

Vatican: Number of Catholics rising worldwide

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VATICAN CITY -- The Vatican says the number of Catholics as a percentage of the worldwide faithful is growing slightly.

The Holy See says that from 2007 to 2008 Roman Catholics grew from 17.33 percent of the global population to 17.4 percent.

The statistics are included in a yearbook presented Saturday to Pope Benedict XVI.

The yearbook says the number of priests rose from 2000-2008 but that the number of nuns worldwide fell 7.8 percent.

The number of nuns rose significantly in Asia and Africa over those eight years but not enough to make up for sharp drops in Europe and America.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/20/AR2010022001179.html>