure.

Admittedly, one must be cautious about using retrospective questions, given possible recall problems (Smith et al. 2014). As only the Philippines was included in the ISSP, I was unable to include historic church attendance data for the other three countries.

Regression Analysis

In the “statistics without tears” tradition (Rowntree 1981), here I attempt to provide more detail about the statistical aspect of the study, especially for the non-specialist reader. I begin by discussing the explanatory variables and control variables (or covariates), followed by an account of robustness checks (i.e. checks undertaken to gauge the violation of regression assumptions and the stability of the results across a step-by-step approach to the regression models.)¹²⁵

Regarding the explanatory variables, there are four in the ordinations to the diocesan priesthood models and three in the resignations among diocesan priests and resignations among diocesan seminarians models. Because the resignation data for resignations only began in 1969, the ecumenical councils predictor was not included in these regression models. *Ecumenical councils* is coded 1 for the years 1962–1965 (when Vatican II took place), and 0 otherwise. *Prophetic stances* is coded 1 for the years representing periods when the Church was most prophetic, and 0 otherwise. The identification of these periods was based on sociocultural accounts (e.g. Buckley 2016; Gill 1998; Okure 2009; Vassallo 1979). It is worth noting that prophetic stances is not an event per se, having more to do with the broader macrohistorical context. I chose this approach because these periods likely reflected examples of the most publicised and visible examples of the Church’s prophetic ministry in a given society, ones most likely to operate as legitimacy cues for new callings (as compared, say, to less visible ministry, such as the publication of a document on a select topic by a commission of a bishops’ conference). *Sexual scandals* is coded 1 for media reportage, popular culture writings, victims’ activism, legal cases, Vatican investigations, the development of

Church responses to clerical sexual abuse, or ongoing debate or reflections within the Church about scandals in that year, and 0 otherwise. In each context, the initial outbreak of cases represented the beginning year of sexual scandals, which more or less continued up until the end of the period under study and thus represented more of an era than a more bounded event like Papal visits. *Papal visits* is coded 1 if a Papal visit occurred that year, and 0 otherwise.

To assess the substantive significance of each of the independent variables, I looked at the unstandardised beta coefficients to see what effect a one-unit change (i.e. an increase from 1 to 0) in each independent variable had on the dependent variable and whether this was large (or not).

As well as these predictor variables, I included two covariates in the regression models: regime type and birth control encyclical. In the resignation models in Malta, regime type was not included, as there was no variability in this variable in this setting from 1969 onwards. In the regression models for resignations among diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians in the four case studies, I did not include a measure of the ecumenical councils perspective, as these data only go back to 1969.

Regime type is based on the regime type (*v2x_regime*) variable from the Episodes of Regime Transformation (ERT) dataset (Maerz et al. 2020). This is a numerical variable with values 0, 1, 2, and 3, with 0 meaning closed autocracy, 1 meaning electoral autocracy, 2 meaning electoral democracy, and 3 meaning liberal democracy. Because the values on this variable for Argentina, Malta, and the Philippines were 0, 1, and 2, I created two dummy variables for these countries. As Nigeria had values of 0 and 1 on this variable, I created one dummy variable for this country. In each case, I used closed autocracy as the reference category.

Birth control encyclical is a dummy variable coded as 1 in the years 1968 and 1969, 0 otherwise. 1968 represents the year of publication of the encyclical and 1969 the year immediately after its publication, when controversy about it played out in the global Church. For example, Pope Paul VI established an Extraordinary

Synod in 1969 to manage the debate brought on by the encyclical (Schoenherr 2002). Because the data in the resignation models for diocesan priests and diocesan seminarians only go back to 1969, in these models birth control encyclical was coded 1 in 1969 and 0 otherwise.

As regression analysis can suffer from problems to do with autocorrelation, heteroskedasticity, nonlinearity, and multicollinearity – all of which can violate the assumptions relied upon for this type of statistical analysis (Schroeder et al. 2017) – I carried out robustness checks on the regression models.

Perhaps the main concern relates to nonlinearity. Regression analysis assumes a linear relationship between an independent variable and the dependent variable. In earlier models (not shown), I included controls for an alternative regime type measure and employment development measure, but because of nonlinearity – gauged using `acprplots` in Stata – I opted to exclude these from the analysis.

Autocorrelation denotes the presence of correlation between one residual error and an earlier one and heteroskedasticity denotes variability in the residual errors, both of which can result in biased standard errors (Schroeder et al. 2017). After checking for autocorrelation and heteroskedasticity using the Durbin-Watson test and `hettest` command respectively in Stata, I corrected for autocorrelation or autocorrelation and heteroskedasticity by running the regressions with Newey-West standard errors.

Multicollinearity denotes the presence of highly correlated variables, which can make it difficult to establish the unique significance of individual predictor variables (Schroeder et al. 2017). In earlier models, I included controls for GDP per capita and percentage Roman Catholic (as a proxy for Catholic commitment), but because of multicollinearity (and nonlinearity) I dropped these from the analysis. A multicollinearity check on the remaining variables using correlation matrices, Variance Inflation Factors, and the `collin` command in Stata indicated that this was not a cause for concern in the models.

At the same time, models correcting for autocorrelation and the other problems mentioned may not necessarily represent the complete picture. A researcher running any regression models must decide about which variables to include (or not). This leads to the possibility of omitted variable bias or the exclusion of potentially relevant variables, which can result in biased regression coefficients (Schroeder et al. 2017). For example, shifts in values¹²⁶ or in Catholic commitment¹²⁷ could also be viewed as potential determinants of callings. However, in the absence of cross-national measures of these going back to the 1950s, it was not possible to include these factors as covariates in the models.

The following section provides more detail about the OLS regression models reported in the main text of the book. Tables [A.2](#) to [A.5](#) (three per country, denoted as a, b, and c) report the results of regression models regarding the three dependent variables (i.e. ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, resignations among diocesan priests, and resignations among diocesan seminarians) in the four case studies. They go beyond Model 3 (full model) that is the focus of the narrative in each of the individual country chapters by presenting a step-by-step approach going from a crude model to a full model, with two models in between.

A baseline Model 0 reports the results with just the predictor variables and none of the covariates, Models 1–2 when each of the two covariates (regime type and birth control encyclical) were added one at a time, and Model 3 when the two covariates were included together. Adding the covariates one at a time makes it possible to look at the relative effect of each covariate on the predictor variables. Thus, Model 0 estimates the crude effect of the predictor variables and Models 1–3 their calibrated or “controlled for” effect. Together, these tables are presented to indicate the stability (or not) of the statistical results presented in the main text of the book. A finding of little or no change across different models helps to bolster a researcher’s confidence in the models (Schroeder et al. 2017). In the following narrative account of each of the three dependent variables, I discuss Model 3 first and then Models 0–2.

I begin with the regression models for the Argentinian case study. Tables [A.2a](#), [A.2b](#) and [A.2c](#) report the results of the regression analysis regarding ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, resignations among diocesan priests, and resignations among diocesan seminarians in Argentina.

Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Argentina

In Model 3, I added the predictors and covariates together. In this full model, ecumenical councils and prophetic stances are negative and statistically significant and Papal visits is positive and statistically significant. The unstandardised beta coefficient for ecumenical councils (-0.010) indicates that a one-unit increase in this leads to a 0.010 decrease in ordinations. Similarly, the unstandardised beta coefficient for prophetic stances (-0.012) indicates that a one-unit increase in this leads to a 0.012 decrease in ordinations. Regarding Papal visits, the unstandardised beta coefficient (0.010) indicates that a one-unit increase in this leads to a 0.010 increase in ordinations. Substantively, the effect of the predictor variables is small. Sexual scandals did not reach statistical significance in Model 3. The regime type covariate is also significant in the full model. The statistically significant effect for electoral autocracy indicates a difference in the dependent variable between closed autocracy (reference category) and electoral autocracy.

Comparing Models 0–2, four observations are worth noting. First, the ecumenical councils coefficient increases from -0.008 in Model 0 to -0.010 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to an increase in the ecumenical councils coefficient from -0.008 in Model 0 to -0.009 Model 2, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a slightly greater impact on the ecumenical councils coefficient compared to the birth control encyclical covariate. Second, the prophetic stances coefficient decreases from -0.015 in Model 0 to -0.012 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to a decrease from -0.015 in Model 0 to -0.014 in Model 2, when the birth con-

trol encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a stronger impact on the prophetic stances coefficient compared to the birth control encyclical covariate. Third, the Papal visits coefficient increased from 0.007 in Model 0 to 0.010 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to an unchanged Papal visits coefficient (0.007) from Model 0 to Model 2, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a stronger impact on the Papal visits coefficient compared to the birth control encyclical). Fourth, the regime type covariate has a notable main effect parameter (being significant in Model 3), as well as affecting the coefficients of the predictor variables.

Overall, the results are stable across the different models, with ecumenical councils, prophetic stances, and Papal visits reaching statistical significance in Models 0–3, with their substantive effect being relatively small.

Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Argentina

Regarding resignations among diocesan priests, Papal visits reached statistical significance in Model 3. The prophetic stances and sexual scandals coefficients did not reach significance in the full model. The birth control encyclical also reached significance in Model 3. The regime type covariate was not significant.

In Model 3, the negative and statistically significant Papal visits coefficient (-3.107) indicates that a one-unit increase in Papal visits leads to a 3.107 decrease in resignations. Substantively, this is a relatively small effect.

Comparing Models 0–2, one observation is worth noting. The Papal visits coefficient decreased from -3.818 in Model 0 to -3.519 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to a decrease in the Papal visits coefficient from -3.818 in Model 0 to -3.654 in Model 2, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a slightly stronger impact on Papal visits compared to the birth control encyclical covariate.

Overall, the results are stable across the different models, with Papal visits reaching statistical significance in Models 0–3 and its substantive effect being relatively small.

Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina

Regarding resignations among diocesan seminarians, none of the independent variables reached significance across the different models. Similarly, none of the covariates were significant.

Table A.2a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Argentina, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ecumenical Councils	-0.008*** (0.003)	-0.010*** (0.003)	-0.009*** (0.003)	-0.010*** (0.003)
Prophetic Stances	-0.015*** (0.003)	-0.012*** (0.004)	-0.014*** (0.003)	-0.012*** (0.004)
Sexual Scandals	0.000 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.004)	0.000 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.004)
Papal Visits	0.007*** (0.002)	0.010*** (0.003)	0.007*** (0.002)	0.010*** (0.002)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		0.009* (0.005)		0.009* (0.005)
Regime type: Electoral democracy		0.009 (0.006)		0.008 (0.006)
Birth Control Encyclical			-0.011** (0.004)	-0.006 (0.003)
Observations	61	61	61	61
Adjusted R ²	0.300	0.353	0.312	0.348

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Table A.2b: Resignations among Diocesan Priests in Argentina, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Prophetic Stances	1.096 (1.054)	1.403 (1.161)	0.884 (1.046)	1.420 (1.186)
Sexual Scandals	0.011 (1.159)	-0.293 (1.355)	0.305 (1.167)	-0.205 (1.377)
Papal Visits	-3.818*** (0.865)	-3.519*** (1.048)	-3.654*** (0.889)	-3.107*** (0.950)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		1.191 (3.717)		1.991 (3.568)
Regime type: Electoral democracy		0.974 (2.395)		1.739 (2.200)
Birth Control Encyclical			6.898*** (1.576)	7.792*** (1.747)
Observations	42	42	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.026	-0.013	0.117	0.107

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table A.2c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Argentina, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Prophetic Stances	0.594 (9.727)	6.977 (6.825)	0.228 (10.177)	7.005 (6.914)
Sexual Scandals	14.664 (11.426)	11.109 (6.976)	15.171 (12.026)	11.251 (7.152)
Papal Visits	-27.891 (24.735)	-27.249 (25.344)	-27.607 (25.162)	-26.583 (25.972)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		-20.055 (22.442)		-18.761 (25.149)
Regime type: Electoral democracy		8.779 (23.949)		10.018 (26.607)
Birth Control Encyclical			11.927 (15.397)	12.611 (28.145)
Observations	42	42	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.030	0.034	0.008	0.011

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Tables [A.3a](#), [A.3b](#), and [A.3c](#) report the results of the regression models regarding ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, resignations among diocesan priests, and resignations among diocesan seminarians in Malta.

Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Malta

In Model 3, I added the predictor variables and covariates together. In this full model, sexual scandals reached statistical significance. The sexual scandals coefficient (–0.324) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 0.324 decrease in ordinations. Substantively, this effect is small. The regime type covariate was also statistically significant in Model 3. The statistically significant effect for electoral autocracy and electoral democracy indicates

a difference in the dependent variable between closed autocracy (reference category) and electoral autocracy and between closed autocracy and electoral democracy. The birth control encyclical covariate did not reach significance.

Comparing Models 0–3, two observations are worth noting. First, the sexual scandals coefficient decreased from -0.359 in Model 0 to -0.317 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to an increase in the sexual scandals coefficient from -0.359 in Model 0 to -0.367 in Model 2, when the birth control covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a stronger impact on sexual scandals compared to the birth control encyclical covariate. Second, regime type has a notable main effect parameter (being significant in Model 3), as well as affecting the coefficients of the predictor variables.

Overall, the results are stable across the different models, with sexual scandals reaching statistical significance in Models 0–3 and its substantive effect being small.

Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Malta

Regarding resignations among diocesan priests, none of the predictor variables reached statistical significance. The birth control encyclical covariate did not reach statistical significance in Model 1.

Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Malta

Regarding resignations among diocesan seminarians, Papal visits was significant in Model 1. The Papal visits coefficient (-35.388) indicates that a one-unit increase in Papal visits leads to a -35.388 decrease in resignations. Substantively, this is a relatively large effect. Prophetic stances and sexual scandals did not reach statistical significance. The birth control encyclical covariate did not reach statistical significance in Model 1.

Comparing Models 0–1, one observation is worth noting. The Papal visits coefficient increased marginally from -34.840 in

Model 0 to -35.388 in Model 1, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added.

Overall, the results are stable across the models, with Papal visits reaching statistical significance in Models 0 and 1 and its substantive effect being relatively large.

Table A.3a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Malta, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ecumenical Councils	0.164 (0.158)	0.242 (0.149)	0.153 (0.166)	0.234 (0.156)
Prophetic Stances	-0.027 (0.147)	0.017 (0.144)	-0.016 (0.153)	0.026 (0.152)
Sexual Scandals	-0.359*** (0.108)	-0.317*** (0.101)	-0.367*** (0.114)	-0.324*** (0.107)
Papal Visits	-0.056 (0.121)	-0.045 (0.107)	-0.060 (0.124)	-0.049 (0.111)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		-0.827*** (0.245)		-0.827*** (0.248)
Regime type: Electoral democracy		-0.636*** (0.211)		-0.631*** (0.215)
Birth Control Encyclical			-0.169 (0.138)	-0.136 (0.143)
Observations	61	61	61	61
Adjusted R ²	0.068	0.133	0.056	0.119

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Table A.3b: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Malta, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1
Prophetic Stances	-0.515 (0.374)	-0.484 (0.407)
Sexual Scandals	0.172 (0.501)	0.163 (0.507)
Papal Visits	1.062 (0.857)	1.054 (0.873)
Birth Control Encyclical		-0.275 (0.311)
Observations	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.034	0.009

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table A.3c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Malta, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1
Prophetic Stances	-12.218 (12.600)	-10.042 (13.553)
Sexual Scandals	8.036 (9.426)	7.404 (9.721)
Papal Visits	-34.840*** (8.197)	-35.388*** (8.251)
Birth Control Encyclical		-19.336 (14.359)
Observations	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.039	0.021

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Tables [A.4a](#), [A.4b](#), and [A.4c](#) report the results of the regression models regarding ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, resignations among diocesan priests, and resignations among diocesan seminarians in Nigeria.

Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Nigeria

In Model 3, I added the predictor variables and covariates together. In this full model, none of the predictor variables reached statistical significance. The statistically significant effect for electoral autocracy indicates a difference in the dependent variable between closed autocracy (reference category) and electoral autocracy. The birth control encyclical covariate did not reach significance.

Overall, the results are relatively stable across the models. While sexual scandals reaches statistical significance in Models 0 and 2, it does not remain significant in Model 3.

Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria

Regarding resignations among diocesan priests, sexual scandals reached statistical significance in Model 3. None of the other predictor variables reached statistical significance in Model 3. Neither the regime type nor the birth control encyclical covariates were statistically significant in this model. The sexual scandals coefficient (-3.346) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 3.346 decrease in resignations, a relatively small substantive effect.

Comparing Models 0–2, two observations are worth noting. First, the statistical significance of sexual scandals decreases from Model 0 to Models 1 and 2 (from being significant at the 0.01 level to being significant at the 0.05 level). Second, the sexual scandals coefficient increases from -2.340 in Model 0 to -3.356 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to a decrease in the sexual scandals coefficient from -2.340 in Model 0 to -2.336 to Model 2, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a

stronger impact on sexual scandals than the birth control encyclical covariate.

Overall, the results are stable across the models, with sexual scandals reaching significance in all four models and its substantive effect being small.

Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria

Regarding resignations among diocesan seminarians, sexual scandals was significant in Model 3. None of the other predictor variables or covariates reached statistical significance in Model 3. The sexual scandals coefficient (-22.319) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 22.319 decrease in resignations. Substantively, this is a relatively large effect. The size of the sexual scandals coefficient decreases from -27.136 in Model 0 to -22.319 in Model 3 but remains statistically significant.

Comparing Models 0–2, two observations can be made. First, the sexual scandals coefficient decreases from -27.136 in Model 0 to -22.154 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to an increase in the sexual scandals coefficient from -27.136 in Model 0 to -27.326 to Model 2, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a stronger impact on sexual scandals than the birth control encyclical covariate. Second, although Papal visits is significant in Model 0 it does not remain so in the other models.

Overall, the results are stable across the models, with sexual scandals reaching significance in all four models and its substantive effect being relatively large.

Table A.4a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in Nigeria, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ecumenical Councils	-0.006 (0.015)	0.000 (0.017)	-0.006 (0.015)	0 (0.017)
Prophetic Stances	-0.007 (0.012)	-0.003 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.012)
Sexual Scandals	0.034*** (0.011)	0.004 (0.010)	0.033*** (0.012)	0.004 (0.01)
Papal Visits	0.022 (0.016)	0.01 (0.026)	0.021 (0.016)	0.009 (0.026)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		0.034** (0.015)		0.034** (0.0161)
Birth Control Encyclical			-0.016 (0.013)	-0.013 (0.013)
Observations	61	61	61	61
Adjusted R ²	0.005	0.056	-0.008	0.041

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table A.4b: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in Nigeria, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Prophetic Stances	0.475 (0.709)	0.685 (0.715)	0.467 (0.816)	0.659 (0.806)
Sexual Scandals	-2.340*** (0.801)	-3.356** (1.528)	-2.336** (0.873)	-3.346** (1.573)
Papal Visits	-0.752 (1.298)	-1.126 (1.110)	-0.747 (1.354)	-1.111 (1.160)
Regime type: Elec- toral autocracy		1.307 (1.420)		1.313 (1.440)
Birth Control Encyclical			0.083 (1.208)	0.279 (1.074)
Observations	42	42	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.060	0.076	0.035	0.050

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table A.4c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in Nigeria, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Prophetic Stances	3.156 (6.089)	2.127 (5.865)	3.496 (6.800)	2.545 (6.500)
Sexual Scandals	-27.136*** (6.070)	-22.154** (9.166)	-27.326*** (6.582)	-22.319** (9.357)
Papal Visits	-15.536* (9.151)	-13.703 (9.845)	-15.745 (9.664)	-13.940 (10.337)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		-6.411 (11.226)		-6.509 (11.469)
Birth Control Encyclical			-3.578 (8.561)	-4.552 (9.063)
Observations	42	42	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.207	0.201	0.186	0.179

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Tables [A.5a](#), [A.5b](#), and [A.5c](#) report the results of the regression models regarding ordinations to the diocesan priesthood, resignations among diocesan priests, and resignations among diocesan seminarians in the Philippines.

Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in the Philippines

In Model 3, I added all the predictor variables and covariates together. In this full model, ecumenical councils reached statistical significance (as in Models 0–2). None of the other predictor variables reached statistical significance. The ecumenical councils coefficient (0.014) indicates that a one-unit increase in ecumenical councils leads to a 0.014 increase in ordinations. Substantively, this is a small effect. In the full model, the regime type covariate also reached statistical significance. The statistically signifi-

cant effect for electoral democracy indicates a difference in the dependent variable between closed autocracy (reference category) and electoral democracy. The birth control encyclical covariate did not reach statistical significance.

Comparing Models 0–2, one observation is worth noting. The size of the ecumenical councils coefficient increases from 0.013 in Model 0 to 0.014 in Model 1, when regime type was added. This compares to no change in the ecumenical councils coefficient (0.013) from Model 0 to Model 2, when the birth control encyclical was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a slightly stronger impact on ecumenical councils compared to the birth control encyclical covariate.

Overall, the results are stable across the models, with ecumenical councils reaching statistical significance in all four and having small substantive effects.

Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines

Regarding resignations among diocesan priests, the sexual scandals variable reached statistical significance in Model 3. The sexual scandals coefficient (-1.519) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a 1.519 decrease in resignations, a small substantive effect. As for the covariates, only the birth control encyclical covariate was significant in Model 3.

Comparing Models 0–2, one observation is worth noting. The sexual scandals coefficient decreases from -2.068 in Model 0 to -1.970 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to a decrease in the sexual scandals coefficient from -2.068 in Model 0 to -1.834 in Model 2, when the birth control covariate was added. This suggests that the birth control encyclical covariate has a stronger impact on sexual scandals compared to the regime type covariate. Overall, the results are stable across the models, with sexual scandals reaching statistical significance in all four and having small substantive effects.

Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines

Regarding resignations among diocesan seminarians, sexual scandals was negative and statistically significant in Model 3. The sexual scandals coefficient (-32.259) indicates that a one-unit increase in sexual scandals leads to a -32.259 decrease in resignations, a relatively large substantive effect. None of the other predictor variables or covariates reached statistical significance in Model 3.

Comparing Models 0–2, one observation is worth noting. The sexual scandals coefficient increases from -32.625 in Model 0 to -33.021 in Model 1, when the regime type covariate was added. This compares to a decrease in the sexual scandals coefficient from -32.625 in Model 0 to -32.257 in Model 2, when the birth control encyclical covariate was added. This suggests that the regime type covariate has a stronger impact on sexual scandals compared to the birth control encyclical covariate.

Overall, the results are stable across the models, with sexual scandals reaching statistical significance in all four and having relatively large substantive effects.

Table A.5a: Ordinations to the Diocesan Priesthood in the Philippines, 1950–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ecumenical Councils	0.013*** (0.003)	0.014*** (0.003)	0.013*** (0.003)	0.014*** (0.003)
Prophetic Stances	0.000 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)
Sexual Scandals	-0.0007 (0.003)	-0.005 (0.003)	-0.0005 (0.003)	-0.005 (0.003)
Papal Visits	0 (0.002)	-0.000 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.0003 (0.002)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		0.002 (0.002)		0.002 (0.003)

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Regime type: Electoral democracy		0.009* (0.005)		0.009* (0.005)
Birth Control Encyclical			0.003* (0.0019)	0.003 (0.002)
Observations	61	61	61	61
Adjusted R ²	0.111	0.168	0.101	0.157

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table A.5b: Resignations Among Diocesan Priests in the Philippines, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Prophetic Stances	0.851 (0.767)	0.767 (0.821)	0.701 (0.708)	0.483 (0.689)
Sexual Scandals	-2.068** (0.857)	-1.970** (0.931)	-1.834** (0.800)	-1.519** (0.677)
Papal Visits	-0.040 (0.699)	-0.033 (0.728)	0.190 (0.780)	0.198 (0.969)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		-0.046 (1.288)		-0.784 (1.018)
Regime type: Electoral democracy		-0.253 (1.265)		-0.875 (1.056)
Birth Control Encyclical			6.640*** (0.613)	7.057*** (0.485)
Observations	42	42	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.242	0.201	0.404	0.384

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table A.5c: Resignations Among Diocesan Seminarians in the Philippines, 1969–2010, OLS Regressions

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Prophetic Stances	-1.417 (5.384)	-0.953 (4.878)	-1.653 (5.431)	-1.432 (4.902)
Sexual Scandals	-32.625*** (7.061)	-33.021*** (7.394)	-32.257*** (7.220)	-32.259*** (7.415)
Papal Visits	-3.085 (12.543)	-3.191 (13.135)	-2.722 (12.827)	-2.800 (13.724)
Regime type: Electoral autocracy		-1.359 (9.821)		-2.604 (10.060)
Regime type: Electoral democracy		0.782 (10.413)		-0.267 (10.518)
Birth Control Encyclical			10.418 (6.565)	11.913 (7.177)
Observations	42	42	42	42
Adjusted R ²	0.523	0.499	0.516	0.492

Newey-West standard errors are in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Qualitative Research

To help provide more contextual information regarding the Papal visits perspective, this book draws on qualitative material, including Papal visit speeches and audiovisual sources.

Papal Visit Speeches

For each case study country, I bring in select quotes from Papal speeches delivered by the Pope during his papal visit. These were sourced from the website of the Holy See (<https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>), which includes an online archive of the various published outputs of each Pope (homilies, speeches, letters, etc.). Where the speeches were not in English (i.e. Argentina),

I employed a professional translator to translate the speeches from Spanish to English.

Papal Visit Audiovisual Sources

I also rely on YouTube videos relating to Papal visits to the four case studies (listed below).

YouTube. “Pope John Paul II in Malta and Gozo,” May 25–27, 1990. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqG5BCatYEw> (accessed December 12, 2022).

YouTube. “Pope continues visit to Malta,” May 9, 2001. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LTvIEfO1w0> (accessed December 12, 2022).

YouTube. “Pope John Paul II in Malta and Ukraine, Gathering of Cardinals,” June 26, 2001. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3S7qxAwUqJY> (accessed December 12, 2022).

YouTube. “Apostolic visit to Malta of Pope Benedict XVI – April 2010,” April 17–18, 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJpa5T_30s (accessed December 12, 2022).

YouTube. “Nigeria – Pope arrives for pastoral visit,” March 21, 1998. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8KAKbjEj_c (accessed December 12, 2022).

YouTube. “Pope Paul VI Wounded – 1970 çToday in History ç 27 Nov 18,” November 27, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaFilo5jm24> (accessed December 12, 2022).

Positionality

Positionality, or centring where a researcher stands in relation to the topic or issue under study, is an important concern in both qualitative and quantitative research (Jamieson et al. 2023). As mentioned in the preface, my background in a Catholic environment gives me an “insider” status in relation to the subject matter of the present study. This meant that the “entry costs” for me of studying Catholicism were relatively low, as I was already well acquainted with much of this religious group’s history, organisa-

tion, and data sources when I first embarked upon the study. At the same time, the fact that the study is guided by sociological theories and methods gives me something of an “outsider” status, from which I attempt to interpret the empirical data.

More broadly, I sought to adopt a reflexive approach by keeping a running journal or log – in line with optimal practice (Jamieson et al. 2023) – of the data collection and analysis stages. As well as serving as a record of my decision-making, this also helped with keeping track of the diverse range of data sources drawn upon, making it easier to pick up from where I left off when I was away from the data for a lengthy time period.

Finally, I sometimes wondered during the course of writing this book whether I did justice to the four societies under study, despite drawing on the country-specific secondary literature as much as possible. Even at the end of it, I cannot lay claim to being an expert in any one of them. Nevertheless, from the beginning I was convinced of the value of studying Catholic vocations using the tools of comparative historical sociology. To paraphrase Émile Durkheim, there is no such thing as sociology without comparison.¹²⁸

Notes

- 1 Bishop Eamonn Casey resigned as bishop following the revelation of his having had a relationship and a son with Annie Murphy (Broderick 1992).
- 2 Father Michael Cleary had a relationship and a child with his housekeeper Phyllis Hamilton, which came to light in 1994 following his death in 1993 (Turpin 2022).
- 3 An alb is a thin white garment worn under a priest's outer vestments.
- 4 For the full text of the Pope's homily as well as visual materials related to the ceremony, see http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140511_omelia-ordinazioni-presbiterali.html (accessed December 2, 2014). The ceremony can be viewed on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bs5u0Wt_1d0. For a Catholic News Agency report on the ordination, see <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/29612/pope-to-newly-ordained-always-be-merciful> (accessed December 4, 2023). The scriptural reference comes from Matthew 4:19.
- 5 For a study of the Jesuit–globalisation nexus, see Banchoff and Casanova (2016).
- 6 The distinction between secular clergy and regular clergy turns on the dominant location of their ministry, which in the case of diocesan priests is the secular social world and in the case of religious priests is a religious community (Schoenherr 2002). In practice, both diocesan and religious priests typically minister in similar everyday secular contexts.
- 7 Although this book focuses on Catholic priests, in the interests of presenting a more complete picture of male workforce trends it also briefly presents data relating to religious brothers in each country.
- 8 These data (for 2022–2023) come from the Bigard Memorial Seminary website. For more detail, see <http://www.bigardenugu.org/seminarians.html> (accessed January 25, 2024).
- 9 These data (for 2019) come from the St Joseph Pontifical Seminary website. For more detail, see <https://mangalapuzha.org/about-us.php#mangalapuzha> (accessed June 11, 2019).

- 10 The data for [Figures 1](#) and [2](#) are the author's calculations based on ASE (1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020).
- 11 For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, Catholics as a proportion of global Catholic adherents increased from less than 1 per cent in 1910 to 16 per cent in 2010. These demographic changes have shifted the Church's centre of geo-political power from the global North to the South, attracting media interest in these changes in a longstanding developed world-heavy institution. For more detail, see <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/02/13/the-global-catholic-population/> (accessed November 20, 2018).
- 12 The relative figures are the author's calculations based on CARA (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate 2023), which are themselves derived from ASE.
- 13 It is worth noting that use of the term "critical events" – and, more broadly, the adoption of critical event-driven investigation – is well established in comparative historical sociology (for a review of recent work, see García-Montoya and Mahoney 2019). What is new here is its application to the Catholic male workforce.
- 14 In developing these shorthands, I was influenced by sociologist David Martin's work (Martin 1978, 2005). These shorthands reflect dominant tendencies of each case, and by using them I do not mean to suggest that one case could not exhibit some of the tendencies of another or that these cases can be completely captured by these types.
- 15 The distinction between settled and unsettled comes from Swidler's work on how culture impacts the social world (Swidler 1986).
- 16 In thinking about these legitimacy challenges, I was influenced by Hagopian's (2009) work.
- 17 Because the documentation for these surveys urges weighting, I carried out weighted analyses of the data for the country samples.
- 18 Pastoral letters are documents written by bishops addressing important faith and morals or social justice issues.
- 19 Bishops' conferences are collective gatherings of bishops that help to organise the pastoral ministry of the Church at the national level.
- 20 <https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>. The Holy See refers to the ministry of the Pope. The term "see" derives from the Latin *sedes*, meaning chair (Allen 2014). A chair in a cathedral represents a bishop's governance, and when a diocese lacks a bishop, as a result of death, resignation, or appointment, it is known as a *sede vacante* or vacant see. The Holy See is headquartered in the Vatican in Rome.
- 21 For a similar claim in a different context, see Bullivant (2019).
- 22 Footloose employment refers to employment that does not rely on a specific location and its resources.
- 23 Unlike the research associated with the secular opportunity and regime transitions perspectives, Schoenherr's work was published posthu-

- mously. The original more lengthy text was edited and introduced by his former graduate student David Yamane (Schoenherr 2002).
- 24 As a theoretical work, *Goodbye Father* is a tour de force, a composite of diverse strands of theory drawn from multiple disciplines. Yet, it remains grounded in sociology, especially the work of Max Weber and Karl Marx. From Weber, Schoenherr focuses on the bureaucratic features of Catholicism and from Marx on its possibilities of bringing about social change (Yamane 2002). Throughout, it is characterised by a strong “call to change” motif.
- 25 For a useful synthesis of Schoenherr’s complex argument, see [Figure 1](#) (Schoenherr 2002, 7).
- 26 It is worth noting that the authorship of this 1972 study was contested. Against the view of Andrew Greeley, the publisher omitted Richard A. Schoenherr as co-author (Sullins 2016). I reference this study as per the published version.
- 27 In other related work, Fishman and colleagues develop an economic perspective rooted in the idea that material inequality may be a driver of the attractiveness (or lack thereof) of service roles in society, including priestly vocations (Fishman, Gervasoni, and Jones Stater 2015). Put differently, in this view an inequality-driven competitiveness fosters greater emphasis on “climbing the ladder” of individual gain at the expense of more socially oriented pathways.
- 28 Perhaps an exception to this is Pope John Paul II’s Papal visit to Poland in 1979, which helped to delegitimise the then communist regime. At the same time, this Papal visit interacted with the Church’s prophetic stances around this time in opposing communism (Conway 2016).
- 29 Papal visits are organised by the Prefecture of the Papal Household (in the case of Papal visits to Italy) and the Ufficio Viaggi within the Section for General Affairs of the Secretariat of State (in the case of Papal visits abroad) (Ekpo 2024).
- 30 These data derive from the World Values Survey (1984–2013).
- 31 Catholic Action was established in Argentina in 1928 (Gill 1998), following the Roman training of two Argentinian priests in this movement (Smith 1991). It was seen as a form of “Catholic defence” (Martin 1978, 192) against opposing currents in society, such as liberal values (Gill 1998). Compared to its counterpart in other Latin American contexts, it had a more middle-class membership base (Gill 1998). Similarly, the Third World Priests Movement can be traced back to priests who imported their worker–priest experiences in France, Italy, and Spain in the 1950s to Argentina (Dodson 1974). In the French case, a special seminary Mission de France was established by the bishops to train priests for ministry among the working classes in industries and shipyards, hence the aptly labelled “worker priests” (Bullivant 2019). Owing to perceived friendly relations with communists, the worker–

- priest movement gradually fell out of favour in the Church, leading to its banning in 1953 by Pope Pius XII (Chamedes 2019).
- 32 An extraordinary meeting of CELAM occurred in Mar del Plata in 1966 on the theme of “The Church in the Integration and Development of Latin America”, which was aimed at adapting Vatican II to this world region (McGrath 1986).
- 33 These data come from *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series I (Anteparaeparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars VII: America Meridionalis - Oceania* (1961). At Vatican II, the Argentinian hierarchy was not as vocal or as organised as its counterparts in Brazil and Chile (Gutiérrez 1987). Interestingly, two Argentinian bishops, Alberto Devoto and Jorge Kéméner, were included in interviews carried out by Rocco Caporale (as part of his PhD research) with bishops who attended the council (Wilde 2007).
- 34 These data come from www.catholic-hierarchy.org (accessed July 9, 2018).
- 35 This conservative orientation is reflected in the relatively strong historic influence of traditionalist lay groups such as Opus Dei in Argentina (Catholics for Choice 2011; Moreton 2021), including this group’s role as an institutional carrier of neoliberalism (Moreton 2021).
- 36 The concept of inculturation refers to the adaptation of the Church to local contexts or, more crudely, its de-Westernisation. This term was developed by a Belgian missionary in the early 1960s (McGreevy 2022).
- 37 Peronism (1946–1955) is a charismatic authority-centred political movement associated with founder Juan Perón, which faced competition from, and sometimes overlapped with, similar secular and religious movements such as Marxism and the Third World Priest Movement in the 1940s–1950s (Dodson 1974). Strongly influencing the working classes (Carassai 2014), Peronism adopted a basically corporatist approach to socio-economic organisation, with a nationalist/populist inflection. As well as controversially shaping Argentinian political culture (Carassai 2014), it also exerted some influence on – and competed with (Morello 2021b) – Argentinian Catholicism, especially its social concern emphasis, reflected in organisations such as the Iron Guard (Gill 2017). Viewing the Church as a threat to authoritarian government, Perón sought to repress its presence in the society in the 1950s (McGreevy 2022).
- 38 This priests’ organisation represented less than 3 per cent of clergy (Dodson 1974).
- 39 In 1949, the then Superior General Father Jean-Baptiste Janssens centred the social apostolate in Jesuit ministry and urged Jesuits not to side with economic elites (Chamedes 2019).

- 40 A natural law position is a view of morality based on the basic nature of human beings (Allen 2014).
- 41 For more detail, see <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/Argentina/Database.htm> (accessed November 12, 2020).
- 42 For more detail on the Vatican's child protection efforts on a global level, see <https://www.tutelaminorum.org> (accessed March 29, 2025).
- 43 For more detail, see the case of Father Nicola Corradi, S.M., <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/Argentina/Database.htm> (accessed November 13, 2020).
- 44 These headlines come from bishop-accountability.org. For more detail, see http://www.bishop-accountability.org/Argentina/Detailed_Grassi_Summary.htm (accessed June 25, 2019).
- 45 For more detail on abuse cases mentioned here, see <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/Argentina/Database.htm> (accessed April 2, 2024).
- 46 For more detail on Argentinian abuse cases, see <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/Argentina/Database.htm> (accessed March 11, 2019).
- 47 For more detail on attendance figures, see <https://www.usccb.org/resources/World-Youth-Day-USA-Chronology-Guide-v2016a.pdf> (accessed March 29, 2025).
- 48 This middle-class orientation was also reflected in other aspects of the Church, including Catholic Action (Gill 1998).
- 49 I owe this point to sociologist Gustavo Morello (personal communication, November 8, 2023). The predominance of the middle classes in Argentina's universities in the 1970s (Carassai 2014) suggests this class-based pattern may also have applied to Catholic higher education institutions at the time, where would-be priests received their education. Also, it is worth mentioning that the seminarians in Morello's study self-identified as coming from a middle-class background (Morello 2015).
- 50 This observation is based on the author's three-day visit to the island in November 2017.
- 51 Within Maltese culture, the priest often operated as contact point between the state and the parish, as dispenser of charity to needy individuals and families, and as broker for obtaining employment, particularly in rural towns and villages. However, with the post-1960s growth in state bureaucracy, this role began to diminish (Boissevain 2013; Frendo 1979; Sultana and Baldacchino 1994; Vassallo 1979, 2017).
- 52 For a recent historical account of Archbishop Gonzi's long episcopate, see Grech (2022).
- 53 These data come from *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series I (Antepreparatoria) Volumen 1 Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars II: Europa* (1960). See also the listing of bishops for Malta at catholic-hierarchy.org/.

- 54 To protect the identity of bishops who voted at Vatican II, Wilde omitted the Maltese bishops from the tables in her analysis (Wilde 2007), though it is likely they voted conservatively.
- 55 For more detail, see <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR?end=2010&locations=MT&start=1970&view=chart> (accessed November 2, 2018).
- 56 These data come from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/sl.tlf.cact.fe.zs?end=2010&start=1990> (accessed March 4, 2019).
- 57 For a similar trend in a different context, see Payne's study of Spanish Catholicism (Payne 1984).
- 58 This may be defined as the strengthening of Catholic institutions as a firewall against the inroads of secularity (Martin 1978).
- 59 For example, sanctions against the Labour Party in the 1920s and 1930s applied to voting for the party, which was regarded a sin, and its newspapers were prohibited (Baldacchino 2002; Pirota 2006; Boissevain 2004).
- 60 The Nationalist Party was part of a wider family of Christian Democratic political parties – either explicitly so or styled in this tradition – that dominated the wider European political landscape from 1945 to 1980 (McGreevy 2022).
- 61 Emmanuel Gerada received his seminary formation in Malta and later studied at the Jesuit-run Gregorian University, before entering the Holy See's diplomatic service. Unusually for a bishop (but perhaps not for a Maltese citizen), he also studied at a British secular university, University College Nottingham (now University of Nottingham). In 1967, he was appointed auxiliary bishop to Archbishop Gonzi and in 1973 was appointed archbishop, following his return to diplomatic service. He served as papal nuncio in El Salvador, Guatemala, Pakistan, and Ireland. For more detail, see <https://maltamigration.com/settlement/personalities/geradaemmanuel.html> and <https://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bgerada.html> (accessed April 1, 2025)
- 62 Joseph Mercieca served as auxiliary bishop prior to his appointment as archbishop of Malta. His tenure as archbishop was a lengthy one, serving for thirty years. For more detail, see <https://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bmercieca.html> (accessed April 1, 2025).
- 63 These data come from <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/> (accessed June 25, 2019).
- 64 For more detail, see http://www.bishop-accountability.org/news2010/03_04/2010_03_21_Massa_ChurchShould.htm (accessed March 12, 2019).
- 65 For more detail, see <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/vaticancityandholysees/7603808/Pope-meets-with-Malta-sex-abuse-victims.html> (accessed March 12, 2019). See also Allen (2014).

- 66 YouTube. 1990. “Pope John Paul II in Malta and Gozo”, May 25–27. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqG5BCatYEw> (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 67 For a similar example in a different context, see Tweed (1997).
- 68 YouTube. 2001. “Pope continues visit to Malta”, May 9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LTvIEfO1w0> (accessed December 12, 2022); YouTube. 2001. “Pope John Paul II in Malta and Ukraine, Gathering of Cardinals”, May 8. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3S7qxAwUqJY> (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 69 YouTube. 2001. “Pope continues visit to Malta”, May 9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LTvIEfO1w0> (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 70 YouTube. 2010. “Apostolic visit to Malta of Pope Benedict XVI – April 2010”, April 17–18. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJpa5T_30s (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 71 For more detail, see the “Program” for the Pope’s visit available at <https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/travels/2010/outside/documents/malta.html#> (accessed November 16, 2020).
- 72 For more detail, see <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2010-04-18/pope-meets-maltese-abuse-victims/400992> (accessed March 13, 2019). In the 2002–2008 span, an estimated 11,500 illegal migrants entered Malta (Calleya 2015).
- 73 Carmel Tabone, a religious priest of the Dominican order, served as Head of Department in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work (established 2003) at the University of Malta (Falzon 2007). The title of his PhD dissertation, “The Secularisation of the Family in a Changing Malta”, is suggestive of the erosion of religious influence in Maltese society. Along with priest–sociologists Anthony Abela and Benjamin Tonna, his appointment reflected the Church’s early dominance of Maltese social science (Falzon 2007).
- 74 YouTube. 2010. “Apostolic visit to Malta of Pope Benedict XVI – April 2010”, April 17–18. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJpa5T_30s (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 75 For more detail on this regarding the US case, see Hoge (2002), Schuth (2019), and Sullins (2016).
- 76 A recent estimate suggests that in the 1960–2015 time period there have been about 600,000 devotees of a Muslim background who have converted to Christianity in Nigeria (Miller and Johnstone 2015).
- 77 For more detail, see <https://aleteia.org/2019/03/06/nigerian-arch-bishop-outlines-challenges-for-christians-facing-boko-haram/> and https://www.fides.org/en/news/64463-AFRICA_NIGERIA_The_Bishops_renew_their_request_asking_President_Muhammadu_Buhari_to_resign_after_the_massacre_of_over_200_Christians.

- 78 For a similar model of Church in a different context, see Madsen's study of Chinese Catholics in the Catholic-heavy Tianjin region (Madsen 1998).
- 79 Past research notes the ongoing tension within Nigerian Catholicism between Nigerian culture and Western culture (e.g. Imokhai 1982).
- 80 For more detail, see <https://fragilestatesindex.org/> (accessed November 18, 2022).
- 81 These data come from the World Values Survey. See also Smith (2009).
- 82 This term denoted national churches in Africa (Lamont 1986).
- 83 These data come from *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series I (Antepreparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars V: Africa* (1960).
- 84 These data come from <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/event/ecv2.html> (accessed July 10, 2018).
- 85 One index of the relative marginality of African prelates at Vatican II was their lack of mention in historian John W. O'Malley's Europe-heavy "Council Participants Frequently Mentioned" listing in his *What Happened at Vatican II* (Orobator 2013; O'Malley 2008). Another indicator are the figures for world regional representation of bishops at the council: 10 per cent from Africa (versus 36 per cent from Europe, 34 per cent from Latin America, and 20 per cent from Asia/Oceania) (O'Malley 2008, 23). Even so, African prelates at Vatican II stood out for being a tight-knit group (O'Malley 2008).
- 86 The concept of inculturation refers to the adaptation of the Church to local contexts or, more crudely, its de-Westernisation. This term was developed by a Belgian missionary in the early 1960s (McGreevy 2022).
- 87 Besides other Catholic humanitarian agencies such as Catholic Relief Services, which channeled resources into the region via international Catholic links, Caritas Internationalis spent an estimated \$2.3 million on its relief efforts during the Biafra civil war, including 20,000 tonnes of food and medical supplies (Makozi and Ojo 1982). These international links to foreign material aid remain a salient feature of the Nigerian Church today (Conway 2014a), as with national churches in Africa more generally (Gifford 1998).
- 88 As a measure of this theological heft, just 3 per cent of theologians at Vatican II came from Africa and Asia (versus 29 per cent and 11 per cent coming from Holland and Belgium respectively) (Wilde 2007). In the absence of native theological expertise, African prelates relied heavily on their Western European colleagues (Hastings 1986).
- 89 One of the council's reforms of bishops meeting collectively as an episcopal conference already existed (since 1958) in this setting. For more detail, see <https://www.cbcn-ng.org/aboutus.php> (accessed March 5, 2019). In 1950, Nigerian was raised from a territory subject to the Vatican's then Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to a national

- Church. At Vatican II discussions about *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, African bishops, including Nigerian ones, sought greater decentralisation in the Church, especially for then new national churches (O'Malley 2008).
- 90 The then auxiliary bishop of Onitsha, Francis Arinze, recalled his early efforts in the mid-1960s to inform clergy and laity alike of the council's documents (O'Connell 2006).
- 91 Although the term was not explicitly used, a stress on inculturation – sometimes understood in terms of the development of local clergy but not limited to this – predated Vatican II, as in Pope Pius XII's 1951 Catholic missions encyclical *Evangelii Praecones* (Okure 2009). As Pope Pius XII states, “the ultimate goal of missionary endeavour ... is to establish the Church on sound foundations among non-Christian peoples, and place it under its own *native Hierarchy*” (Pius XII 1951) (emphasis mine). The term is generally attributed to the Jesuit superior general Fr Pedro Arrupe, who mentioned it in a letter to his global confrères in 1978 (Clevenger 2020). A glance at today's seminary personnel – all Nigerians – at Saints Peter and Paul Major seminary in Ibadan points to the achievement of Nigerian leadership. For more detail, see <https://web.archive.org/web/20200216003638/https://sppseminaryibadan.org/viewcontent3.php?tab=4> (accessed May 30, 2025). Although the bishops tended to be strongly influenced by wider regional episcopal entities such as SECAM (Symposium of the Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar) – itself inspired by Vatican II (Orobator 2013) – in developing their approach to inculturation in general (Okure 2009), this was less true of their 1991 pastoral letter on this topic under the title *The Nigerian Church: Evangelisation Through Inculturation* (Schineller 2002), which appealed mostly to Vatican II documents.
- 92 As with many other big, heterogenous, and populous countries, Nigeria is characterised by a strong centralised state, with some devolved responsibilities to subnational units. For more detail on state organisation in the African context, see Hassan (2020).
- 93 These data come from <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/> (accessed June 25, 2019).
- 94 For more detail, see <https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/27123/archbishop-burke-and-immodesty-in-the-church.html> (accessed November 16, 2020).
- 95 Individual bishops – such as Bishop Badejo of Oyo – have been critical of the lack of facticity in media reportage of sex abuse scandals in the Church, as reported in a diocese of Oyo press release entitled “Child Abuse Scandal and Media Responsibility”. For more detail, see <https://web.archive.org/web/20211022183415/https://www.cbcn-ng.org/articledetail.php?tab=6> (accessed May 12, 2025).

- 96 Cardinal Arinze, one of few nationally known Catholic leaders, served in a top Vatican bureaucratic office, the then Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (O’Connell 2006). Regarded as “Papabile” (i.e. considered as a potential Pope), Cardinal Arinze’s traditional/conservative orientation reflected those of African Catholicism in general (Jenkins 2011).
- 97 YouTube. 1998. “Nigeria – Pope arrives for pastoral visit”, March 21. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8KAKbjEj_c (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 98 This term refers to Catholicism’s emphasis on promoting the faith in the social world (Allen 2014).
- 99 The Spanish colonial era was followed by a period of American rule until the end of the Second World War and national independence in 1946 (Cornelio 2018; Carroll 2004).
- 100 This refers basically to a 1920s term for what is known nowadays as lay participation. It was a social movement within the Church aimed at creating a Catholic civil society and catered to virtually all demographic categories (McGreevy 2022).
- 101 For more detail, see <http://cbcponline.net/history-of-cbcp/>.
- 102 Archbishop Rosales was head of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines from 1961 to 1965. For more on the history of the Philippine episcopal conference, see <http://cbcponline.net/history-of-cbcp/> (accessed July 12, 2018). Among the bishops attending was the archbishop of Manila Cardinal Rufino Santos (O’Malley 2008), the highest ranking prelate.
- 103 These data come from *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series I (Antepreparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars IV: Asia* (1960). Interestingly, one Filipino bishop, Alejandro Olalia, was part of Rocco Caporale’s sample of bishops at the council whom he interviewed for his PhD research. Olalia was also a member of Domus Mariae, a gathering of bishops from different world regions that advanced a progressive agenda. Another Filipino bishop, William Brasseur, also participated in this group, but later or infrequently (Wilde 2007).
- 104 The Philippine bishops began collective meetings in 1945. For more detail, see <https://cbcpcwebsite.com/History/index.html> (accessed March 5, 2019).
- 105 These data come from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR?end=2010&locations=PH&start=1970&view=chart+%28> (accessed March 1, 2019).
- 106 For more detail, see <http://cbcponline.net/history-of-cbcp/> (accessed February 25, 2025). See also Rivera (2010).
- 107 This concept was inspired by sociologist David Martin’s notion of “semidetached religiosity” in reference to base communities in Latin

- America (Martin 1988, 8). Basic Christian communities were lay-led politicised prayer groups that sought to upend traditional Church authority patterns, with organisational elites such as priests as leaders, by developing the leadership capacities of ordinary people (Hornsby-Smith 1989).
- 108 These data come from <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/> (accessed June 25, 2019).
- 109 For more detail, see <https://www.bishop-accountability.org/philippine-database/> (accessed March 11, 2019).
- 110 For more detail, see <https://cbcpwebsite.com/Commissions/concern.html> (accessed May 30, 2025).
- 111 For more detail, see http://www.bishopaccountability.org/Philippines/2015_02_03_Doyle_and_McKiernan_to_Dy_Liacco.htm (accessed March 11, 2019).
- 112 For more detail, see <https://www.bishop-accountability.org/philippine-database/> (accessed March 11, 2019).
- 113 YouTube. 2018. “Pope Paul VI Wounded – 1970 Today in History 27 Nov 18”, November 27. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaFiIo5jm24> (accessed December 12, 2022).
- 114 For an account of other challenges – such as how the Church engages with a secular social world – see Dillon (2018). See also Conway (2021).
- 115 For an account of Irish priests serving in the US Church, see Smith (2004).
- 116 For more detail, see <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190927-the-imported-priests-saving-irelands-ageing-clergy> (accessed April 30, 2024).
- 117 Émile Durkheim defined social facts as “ways of acting, thinking and feeling which possess the remarkable property of existing outside the consciousness of the individual” but which nonetheless “impose themselves upon him” (Durkheim 1982(1895), 51). Fishman and colleagues also usefully consider trends in callings as social facts (Fishman et al. 2015).
- 118 The relative figures are the author’s calculations based on ASE (1975, 2015).
- 119 For more detail, see <https://www.dawn.com/news/1392283> (accessed March 14, 2023). See also <https://cruxnow.com/church-in-asia/2019/02/allegations-of-abuse-in-two-asian-nations-make-some-worry-more-to-follow> (accessed January 29, 2024).
- 120 The relative figures are the author’s calculations based on ASE (1975, 2015).
- 121 For more detail, see <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/african-bishops-invite-pope-to-re-visit-uganda-1771018> (accessed March 14, 2023).

- 122 For more detail, see the “Instruction on the Sending Abroad and Sojourn of Diocesan Priests from Mission Territories” (2001), Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cevang/documents/rc_con_cevang_doc_20010612_istruzione-sacerdoti_en.html (accessed May 28, 2018).
- 123 For more detail, see http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/july/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20050725_diocesi-aosta.html (accessed April 18, 2019).
- 124 For example, Guinean Cardinal Robert Sarah identifies the shortage of clergy as one of the most significant challenges facing today’s global Church (Sarah 2015).
- 125 I used *asdoc*, a Stata programme developed by Shah (2018), to create the tables in the book.
- 126 Earlier studies note a shift in values in the Western world away from the value of self-restraint towards the value of self-expression (e.g. Stolz et al. 2016). Large-scale social surveys measuring values and religious commitment (e.g. World Values Survey) only go back to the early 1980s. For a history of surveys in sociological research, see Molteni (2021).
- 127 Earlier research relates changes in Catholic commitment to reductions in callings (e.g. Finke and Stark 1992; see also Johnson et al. 2014).
- 128 In *The Rules of Sociological Method*, Émile Durkheim argues that “comparative sociology is not a special branch of sociology; it is sociology itself” (Durkheim 1982(1895), 157).

Bibliography

- Aba, Uchenna. *The Reception of the Second Vatican Council's Liturgical Reforms in Nigeria (Nsukka Diocese)*. LIT Verlag, 2016.
- Abbott, Andrew. "From Causes to Events: Notes on Narrative Positivism." *Sociological Methods and Research* 20, no. 4 (1992): 428–455. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124192020004002>.
- Abela, Angela. "Malta." In *Cultural Sociology of Divorce: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 3, edited by Robert E. Emery. Sage, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452274447>.
- Abela, Anthony M. "Young Catholics in Malta: Similar Origins, Multiple Destinations." In *Young Catholics at the New Millennium: The Religion and Morality of Young Adults in Western Countries*, edited by John Fulton, Anthony M. Abela, Irena Borowik, Teresa Dowling, Penny Long Marler, and Luigi Tomasi. University College Dublin Press, 2000.
- Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series 1 (Antepreparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars II: Europa*. Newman Press, 1960.
- Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series 1 (Antepreparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars V: Africa*. Newman Press, 1960.
- Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series 1 (Antepreparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars IV: Asia*. Newman Press, 1960.
- Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando Series 1 (Antepreparatoria) Volumen II Consilia et Vota Episcoporum Ac Praelatorum Pars VII: America Meridionalis: Oceania*. Newman Press, 1961.
- Adamczyk, Amy. *Cross-National Public Opinion About Homosexuality: Examining Attitudes Across the Globe*. University of California Press, 2017.
- Agadjanian, Victor. "Women's Schooling and Religious Mobility: Joining, Switching, and Quitting Church in a Christian Sub-Saharan Setting." *Sociology of Religion* 78, no. 4 (2018): 411–436. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srx027>.

- Aguirre, Arjan. "The International Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Anti-Marcos Movements." *Philippine Sociological Review* 58 (2010): 25–47.
- Aid to the Church in Need. *Religious Freedom in the World – Report 2016*. Aid to the Church in Need, 2016. <https://religion-freedom-report.org.uk/countries> (accessed October 19, 2022).
- Alexander, Jeffrey C., and Philip Smith. "The Discourse of American Civil Society." In *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology*, by Jeffrey C. Alexander. Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Allen Jr., John L. "Two Parallels for Understanding the 'Powerhouse' Church in Nigeria." *National Catholic Reporter*, March 9, 2007. <https://www.ncronline.org/news/two-parallels-understanding-powerhouse-church-nigeria> (accessed March 22, 2019).
- Allen Jr., John L. "Vatican Abuse Summit: 'We Don't Want to Repeat U.S., Irish Mistakes'" *National Catholic Reporter*, February 9, 2012. <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/vatican-abuse-summit-we-dont-want-repeat-us-irish-mistakes> (accessed November 16, 2020).
- Allen Jr., John L. *The Catholic Church: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Allen Jr., John L. "Francis Flexes Papal Muscle in Nigeria." *The Irish Catholic*, June 15, 2017. <https://www.irishcatholic.com/francis-flexes-papal-muscle-in-nigeria/> (accessed June 6, 2019).
- Allen Jr., John L., and Pamela Schaeffer. "Reports of Abuse: AIDS Exacerbates Sexual Exploitation of Nuns, Reports Allege." *National Catholic Reporter*, March 16, 2001. https://natcath.org/NCR_Online/archives2/2001a/031601/031601a.htm (accessed November 16, 2020).
- Althoff, Andrea, and Jakob Egeris Thorsen. "The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in the Americas." In *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*. Vol. 2, 2018, *The Changing Faces of Catholicism*, edited by Solange Lefebvre and Alfonso Pérez-Agote. Brill, 2018.
- Altinordu, Ates. "A Midsummer Night's Coup: Performance and Power in Turkey's July 15 Coup Attempt." *Qualitative Sociology* 40, no. 2 (2017): 139–164. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-017-9354-y>.
- Andes, Stephen J. C. *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico & Chile: The Politics of Transnational Catholicism, 1920–1940*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Annuario Pontificio* (1961). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Annuario Pontificio* (1952–1970). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* (1969–2010). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* (2015). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* (2020). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* (2021). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Anonymous. "It's Tough Being Queer in Africa, but Nigerians Begin Organizing." *Contemporary Sexuality* 40, no. 4 (2006): 8–9.

- Arévalo, Catalino G. "After Vatican II: Theological Reflection in the Church in the Philippines 1965–1987." *Landas* 2, no. 1 (1988): 11–24.
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Collective Pastoral on Catholic Action/Pastoral Colectiva sobre la Accion Catolica*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1951. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1940-1959/1951-1Accion-Catolica_53.doc (accessed November 30, 2023).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Collective Pastoral on the Family/Pastoral Colectiva sobre la Familia*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1952. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1940-1959/1952-4LA-FAMILIA_56.doc (accessed November 30, 2023).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Collective Pastoral on Church Rights/Pastoral Colectiva acerca de los derechos de la Iglesia*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1955. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1940-1959/1955-18DerechosIglesia_70.doc (accessed 30 November, 2023).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Church and National Community/Iglesia y Comunidad Nacional*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1981. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1981-ComunidadNacional_40.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1982a. *Morality and the Means of Communication/Moralidad y Medios de Comunicación*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1982. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1982-15Moralidad_66.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1982b. *Principals of Civic Guidance for Christians/Principios de Orientación Cívica para los Cristianos*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1982. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1982-11Civica_62.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1982c. *Statement of the Argentinian Bishops' Conference Regarding the Disappeared and Their Families/Actuación de la Conferencia Episcopal Argentina sobre los Desaparecidos y sus Familias*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1982. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1982-10Desaparecidos_61.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1986a. *The Proposed Law of Bonded Divorce/El Proyecto de ley de Divorcio Vincular*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1986. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1986-6-8Divorcio_35.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).

- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1986b. *To the Men and Women of Work in Argentina/A los Hombres y Mujeres del Trabajo en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1986. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1986-12Trabajo_38.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Minors Entrusted in Our Care/Los Menores Confiados a Nuestro Cuidado*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1988. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1988-8Ninos_58.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Extreme Needs and Violence/Necesidades Extremas y Violencia*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1989. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1989-6Necesidades_67.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *God, Source and Lord of Life/Dios, Fuente y Señor de la Vida*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1990. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1990-3DiosFuente_72.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1994a. *Public Statement/Declaracion*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1994. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1994-PlenariaDeclaracion_98.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1994b. *In Defence of Life/En Favor de la Vida*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1994. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1994-EnFavorVida_97.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1995a. *Declaration of the Episcopal Commission on Faith and Culture About the Assisted Human Fertilization/Declaración de la Comisión Episcopal de Fe y Cultura: A propósito de la Fecundación Humana Asistida*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1995. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1995-FecundacionAsistida_101.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. 1995b. *A "Network of Charity"/Una "Red de Caridad."* Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1995. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1995-UnaRedCaridad_104.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Reflections on Justice/Reflexiones sobre la Justicia*. Buenos Aires:

- Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 1997. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/1980-1999/1997-Justicia_110.htm (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *The Good News of Human Life and the Value of Sexuality/La Buena Noticia de la Vida Humana y el Valor de la Sexualidad*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 2000. https://episcopado.org/assetsweb/documentos/2000-2019/2000---La-buena-noticia-de-la-vida-humana_32.pdf (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Argentinian Episcopal Conference/Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. *Let's Bet on Life/Apostemos siempre por la Vida*. Buenos Aires: Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, 2005. <https://episcopado.org/documentos> (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Arua Diocese Bulletin. *Celebrating our Heritage: A Pastoral Letter by the Catholic Bishops of Uganda on the Occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Uganda's Independence*, abridged edition, no. 127 (October/November 2012). Arua: Communications Department. <https://web.archive.org/web/20220113162213/https://www.archindy.org/cc/globalsolidarity/documents/Bulletin-127-Oct-Nov%202012.pdf> (accessed May 30, 2025).
- Askia, Raphael Iwuchukwu. "A Program for Enhancing Awareness Among Seminarians in Nigeria About the Implications of Sexual Abuse of Children and Young People." PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 2010.
- Associated Press. "Catholic Malta Legalizing Gay Marriage Over Church Objection." *Crux*, July 12, 2017. <https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2017/07/catholic-malta-legalizing-gay-marriage-church-objection> (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Associated Press. "Pope's Role in Study of Argentine Sex Abuse Case Draws Fire." *Crux*, September 18, 2018. <https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/09/popes-role-in-study-of-argentine-sex-abuse-case-draws-fire> (accessed March 8, 2019).
- Asue, Daniel Ude. "A Catholic Inclusive Approach to Homosexuality in Nigeria." *Theology Today* 74, no. 4 (2018): 396–408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040573617731710>.
- Augustyn, Boguslaw A. "The Growth and Decline of the Ordination Rates to the Roman Catholic Diocesan Priesthood Cross-Nationally, 1950–2000." Unpublished PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 2006.
- Ayling, Liz. "Preaching to the Converted: Pope Benedict in Malta." *Malta Insideout*, March 3, 2010. <http://maltainsideout.com/10045/preaching-to-the-converted-pope-benedict-in-malta/> (accessed July 1, 2020).

- Bacani Jr., Teodoro C. "Church of the Poor': The Church in the Philippines' Reception of Vatican II." *East Asian Pastoral Review* 42, nos. 1–2 (2005). <https://eapionline.org/eapr/> (accessed May 30, 2025).
- Baggett, Jerome P. *Sense of the Faithful: How American Catholics Live Their Faith*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Baldacchino, Godfrey. "A Nationless State? Malta, National Identity and the EU." *West European Politics* 25, no. 4 (2002): 191–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713601632>.
- Baldacchino, Jean-Paul. "Miracles in the Waiting Room of Modernity: The Canonisation of Dun Ġorg of Malta." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 22 (2011): 104–124. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1757-6547.2011.00109.x>.
- Baldacchino, Jean-Paul. "Contextualizing the Secular Public Sphere: Religious Ritual, *Festa* and Migrant Identity in Malta and Australia." *Ethnicities* 14, no. 1 (2014): 113–135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796813497930>.
- Banchoff, Thomas, and José Casanova, eds. *The Jesuits and Globalization: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Challenges*. Georgetown University Press, 2016.
- Barlow, Rich. "Priest Shortage? Why a Surprising Number of BU Alums Are Entering the Catholic Priesthood." *Bostonia*, November 18, 2021. <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2021/despite-priest-shortage-bu-alums-enter-catholic-priesthood/> (accessed January 2, 2024).
- Barrett, David B., George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson. 2001a. "Argentina." In *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. Vol. 1, *The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Barrett, David B., George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson. 2001b. "Malta." In *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. Vol. 1, *The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Barrett, David B., George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson. 2001c. "Nigeria." In *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. Vol. 1, *The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Barrett, David B., George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson. 2001d. "Philippines." In *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. Vol. 1, *The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Bender, Courtney, Wendy Cadge, Peggy Levitt, and David Smilde, eds. *Religion on the Edge: De-Centering and Re-Centering the Sociology of Religion*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

- Benedict XVI. Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia offering them his Christmas Greetings, December 22, 2005. https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia.html (accessed November 8, 2013).
- Benedict XVI. Interview of the Holy Father Benedict XVI in Preparation for the Upcoming Journey to Bavaria (September 9–14, 2006), Apostolic Palace of Castel Gandolfo, August 5, 2006. https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/august/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20060805_intervista.html (accessed January 29, 2024).
- Benedict XVI. 2009a. Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Bishops of Nigeria on their “Ad Limina” Visit, Consistory Hall, Saturday, February 14, 2009. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2009/february/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20090214_ad-limina-nigeria.html (accessed July 10, 2018).
- Benedict XVI. 2009b. *Caritas in Veritate*. Vatican, 2009. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html (accessed February 26, 2019).
- Benedict XVI. 2010a. Press Release: Meeting of the Pope with a Group of Persons Who Were Sexually Abused (Apostolic Nunciature in Malta, April 18, 2010). Vatican, 2010. <https://press.vatican.va/content/salas-tampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2010/04/18/0236/00545.html> (accessed March 13, 2019).
- Benedict XVI. 2010b. Meeting with Young People at the Grand Harbour of Valletta, Valletta, April 18, 2010. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2010/april/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100418_incontro-giovani.html (accessed August 29, 2018).
- Benedict XVI. 2010c. Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Floriana, April 18, 2010. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100418_floriana.html (accessed March 13, 2018).
- Benedict XVI. 2010d. Farewell Ceremony: Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI, International Airport of Malta-Luqa, Third Sunday of Easter, April 18, 2010. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2010/april/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100418_farewell-malta.html (accessed August 29, 2018).
- Berezin, Mabel. “Events as Templates of Possibility: An Analytical Typology of Political Facts.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, edited by Jeffrey C. Alexander, Ronald N. Jacobs, and Philip Smith. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Berger, Peter. [1967]. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Doubleday, 1990.
- Berry, Jason. *Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children*. University of Illinois Press, 2000.

- Bezjak, Sonja. "Catholic Women Religious Vocations in the Twentieth Century: The Slovenian Case." *Review of Religious Research* 54, no. 2 (2012): 157–174. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-012-0049-2>.
- Boissevain, Jeremy. "A Politician and his Audience: Malta's Don Mintoff." In *Maltese Society: A Sociological Inquiry*, edited by Ronald G. Sultana and Godfrey Baldacchino, Mireva Publications, 1994.
- Boissevain, Jeremy. *Saints and Fireworks: Religion and Politics in Rural Malta*. Berg, 2004.
- Boissevain, Jeremy. *Factions, Friends and Feasts: Anthropological Perspectives on the Mediterranean*. Berghahn Books, 2013.
- Bonnin, Juan Eduardo. "Scenes of Explicit Catholicism: The Pope and the Political Meanings of Religion in Argentina." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 22, no. 2 (2013): 123–138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569325.2013.803953>.
- Borer, Tristan Anne. *Challenging the State: Churches as Political Actors in South Africa 1980–1994*. University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. "Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field." In *Comparative Social Research: A Research Annual*, edited by Craig Calhoun. JAI Press, 1991.
- Bratton, Michael, Robert Mattes, and E. Gyimah-Boadi. *Public Opinion, Democracy, and Market Reform in Africa*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Brenner, Philip S. "Cross-National Trends in Religious Service Attendance." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 80, no. 2 (2016): 563–583. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfw016>.
- Broderick, Joe. *Fall From Grace: The Life of Eamonn Casey*. Brandon Book Publishers Ltd, 1992.
- Brown, Davis. "Measuring Long-Term Patterns of Political Secularization and Desecularization: Did They Happen or Not?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 58, no. 3: 570–590 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12610>.
- Bruce, Tricia Colleen. *Faithful Revolution: How Voice of the Faithful Is Changing the Church*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Bruneau, Thomas C. *The Church in Brazil: The Politics of Religion*. University of Texas Press, 1982.
- Buckley, David T., and Clyde Wilcox. "Religious Change, Political Incentives, and Explaining Religious–Secular Relations in the United States and the Philippines." *Politics and Religion* 10, no. 3 (2017): 543–566. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048317000050>.
- Buckley, David T. "Catholicism's Democratic Dilemma: Varieties of Public Religion in the Philippines." *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 62, nos. 3–4 (2014): 313–339. <https://doi.org/10.1353/phs.2014.0025>.

- Buckley, David T. *Faithful to Secularism: The Religious Politics of Democracy in Ireland, Senegal, and the Philippines*. Columbia University Press, 2016.
- Bullivant, Stephen. *Mass Exodus: Catholic Disaffiliation in Britain and America Since Vatican II*. Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Bullivant, Stephen, and Giovanni Radhitio Putra Sadewo. "Power, Preferment, and Patronage: An Exploratory Study of Catholic Bishops and Social Networks." *Religions* 13, no. 9 (2022): 851. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13090851>.
- Burns, Gene. *The Frontiers of Catholicism: The Politics of Ideology in a Liberal World*. University of California Press, 1994.
- Cahill, Desmond, and Peter Wilkinson. *Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: An Interpretative Review of the Literature and Public Inquiry Reports*. Centre for Global Research, RMIT University, Melbourne, 2017. http://www.bishop-accountability.org/reports/2017_09_12_Cahill_and_Wilkinson_RMIT_Child_Sexual_Abuse.pdf (accessed March 11, 2019).
- Calderisi, Robert. *Earthly Mission: The Catholic Church and World Development*. Yale University Press, 2013.
- Calhoun, Craig. "Introduction." In *Comparative Social Research: A Research Annual*, edited by Craig Calhoun. JAI Press, 1991.
- Calleya, Stephen. "A Strategic Perspective for a New Era in Euro-Mediterranean Relations: Religion, Immigration, and a Post-Arab Spring World." In *Secularism, Catholicism, and the Future of Public Life: A Dialogue with Ambassador Douglas W. Kmiec*, edited by Gary J. Adler Jr. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Carassai, Sebastián. *The Argentine Silent Majority: Middle Classes, Politics, Violence, and Memory in the Seventies*. Duke University Press, 2014.
- Carroll, John J. "The Philippines: Church at the Crossroads." In *World Catholicism in Transition*, edited by Thomas M. Gannon. Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988.
- Carroll, John J. "Cracks in the Wall of Separation? The Church, Civil Society, and the State in the Philippines." In *Civil Society in Southeast Asia*, edited by Lee Hock Guan. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2004.
- Carroll, John J. "Bishop Claver's Vision of the Church." In *Becoming a Church of the Poor: Philippine Catholicism after the Second Plenary Council*, edited by Eleanor R. Dionisio. John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues, 2011.
- Casanova, José. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Catholics for Choice. *Opposition Notes: A Primer on Opus Dei in Latin America*. Catholics for Choice, 2011. <https://www.catholicsforchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/OpusDeiinLatinAmerica.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2021).

- Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. *The Church and Nigerian Social Problems: Memorandum of the Catholic Bishops of Nigeria*. Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, 1972.
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. *Hope in the Midst of Crisis: A Message from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*. Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 2002. <http://cbcponline.net/hope-in-the-midst-of-crisis/> (accessed October 19, 2018).
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. *Pastoral Guidelines on Sexual Abuses and Misconduct by the Clergy*. Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 2003. http://bishop-accountability.org/Philippines/news/2003_Philippines_Pastoral_Guidelines_on_Sexual_abuses_and_Misconduct_by_Clergy.htm (accessed March 11, 2019).
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. *That Our Oil and Gas Wealth May Serve the Common Good*. Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, 2008.
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. "Salt of the Earth and Light of the World": *Manual of the Laity*. Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, 2009.
- Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. Frequently Requested Church Statistics. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2023. <https://cara.georgetown.edu/faqs> (accessed March 8, 2023).
- Center for Reproductive Rights. *The World's Abortion Laws*. Center for Reproductive Rights, 2011. http://reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civicaactions.net/files/documents/AbortionMap_2011.pdf (accessed October 19, 2022).
- Chamedes, Giuliana. *A Twentieth-Century Crusade: The Vatican's Battle to Remake Christian Europe*. Harvard University Press, 2019.
- Chaves, Mark. "Segmentation in a Religious Labor Market." *Sociological Analysis* 52, no. 2 (1991): 143–158. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3710960>.
- Cherry, Stephen M. "The Gawad Kalinga Movement: Charismatic Catholicism." In *Global Religious Movements Across Borders: Sacred Service*, edited by Stephen M. Cherry and Helen Rose Ebaugh. Ashgate, 2014.
- Chigere, Nkem Hyginus M. V. *Foreign Missionary Background and Indigenous Evangelization in Igboland*. LIT Verlag, 2001.
- Chima, Alex B. "Africanising the Liturgy – Where Are We Twenty Years After Vatican II?" *The African Ecclesial Review* 25, no. 5 (1983): 280–292.
- Chupungco, Anscar J. "Mission and Inculturation: East Asia and the Pacific." In *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, edited by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Cleary, Edward L. *The Rise of Charismatic Catholicism in Latin America*. University Press of Florida, 2011.
- Clevenger, Casey Ritchie. *Unequal Partners: In Search of Transnational Catholic Sisterhood*. University of Chicago Press, 2020.
- Cogan, Brian. "Ibo Catholicism: A Tentative Survey." *African Ecclesiastical Review* VIII, no. 4 (1966): 346–358.

- Coleman, John A. *The Evolution of Dutch Catholicism, 1958–1974*. University of California Press, 1978.
- Coley, Jonathan S., and Quan D. Mai. “The Ecology of Environmental Association: Density, Spillover, Competition, and Membership in Sierra Club, 1984–2016.” *Sociological Focus* 55, no. 4 (2022): 405–427. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00380237.2022.2134239>.
- Constitution of Malta. 1964. <http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8566> (accessed February 6, 2019).
- Conway, Brian. 2014a. “Religious Public Discourses and Institutional Structures: A Cross-National Analysis of Catholicism in Chile, Ireland and Nigeria.” *Sociological Perspectives* 57, no. 2 (2014): 149–166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121414523400>.
- Conway, Brian. 2014b. “Religious Institutions and Sexual Scandals: A Comparative Study of Catholicism in Ireland, South Africa, and the United States.” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 55, no. 4 (2014): 318–341. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020715214551472>.
- Conway, Brian. “Contexts of Trends in the Catholic Church’s Male Workforce: Chile, Ireland and Poland Compared.” *Social Science History* 40, no. 3 (2016): 405–432. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2016.12>.
- Conway, Brian. “The Sociology of Catholicism: A Review of Research and Scholarship.” *Sociology Compass* 15, no. 4 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12863>.
- Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Fabio Angiolillo, Michael Bernhard, Cecilia Borella, Agnes Cornell, M. Steven Fish, Linnea Fox, Lisa Gastaldi, Haakon Gjerlow, Adam Glynn, Ana Good God, Sandra Grahn, Allen Hicken, Katrin Kinzelbach, Joshua Krusell, Kyle L. Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Valeriya Mechkova, Juraj Medzihorsky, Natalia Natsika, Anja Neundorf, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Josefine Pernes, Oskar Rydén, Johannes von Römer, Brigitte Seim, Rachel Sigman, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jeffrey Staton, Aksel Sundström, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Tore Wig, Steven Wilson and Daniel Ziblatt. “V-Dem [Argentina-1950-2010/Malta-1950-2010/Nigeria-1950-2010/Philippines/1950-2010] Dataset v14” Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.23696/mcwt-fr58>.
- Corish, Patrick J. *Maynooth College 1795–1995*. Gill & Macmillan, 1995.
- Cornelio, Jayeel Serrano. *Being Catholic in the Contemporary Philippines: Young People Reinterpreting Religion*. Routledge, 2016.
- Cornelio, Jayeel. “How the Philippines Became Catholic.” *Christianity Today*, March 9, 2018. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2018/february/philippines.html> (accessed September 11, 2018).
- Cornelio, Jayeel Serrano, and Manuel Victor J. Sapitula. “Are We Losing Faith? An Invitation to the Sociology of Religion in the Philippines.” *Social Studies Corner [online portal]*, November 20, 2014.

<https://socialstudiescorner.wordpress.com/2014/11/20/are-we-losing-faith-an-invitation-to-the-sociology-of-religion-in-the-philippines/> (accessed February 26, 2018).

- Coser, Lewis A. "Greedy organizations." *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 8, no. 2 (1967): 196–215. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000397560000151X>.
- Csordas, Thomas J. "Catholic Charismatic Healing in Global Perspective: The Cases of India, Brazil and Nigeria." In *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, edited by Candy Gunther Brown. Oxford University Press, 2011.
- D'Antonio, William V., Michele Dillon, and Mary L. Gautier. 2013. *American Catholics in Transition*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2013.
- Davie, Grace. *Religion in Modern Europe: A Memory Mutates*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Davie, Grace. *Europe: The Exceptional Case*. Darton, Longman and Todd, 2002.
- Deegan, Mary Jo. "Cultural Components in the Priest/Father Symbol." *International Journal of Symbolology* 7 (1976): 66–81.
- DeGeorge, Gail. "Women Religious Shatter the Silence About Clergy Sexual Abuse of Sisters." *Global Sisters Report*, 2019. <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/trends/women-religious-shatter-silence-about-clergy-sexual-abuse-sisters-55800> (accessed February 27, 2019).
- Deguara, Angele. "Destroying False Images of God: The Experiences of LGBT Catholics." *Journal of Homosexuality* 65, no. 3 (2018): 317–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2017.1317474>.
- Derks, Marjet. 2018. "Debating the Council on the Air: Media, Personality, and the Transformation of the Dutch Church." In *Catholics in the Vatican II Era: Local Histories of a Global Event*, edited by Kathleen Sprows Cummings, Timothy Matovina, and Robert A. Orsi. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Dillon, Michele. "Cultural Differences in the Abortion Discourse of the Catholic Church: Evidence from Four Countries." *Sociology of Religion* 57, no. 1 (1996): 25–36. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3712002>.
- Dillon, Michele. *Postsecular Catholicism*. Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Dim, Innocent O. *Reception of Vatican II in Nigeria/Igbo Church with Reference to Awka Diocese*. Peter Lang, 2003.
- Dionisio, Eleanor R. "Introduction." In *Becoming a Church of the Poor: Philippine Catholicism after the Second Plenary Council*, edited by Eleanor R. Dionisio. John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues, 2011.
- Diotalleivi, Luca. "The Territorial Articulation of Secularization in Italy: Social Modernization, Religious Modernization." *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* 107 (1999): 77–108. https://www.persee.fr/doc/assr_0335-5985_1999_num_107_1_1164.

- Dodson, Michael. "Priests and Peronism: Radical Clergy and Argentine Politics." *Latin American Perspectives* 1, no. 3 (1974): 58–72. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X7400100304>.
- Donadio, Rachel. "Pope Meets Victims Abused by Priests in Malta." *The New York Times*, April 18, 2010.
- Dowd, Robert A. *Christianity, Islam, and Liberal Democracy: Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Dowd, Robert A. "Religious Diversity and Religious Tolerance: Lessons from Nigeria." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 4 (2016): 617–644. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002714550085>.
- Dowd, Robert, and Ani Sarkissian. "The Roman Catholic Charismatic Movement and Civic Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 56, no. 3 (2017): 536–557. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12370>.
- Drosdoff, Daniel. "Sensitive Problems Await Pope in Argentina." *United Press International*, April 6, 1987. <http://www.upi.com/Archives/1987/04/06/Sensitive-problems-await-pope-in-Argentina/3508544680000/> (accessed March 15, 2017).
- Duffy, Eamon. *Saints & Sinners: A History of the Popes*. Yale University Press, 1997.
- Duffy, Eamon. *Ten Popes Who Shook the World*. Yale University Press, 2011.
- Durkheim, Émile. [1895]. *The Rules of Sociological Method and Selected Texts on Sociology and its Method*, edited with an introduction by Steven Lukes; translated by W. D. Halls. Macmillan, 1982.
- Ebaugh, Helen Rose, ed. *Religion and the Social Order: Vatican II and U.S. Catholicism*. JAI Press Inc., 1991.
- Ebaugh, Helen Rose Fuchs. *Women in the Vanishing Cloister: Organizational Decline in Catholic Religious Orders in the United States*. Rutgers University Press, 1993.
- Ebaugh, Helen Rose, Jon Lorence, and Janet Saltzman Chafetz. "The Growth and Decline of the Population of Catholic Nuns Cross-Nationally, 1960–1990: A Case of Secularization as Social Structural Change." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 35, no. 2 (1996): 171–183. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387084>.
- Ede, Victor Ifeanyi, and Dominic Zuoke Kalu. "Child Abuse in Nigeria: Responses of Christian Churches and the Way Out." *International Journal for Innovative Research in Interdisciplinary Field* 4, no. 4 (2018): 46–53.
- Ellul, Joseph. *The Catholic Identity of Malta After Ten Years of Membership in the European Union: Challenges and Prospects*. The Institute for European Studies, University of Malta, 2014. http://aei.pitt.edu/57599/1/Joseph_Ellul_Final.pdf (accessed November 16, 2020).
- Emery, Robert E., ed. *Cultural Sociology of Divorce: An Encyclopedia*, vols 1–3. Sage, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452274447>.

- Ekpo, Anthony. *The Roman Curia: History, Theology, and Organization*. Georgetown University Press, 2024.
- Erikson, Emily. "Discussion." *Trajectories* (newsletter of the American Sociological Association Comparative and Historical Sociology section) 30, nos. 2–3 (Winter/Spring 2019): 38–39.
- Espina-Varona, Inday. "Cruelty Towards Flock Haunts Clergy Amid Sex Abuse Crisis." *La Croix International*, February 28, 2019.
- European Values Study. EVS Trend File 1981–2017. GESIS, 2022. ZA7503 Data file Version 3.0.0, <https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14021>.
- Ezeakacha, Ignatius Chukwuma. "The Participation of Lay Catholics in Nigerian Politics in the Light of the Teaching of Articles 7 and 14 of Vatican II's, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*." M.Th. thesis, Faculty of St. Michael's College and the University of Toronto, 2014. https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/67434/7/Ezeakacha_Ignatius_C_201411_ThM_thesis.pdf (accessed January 11, 2021).
- Falzon, Mark-Anthony. "God Protect Me from My Friends Prelates, Politicians, and Social Welfare in Contemporary Malta." *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 17, no. 1 (2007): 47–72. muse.jhu.edu/article/676848.
- Felknor, Laurie, ed. *The Crisis in Religious Vocations: An Inside View*. Paulist Press, 1989.
- Fenech, Gerald. 2010a. "Jew B'Xejn, Jew Xejn" (The Church School Saga Part 1.) *Malta Today*, April 25, 2010, p. 13. <http://archive.maltatoday.com.mt/2010/04/25/pix/feature.pdf> (accessed August 24, 2020).
- Fenech, Gerald. 2010b. "Jew B'Xejn, Jew Xejn" (The Church School Saga Part 2.) *Malta Today*, 2 May 2010, p. 13. <http://archive.maltatoday.com.mt/2010/05/02/pix/feature.pdf> (accessed August 24, 2020).
- Fichter, Stephen Joseph. "Shepherding in Greener Pastures: Causes and Consequences of the Dual Transition of Celibate Catholic Priests into Married Protestant Ministry." PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2009.
- Finke, Roger. "An Orderly Return to Tradition: Explaining the Recruitment of Members into Catholic Religious Orders." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36, no. 2 (1997): 218–230. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387554>.
- Finke, Roger, and Patricia Wittberg. "Organizational Revival from Within: Explaining Revivalism and Reform in the Roman Catholic Church." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39, no. 2 (2000): 154–170. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0021-8294.00013>.
- Fishman, Robert M., and Keely Jones. "Civic Engagement and Church Policy in the Making of Religious Vocations: Cross-National Variation in the Evolution of Priestly Vocations." In *Vocation and Social Context*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan. Brill, 2007.

- Fishman, Robert M., Carlos Gervasoni, and Keeley Jones Stater. "Inequality and the Altruistic Life: A Study of the Priestly Vocation Rate." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 54, no. 3 (2015): 575–595. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12216>.
- Fleet, Michael, and Brian H. Smith. *The Catholic Church and Democracy in Chile and Peru*. University of Notre Dame Press, 1997.
- Fox, Jonathan. *A World Survey of Religion and the State*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Francis. First Greeting of the Holy Father Pope Francis, Central Loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, Wednesday, March 13, 2013. https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco_20130313_benedizione-urbi-et-orbi.html (accessed May 10, 2018).
- Francisco, Jose Mario C. "People of God, People of the Nation: Official Catholic Discourse on Nation and Nationalism." *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 62, nos. 3–4 (2014): 341–375. <https://doi.org/10.1353/phs.2014.0028>.
- Francisco, Jose Mario C. "In But Not of the World': Filipino Catholicism and Its Powers." In *Theology and Power: International Perspectives*, edited by Stephen Bullivant, Eric Marcelo O. Genilo, Daniel Franklin Pilario, and Agnes M. Brazal. Paulist Press, 2016.
- Frendo, Henry. *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience*. Midsea Books Ltd., 1979.
- Gannon, Thomas M. "Preface." In *World Catholicism in Transition*, edited by Thomas M. Gannon. Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988.
- García-Montoya, Laura, and James Mahoney. "The Logic of Critical Event Analysis." *Trajectories* (newsletter of the American Sociological Association Comparative and Historical Sociology section) 30, nos. 2–3 (Winter/Spring 2019).
- Gautier, Mary L., Paul M. Perl, and Stephen J. Fichter. 2012. *Same Call, Different Men: The Evolution of the Priesthood Since Vatican II*. Liturgical Press, 2012.
- Giddens, Anthony. "Foreword." In *Maltese Society: A Sociological Inquiry*, edited by Ronald G. Sultana and Godfrey Baldacchino. Mireva Publications, 1994.
- Gifford, Paul. *African Christianity: Its Public Role*. C. Hurst & Company, 1998.
- Gifford, Paul. *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa*. C. Hurst & Company, 2015.
- Gill, Anthony. *Rendering unto Caesar: The Catholic Church and the State in Latin America*. University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Gill, Anthony, host. *Research on Religion Podcast*, podcast, "Samuel Gregg on Pope Francis, Argentina, and Economics." January 8, 2017. <https://web.archive.org/web/20200219064951/http://www.researchonreligion>.

- [org/historical-topics/samuel-gregg-on-pope-francis-argentina-and-economics](#) (accessed May 30, 2025).
- Goñi, Uki. "Defying Church, Argentina Legalizes Gay Marriage." *Time*, July 15, 2010. <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2004036,00.html> (accessed February 1, 2018).
- Goodstein, Laurie. "India, Exporter of Priests, May Keep Them Home." *The New York Times*, December 30, 2008. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/30/world/americas/30iht-30priest.18990361.html> (accessed November 3, 2020).
- Grech, Sergio. "Archbishop Michael Gonzi in a Changing Malta." PhD diss., University of Malta, 2022. <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/104297> (accessed November 21, 2023).
- Greeley, Andrew M. *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Sociological Investigations*. United States Catholic Conference 1972.
- Greeley, Andrew M. *Priests: A Calling in Crisis*. University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Grzymała-Busse, Anna, and Dan Slater. "Making Godly Nations: Church-State Pathways in Poland and the Philippines." *Comparative Politics* 50, no. 4 (2018): 545–564. <https://doi.org/10.5129/001041518823565597>.
- Grzymała-Busse, Anna. "Time Will Tell? Temporality and the Analysis of Causal Mechanisms and Processes." *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 9 (2011): 1267–1297. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414010390653>.
- Grzymała-Busse, Anna. *Nations Under God: How Churches Use Moral Authority to Influence Policy*. Princeton University Press, 2015.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. "The Church and the Poor: A Latin American Perspective." In *The Reception of Vatican II*, edited by Giuseppe Alberigo, Jean-Pierre Jossua, and Joseph A. Komonchak. The Catholic University of America Press, 1987.
- Hagopian, Frances. *Latin American Catholicism in an Age of Religious and Political Pluralism: A Framework for Analysis*. Kellogg Institute, 2006. https://kellogg.nd.edu/sites/default/files/old_files/documents/332_0.pdf (accessed February 9, 2018).
- Hagopian, Frances, ed. *Religious Pluralism, Democracy, and the Catholic Church in Latin America*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.
- Hale, Christopher W. *Divined Intervention: Religious Institutions and Collective Action*. University of Michigan Press, 2020.
- Hanson, Eric O. *The Catholic Church in World Politics*. Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Harwood, Mark. *Malta in the European Union*. Routledge, 2014.
- Hassan, Mai. *Regime Threats and State Solutions: Bureaucratic Loyalty and Embeddedness in Kenya*. Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Hastings, Adrian. *Church & Mission in Modern Africa*. Burns & Oates, 1967.
- Hastings, Adrian. "Celibacy in Africa." In *Celibacy in the Church*, edited by William Bassett and Peter Huizing. Herder and Herder, 1972.

- Hastings, Adrian. "The Council Came to Africa." In *Vatican II Revisited By Those Who Were There*, edited by Dom Alberic Stacpoole. Winston Press, 1986.
- Hastings, Adrian. "East, Central, and Southern Africa." In *World Catholicism in Transition*, edited by Thomas M. Gannon. Macmillan, 1988.
- Hastings, Adrian. "East, Central, and Southern Africa." In *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, edited by Adrian Hastings. Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Hebblethwaite, Peter. 1991. "John Paul II." In *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, edited by Adrian Hastings. Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Herbst, Jeffrey. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton University Press, 2014.
- Hertzke, Allen D. "The Catholic Church and Catholicism in Global Politics." In *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*, 2nd edition, edited by Jeffrey Haynes. Routledge, 2016.
- Hervieu-Léger, Danièle. "Religion, Memory and Catholic Identity: Young People in France and the 'New Evangelisation of Europe.'" In *Religion in Contemporary Europe*, edited by John Fulton and Peter Gee. The Edwin Mellen Press, 1994.
- Hoge, Dean R. *The Future of Catholic Leadership: Responses to the Priest Shortage*. Sheed & Ward, 1987.
- Hoge, Dean R. *The First Five Years of the Priesthood: A Study of Newly Ordained Catholic Priests*. The Liturgical Press, 2002.
- Hoge, Dean R. "The Sociology of the Clergy." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, edited by Peter B. Clarke. Oxford University Press, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199588961.013.0033>.
- Hoge, Dean R., Joseph J. Shields, and Douglas L. Griffin. "Changes in Satisfaction and Institutional Attitudes of Catholic Priests, 1970–1993." *Sociology of Religion* 56, no. 2 (1995): 195–213. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3711763>.
- Hoover, Stewart M. *Religion in the News: Faith and Journalism in American Public Discourse*. Sage, 1998.
- Hornsby-Smith, Michael P. *The Changing Parish: A Study of Parishes, Priests, and Parishioners After Vatican II*. Routledge, 1989.
- Htun, Mala. *Sex and the State: Abortion, Divorce, and the Family Under Latin American Dictatorships and Democracies*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Hungerman, Daniel M. "Substitution and Stigma: Evidence on Religious Markets from the Catholic Sex Abuse Scandal." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 5, no. 3 (2013): 227–253. <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/pol.5.3.227>.
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. *Looking Backward: A Cross-National Study of Religious Trends*. George Mason University Working paper, 2003.

- Imokhai, C. A. "The Evolution of the Catholic Church in Nigeria." In *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, edited by A. O. Makozi and G. J. Afolabi Ojo. Macmillan Nigeria, 1982.
- Inglehart, Ronald, Christian Haerpfer, Alejandro Moreno, Christian Welzel, Kseniya Kizilova, Jaime Diez-Medrano, Marta Lagos, Pippa Norris, Eduard Ponarin, and Bi Puranen et al., eds. *World Values Survey: All Rounds – Country-Pooled Datafile*. Madrid, Spain and Vienna, Austria: JD Systems Institute & WWSA Secretariat, 2022. Dataset Version 3.0.0. [doi:10.14281/18241.17](https://doi.org/10.14281/18241.17).
- Intengan, Romeo J. "The Recent Philippine Church and Government Dispute: Birth Regulation, Population Policy, and Sex Education." *Landas: Journal of Loyola School of Theology* 10, no. 1 (1996): 95–123.
- Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. Statement by Bishop Francis Duffy Concerning Father Joseph Okere. Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2015. <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2015/10/05/statement-by-bishop-francis-duffy-concerning-father-joseph-okere/> (accessed November 2, 2020).
- Jamieson, Michelle K., Gisela H. Govaart, and Madeleine Pownall. "Reflexivity in Quantitative Research: A Rationale and Beginner's Guide." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 17, no. 4 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12735>.
- Jenkins, Philip. *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis*. Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
- John XXIII. "Allocation of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII on Religious Vocations." In *Today's Vocation Crisis: A Summary of the Studies and Discussions at the First International Congress on Vocations to the States of Perfection December 10–16, 1961*, edited by Godfrey Poage and Germain Lievin. The Mercier Press, 1962.
- John Paul II. 1981a. Holy Mass in the Cathedral of Manila, Homily of His Holiness John Paul II, Manila, February 17, 1981. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1981/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19810217_manila-filippine.html (accessed March 9, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1981b. Holy Mass for the Beatification of Lorenzo Ruiz, Homily of the Holy Father John Paul II, Manila, February 18, 1981. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1981/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19810218_beatificazione-ruiz.html (accessed March 9, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1981c. Holy Mass for Families, Homily of the Pope John Paul II, Cebu City, February 19, 1981. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1981/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19810219_famiglie.html (accessed March 9, 2018).

- John Paul II. 1981d. Holy Mass for Farmers in Legazpi City, Homily of the Pope John Paul II, Legazpi City, February 21, 1981. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1981/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19810221_agricoltori.html (accessed March 9, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1981e. Address of His Holiness John Paul II to Landowners and Workers of Sugar Cane Plantations, Reclaimed Area, Bacolod City, February 20, 1981. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1981/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19810220_filippine-bacolod-zucchero.html (accessed August 31, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1982a. Homily of Pope John Paul II, Holy Mass at the Shrine of Luján, Buenos Aires, June 11, 1982. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820611_buenos-aires.html (accessed March 14, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1982b. Homily of Pope John Paul II, Holy Mass for the Argentinian People, Buenos Aires, June 12, 1982. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820612_popolo-argentina.html (accessed March 14, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1982c. Address of John Paul II to the Bishops of Nigeria, Lagos, February 15, 1982. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1982/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19820215_vescovi-nigeria.html (accessed July 10, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1982d. Homily of John Paul II, Holy Mass, Lagos, February 12, 1982. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820212_lagos-nigeria.html (accessed March 9, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1982e. Homily of John Paul II, Mass for the Families, Onitsha, February 13, 1982. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820213_onitsha-nigeria.html (accessed March 9, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1982f. Homily of John Paul II, Mass with Priestly Ordinations, Kaduna, February 14, 1982. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820214_ordinazioni-nigeria.html (accessed March 22, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987a. Celebration of the World with the Faithful in Mendoza, Homily of John Paul II, Mendoza, April 7, 1987. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870407_fedeli-mendoza.html (accessed March 22, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987b. Holy Mass for Families. Homily of John Paul II, Cordoba, April 8, 1987. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870408_messa-cordoba.html (accessed March 22, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987c. Celebration of the Word with the Faithful in Viedma, Homily of John Paul II, “Gobernador Edgardo Castello” Airport Viedma, April 7, 1987. <https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/>

- [homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870407_fedeli-viedma.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870407_fedeli-viedma.html) (accessed March 22, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987d. Celebration of the Word on the Theme of Immigration, Homily of John Paul II, Paraná airport, April 9, 1987. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870409_celebraz-parana.html (accessed March 26, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987e. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*. Vatican, 1987. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html. (accessed March 27, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987f. Homily of John Paul II, Independence Park, Rosario, April 11, 1987. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870411_messa-rosario.html (accessed March 28, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987g. Holy Mass in Corrientes, Homily of John Paul II, Corrientes, April 9, 1987. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870409_messa-corrientes.html (accessed March 23, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1987h. Holy Mass for Palm Sunday and Second World Youth Day, Homily of John Paul II, Buenos Aires, April 12, 1987. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/es/homilies/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19870412_celebraz-giornata-gioventu.html (accessed March 27, 2018).
- John Paul II. Homily of His Holiness John Paul II, Island of Gozo, May 26, 1990. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1990/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19900526_gozo.html (accessed February 22, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1995a. Holy Mass for the Representatives of the International Youth Forum, Homily of the Holy Father John Paul II, Chapel of the University of Santo Tomás, Manila, January 13, 1995. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19950113_forum-giovani-gmg.html (accessed March 29, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1995b. Solemn Eucharistic Concelebration, Homily of the Holy Father John Paul II, Rizal Park, Manila, January 15, 1995. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19950115_manila-gmg.html (accessed March 29, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1995c. Address of His Holiness John Paul II to the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines, Dominigo Salazar Hall, Curia of the Archdiocese of Manila, January 14, 1995. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1995/january/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_14011995_bishops-of-the-philippines.html (accessed August 31, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1998a. Homily of John Paul II, Mass for the Beatification of Father Cyprian Tansi, March 22, 1998. <https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1998/documents/>

- [hf_jp-ii_hom_19980322_nigeria-beatification.html](#) (accessed February 20, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1998b. Meeting with Muslim Leaders, Address of John Paul II, Sunday, March 22, 1998. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980322_nigeria-muslim.html (accessed August 30, 2018).
- John Paul II. 1998c. Address of John Paul II, Meeting with Nigerian Bishops, Abuja, Monday, March 23, 1998. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/travels/1998/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_23031998_nigeria-bishops.html (accessed August 30, 2018).
- John Paul II. 2001. Homily of John Paul II, Mass with Beatifications, “Granaries” of Floriana, May 9, 2001. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20010509_malta-beatification.html (accessed March 13, 2018).
- Johnson, Mary, Patricia Wittberg, and Mary L. Gautier. *New Generations of Catholic Sisters: The Challenge of Diversity*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Kalbian, Aline H. *Sex, Violence, and Justice: Contraception and the Catholic Church*. Georgetown University Press, 2014.
- Kalilombe, Patrick A. “Africa.” In *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, edited by Adrian Hastings. Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Karaos, Anna Marie A. “The Church and the Environment: Prophets Against the Mines.” In *Becoming a Church of the Poor: Philippine Catholicism after the Second Plenary Council*, edited by Eleanor R. Dionisio. John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues, 2011.
- Katzenstein, Mary Fainsod. *Faithful and Fearless: Moving Feminist Protest Inside the Church and Military*. Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Keenan, Marie. *Child Sexual Abuse & The Catholic Church Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Keogh, Dermot. “Church and State.” In *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, edited by Adrian Hastings. Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Kerkhofs, Jan, ed. *Europe Without Priests?* SCM Press, 1995.
- Kmiec, Douglas W. “Secularism Crucified?” In *Secularism, Catholicism, and the Future of Public Life: A Dialogue with Ambassador Douglas W. Kmiec*, edited by Gary J. Adler Jr. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Knapman OSB, Hugh Somerville, ed. *A Limerickal Commentary on the Second Vatican Council*. Arouca Press, 2020.
- Kollman, Ken. *Perils of Centralization: Lessons from Church, State, and Corporation*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Krause, Monika. *Model Cases: On Canonical Research Objects and Sites*. University of Chicago Press, 2021.
- Künkler, Mirjam, and John Madeley. “Conclusions: The Continued Prevalence of the ‘Marker State.’” In *A Secular Age Beyond the West: Religion, Law and the State in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa*, edited by

- Mirjam Künkler, John Madeley, and Shylashri Shankar. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Laitin, David D. *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change Among the Yoruba*. University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Lamont, Donal. "Ad Gentes: A Missionary Bishop Remembers." In *Vatican II Revisited By Those Who Were There*, edited by Dom Alberic Stacpoole. Winston Press, 1986.
- Lange, Matthew. *Comparative-Historical Methods*. Sage, 2013.
- Langenberg, Amy, and Ann Gleig. "Sexual Misconduct and Buddhism – Centering Survivors." *The Shiloh Project: Rape Culture, Religion, and the Bible*, 18 November 2020. <https://www.shilohproject.blog/sexual-misconduct-and-buddhism-centering-survivors/> (accessed March 3, 2023).
- Laver, Michael. "Are Irish Parties Peculiar?." In *The Development of Industrial Society in Ireland*, edited by John H. Goldthorpe and Christopher T. Whelan. Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Leung, Beatrice, and Patricia Wittberg. "Catholic Religious Orders of Women in China: Adaptation and Power." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 43, no. 1 (2004): 67–82. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2004.00218.x>.
- Levine, Daniel H. *Religion and Politics in Latin America: The Catholic Church in Venezuela and Columbia*. Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Levine, Daniel H. *Politics, Religion, and Society in Latin America*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012.
- Levitt, Peggy, and Sally Merry. "Vernacularization on the Ground: Local Uses of Global Women's Rights in Peru, China, India and the United States." *Global Networks* 9, no. 4 (2009): 441–461. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2009.00263.x>.
- Likhaan – Child Justice League – Catholics for a Free Choice. The Holy See and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of the Philippines: NGO Report on How the Holy See's Laws Impact the Philippines' Compliance with the Convention. Likhaan – Child Justice League – Catholics for a Free Choice, 2004. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/2252.pdf> (accessed February 20, 2025).
- Linden, Ian. *Global Catholicism: Diversity and Change Since Vatican II*. Columbia University Press, 2009.
- Lipka, Michael, and Bill Webster. *A Half Century of Well-Travelled Popes*. Pew Research Center, 2014. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/05/23/a-half-century-of-well-traveled-popes/> (accessed October 26, 2020).
- Lu, Yun, and Fenggang Yang. "Does State Repression Suppress the Protest Participation of Religious People?" *Sociology of Religion* 80, no. 2 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/sry029>.
- Luft, Aliza. "LGBT Activism in Eastern Africa." In *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, edited by Nancy A. Naples,

- Renée C. Hoogland, Maithree Wickramasinghe, and Wai Ching Angela Wong. Wiley-Blackwell, 2016.
- Luft, Aliza. "Religion in Vichy France: How Meso-Level Actors Contribute to Authoritarian Legitimation." *European Journal of Sociology* 61, no. 1 (2020): 67–101. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975620000041>.
- Lupu, Noam, Virginia Oliveros, and Luis Schiumerini. 2019. "Toward a Theory of Campaigns and Voters in Developing Democracies." In *Campaigns and Voters in Developing Democracies: Argentina in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Noam Lupu, Virginia Oliveros, and Luis Schiumerini. University of Michigan Press, 2019.
- Lynch, Gordon. *The Sacred in the Modern World: A Cultural Sociological Approach*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Madsen, Richard. *China's Catholics: Tragedy and Hope in an Emerging Civil Society*. University of California Press, 1998.
- Maerz, Seraphine, Amanda Edgell, Joshua Krusell, Laura Maxwell, and Sebastian Hellmeier. ERT – Episodes of Regime Transformation R package. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. 2020. <https://github.com/vdeminstitute/ERT>.
- Makozi, A. O., and G. J. Afolabi Ojo, eds. *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*. Macmillan Nigeria, 1982.
- Mainwaring, Scott, and Alexander Wilde, eds. *The Progressive Church in Latin America*. University of Notre Dame, 1989.
- Malzac, Marie. "Sexual abuse still a 'private' matter in Africa." *La Croix International*, August 13, 2019.
- Mallimaci, Fortunato, and Juan Cruz Esquivel. "Pluralism and Individualization in the Argentine Religious Field: Challenges for Catholicism in the Perspective of Society and Politics." *Politics and Religion* IX, no. 1 (2015): 35–50. <https://www.politicsandreligionjournal.com/index.php/prj/article/view/196/218>.
- Malta Today. "The Success Story of Malta: Europe's Gaming Hub." *Malta Today*, January 8, 2024. https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/announcements/announcements/126895/the_success_story_of_malta_europes_gaming_hub (accessed January 29, 2024).
- Maltese Ecclesiastical Province. *On Cases of Sexual Abuse in Pastoral Activity Statement of Policy and Procedures in Cases of Sexual Abuse*. Floriana: Maltese Episcopal Conference, 1999.
- Maltese Ecclesiastical Province. *On Cases of Sexual Abuse in Pastoral Activity Statement of Policy and Procedures in Cases of Sexual Abuse*. Floriana: Maltese Episcopal Conference, 2014. <http://ms.maltadiocese.org/WEB-SITE/2014/Safeguarding%20Policy%202014.pdf> (accessed December 8, 2023).
- Mananzan, Mary John. "The Philippines." In *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, edited by Adrian Hastings. Oxford University Press, 1991.

- Manglos-Weber, Nicolette D. "Identity, Inequality, and Legitimacy: Religious Differences in Primary School Completion in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 56, no. 2 (2017): 302–322. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12333>.
- Manglos, Nicolette D., and Alexander A. Weinreb. "Religion and Interest in Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Social Forces* 92, no. 1 (2013): 195–219. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sot070>.
- Marchadesch, Barbara. "One Can Never Justify Any Violation of Rights': John Paul II Stands up to a Dictator." *GMA News Online*, April 27, 2014. <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/358581/lifestyle/one-can-never-justify-any-violation-of-rights-john-paul-ii-stands-up-to-a-dictator> (accessed March 16, 2017).
- Marmion, Declan. "Introduction." In *Models of Priestly Formation: Assessing the Past, Reflecting on the Present, and Imagining the Future*, edited by Declan Marmion, Michael Mullaney, and Salvador Ryan. Liturgical Press, 2019.
- Martin, David. *A General Theory of Secularization*. Harper & Row Publishers, 1978.
- Martin, David. "Catholicism in Transition." In *World Catholicism in Transition*, edited by Thomas M. Gannon. Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988.
- Martin, David. *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*. Ashgate, 2005.
- Massa, Ariadne. "Child Abuser Priest Told He Was Defrocked Last March." *Times of Malta*, September 5, 2015. <https://www.timesofmalta.com/article/child-abuser-priest-told-he-was-defrocked-last-march.583268> (accessed October 31, 2024).
- Maunder, Chris. *Our Lady of the Nations: Apparitions of Mary in Twentieth-Century Catholic Europe*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Mayblin, Maya. "Containment and Contagion: The Gender of Sin in Contemporary Catholicism." In *The Anthropology of Catholicism: A Reader*, edited by Kristin Norget, Valentina Napolitano, and Maya Mayblin. University of California Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520288423.003.0012>.
- Mayblin, Maya, Kristin Norget, and Valentina Napolitano. "Introduction: The Anthropology of Catholicism." In *The Anthropology of Catholicism: A Reader*, edited by Kristin Norget, Valentina Napolitano, and Maya Mayblin. University of California Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520288423.003.0001>.
- McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- McAdam, Doug, and William H. Sewell. "'It's About Time': Temporality in the Study of Social Movements and Revolutions." In *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics*, edited by Ronald R. Aminzade, Jack A.

- Goldstone, Doug McAdam, Elizabeth J. Perry, William H. Sewell, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilley. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- McDonald, Marie. "The Problem of the Sexual Abuse of African Religious in Africa and in Rome." *National Catholic Reporter*, March 9, 2001. https://natcath.org/NCR_Online/documents/McDonaldAFRICAreport.htm (accessed February 28, 2019).
- McGrath, Marcos. "Social Teachings Since the Council: A Response from Latin America." In *Vatican II Revisited By Those Who Were There*, edited by Dom Alberic Stacpoole. Winston Press, 1986.
- McGreevy, John T. *Catholicism: A Global History from the French Revolution to Pope Francis*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2022.
- Medina, Marielle, and Rafael L. Antonio. "Pope John Paul II's visits to PH." *Inquirer.Net*, April 26, 2014. <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/102782/pope-john-paul-iis-visits-to-ph> (accessed March 16, 2017).
- Meyer, Birgit. "Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 447–474. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143835>.
- Meyer, Rachel, and Howard Kimeldorf. "Eventful Subjectivity: The Experiential Sources of Solidarity." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 28, no. 4 (2015): 429–457. <https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12083>.
- Mitchell, Jon P. "Modernity and the Mediterranean." *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 12, no. 1 (2002): 1–21. muse.jhu.edu/article/670315.
- Mitchell, Jon P. "A Catholic Body? Miracles, Secularity, and the Porous Self in Malta." In *The Anthropology of Catholicism: A Reader*, edited by Kristin Norget, Valentina Napolitano, and Maya Mayblin. University of California Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520288423.003.0017>.
- Miller, Duane Alexander, and Patrick Johnstone. "Believers in Christ from a Muslim Background: A Global Census." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 11 (2015): 1–20. <http://www.religjournal.com/pdf/ijrr11010.pdf> (accessed February 21, 2025).
- Molteni, Francesco. *A Need for Religion: Insecurity and Religiosity in the Contemporary World*. Brill, 2021.
- Molteni, Francesco, and Ferruccio Biolcati. "Religious Decline as a Population Dynamic: Generational Replacement and Religious Attendance in Europe." *Social Forces* 101, no. 4 (2023): 2034–2058. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soac099>.
- Moore, Adam. "The Eventfulness of Social Reproduction." *Sociological Theory* 29, no. 4 (2011): 294–314. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2011.01399.x>.
- Morello, Gustavo. "Catholicism(s), State Terrorism and Secularisation in Argentina." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 31, no. 3 (2012): 366–380. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1470-9856.2011.00695.x>.

- Morello, Gustavo. *The Catholic Church and Argentina's Dirty War*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Morello, Gustavo. "Transformations in Argentinian Catholicism, from the Second Half of the Twentieth Century to Pope Francis." In *Secularisms in a Postsecular Age? Religiosities and Subjectivities in Comparative Perspective*, edited by José Mapril, Ruy Blanes, Emerson Giumbelli, and Erin K. Wilson. Palgrave, 2017.
- Morello, Gustavo. "The Symbolic Efficacy of Pope Francis's Religious Capital and the Agency of the Poor." *Sociology* 53, no. 6 (2019): 1077–1093. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519853109>.
- Morello, Gustavo. 2021a. "Catholicism in Context: Religious Practice in Latin America." *Journal of Global Catholicism* 6, no. 1 (2021): 46–63. <https://crossworks.holycross.edu/jgc/vol6/iss1/3/>.
- Morello, Gustavo. 2021b. "Nobody Prays Alone: The Practice of Prayer Among Catholics in Three Latin American Cities." *International Journal of Latin American Religions* 5, no. 2 (2021): 265–286. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41603-021-00144-4>.
- Morello, Gustavo, and Fortunato Mallimaci. "Political Pluralization and the Declining Scope of Religious Authority in Argentina's 1960s: The Case of *Cristianismo y Revolución*." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 33, no. 3 (2018): 427–445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537903.2018.1535363>.
- Moreton, Bethany. "Our Lady of Mont Pelerin: The 'Navarra School' of Catholic Neoliberalism." *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics* 2, no. 1 (2021): 88–153. [10.1353/cap.2021.0003](https://doi.org/10.1353/cap.2021.0003).
- Murdock, Heather. "Nigeria's Thriving Catholics Push for Continuing Conservatism from Church," *The World*, March 12, 2013, Available online at <https://theworld.org/stories/2013-03-12/nigerias-thriving-catholics-push-continuing-conservatism-church> (accessed January 18, 2024).
- National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church. *Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Saint Patrick's Missionary Society (undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI))*. National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, 2013. <https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Article/Images/St-Patricks-Missionary-Society-Kiltegan-Fathers1.pdf> (accessed February 22, 2019).
- Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. "Mutiny and Nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring Military Defections and Loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria." *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013): 337–349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343313476529>.
- Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. "Religion, Ideology, and Support for Nonviolent Revolutionary Struggles: A Comparison of Catholic Leaders in Argentina, Chile, and El Salvador in the 1970s–1980s." In *Research in Social*

- Movements, Conflicts and Change*, vol. 43, edited by Lisa Leitz and Eitan Y. Alimi. Emerald Publishing Limited, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0163-786X2019000043010>.
- Ngundo, Bibiana M., and Jonathon Wiggins. *Women Religious in Africa*. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University, 2017. <https://www.asec-sldi.org/docs/published-work/AfricanSisters2017.pdf> (accessed February 25, 2019).
- N.K.C. *My Father: From Malta to Clontarf*. Xlibris Corporation, 2010.
- Norget, Kristin. "The Virgin of Guadalupe and Spectacles of Catholic Evangelism in Mexico." In *The Anthropology of Catholicism: A Reader*, edited by Kristin Norget, Valentina Napolitano, and Maya Mayblin. University of California Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520288423.003.0015>.
- Norris, Pippa, and Ronald Inglehart. *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*. Cambridge University Press, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511791017>.
- Obadare, Ebenezer. "Religious NGOs, Civil Society and the Quest for a Public Sphere in Nigeria." *African Identities* 5, no. 1 (2007): 135–153. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725840701253928>.
- Odchigue, Randy J. C. "Church Power, People Power: Hegemonies and Resistances." In *Theology and Power: International Perspectives*, edited by Stephen Bullivant, Eric Marcello O. Genilo, Daniel Franklin Pilario, and Agnes M. Brazal. Paulist Press, 2016.
- O'Connell, Gerard. *God's Invisible Hand: The Life and Work of Francis Cardinal Arinze*. Ignatius Press, 2006.
- O'Connell, James. "Will the Success of the Church Continue in Africa." *African Ecclesiastical Review* VIII, no. 4 (1966): 134–145.
- O'Donohue, Maura. "Memo from Sr. Maura O'Donohue MMM: Urgent Concerns for the Church in the Context of HIV/AIDS." *National Catholic Reporter*, March 9, 2001. https://natcath.org/NCR_Online/documents/UrgentConcernsO'DONOHUE.htm (accessed February 28, 2019).
- Okure, Aniedi Peter. "The Catholic Church as Social and Political Actor: An Analysis of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, 1960–1990." PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 2009.
- Olson, Laura R. "From the Editor: Toward a More Internationally Inclusive Study of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 53, no. 2 (2014): v–vi. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12119>.
- O'Malley, John W. *What Happened at Vatican II*. Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Omolade, Richard. "Challenges for Catholic Schools in Nigeria." *International Studies in Catholic Education* 1, no. 1 (2009): 30–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19422530802605457>.

- Openibo, Veronica. Openness to the World as a Consequence of the Ecclesial Mission, Meeting “The Protection of Minors in the Church”, February 23, 2019. Vatican, 2019. http://www.vatican.va/resources/resources_suoropenibo-protezioneminori_20190223_en.html (accessed February 27, 2019).
- Orobator, Agbonkhianmeghe E. “After All, Africa Is Largely a Nonliterate Continent’: The Reception of Vatican II in Africa.” *Theological Studies* 74, no. 2 (2013): 284–301. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056391307400202>.
- Orsi, Robert A. “What Is Catholic About the Clergy Sex Abuse Crisis?” In *The Anthropology of Catholicism: A Reader*, edited by Kristin Norget, Valentina Napolitano, and Maya Mayblin. University of California Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520288423.003.0022>.
- Pace, Roderick. “Growing Secularisation in a Catholic Society: The Divorce Referendum of 28 May 2011 in Malta.” *South European Society and Politics* 17, no. 4 (2012): 573–589. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2012.755761>.
- Parliament of Australia. 2001. *Lost Innocents: Righting the Record – Report on Child Migration*, August 30, 2001. https://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/senate/community_affairs/completed_inquiries/1999-02/child_migrat/report/index (accessed November 18, 2024).
- Paul VI. 1965a. *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity Apostolicam Actuositatem*. Vatican, 1965. https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html (accessed February 11, 2023).
- Paul VI. 1965b. *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)*. Vatican, 1965. https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Paul VI. Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae* of the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI. Vatican, 1965. https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html (accessed October 29, 2022).
- Paul VI. 1970a. Mass at the Quezon Circle, Homily of the Holy Father Paul VI, Philippines, Manila, Sunday, November 29, 1970. https://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/homilies/1970/documents/hf_p-vi_hom_19701129.html (accessed March 9, 2018).
- Paul VI. 1970b. Address of the Holy Father Paul VI to All the Bishops of Asia. Manila, Philippines, Saturday, November 28, 1970. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/speeches/1970/documents/hf_p-vi_spe_19701128_vescovi.html (accessed August 30, 2018).
- Paul VI. 1970c. Radio Message of the Holy Father Paul VI to All People of Asia, Manila, Philippines, Sunday, November 29, 1970. <http://>

- w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/speeches/1970/documents/hf_p-vi_spe_19701129_popoli-asia.html (accessed August 30, 2018).
- Payne, Stanley G. *Spanish Catholicism: An Historical Overview*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.
- Pentin, Edward. "Cardinal Bergoglio Hits Out at Same-Sex Marriage." *National Catholic Register*, July 8, 2010. <http://www.ncregister.com/blog/edward-pentin/cardinal-bergoglio-hits-out-at-same-sex-marriage> (accessed March 6, 2019).
- Perelli, Carina. "Settling Accounts with Blood Memory: The Case of Argentina." *Social Research* 59, no. 2 (1992): 415–451.
- Pew Research Center. *Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2010. <https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2010/04/sub-saharan-africa-full-report.pdf> (accessed April 24, 2019).
- Pew Research Center. "During U.S. Papal Visit, Media Focused on the Shepherd and His Flock", May 6, 2008. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2008/05/06/during-us-papal-visit-media-focused-on-the-shepherd-and-his-flock/> (accessed January 18, 2024).
- Pew Research Center. *Same-Sex Marriage Around the World*. Pew Research Center, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/fact-sheet/gay-marriage-around-the-world/> (accessed October 19, 2022).
- Pham, John-Peter. *Heirs of the Fisherman: Behind the Scenes of Papal Death and Succession*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Pierson, Paul. "Big, Slow-Moving, and ... Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Pirotta, Godfrey A. *Malta's Parliament: An Official History*. Gutenberg Press, 2006.
- Pius XII. *Evangelii Praecones*. Vatican, 1951. http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_02061951_evangelii-praecones.html (accessed February 26, 2019).
- Plowman, David H. "A Fragment of the Maltese Exodus: Child Migration to Australia 1953–1965." *Journal of Maltese History* 2, no. 1 (2010): 1–20. <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/17976/1/2.A%20Fragment%20of%20the%20Maltese%20Exodus%20Child%20Migration%20to%20Australia%201953-1965.pdf> (accessed October 27, 2024).
- Poage, Godfrey, and Germain Lievin, eds. *Today's Vocation Crisis: A Summary of the Studies and Discussions at the First International Congress on Vocations to the States of Perfection December 10–16, 1961*. The Mercier Press, 1962.
- Poggioli, Sylvia. "After Years of Abuse By Priests, #NunsToo Are Speaking Out." *National Public Radio*, March 18, 2019. <https://www.npr>

- [org/2019/03/18/703067602/after-years-of-abuse-by-priests-nunsto-are-speaking-out?t=1605531106122](https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/new-to-the-parish-my-father-said-i-was-too-shy-to-be-a-priest-1.2502694) (accessed November 16, 2020).
- Pollack, Detlef, and Gergely Rosta. *Religion and Modernity: An International Comparison*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Pollak, Sorcha. "New to the Parish: 'My Father Said I was Too Shy to Be a Priest.'" *The Irish Times*, January 27, 2016. <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/new-to-the-parish-my-father-said-i-was-too-shy-to-be-a-priest-1.2502694> (accessed November 3, 2020).
- Pollard, John F. *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy: Financing the Vatican, 1850–1950*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Pollard, John. *The Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism 1914–1958*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. *Annual Report on Church Policies and Procedures for Safeguarding*. Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, 2024. <https://www.tutelaminorum.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/English-AR-Digital-Version-2024-1.pdf.pagespeed.ce.CQaxFo87EK.pdf> (accessed October 29, 2024).
- Quiñonez, Lora Ann, and Mary Daniel Turner. *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*. Temple University Press, 1992.
- Rabbia, Hugo H., and Lucas Gatica. "Being a Roman Catholic in a Context of Religious Diversity: An Exploration of Lived Religion Among Catholics in Córdoba, Argentina." *Visioni LatinoAmericane* IX, no. 17 (2017): 38–64. <https://doi.org/10.13137/2035-6633/18470>.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. "The New Pagans and the Church: A 1958 Lecture by Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI). Translated by Fr. Kenneth Baker, S. J." *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, January 30, 2017. <https://www.hprweb.com/2017/01/the-new-pagans-and-the-church/> (accessed January 26, 2021).
- Rivera, Roberto E. N. "Philippine Catholicism as Disruptive Public Religion: A Sociological Analysis of Philippine Catholic Bishops' Statements, 1946 to 2000." *Philippine Sociological Review* 58 (2010): 75–96.
- Rivera, Roberto E. N. "A Discerning Community: The Philippine Church and Electoral Politics, 1986–2010." In *Becoming a Church of the Poor: Philippine Catholicism After the Second Plenary Council*, edited by Eleanor R. Dionisio. John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues, 2011.
- Romo, Rafael, Jose Manuel Rodriguez, and Catherine E. Shoichet. "Behind Closed Doors, Pope Supported Civil Unions in Argentina, Activist Says." CNN, March 21, 2013. <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/20/world/americas/argentina-pope-civil-unions/index.html> (accessed November 12, 2020).
- Rountree, Kathryn. "Neo-Paganism, Native Faith and Indigenous Religion: A Case Study of Malta Within the European Context." *Social Anthropology* 22, no. 1 (2014): 81–100. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12063>.

- Rowntree, Derek. *Statistics Without Tears: An Introduction for Non-Mathematicians*. Penguin Books, 1981.
- Rufo, Aries C. *Altar of Secrets: Sex, Politics, and Money in the Philippine Catholic Church*. Journalism for Nation Building Foundation, 2013.
- Sampson, Isaac Terwase. "Religion and the Nigerian State: Situating the *de facto* and *de jure* Frontiers of State-Religion Relations and Its Implications for National Security." *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion* 3, no. 2 (2014): 311–339. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ojlr/rwt026>.
- Sansone, Kurt. "Revelations in New Book About Archbishop Gonzi: Who is this Joseph Mercieca?" *Times of Malta*, November 1, 2015. <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151101/local/revelations-in-new-book-about-archbishop-gonzi.590386> (accessed January 23, 2024).
- Sarah, Robert Cardinal. *God Or Nothing: A Conversation on Faith with Nicolas Diat*. Ignatius Press, 2015.
- Schineller, Peter, ed. *The Voice of the Voiceless: Pastoral Letters and Communiqués of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria 1960–2002*. Daily Graphics Nigeria, 2002.
- Schoenherr, Richard A. "Holy Power? Holy Authority? and Holy Celibacy?" In *Celibacy in the Church*, edited by William Bassett and Peter Huizing. Herder and Herder, 1972.
- Schoenherr, Richard A. (ed. David Yamane). *Goodbye Father: The Celibate Male Priesthood and the Future of the Catholic Church*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Schoenherr, Richard A., and Jose Pérez Vilarino. "Organizational Role Commitment in the Catholic Church in Spain and the USA." In *Organizations Alike and Unlike: International and Interinstitutional Studies in the Sociology of Organizations*, edited by Cornelis J. Lammers and David J. Hickson. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979.
- Schoenherr, Richard A., and Lawrence A. Young. "Quitting the Clergy: Resignations in the Roman Catholic Priesthood." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 29, no. 4 (1990): 463–481. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387312>.
- Schoenherr, Richard A., and Lawrence A. Young. "Full Pews and Empty Altars: Demographics of U.S. Diocesan Priests, 1966–2005." In *Religion and the Social Order: Vatican II and U.S. Catholicism*, edited by Helen Rose Ebaugh. JAI Press Inc., 1991.
- Schoenherr, Richard A., and Lawrence A. Young. 1993. *Full Pews & Empty Altars: Demographics of the Priest Shortage in United States Catholic Dioceses*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Schroeder, Larry D., David L. Sjoquist, and Paula E. Stephan. *Understanding Regression Analysis: An Introductory Guide*. SAGE, 2017.
- Schuth, Katarina. "Who Pastors: The Priest, The Context, and the Ministry." In *The Future of Catholicism in America*, edited by Patricia O'Connell Killen and Mark Silk. Columbia University Press, 2019.

- Schwartz, Barry, and Mikyoung Kim. "Introduction: Northeast Asia's Memory Problem." In *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory*, edited by Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Scicluna, Charles. "Church Must Change Its Language – Mgr Scicluna." *Times Malta*, October 14, 2012. <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/Church-must-change-its-language-Mgr-Scicluna.440905> (accessed August 26, 2020).
- Seidler, John. "Priest Resignations in a Lazy Monopoly." *American Sociological Review* 44, no. 5 (1979): 763–783. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2094527>.
- Serrano, Sol, and Luz María Díaz De Valdés. "Catholic Mobilizations and Chilean Revolutions, 1957–1989." In *Catholics in the Vatican II Era Local Histories of a Global Event*, edited by Kathleen Sprows Cummings, Timothy Matovina, and Robert A. Orsi. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Sewell, William. "Three Temporalities: Toward a Sociology of the Event." CSST Working Paper 58/CRSO Working Paper 448. 1990. <http://deep-blue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/51215/448.pdf;jsessionid=6BE72256BA921CAEB4D1892F2E9103AF?sequence=1> (accessed January 18, 2013).
- Sewell Jr., William H. "Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille." *Theory and Society* 25, no. 6 (1996): 841–881. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00159818>.
- Shah, Attaullah. ASDOC: Stata module to create high-quality tables in MS Word from STATA output. Statistical Software Components S458466. Department of Economics, Boston College, 2018.
- Shupe, Anson, ed. *Wolves Within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power*. Rutgers University Press, 1998.
- Sin, Cardinal Jaime L. "The Church in the Philippines: Twenty-Seven Years After Vatican II." *Landas: Journal of Loyola School of Theology* 2, no. 1 (1988): 3–10.
- Smith, Brian H. *The Church and Politics in Chile: Challenges to Modern Catholicism*. Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Smith, Brian H. *Religious Politics in Latin America: Pentecostal vs. Catholic*. University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Smith, Christian. *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Smith, Christian. *How to Go from Being a Good Evangelical to a Committed Catholic in Ninety-Five Difficult Steps*. Cascade Books, 2011.
- Smith, Christian, Kyle Longest, Jonathan Hill, and Kari Christoffersen. *Young Catholic America: Emerging Adults In, Out of, and Gone from the Church*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Smith, Tom W. Religious Change Around the World. GSS Cross-National Report No. 30. 2009. <http://gss.norc.org/Documents/reports/>

- [cross-national-reports/CNR%2030%20Religious%20Change%20Around%20the%20World.pdf](#) (accessed October 11, 2017).
- Smith, Simon C. "Priests and Politicians: Archbishop Michael Gonzi, Dom Mintoff, and the End of Empire in Malta." *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 23, no. 1 (2014): 113–124. muse.jhu.edu/article/671430.
- Smith, William L. *Irish Priests in the United States: A Vanishing Subculture*. University Press of America, 2004.
- Solomon, Digby A. "Argentina Prepares for Papal Visit," *United Press International*, June 7, 1982, <http://www.upi.com/Archives/1982/06/07/Argentina-prepares-for-papal-visit/8908392270400/> (accessed March 15, 2017).
- Soper, J. Christopher, and Joel S. Fetzer. *Religion and Nationalism in Global Perspective*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Spencer, Anthony E. C. W. (edited by Mary E. Daly). *Arrangements for the Integration of Irish Immigrants in England and Wales*. Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2012.
- Sprows Cummings, Kathleen, Timothy Matovina, and Robert A. Orsi, eds. *Catholics in the Vatican II Era: Local Histories of a Global Event*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Squires, Nick. "Pope Arrives in Malta on First Foreign Visit Since Sex Scandal." *The Telegraph*, April 17, 2010. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/vaticancityandholyysee/7601845/Pope-arrives-in-Malta-on-first-foreign-visit-since-sex-scandal.html> (accessed February 7, 2025).
- Stark, Rodney. "Catholic Contexts: Competition, Commitment and Innovation." *Review of Religious Research* 39, no. 3 (1998): 197–208. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3512588>.
- Stark, Rodney, and James C. McCann. "Market Forces and Catholic Commitment: Exploring the New Paradigm." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32, no. 2 (1993): 111–124.
- Stark, Rodney, and Roger Finke. "Catholic Religious Vocations: Decline and Revival." *Review of Religious Research* 42, no. 2 (2000): 125–145. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3512525>.
- Steinmetz, George. "Odious Comparisons: Incommensurability, the Case Study, and 'Small N's' in Sociology." *Sociological Theory* 22, no. 3 (2004): 371–400. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2751.2004.00225.x>.
- Stevens-Arroyo, Antonio M., ed. *Papal Overtures in a Cuban Key: The Pope's Visit and Civic Space for Cuban Religion*. University of Scranton Press, 2002.
- Stolz, Jörg, Judith Könemann, Mallory Schnewly Purdie, Thomas Englberger, and Michael Krüggeler. *(Un)Believing in Modern Society: Religion, Spirituality, and Religious-Secular Competition*. Routledge, 2016.

- Sullins, D. Paul. "Institutional Selection for Conformity: The Case of U.S. Catholic Priests." *Sociology of Religion* 74, no. 1 (2013): 56–81. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srs053>.
- Sullins, D. Paul. *Keeping the Vow: The Untold Story of Married Catholic Priests*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Sultana, Ronald G., and Godfrey Baldacchino. eds. *Maltese Society A Sociological Inquiry*. Mireva Publications, 1994.
- Suro, Roberto. "Pope, in Argentina, Hits a Political Note." *The New York Times*, April 7, 1987. <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/04/07/world/pope-in-argentina-hits-a-political-note.html> (accessed March 15, 2017).
- Swidler, Ann. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 2 (1986): 273–286. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095521>.
- Tabone, Carmel. "Secularization." In *Maltese Society A Sociological Inquiry*, edited by Ronald G. Sultana and Godfrey Baldacchino. Mireva Publications, 1994.
- Tagle, Luis Antonio G. Clergy Sexual Misconduct: Some Reflections from Asia. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2012. <https://www.usccb.org/resources/Reflections-from-Asia-Tagle.pdf> (accessed February 4, 2025).
- Tagle, Luis Antonio. "Cardinal Tagle: Pope Francis Enjoys Universal Appeal in Asia." *Vatican Radio*, August 17, 2014. http://www.archivioradiovaticana.va/storico/2014/08/17/cardinal_tagle_pope_francois_enjoys_universal_appeal_in_asia/en-1104713 (accessed March 25, 2023).
- Ter Haar, Gerrie. *How God Became African: African Spirituality and Western Secular Thought*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.
- ThisDay*. "Abuja Priest Held Over Sex Abuse in US." *ThisDay*, June 25, 2002. <https://allafrica.com/stories/200206250177.html> (accessed November 2, 2024).
- Thompson, Mark R. *The Anti-Marcos Struggle: Personalistic Rule and Democratic Transition in the Philippines*. Yale University Press, 1995.
- Tonna, Benjamin. *Pastoral Planning in Malta*. 1995. https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/37332/1/MT%2C_46%281%29_-_A1.pdf (accessed March 25, 2023).
- Tonna, Benjamin, and Annetto Depasquale. *Report on the Sunday Mass Census held on December 17, 1967*. Valletta: Pastoral Research Services, 1969.
- Turpin, Hugh. *Unholy Catholic Ireland: Religious Hypocrisy, Secular Morality, and Irish Irreligion*. Stanford University Press, 2022.
- Tweed, Thomas A. *Our Lady of the Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami*. Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Vaidyanathan, Brandon. "The Politics of the Liturgy in the Archdiocese of Bangalore." In *Catholics in the Vatican II Era: Local Histories of a Global Event*, edited by Kathleen Sprows Cummings, Timothy Matovina, and Robert A. Orsi. Cambridge University Press, 2018.

- Vaidyanathan, Brandon. *Mercenaries and Missionaries: Capitalism and Catholicism in the Global South*. Cornell University Press, 2019.
- Valley, Paul. *Pope Francis: Untying the Knots*. Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Vassallo, Mario. *From Lordship to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta*. Mouton, 1979.
- Vassallo, Mario. "Malta. A Society with Values in Turmoil." In *Religion and Secularism in the European Union: State of Affairs and Current Debates*, edited by Jan Nelis, Caroline Sägeser, and Jean-Philippe Schreiber. Peter Lang, 2017.
- Vassallo, Raphael. "Sorry Is the Hardest Word..." *Malta Today*, May 30, 2011. <https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/comment/blogs/801/sorry-is-the-hardest-word> (accessed March 12, 2019).
- Vatican. *Missal for the Apostolic Journey: Pastoral Visit of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to Malta*. Vatican, 2010. http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/libretti/2010/messale-malta2010.pdf (accessed November 16, 2020).
- Vatican News. "Pope Francis Visits Homeless Families at the Capuchin Day Centre." August 25, 2018. <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-08/apostolic-journey-ireland-capuchin-day-centre-pope-homeless.html> (accessed January 25, 2024).
- Vatican News. "Pope Francis Says He Will Appoint Women to Dicastery for Bishops." July 6, 2022. <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2022-07/pope-francis-says-he-will-appoint-women-to-dicastery-of-bishops.html> (accessed December 8, 2023).
- Vaughan, Diane. "The Dark Side of Organizations: Mistake, Misconduct, and Disaster." *Annual Review of Sociology* 25 (1999): 271–305. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.25.1.271>.
- Veenendaal, Wouter. *Politics and Democracy in Microstates*. Routledge, 2014.
- Vella, Mario. "'That Favourite Dream of the Colonies': Industrialization, Dependence and the Limits of Development Discourse in Malta." In *Maltese Society A Sociological Inquiry*, edited by Ronald G. Sultana and Godfrey Baldacchino. Mireva Publications, 1994.
- Vilariño, José Pérez. "The Catholic Commitment and Spanish Civil Society." *Social Compass* 44, no. 4 (1997): 595–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003776897044004008>.
- Vilariño, José Pérez, and José L. Sequeiros Tizón. "The Demographic Transition of the Catholic Priesthood and the End of Clericalism in Spain." *Sociology of Religion* 59, no. 1 (1998): 25–35. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3711963>.
- Wagner-Pacifici, Robin. "Theorizing the Restlessness of Events." *American Journal of Sociology* 115, no. 5 (2010): 1351–1386. <https://doi.org/10.1086/651299>.

- Wallace, Ruth A. *They Call Her Pastor: A New Role for Catholic Women*. State University of New York Press, 1992.
- Warner, Carolyn M. *Confessions of an Interest Group: The Catholic Church and Political Parties in Europe*. Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Warner, Carolyn M. "The Politics of Sex Abuse in Sacred Hierarchies: A Comparative Study of the Catholic Church and the Military in the United States." *Religions* 10, no. 4 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10040281>.
- Weber, Max. "Politics as a Vocation." In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated, edited, and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1970.
- Weigert, Andrew J., and Anthony J. Blasi. "Vocation." In *Vocation and Social Context*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan. Brill, 2007.
- White, Hilary. 2014a. "West Wants Nigeria as 'Dumping Ground' for 'Immoral Practices.'" *Catholic Lane*, February 4, 2014. <http://dev.catholiclane.com/west-trying-to-make-nigeria-dumping-ground-for-immoral-practices/> (accessed December 16, 2020).
- White, Hilary. 2014b. "'Cry of Anguish': African Synod Unveils Final Document Blasting Western Anti-Life Ideologies, Resour." *LifeSiteNews.com*, March 27, 2014. <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/cry-of-anguish-african-synod-unveils-final-document-blasting-western-anti-life-ideologies-resour/> (accessed November 1, 2024).
- Wilde, Melissa J. *Vatican II: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Change*. Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Wilkinson, Earl K. *Priestly Pedophiles*. Book of Dreams, 2003.
- Williams, Philip J. *The Catholic Church and Politics in Nicaragua and Costa Rica*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989.
- Willis, David K. "Popes Visit to Britain – Not Everyone is Happy." *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 28, 1982. <http://www.csmonitor.com/1982/0528/052850.html> (accessed March 15, 2017).
- Wittberg, Patricia. *The Rise and Fall of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective*. The State University of New York Press, 1994.
- World Bank. Worldwide Governance Indicators. 2024. World Bank, 2024 update. <https://www.govindicators.org> (accessed 27 December, 2024).
- Yamane, David. "Editor's Introduction." In *Goodbye Father: The Celibate Male Priesthood and the Future of the Catholic Church*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Yamane, David. *The Catholic Church in State Politics: Negotiating Prophetic Demands & Political Realities*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.
- YouGov/University of Lancaster Survey Results. Westminster Faith Debates. 2013. http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/k0rbt8onjb/YG-Archive-050613-FaithMatters-UniversityofLancaster.pdf (accessed October 5, 2020).

Youngblood, Robert L. *Marcos Against the Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines*. Cornell University Press, 1990.

Zubrzycki, Geneviève. *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland*. University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Index

Please note, page numbers in bold denote information in tables and those in italics denote information in figures.

A

abortion [39](#), [202](#)

Argentina [55](#), [68](#), [72–74](#)

Malta [89](#), [112–113](#)

Nigeria [150](#)

Philippines [10](#), [187](#)

abuse of power within the Church

Malta [17](#), [108](#)

Africa

clerical mobility from Europe

[17–18](#), [193](#)

recruitment and retention trends

[5](#), [242n11](#)

SECAM [202](#), [249n91](#)

see also Nigeria

Annuario Pontificio (AP)

data source [11–12](#), [210](#), [211](#)

Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae

(ASE)

data source [11–12](#), [210](#), [211](#)

Apostolic Journeys, *see* Papal visits

Argentina [9–11](#)

Catholic Action [243n31](#)

church attendance [56](#)

Church doctrine and social forces,

chasm between [16](#)

critical events theory [66](#), [83–84](#)

diocesan priests [58–59](#), [58](#)

ordination trends [59](#), [67](#)

resignations [60](#), [61](#)

diversity and competition

between Catholic Church and

other churches [54–55](#)

within the Catholic Church [54](#)

liberation theology [63–64](#)

Marxism [63](#), [64](#), [69](#), [71](#), [244n37](#)

military authoritarianism [63](#), [65](#),

[68–75](#), [78](#)

Papal visits [15–16](#), [78–82](#), [197–198](#)

recruitment and retention,

impact on [82–83](#)

participation in Church sacra-

ments [57](#)

Peronism [63–64](#), [65](#), [68–69](#),

[244n37](#)

prophetic stance [15](#), [55](#), [68–69](#),

[197](#)

divorce [55](#)

human rights abuses [75](#)

liberalisation of abortion laws

[55](#)

military regime [69–72](#)

moral activism and distance

from State [71–73](#)

recruitment and retention,

impact on [74](#)

- same-sex marriage [55](#), [74](#)
 - social concerns [73–75](#)
- recruitment and retention [58–61](#), [66](#), [83–84](#)
 - Papal visits, impact of [82–83](#)
 - prophetic stance, impact of [74](#)
 - sexual abuse scandals, impact of [77](#), [77](#)
- religiosity [55–57](#)
- religious background [54–57](#)
- sexual scandals [16](#), [75–76](#), [197](#)
 - historic child sexual abuse [76–77](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [77](#), [77](#)
 - sexual abuse of seminarians [76](#)
- Vatican II reforms [15](#), [62–63](#), [197](#)
 - Church-State interactions [63–67](#)
- workforce trends
 - diocesan priests [58–59](#), [58](#), [59](#), [61](#)
 - ordinations [59](#)
 - Papal visits, impact of [82–83](#)
 - religious brothers [60](#), [61](#)
 - religious priests [58](#), [59](#)
 - resignations [60](#), [61](#), [61](#)
- Asia
 - clerical mobility [205](#)
 - recruitment and retention trends [5–7](#)
 - South Korea [201](#)
 - see also* India; Philippines
- Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) [167](#), [171](#)
- Augustinian order [91](#), [158](#)
- B**
- Benedict XVI
 - child protection [107–108](#)
 - discontinuity and rupture versus reform [36](#)
- Papal visits [46](#), [49–50](#)
 - Malta [16–17](#), [107–108](#), [111–115](#)
- birth control
 - Argentina [56](#), [64](#), [66](#)
 - ordinations in Argentina [222–223](#)
 - Nigeria [135](#), [136](#), [150](#)
 - Philippines [159](#), [176](#)
- birth control encyclical *Humanae Vitae* [13](#)
 - Argentina [66](#)
 - ordinations to diocesan priesthood [222–223](#), [224](#)
 - resignations among diocesan priests [223–224](#), [225](#)
 - resignations among diocesan seminarians [223–224](#), [226](#)
 - Malta [98](#), [99](#)
 - ordinations to diocesan priesthood [226–227](#), [228](#)
 - resignations among diocesan priests [227](#), [229](#)
 - resignations among diocesan seminarians [227–228](#), [229](#)
 - Nigeria [135](#), [136](#), [141](#)
 - ordinations to diocesan priesthood [230](#), [232](#)
 - resignations among diocesan priests [230–231](#), [232](#)
 - resignations among diocesan seminarians [231](#), [233](#)
 - Philippines [168](#), [168–169](#)
 - ordinations to diocesan priesthood [233–234](#), [235–236](#)
 - resignations among diocesan priests [234](#), [236](#)
 - resignations among diocesan seminarians [235](#), [237](#)
- regression analysis [219–220](#), [221](#)
- C**
- Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) [6–7](#)

child sexual abuse scandals [42–43](#)

Argentina [76–77](#)

Malta [106–107](#)

Philippines [177, 178, 179](#)

see also sexual scandals

Christian Association of Nigeria
(CAN) [135](#)

Christian Brothers [3](#)

clergy [2–3, 241n6](#)

diocesan priests, *see* diocesan

priests

religious priests, *see* religious

priests

clerical mobility [17–18, 24–25,](#)

[193–195, 203–205](#)

Comisión Nacional sobre la Desapa-
rición de Personas (CONADEP)
[69](#)

Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano y
Caribeño (CELAM) [62](#)

contraception, *see* birth control

critical events theory [8, 33–35,](#)

[193–197, 199, 200–203, 242n13](#)

Argentina [66, 83–84](#)

case analysis [9–11](#)

ecumenical councils [36–39, 197](#)

Malta [99, 116–117](#)

Nigeria [136, 154–155](#)

Papal visits [46–51, 197–198](#)

Philippines [168, 190–191](#)

prophetic stance [39–42, 197](#)

sexual scandals [42–45](#)

cult of personality [46](#)

D

De La Salle Brothers [91](#)

diocesan priests [2, 6](#)

Argentina [58–59, 58, 59, 61](#)

Malta [91, 91, 92, 94](#)

Nigeria [126, 126, 128, 129, 129](#)

Philippines [161–162, 162, 169,](#)

[169–170](#)

regular clergy distinguished [241n6](#)

divorce [10, 39](#)

Argentina [55, 68–69, 79, 80](#)

Malta [16, 89, 105–106, 111, 112](#)

Nigeria [150](#)

Philippines [159](#)

Dominican order [91, 158](#)

E

economic context [11, 21, 23–26,](#)

[243n27](#)

Argentina [72–74, 80–81, 244n37,](#)

[244n39](#)

Malta [88, 95–96, 101, 102](#)

Nigeria [142, 152–153](#)

Philippines [166, 171, 186–188](#)

see also secular opportunity

ecumenical councils [21, 33–34,](#)

[36–39, 197](#)

see also Vatican II

environmental activism

Nigeria [142–143, 151–152](#)

Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA)
[173, 175](#)

European Values Study (EVS) [12](#)

F

Falklands War [15–16, 78–79](#)

family values [26–27](#)

Argentina [68, 79–81](#)

Benedict XVI [16–17](#)

Malta [96, 101–102, 105, 109–110,](#)

[112–113, 115](#)

Nigeria [141, 143, 149–150, 152](#)

Philippines [159–160, 171, 174–](#)

[175, 176, 186–188](#)

female workforce [3](#)

expansion [4](#)

secular opportunity and changes

in opportunity structure [23–26,](#)

[195](#)

workforce trends [195–196](#)

Vatican II [38](#)

foreign clerical labour [145](#), [172](#),
[204–205](#)

see also clerical mobility

Francis (Pope) [207](#)

election [53](#), [75–76](#)

female workforce [4](#)

Nigeria [120](#)

ordination of new priests [1](#), [19](#)

Papal visits [14](#), [48](#)

social care ministry [48](#)

South Korea [201–202](#)

Uganda [202](#)

G

gender dualism [203](#)

Global North

recruitment and retention trends
[4–5](#)

see also individual countries

H

historical sexual abuse scandals, *see*
sexual scandals

homosexuality

homosexual behaviour by clergy
[43](#)

right to marry and adopt children
[74](#)

same-sex marriage [12](#), [17](#), [39](#)

Argentina [55](#), [73–74](#)

Malta [89](#)

moral activism against [17](#)

Nigeria [17](#), [123–124](#), [143](#)

Philippines [10](#)

social care ministry [41](#)

I

identity ambivalence [38–39](#), [42](#), [51](#),
[196](#)

inculturation [63](#), [130](#), [132–133](#), [165](#),
[183–184](#), [244n36](#), [248n86](#), [249n91](#)

India [25](#), [204](#)

clerical mobility [193–194](#)

recruitment and retention trends
[5–6](#), [6](#)

institutional decision-making [3–4](#)

International Social Survey Pro-
gramme (ISSP) [217–218](#)

Ireland [4–5](#), [6](#), [44–45](#)

child protection [145–146](#)

clerical mobility [149](#), [193–194](#)

historical child sexual abuse [179](#)

Papal visits [14](#), [48–49](#)

J

Jesuit order [2](#), [64–65](#), [158](#)

John XXIII [22](#)

Vatican II [36](#)

John Paul II

conservative lay groups [40–41](#)

liberation theology [40–41](#)

neoliberalism [40–41](#)

Papal visits [47–48](#), [50](#)

Argentina [15–16](#), [78–82](#), [84](#)

Malta [16–17](#), [109–110](#)

Netherlands [49](#)

Nigeria [17–18](#), [148–152](#)

Philippines [15](#), [18](#), [184–188](#)

Poland [243n28](#)

Uganda [202](#)

US [49](#)

L

Latin American and Caribbean

Bishops' Council (CELAM) [62](#),
[244n32](#)

lay ministries [3](#)

lay participation [250n100](#)

Argentina [62–63](#)

Nigeria [17](#), [133–134](#), [140](#), [152](#)

liberation theology [40–41](#)

Argentina [63–64](#), [69](#)

Philippines [166](#), [167](#)

long-term secular change [21](#), [155](#),
[199](#)

M

male clergy

- diocesan priests [2](#)
- institutional decision-making [3–4](#)
- parish organisation [3–4](#)
- religious priests [2–3](#)
- sacramental celebration [3–4](#)
- trends and patterns [4](#)
 - declining workforce [4–9](#), [193](#)
 - recruitment and retention [4–7](#)
 - see also* recruitment and retention

Malta [9–11](#), [116–117](#)

- abuse of power within the Church [17](#)
- Church—State relations [245n51](#)
- critical events theory [99](#)
- diocesan priests [91](#), [91](#)
 - ordination trends [92](#)
 - resignations [94](#)
- family, importance of [16–17](#), [104–106](#)
- moral leadership [16–17](#)
- Papal visits [16–17](#), [114–116](#), [197–198](#)
 - Benedict XVI [16–17](#), [111–114](#)
 - John Paul II [16–17](#), [109–110](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [114–116](#)
- prophetic stance [16](#), [100–101](#)
 - moral activism [101–102](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact of [106](#)
 - religio-political tensions [101–106](#)
- recruitment and retention [91–95](#), [99](#), [116–117](#)
 - Papal visits, impact of [115–116](#)
 - prophetic stance, impact of [106](#)
 - sexual abuse scandals, impact of [108](#)
- religious background
 - Church attendance [88–89](#), [89](#)

- global outlook [87–88](#)
- participation in Church sacraments [90](#)
- religiosity [85](#)
- religious freedom [87](#)
- religious nationalism [85–87](#)
- sexual scandals [17](#), [197](#)
 - historic child sexual abuse [106–107](#)
 - transnational dimension [107](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [108](#)
- Vatican II reforms [16](#), [95–98](#), [197](#)
- workforce trends
 - diocesan priests [91](#), [91](#), [92](#), [94](#), [100](#)
 - ordinations [92](#), [100](#)
 - Papal visits, impact of [114–116](#)
 - religious brothers [93](#), [93](#)
 - religious priests [92–93](#), [93](#)
 - resignations [94](#)
 - sexual scandals, impact of [108](#)
- mandatory celibacy [15](#), [32](#), [195](#)
 - post-Vatican II personnel exclusions [27](#)
 - predominant factor in resignations [29–30](#)
 - second-order celibacy [27](#)
 - workforce, impact on [26–27](#)
 - cultural values, individual independence and self-expression [28](#)
 - evolving sociocultural context [28–29](#)
 - Vatican II and delegitimising of celibacy [27](#)
- marriage [26–27](#)
 - Argentina [57](#), [57](#), [68](#), [79–80](#)
 - Malta [17](#), [90](#), [102](#), [112–113](#)
 - Nigeria [124](#), [141](#), [150](#), [152](#)
 - Philippines [176](#), [186](#), [187–188](#)
 - polygamy [150](#)
 - same-sex marriage [12](#), [39](#)
 - Argentina [55](#), [73–74](#)
 - Malta [89](#)

- Philippines [10](#)
- Nigeria [17](#), [123–124](#), [143](#)
- Marxism
 - Argentina [63](#), [64](#), [68](#), [71](#), [244n37](#)
- military authoritarianism
 - Argentina [63](#), [65](#), [68–75](#), [78](#)
- mobility, *see* clerical mobility
- moral activism
 - Argentina [72–74](#), [83–84](#)
 - Malta [16](#), [101](#)
 - Nigeria [17](#), [131](#), [138](#)
 - Philippines [173](#), [174–176](#)
- moral leadership [16](#), [74–75](#), [176–177](#)
- N**
- National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP) [69](#)
- Nigeria [9–11](#), [154–155](#)
 - Biafra War [131–132](#), [140](#), [248n87](#)
 - commitment to Catholic–Muslim relations [135](#), [152](#)
 - critical events theory [136](#)
 - moral activism [17](#)
 - Papal visits [17–18](#), [148–150](#), [197–198](#)
 - beatification of Father Tansi [150–151](#)
 - commitment to Catholic–Muslim relations [152](#)
 - macro-politics [151–152](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [152–154](#)
 - prophetic stance [138–139](#)
 - AIDS [143](#)
 - environmental activism [142–143](#)
 - family values [141](#)
 - homosexuality [143–144](#)
 - independence and freedom [139–140](#)
 - lay participation [140](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact of [144](#)
 - same-sex marriage [143](#)
 - secular state [141](#)
 - social activism [141–142](#)
- recruitment and retention [5–6](#), [126–129](#), [135](#), [136](#), [136–137](#), [137](#), [154–155](#)
 - Papal visits, impact of [153](#)
 - prophetic stance, impact of [144](#)
 - sexual abuse scandals, impact of [146–148](#)
- religious background [119](#)
 - Church attendance [124](#)
 - civil society and social activism, [119–120](#)
 - inter-religious clashes [121](#)
 - Islam [120–121](#)
 - missionary activity [119–120](#)
 - participation in Church sacraments [125](#)
 - Pentecostal groups [122](#)
 - political fragility [123](#)
 - poverty [122](#)
 - religiosity [121](#), [123–126](#)
 - secular nationalism [123–124](#)
 - traditional religions [122](#)
 - tribal identities and the Church [120](#)
- sexual scandals [18](#), [144–145](#), [197](#)
 - foreign clergy, by [145–146](#)
 - foreign countries, in [145](#)
 - HIV/AIDS [145](#)
 - #MeToo movement [145](#)
 - #NunsToo movement [145](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [146–148](#)
- Vatican II reforms [17](#), [197](#)
 - inculturation [132–133](#)
 - lay participation, ecumenism, and social justice [17](#), [133–134](#)
 - liturgical reform [132–133](#)
 - moral activism [130–131](#)
 - workforce, impact on [136–137](#), [137](#)

- workforce
 diocesan priests [126](#), [126](#), [128](#)
 ordinations [127](#), [128](#), [136–137](#), [137](#)
 religious brothers [128](#)
 religious priests [126](#), [127](#)
 resignations [128](#), [129](#), [129](#), [137](#)
 Vatican II, impact of [136–137](#), [137](#)
- nuns [3](#), [23–24](#), [195–196](#), [213](#)
 sexual abuse of [145](#)
- O**
- Opus Dei [40–41](#), [244n35](#)
 order of Saint Camillus [2](#)
 Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models [12](#), [221](#)
 ordination of new priests [1](#)
 Argentina [59](#), [67](#), [222–223](#), [224](#)
 Malta [92](#), [100](#), [115–116](#), [226–227](#), [228](#)
 Nigeria [127](#), [128](#), [136–137](#), [137](#), [230](#), [232](#)
 Philippines [162–163](#), [163](#), [169](#), [169–170](#), [233–234](#), [235–236](#)
- P**
- Papal visits
 Argentina [15–16](#), [78–82](#)
 workforce, impact on [82–83](#)
 Benedict XVI
 Malta [16–17](#), [111–114](#)
 John Paul II [15–16](#)
 Argentina [15–16](#)
 Malta [16–17](#), [109–110](#)
 Nigeria [17–18](#)
 Philippines [15](#), [184–186](#)
 Poland [243n28](#)
 Malta [16–17](#), [114–116](#)
 Benedict XVI [16–17](#), [111–114](#)
 John Paul II [16–17](#), [109–110](#)
 Nigeria [17–18](#), [148–150](#)
 beatification of Father Tansi [150–151](#)
 commitment to Catholic–Muslim relations [152](#)
 macro-politics [151–152](#)
 recruitment and retention, impact on [152–154](#)
- Paul VI
 Philippines [15](#), [182–184](#)
- Philippines [18](#)
 beatification of Lorenzo Ruiz [184–185](#)
 defence of human rights [287](#)
 John Paul II [184–186](#)
 Paul VI [182–184](#)
 recruitment and retention, impact on [188–190](#)
 social justice concerns [186–188](#)
 workforce, impact on [46–50](#)
 Argentina [82–83](#)
 Malta [114–116](#)
- parish organisation [3–4](#)
- pastoral letters [242n18](#)
 Argentina [68](#)
 Malta [101–102](#)
 Nigeria [138](#), [141–142](#)
 Philippines [170](#)
 Uganda [202](#)
- Paul VI
 birth control encyclical *Humanae Vitae* [12](#)
 Extraordinary Synod [219–220](#)
 lay participation [37–38](#)
 Nigeria-Biafra War [131–132](#)
- Papal visits
 Holy Land [47](#)
 Philippines [18](#), [182–184](#)
 Uganda [202](#)
 Vatican II [40](#)
- People Power Revolution (EDSA) [173](#), [175](#)
- Peronism [63–64](#), [65](#), [68–69](#), [244n37](#)
- Philippines [9–11](#), [190–191](#)
 critical events theory [168](#)
 disunity [18](#), [167](#)
 honour culture [19](#)

- liberation theology [166](#)
 Papal visits [18](#), [197–198](#)
 beatification of Lorenzo Ruiz [184–185](#)
 defence of human rights [287](#)
 John Paul II [184–186](#)
 Paul VI [182–184](#)
 recruitment and retention, impact on [188–190](#)
 social justice concerns [186–188](#)
 politicisation of the Church [18](#)
 prophetic stance [18](#), [159–60](#)
 anti-regime discourse [170–173](#)
 contraception [176](#)
 family values [174–175](#)
 Marcos era [170–173](#)
 moral activism [170–173](#)
 political and military oppression [171–172](#)
 post-Marcos era [174–177](#)
 recruitment and retention, impact on [176–177](#)
 religious–secular interactions [170–171](#)
 sex education programme in schools [176](#)
 recruitment and retention [161–165](#), [168](#), [168–170](#), [190–191](#)
 Papal visits, impact of [188–190](#)
 prophetic stance, impact of [176–177](#)
 sexual abuse scandals, impact of [181–182](#)
 religious background [157](#)
 Church attendance [160](#), [160–161](#)
 Church-State cooperation [158](#)
 Indigenous religions [158](#)
 Islam [158](#)
 missionary activity [157–158](#)
 participation in Church sacraments [161](#), [161](#)
 poverty and political fragility [159](#)
 religiosity [160–161](#)
 sexual scandals [19](#), [197](#)
 abuse of seminarians [178](#)
 historic child abuse [177](#), [178](#), [179](#)
 male clergy abusing adult females [177](#), [178–179](#)
 response to [179–181](#)
 retention and recruitment, impact on [181–182](#)
 status, negative impact on [177–178](#)
 Vatican II reforms [18](#), [165–166](#), [168–169](#), [197](#)
 criticisms [167](#)
 liberation theology [166](#)
 social justice messages [166–167](#)
 workforce
 diocesan priests [161–162](#), [162](#), [169](#), [169–170](#)
 ordinations [162–163](#), [163](#), [169](#), [169–170](#)
 religious brothers [163](#), [163](#)
 religious priests [162](#), [162](#)
 resignations [163–165](#), [164](#), [181](#)
 Pius IX [47](#), [139](#), [243n31](#), [249n91](#)
 plurality within Catholicism [105](#), [199](#), [205–206](#)
 political arrangements [30–33](#), [195](#)
 see also regime transition
 prophetic stance
 Argentina [15](#), [68–69](#)
 human rights abuses [75](#)
 military regime [69–72](#)
 moral activism and distance from State [71–73](#)
 same-sex marriage [74](#)
 social concerns [73–75](#)
 hierarchical organisation, impact of [40–41](#)
 identity ambivalence [42](#)
 liberation theology [40–41](#)
 Malta [16](#), [100–101](#)
 moral activism [101–102](#)

religio-political tensions
[101–106](#)

Nigeria [17–18](#), [138–139](#)
 AIDS [143](#)
 environmental activism,
[142–143](#)
 family values [141](#)
 homosexuality [143–144](#)
 independence and freedom
[139–140](#)
 lay participation [140](#)
 same-sex marriage [143](#)
 secular state [141](#)
 social activism [141–142](#)

pastoral ministry challenges [41–42](#)

Philippines [18](#), [39](#), [159–160](#)
 anti-regime discourse [170–173](#)
 contraception [176](#)
 family values [174–175](#)
 Marcos era [170–173](#)
 moral activism [170–173](#)
 political and military oppres-
 sion [171–172](#)
 post-Marcos era [174–177](#)
 recruitment and retention,
 impact on [176–177](#)
 religious–secular interactions
[170–171](#)
 sex education programme in
 schools [176](#)

political entrepreneurship [40](#)
 political involvement [39](#)
 religious worldview affirmation [40](#)
see also abortion; divorce; family
 values; same-sex marriage

Q

qualitative analysis [13–14](#), [205–206](#),
[237–239](#)

quantitative analysis [11–13](#), [14](#),
[205–206](#), [210–237](#)

R

recruitment and retention trends
[12–13](#), [203–206](#)

Africa [5–7](#)

Argentina [58–61](#), [66](#), [83–84](#)
 Papal visits, impact of [82–83](#)
 prophetic stance, impact of [74](#)
 sexual abuse scandals, impact
 of [77](#), [77](#)

Asia [5–7](#)

Global North [4–5](#)

global picture [6–7](#)

India [5–6](#)

Ireland [4–5](#)

legitimacy challenges [207–208](#)

Malta [91–95](#), [99](#), [116–117](#)
 Papal visits, impact of [115–116](#)
 prophetic stance, impact of
[106](#)
 sexual abuse scandals, impact
 of [108](#)

Nigeria [5–6](#), [126–129](#), [135](#), [136](#),
[136–137](#), [137](#), [154–155](#)
 Papal visits, impact of [153](#)
 prophetic stance, impact of [144](#)
 sexual abuse scandals, impact
 of [146–148](#)

Philippines [161–165](#), [168](#),
[168–170](#), [190–191](#)
 Papal visits, impact of [188–190](#)
 prophetic stance, impact of
[176–177](#)
 sexual abuse scandals, impact
 of [181–182](#)

Western World [4–5](#)

regime transitions [22–23](#), [195](#)
 workforce, impact on [30–32](#), [195](#)

Philippines [18](#), [157–158](#), [170–177](#)

regime type [12–13](#)

Argentina [65–66](#), [66](#)
 ordinations to diocesan priest-
 hood [222–223](#), [224](#)

resignations among diocesan priests [223–224](#), [225](#)
 resignations among diocesan seminarians, [223–224](#), [226](#)
 Malta [98](#), [99](#)
 ordinations to diocesan priesthood [226–227](#), [228](#)
 resignations among diocesan priests [227](#), [229](#)
 resignations among diocesan seminarians [227–228](#), [229](#)
 Nigeria [135](#), [136](#), [141](#)
 ordinations to diocesan priesthood [230](#), [232](#)
 resignations among diocesan priests [230–231](#), [232](#)
 resignations among diocesan seminarians [231](#), [233](#)
 Philippines [168](#), [168–169](#)
 ordinations to diocesan priesthood [233–234](#), [235–236](#)
 resignations among diocesan priests [234](#), [236](#)
 resignations among diocesan seminarians [235](#), [237](#)
 regression analysis, [219–221](#)
 religious brothers [2](#), [3](#), [7](#), [11](#), [201](#), [202](#), [213](#), [241n7](#)
 Argentina [60](#), [61](#)
 Malta [93](#), [93](#)
 Nigeria [128](#), [129](#)
 Philippines [163](#), [163](#)
 religious “empire building” [204–205](#)
see also foreign clerical labour
 religious priests [2–3](#), [212](#), [213](#)
 Argentina [58](#), [59](#)
 Malta [92–93](#), [93](#)
 Nigeria [126](#), [127](#)
 Philippines [162](#), [162](#)
 secular (diocesan) clergy distinguished [241n6](#)
 religious regulations and religious vocations [26–30](#), [195](#)
see also mandatory celibacy

religious worldview affirmation [50](#), [196](#)
 prophetic stance [40](#)
 Vatican II [39](#)
 religiosity [12–13](#), [25](#)
 Argentina [53–57](#)
 Malta [85–90](#)
 Nigeria [119–126](#)
 Philippines [157–161](#)
 semidetached religiosity [250n107](#)

S

sacramental celebration [1](#), [3–4](#), [26](#), [194](#), [207](#)
 Argentina [54](#), [57](#), [57](#), [82](#)
 Malta [90](#), [90](#), [105](#)
 Nigeria [125](#), [124–125](#), [149](#)
 Philippines [160](#), [161](#), [161](#)
 same-sex marriage [12](#), [39](#)
 Argentina [55](#), [73–74](#)
 Malta [89](#)
 moral activism against [17](#)
 Nigeria [17](#), [123–124](#), [143](#)
 Philippines [10](#)
 Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962–1965), *see* Vatican II
 second-order celibacy [27](#)
 Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II) [165–166](#), [168](#), [174](#)
 Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), *see* Vatican II
 sectarianisation of Catholicism [206](#)
 secular clergy, *see* diocesan priests
 secular opportunity
 changes in the opportunity structure [23–26](#), [32](#)
 economic context [23–26](#), [195](#)
see also economic context
 semidetached religiosity [250n107](#)
 seminarians [2](#)
 kidnapping and torture of [71](#)

- resignation of diocesan seminarians [194–195](#), [210](#)
- Argentina [61](#), [61](#), [66](#), [77](#), [77](#), [82–83](#)
 - Malta [93–95](#), [94](#), [99](#), [104](#), [108](#), [115–116](#)
 - Nigeria [129](#), [129](#), [136](#), [136–137](#), [137](#), [147](#), [153–154](#)
 - Philippines [163–165](#), [164](#), [168](#), [181](#), [181–182](#), [189–190](#), [191](#)
- sexual abuse of [43](#), [76](#), [108](#), [154](#), [178](#), [181–182](#), [197](#)
- seminaries [2](#), [5](#), [206](#)
- sexual scandals [7–8](#), [13](#)
- Argentina [16](#), [75–76](#)
 - historic child sexual abuse, [76–77](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [77](#), [77](#)
 - sexual abuse of seminarians [76](#)
 - avoidance of shame [45](#)
 - celibacy rule, breaking [26](#), [43](#)
 - child sexual abuse scandals [42–43](#)
 - Argentina [76–77](#)
 - Malta [106–107](#)
 - Philippines [177](#), [178](#), [179](#)
 - collateral damage [44](#)
 - homosexual behaviour by clergy [43](#)
 - impact [43–44](#)
 - Malta [17](#)
 - historic child sexual abuse [106–107](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [108](#)
 - transnational dimension [107](#)
 - Nigeria [17–18](#), [144–145](#)
 - foreign clergy, by [145–146](#)
 - foreign countries, in [145](#)
 - HIV/AIDS [145](#)
 - #MeToo movement [145](#)
 - #NunsToo movement [145](#)
 - recruitment and retention, impact on [146–148](#)
 - Philippines [19](#)
 - abuse of seminarians [178](#)
 - historic child abuse [177](#), [178](#), [179](#)
 - male clergy abusing adult females [177](#), [178–179](#)
 - response to [179–181](#)
 - retention and recruitment, impact on [181–182](#)
 - status, negative impact on [177–178](#)
 - responses [45](#)
 - sexual moral code among the laity [44–45](#)
 - short-term religious change [8–9](#), [19](#), [199–200](#), [203](#)
 - shortage of clergy [3–4](#), [5](#), [8](#), [28–30](#), [193–194](#), [205–206](#), [207](#), [252n124](#)
 - sisters [3](#), [23](#), [25–26](#), [145](#)
 - social justice [16](#), [39](#), [45](#), [73](#), [186](#), [188](#), [198](#)
 - pastoral letters [242n18](#)
 - social justice apostolate [81](#), [165–167](#), [194–195](#)
 - Society of Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM) [114](#)
 - sociology of religion [10](#), [14–15](#), [200](#)
 - South Korea [201–202](#)
 - Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SE-CAM) [202](#), [249n91](#)
- ## T
- training [2](#), [37](#), [152](#), [213](#)
- ## U
- Uganda [131–132](#), [135](#), [138](#), [202](#)
- United States [179](#)
- clerical abuse and sexual scandals [44–45](#), [49](#), [177](#), [179](#)
 - clerical mobility [144](#), [145–146](#), [177](#)
 - recruitment and retention [28](#), [29–30](#), [208](#)
 - secular opportunities for females [24](#), [25–26](#), [195–196](#)

V

Vatican II

- Argentina, impact in [15](#), [62–63](#)
 - Church-State interactions [63–67](#)
- clergy–laity relations [37–38](#)
 - workforce, impact on [38–39](#)
- discontinuity and rupture versus reform [36](#)
- identity ambivalence [38–39](#)
- John XXIII [36](#)
- liturgical reform [37](#), [201](#)
- Malta [16](#), [95–98](#)
- mandatory celibacy
 - delegitimising of celibacy [27](#)
 - post-Vatican II personnel exclusions [27](#)
- Nigeria [17](#)
 - inculturation [132–133](#)
 - lay participation, ecumenism, and social justice [17](#), [133–134](#)
 - liturgical reform [132–133](#)

- moral activism [130–131](#)
- workforce, impact on [136–137](#), [137](#)

- Philippines [18](#)
- religious worldview affirmation [39](#)
- Uganda [202](#)
- vows of poverty, chastity and obedience [27](#), [43](#)
 - religious brothers [3](#)
 - religious priests [2](#)

W

Western World

- recruitment and retention trends [4–5](#)
 - see also individual countries*
- World Day of Prayer for Vocations [1](#)
- World Values Survey (WVS) [12](#), [73](#), [142](#), [144](#), [175](#), [252n126](#)
- Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) [55](#), [88](#), [123](#), [159](#)