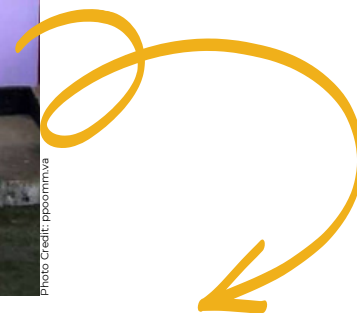


# Myanmar



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Myanmar—officially The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and formerly called Burma—is a Southeast Asian nation of more than 100 ethnic groups bordering India, Bangladesh, China, Laos, and Thailand. In area, it is slightly smaller than Texas with about double the amount of people. The capital city is Yangon (formerly Rangoon). Most of Myanmar’s population live along the coastline and make a living from fishing or growing rice.

Myanmar (then called Burma) was granted independence from Great Britain in 1948 and was a democratic nation. That ended in 1962 when the military took over the country and it became a dictatorship. Since then, ethnic strife has been constant, plunging Myanmar into one of the world’s longest ongoing civil wars. Many human rights violations were reported by the United Nations and other world organizations.

Although Christianity was first introduced to the country in the 1600s, it truly began to grow centuries later. The Catholic faith was reestablished in Myanmar in 1954 by the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME).

In 1966 all foreign missionaries who had entered the country for the first time after independence in 1948 were forced to leave.

*The Pontifical Mission Societies (the parent organization of the Missionary Childhood Association) is active in Myanmar, helping people of all faiths. This food distribution program in the Archdiocese of Yangon during the COVID19 pandemic is just one example of our faith in action.*

## Info

**Population** 57,970,293

**Religion** 87.9% of the Myanmar people identify as Buddhist  
6.2% call themselves Christian (1.29% are Roman Catholics)  
4.3% say their religion is Muslim  
1.6% are Animists, Hindu or practice no religion

Myanmar is a patchwork of over 130 religious and ethnic groups, making it one of the most diverse countries in the region. Ethnic minorities face substantial discrimination; the Rohingya, the largest Muslim group, are arguably the most persecuted.

\*CIA World Factbook

### Other data

There are 460 parishes that make up 16 dioceses.

**mca**  
missionary childhood  
association

# in Hakha, Myanmar

In the Diocese of Hakha, The Missionary Childhood Association is there to help children grow into the people God intended them to be by providing education. Located in the mountainous region of Chin State, it is one of the most remote areas of Myanmar. There is very little development and school facilities, where they exist, are inadequate.

Chin State has one of the lowest literacy rates in all of Myanmar. About 26% of all people there have never been to school.

With funding from MCA, Saint John's School is changing the educational status of the area. Since the beginning of construction in January 2017, one of two planned buildings is finished and fifteen Early Child Care Development teachers have been trained. They received their certification through a Church-sponsored teacher education program in the capital city which is funded by The Pontifical Mission Societies.



There are currently 155 students attending Saint John's School.

Saint John's School strives to be a model of best practices in education. While other schools in Myanmar are still teaching by outdated memorization and rote learning techniques, Saint John's is teaching using child-centered practices. Children are encouraged to learn at their own pace.



The construction of a second classroom building will increase the school's capacity by an additional 240 students. More teachers will be trained and formed in the Catholic Church's catechetical programs. Current teachers need on-going formation as well.

The school hopes to buy a second bus so the children who live in the furthest reaches of the area can be served by the school.

Watch the first fifty students in their pre-school and kindergarten classrooms as they sing, learn, and interact. You'll see the area in which they live as well as take a quick bus ride with them in this five minute video! <https://bit.ly/2Gn0tZs>

In November 2017, Pope Francis visited Myanmar and said "Through the generous assistance provided by The Pontifical Mission Societies, the Church in this country is helping great numbers of men, women and children, regardless of religion or ethnic background."

He was thanking YOU—the Missionary Childhood members—who, at last report, helped send \$32,100 to the Diocese of Hakha to support education, orphanages, and, most importantly, faith formation. MCA members of Myanmar sacrificed \$14,473.08 for children around the world in need of the help of Catholic missionaries.