

THE SABEEL SURVEY

THE SABEL SURVEY
ON
PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS
IN
THE WEST BANK AND ISRAEL

Historical Demographic Developments, Current
Politics and Attitudes Towards Church,
Society and Human Rights.

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Sabeel

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FOREWORD

The presence of Christians in Palestine and Israel was the focus of Sabeel's 6th International Conference held 2-9 November 2006 and entitled "The Forgotten Faithful: A Window into the Life and Witness of Christians in the Holy Land."

Christianity has had a continuous and uninterrupted presence in the land of its birth for more than two millennia. The Church in Palestine and Israel has had its ups and downs, its strengths and weaknesses, and its numerous theological and denominational divisions. Now it faces a critical decline in numbers. The Church has survived by the grace of God and will continue in faith and hope to bear witness to the life and message of its Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Conference covered the history of the Church in the Holy Land, its present reality and the challenges of the future. One major feature and focal point of the conference was The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel, Summer 2006. The survey sample included 1500 Christian families equally divided between those living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and those living in Israel. Political conditions prevented including the Christians of Gaza in the sample.

Sabeel has been in the forefront of Palestinian Christian organizations addressing the decline of the Christian population in Palestine and Israel. As this survey shows and as our recent conference, “The Forgotten Faithful,” addressed, the decline in the numbers of Christians has reached a critical point. Some suggest that there is a major possibility that the Holy Land will have virtually no Christian presence if the trend continues any further.

It should be mentioned here as well, that the Palestinian people in general suffer from the problem of emigration due to the harsh political and economic conditions under occupation.

Thus, Sabeel, with the support and encouragement of Diakonia, a Christian development agency funded by five Swedish churches, commissioned this survey to obtain a realistic assessment of who Christians are, where they are located, and how they view the current situation. The goal is to enable churches in Palestine-Israel and abroad to seek ways to stem the tide of declining Christian presence and even to reverse that trend.

We firmly believe that the Christian presence in the Holy Land must be more than that of maintaining ancient sites. The presence of Christians and their message of justice, peace and reconciliation are essential ingredients in the solution of the current crisis and in the creation of a just society for all.

It is our hope that the information provided in this survey will inform the people of the world, stimulate constructive discussion, and ultimately lead to proposals and actions that will address the plight of the “living stones” who live, work and struggle in the name of Christ in the Holy Land. We hope that those who read and study this survey will be moved to act in concert with others who care about this issue. The goal is to raise the resources of the Church

universal on behalf of the indigenous Christian community who live and serve in Palestine-Israel so that they might be empowered to continue firm in their faith and resilience.

We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Diakonia, who funded this project. Diakonia has been one of Sabeel's most cherished partners as we have worked together for justice and truth. We are very grateful to Diakonia's Program Manager for Palestinian Programs in Jerusalem, Safa' Abu Assab, and Regional Manager, Christoffer Sjöholm, for their guidance and support.

Dr. Bernard Sabella, a long time friend and supporter of Sabeel, agreed to supervise and to interpret the results of the survey. University Lecturer Romell Soudah, Instructor Walid Atallah and Father Jamal Khader of Bethlehem University shared the many tasks necessary to complete the project. To them we owe our thanks. And finally, we are indebted to the graduate students from Bethlehem University who conducted the interviews and directly gathered these data.

We are aware that a survey alone will not achieve the goals we hope to attain. But we also know that reliable data can provide the stimulus for thought and action. We hope and trust that our efforts in producing these data will be used constructively for the glory of God and for the benefit of God's people who yearn to participate in God's mission.

Naim Ateek

Director

Sabeel Jerusalem

This Survey and the analysis accompanying it are the sole responsibility of the authors.

CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND

Across the Political and Economic Divide

By

Romell Soudah*

Little is known about the Palestinian Christian population in the Holy Land. The question of the Christian presence reflected by population size in the Holy Land has become more important than ever. The Christian population has been declining in absolute and relative terms over the years. In British mandated Palestine of 1946 Christians numbered 148,910.¹ At present, the Christian population counts less than 160,000 in both Palestine and Israel. Several factors are responsible for this decline. The restless political situation and

* **Romell Soudah** completed his graduate studies in economics at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and is Lecturer in Economics in the Faculty of Business Administration at Bethlehem University. He has written a number of articles and scholarly papers about the economy of Palestine and Christians in the Holy-Land. His current research is in the field of the economics of conflict and development.

¹ *McCarthy, Justine. The Population of Palestine: Population Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and the Mandate, Columbia University Press, New York, 1990. See also Statistical Abstract of Palestine 1944 - 45, 8th ed. 1946. See also A Survey of Palestine, Volume I, Institute for Palestine Studies, Washington, DC. 1991.*

the accompanying depressed economic conditions are the major causes behind the declining size of the Christian population in the Holy Land.

This study is quantitative and comparative and is based on a very large sample from both the Christian population in Palestine and that in Israel. The sample of 1500 families was equally divided between the two territories and it covered Christians in urban and rural localities. It must be pointed out that the 750 families interviewed in Palestine were all from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. It was not possible, due to the political situation and other factors, to include a sample from the Gaza Strip where there is a Christian population of approximately 2,500, mostly Greek Orthodox.

The main purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to briefly show demographic, economic, educational, and emigration data as generated by the Christian population itself; (2) to focus on emigration and its causes and the challenges confronting Palestinian Christians and their continued presence in the Holy Land.

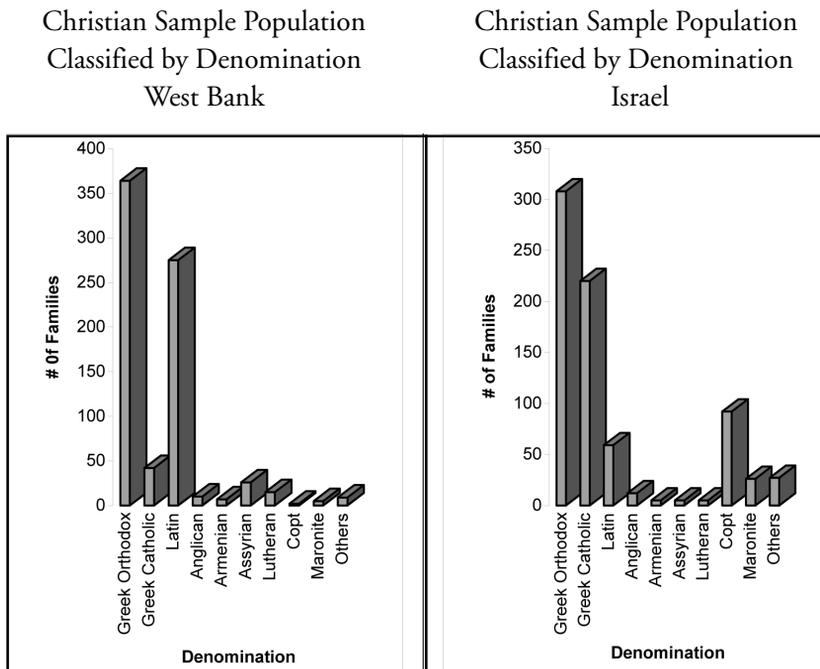
I. Sample Population

The sample of 1,500 families was equally divided between Palestine and Israel. It covered all denominations and reached out to urban-rural localities in both the West Bank, East Jerusalem and in Israel.² The sample represents 7.5% of the total Christian population in Palestine and 2.8% of the total Christian population residing in Israel.

² *In Israel, the sample covered the following towns and villages: Nazareth, Rameh, Haifa, Jedaideh, Tur'an, Al-Makr, Mailya, Ailaboun, Shefa 'Amer, Beqe'i'a, Tarshiha, Ramle, Reineh, Lydda, 'Ibillin, Cana, 'Isufia. In the West Bank, the sample covered the following towns and villages: Jenin, Zababdeh, Toubas, Rafidia, Ramallah, Aboud, Birzeit, Jifna, Taybeh, Beit Sahour, Beit Jala, Bethlehem, and East Jerusalem.*

Figure 1: Graphic size and distribution of Christian sample population by denomination in the West Bank and Israel.

Figure: 1



*Source: Christian sample population in late 2005 and early 2006.

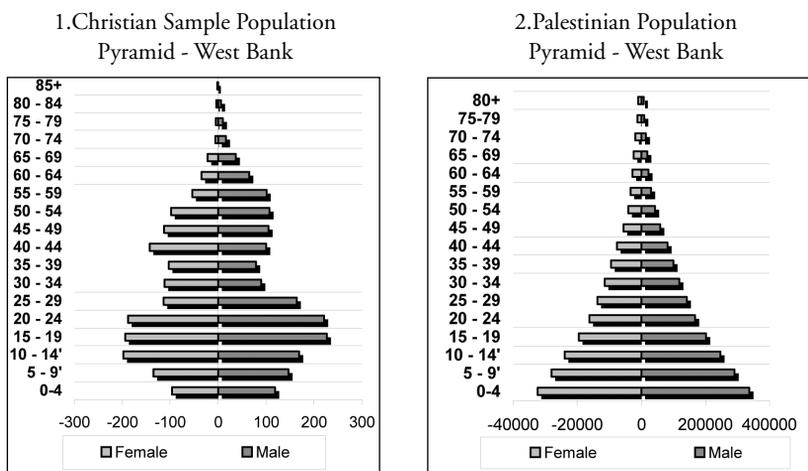
As Figure 1 shows, the entire sample of the Christian population covered all denominations in the West Bank and Israel. The differences in number of families between denominations reflect the relative size of each church in the West Bank and Israel. The first three largest churches are the Greek Orthodox Church, the Melkite Greek Catholic Church and the Latin Church. Note should be made of the fact that the Israeli sample over-represents the Greek Orthodox while under-representing the Greek Catholics, who are a majority within the Christian population of Israel. This, however, does not affect the

reliability and validity of the data.

II. Population Structure

The Christian sample population in the West Bank (WB) and Israel is presented in Figure 2 in comparison with the population pyramids for the respective territories. The population pyramids enable us to compare the age-sex structure of the Christian population to that of the general population. It also gives a summary of the dependency ratio; i.e., the percentage of children below 14 years of age and elderly above the age of 65 years to the population between ages 15 and 64 years. These measures are very important indicators in evaluating and forecasting the population size and its economic and social needs and potential.

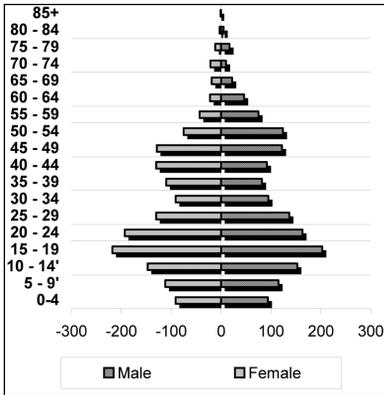
Figure 2: Population Pyramids of Christian Sample of the West Bank and of Israel Compared to Population Pyramids of The Two Countries



*Source: Christian sample population in late 2005 and early 2006.

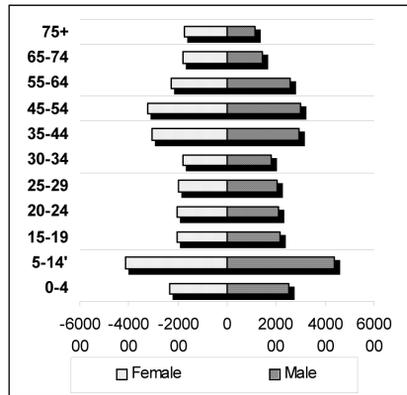
*Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2005

3. Christian Sample Population Pyramid-Israel



*Source: Christian sample population in late 2005 and early 2006.

4. Jewish Population Pyramid-Israel



*Source: Israel Abstract 2005

An examination of the Palestinian and the Christian West Bank population pyramids respectively shows some clear differences. The Palestinian population pyramid is expansive meaning that it has a broad base which indicates a high proportion of children and a rapid rate of population growth with a low proportion of older people. The Christian WB sample is constrictive meaning that Palestinian Christians have lower numbers or percentages of younger people. Thus, the birth rate of Palestinian Christians is clearly much lower than that of the general population; 2.0% to 3.7%. The comparison between the pyramids of the Christian sample and the Palestinian population highlights this difference thus confirming the representative nature of the sample. But one other difference has to do with the population of older age: in the Christian sample pyramid in contrast to that of the Palestinian population there are more elderly people among the Christians than in the general population. This could be attributed to life style, nutrition, medical care, social welfare and other such characteristics. A tentative conclusion in looking at

the Christian sample pyramid of the West Bank is that the lower birth rate of Christians is an added factor, besides emigration, that contributes to the dwindling numbers of Palestinian Christians. This is explained by the constrictive “waist-like” appearance of the pyramid that is observed in the Christian sample.

The population pyramids in Israel for both the general population and the Christian sample show relatively similar demographic trends. The Israelis’ population pyramid can be characterized as stationary meaning that it shows unchanging patterns of fertility and mortality across the age structure with the exception of one or two age groups. The population pyramid of the Christian sample is more constrictive in that it reflects lower numbers or percentages of younger people. This is an indication that in terms of birth rate the Palestinian Christian population in Israel is approaching the low birth rate of the Israeli Jewish population. Hence the growth rate of the Christian population in Israel remains much lower than the rate of the general Arab Palestinian population in the country. An added explanation for the rather low birth rate among Christians in the West Bank and Israel is the relatively late marriage age of Christians in comparison particularly to Muslims. The Palestinians in the WB and Israel tend to have a lower marriage age and higher fertility rate, while the Christians and Jews are characterized with a higher marriage age and lower fertility rate. Statistics show roughly that the average marriage age is 28 years for Christians, 19 years for Muslim women and 23 for men. Furthermore, the overall fertility rate of Palestinians is 6.06 and 7.41 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively. It is worth noting that the fertility rate among women with less than secondary education (less than 12 years of education) is 6.32, and women with secondary education is 5.57 and women above secondary education is 4.52. In contrast, the fertility rate for Christian women is 2.59.³

³ *Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2005*

One conclusion from the population pyramids of the Christian sample in both Israel and the West Bank is that both have a constrictive nature, meaning that both groups of Palestinian Christians show similar demographic characteristics in terms of birth rate; age, sex and overall population structure.

Marital Status:

Unmarried: There is a sizable portion of singles (aged 15 years and over) among the Christian population in the WB and Israel that prefer not to get married as Table 1 shows.

Table: 1

Marital Status for Ages 15 Years and Over

West Bank		Israel
43.8%	Single	39.9%
53.5%	Married	57.4%
1.82%	Widowed	1.5%
0.19%	Divorced.	0.71%
0.19%	Re-married	0.12%
0.5%	Separated.	0.37%

Numerous factors can account for this. One is the growing educational opportunities available for both sexes. Another important factor is the desire to remain free from the obligations of marriage as long as possible, due to the gloomy political and economic situation. Many view this high percentage of bachelorhood negatively since it affects the growth of the Christian population as reflected in the low fertility rates.

Married: Marriage and age of marriage are influenced by factors such as education, social class, and anticipated income that is sufficient to support a family. Close to 54% of the West Bank Christian sample are married and over 57% for the Israeli Christian sample. This points to the cultural fact that the Palestinian Arab society is a society that stresses the importance of marriage for all its members. But in spite of this fact, it is more likely, judging from the overall data of the survey, that there are more singles among Christians than among the general Arab population.

Although the estimation of percentages is based on persons 15 years and above, it is of importance to point out that Christians in general do not get married during the early years of 15 to 18 like the general Palestinian population.

Divorced & Separated: Apparently, there are only few cases of marriage breakups among Christians in the WB and Israel. Table 1 shows that 0.19% are divorced and 0.5% are separated in the WB and 0.71% divorced and 0.37% separated in Israel. Explanations for the rather low rates of separation and divorce are: First, divorce and separation are socially undesirable. Even in the Muslim population, where divorce is permissible, the rates for divorce are exceptionally low, again reflecting a general cultural trend disfavoring the breakup of the family unit. Second, marriage in the region is a religious contract, not a civil contract as in the developed countries. As a result, divorce and separation are blocked and discouraged not only socially but also by the church authorities. Overall, despite the fact that the percentages of divorce and separation are negligible, they nevertheless could point to some underlying social and family problems that need attention and follow up.

Widowed and Re-married: The survey shows small percentages of widowed and re-married. Table 1 indicates a percentage of 1.82% widowed and 0.19% re-married in the WB and 1.5% widowed and 0.12% re-married in Israel. Loss of spouse affects women more than men and accordingly there is a need, as in divorce and separation, to pay attention to these families that have lost either parent and that are in need of social and communal support.

III. Education

Education is of high value to Christians in the WB and Israel. They consider education to be a resource that stays with their children and could ensure a career with a proper income and decent life. Traditionally, Christians in Palestine have had earlier access to education due to the foreign educational institutions. This has made them value education in and for itself and as a means of progress.

Table: 2

All Students Classified by Level of Education		
WB	Level of Education	Israel
9.8%	Nursery & Kindergarten	11.5%
64.7%	School	70.8%
1%	Vocational School	1.3%
25.5%	University	16.4%
39.4%	% of the Sample Population	42.1%

The survey reveals a sizable portion of the sample in both the WB with 39.4% and in Israel with 42.1% students attending schools and universities. Christians have an almost universal school attendance

among their children. Other data point to a relatively larger proportion of Palestinian Christians attending universities than the general Palestinian population. The results of the survey are in conformity with what is known on the educational profile of the Christian Palestinian population.

Nursery and Kindergarten: As a percentage of the total population sample, Table 2 shows that children in nursery school and kindergarten represent 9.8% of total students in the WB and 11.5% in Israel. Nursery school for infants increases with the increasing participation rate of married women in the labor force. With the Christian Palestinian life style and the active participation of the married woman in life outside home, kindergarten has become almost a necessity. Certainly, income and the availability of nursery schools play a role in the decision to send children to nursery schools.

School Students: There is a great tendency among Christian parents to send their children to private schools for better education. Most of the Christian students attend private schools rather than public schools. Table 2 shows that 64.7% of the samples are high school students in the WB and 70.8% in Israel. It is worth noting here that most private schools in the WB and Israel belong to the local churches. Table 3 indicates that 91.4% of school students in the WB and 67.1% in Israel are in private schools. Public schools are far less popular among Christians in the WB than in Israel. A sum of 32.9% of Christian students in Israel go to public schools. Some of the Christian families believe that Israeli public schools better prepare their children to compete for entrance to Israeli universities. In comparison, only 8.6% of students in the WB attend other schools because the needed class level is not available in the private school, or the private school is far from their towns.

Table: 3

School Students Classified by Type of School		
WB	Type of School	Israel
91.4%	Private	67.1%
8.6%	Public	32.9%

Vocational Schools: Only 1% of total students in the WB and 1.3% in Israel are in vocational schools (Table 2). Apparently, vocational schools are not popular with Christians in either the WB or Israel. Learning a vocation is seen fit only for young people who cannot make it in school or those who come from limited income families, and cannot afford the expenses of attending school and university.

University Students: Higher education is as much in demand as high school education. Despite the limited and low per capita income and the grim political and economic situation, a total of 25.5% of Christian students are pursuing higher education in the West Bank. Christian university students in Israel constitute only 16.4% (Table 2). This is an indication that Christians are more keen on attending university than the general Arab Palestinian population in the West Bank and Israel.

In comparison, the percentage of Christian university students in Israel is smaller than the percentage of Christian university students in the WB. This difference is influenced by many factors, considering that it is not easy for Arab students in Israel to enter Israeli universities because of constant change in their admission policy. In many cases, these policies prevent Arab students from entering the Israeli universities. On the contrary, it has become easier for Christian

students in the WB to pursue university education with the opening of Palestinian universities. Another reason might be attributed to the economic situation in the WB. The lack of job opportunities in the WB leaves high school graduates with limited options: unemployment, emigration, or higher education.

Another important point is the fact that both Christian males and females equally attend university education in both Israel and the

Table: 4

All Students Classified by Sex		
West Bank	Sex	Israel
50.1%	Male	50.3%
49.9%	Female	49.7%

Table: 5

University Students Classified by Sex		
West Bank	Sex	Israel
52.1%	Male	44.9%
47.9%	Female	55.1%

WB. Table 4 shows the percentage of male to female at all levels of education while Table 5 shows the percentage of male to female at the university level. Both tables reveal almost the same percentages for male and female student participation for Christians in both the WB and Israel.

Financial Aid: *Tables 6 and 7* show that Christian school and university students in the WB receive more financial assistance than those Christian students in Israel. This is due to the bad economic and political situation in the West Bank where there are willing donors, particularly among churches and religious organizations.

The educational profile of the Christian Palestinian population in both Israel and the WB is something that the community can be

proud of. Education has been a mainstay of the community through good and bad times. Christians in the Holy Land living in an insecure political and economic situation have resorted to education as a means for providing human capital and future security.

Table: 6

Financial Aid to Students in Schools		
West Bank	Donors	Israel
6.6%	School	1.4%
1.1%	Church	0.4%
-	Relatives	1.2%

Table: 7

Financial Aid to Students in Universities		
West Bank	Financial Aid	Israel
30.4%	Grants	17.8%
7.1%	Loans	5.1%

IV. Labor Force

The size of the labor force is mainly determined by the size of the population over the age of 15 years. The Christian population 15 years and over can be classified under two categories: those in the labor force (the active portion to include employed and unemployed persons) and those who are not in the labor force (the inactive portion to include students, homemakers, the elderly, etc.).

In The Labor Force (active):

Employment: The Christian population enjoys a relatively high rate of employment in the WB and Israel in comparison to other Palestinians in the WB and to the Arab population in Israel. Table 8 shows that 88.4% of the Christian labor force is employed while the overall Palestinian employment rate is less than 60% in the WB. It also shows that in Israel, 93.7% of the Christian labor force is employed in comparison to only 80% among the general Arab Palestinian population.

Table:8

Labor Force Classified by Employment & Unemployment		
West Bank		Israel
88.4%	Employment Rate	93.7%
11.6%	Unemployment Rate	6.3%

Table:9

Employed Persons Classified by Field of Work		
West Bank		Israel
0.8%	Agriculture	0.6%
13.7%	Industry	11.2%
60.7%	Services	68.2%
4.7%	Construction	9.5%
20.1%	Commerce	10.5%

Field of work: Concerning field of work, Table 9 shows the percentage distribution of Christian employed persons among fields of work in the WB and Israel. It shows that work in services, commerce and industry is highest among Christian employed persons. The majority of Christian employed persons in both territories are working in the service sector; i.e., banks, insurance companies, schools, tourism, hospitals and other such service-providing institutions. The field of services attracts 60.7% and 68.2% of the total employed in the WB and Israel respectively. The second most attractive fields are commerce and industry, which capture a total of 33.8% and 21.7% of the total employed in the WB and Israel respectively.

Agriculture captures less than 1% of Christian employed persons in both Israel and the West Bank. As to construction, only 4.7% and 9.5% of the employed are engaged in this field in the WB and Israel respectively. The reason for this low percentage of employed Christian labor force in construction is due to the fact that construction work requires mostly unskilled and hard labor while the preference of the Christian labor force is more towards skilled and professional work.

Table:10

Employed Persons Classified by Economic Sector		
West Bank	Sector	Israel
94.3%	Private Sector	87.3%
5.6%	Public Sector	11.4%
0.1%	Foreign Employer	1.3%

Economic Sector: The Christian labor force is classified by three economic sectors. Most of the Christian working labor force in the WB and Israel are working in the private sector. Table 10 shows 94.3% and 87.3% of the employed in the WB and Israel respectively are working in the private sector. This can be explained by the relative size of the private sector and its potential growth. First, the private sector is the largest and provides more job opportunities than others. Second, it also provides the chance for potential individual growth as well as providing more income.

The public sector in the WB is not only relatively small but also not attractive to many workers because of the difference in wages. Public workers earn far lower wages or salaries than those who are working in the private or international sectors. However, it is considered as the last resort for desperate employment seekers in the absence of job

opportunities. The international sector, including embassies or international NGOs are attractive to many because of salary and other fringe benefits. However, it is relatively one of the smallest sectors and hence has limited job opportunities.

Employment Status: The Christian employed labor force is analyzed in three categories: employed, self-employed and working with the family. The survey shows that out of the 94.3% of employed persons in the private sector in the WB, 54.7% are employees, 35.7% are self-employed and 3.9% are working with the family. A sum of 39.6% are either self-employed or working with family in the WB. The survey also shows that out of the 87.3% of employed persons in the private sector in Israel, 59.3% are employees and 28% are either self-employed (22.8%) or working with the family (5.2%).

The percentage of those who are self-employed and working with the family in the WB is more than in Israel. This is not always a sign of healthy economy but sometimes is a reflection of a weak economy as in the case of the WB. In the case of Israel, it might be the lack of job opportunities and work discrimination. Many young people who graduate from school or university, especially in the WB, prefer to work with family and to do odd jobs rather than stay idle. Under these conditions, a relatively large portion of employed persons may be underemployed.

Table:11

Employed Persons Classified by Full-time & Part-time		
West Bank		Israel
85.6%	Full-time	82.8%
14.4%	Part-time	17.2%

Table 11 shows a rather similar percentage of Christian working labor force in the WB and Israel employed full-time and part-time. Most important is that 16.1% of those who are working in the WB are looking for additional jobs to increase their income while those count only 2.8% in Israel. This difference reflects the bad economic situation in the WB. Working Christians in the WB, like all Palestinians, earn a low income (WB income) and are forced to live with Israeli-indexed cost of living since most of the products in the WB are either Israeli made or imported via Israel. They are suffering from the mismatch and imbalance between their earnings and expenditures. Their earned income is not enough to satisfy their present needs or to assure their future security.

Taking into account those who are self-employed and working with family (39.6% in the WB & 28% in Israel) and those who are working and looking for additional jobs (16.1% in the WB & 2.8% in Israel), the rate of unemployment and underemployment for Christians both in the WB and Israel could be higher than it appears.

Table:12

Employed Persons Classified by Level of Education

West Bank	Education	Israel
18.3%	Less than Secondary	5.7%
32.8%	Secondary	38.9%
18.7%	Diploma	17.2%
30.2%	B A & above	38.2%

Education: One of the important characteristics of the Christian labor force in the WB and Israel is marked by a high level of education. Table 12 shows that 48.9% of employed persons (half of the employed labor force) hold college degrees, 32.8% hold Secondary degrees while only 18.3% of them have less than Secondary degrees (less than twelve years of education). In Israel, 55.4% of employed persons (more than half of the employed labor force) hold college degrees, 38.9% hold Secondary degrees and only 5.7% of them have less than a Secondary degree. It is clear that the Christian labor force in the WB is slightly less educated than in Israel. The slight difference can be explained by the higher rate of unemployment for Christians in the WB than in Israel. Moreover, many persons with a higher level of education in the WB emigrate due to lack of job opportunities in the WB.

Unemployment: The unemployed in the WB and Israel are those who are actively looking for jobs and do not find a job. This part of the labor force is relatively small compared to the overall rate of unemployment. The rate of Christian unemployment in the WB is higher than that in Israel, a fact which can be attributed to the political and economic situation in the WB. Table 8 indicates 11.6% of the

Christian labor force in the WB is unemployed in comparison to a rate of more than 40% unemployment among the Palestinians in general. The survey also shows that 6.3% of the Christian labor force is unemployed in Israel while the rate of unemployment among the Arabs in Israel is around 20%.

Table: 13

Unemployed Persons Classified by Level of Education		
West Bank	Education	Israel
16.9%	Less than Secondary	5.8%
41.2%	Secondary	52.9%
19.6%	Diploma	24.1%
22.3%	B A and more	17.2%

Taking education into consideration, Table 13 shows that 41.9% in the WB and 41.3% in Israel whose level of education is a diploma and above are unemployed. This could be a strong push factor for emigration especially among youth between 20 and 34 years of age. Furthermore, it is of considerable importance to point out that a sum of 74.4% of unemployed persons in the WB has been unemployed for more than one year. This represents a clear indication of the deteriorating economic situation and the lack of job opportunities in the WB. In contrast, a sum of 44.2% of unemployed persons in Israel has been unemployed for more than one year.

Participation: Participation in the labor force is a function of several economic and social factors. Table 14 shows that the Christian male participation rate in the labor force in the WB is slightly lower than male participation rate in Israel. Moreover, the Christian female

participation rate in the labor force in the WB is lower than female participation rate in Israel. Furthermore, while in the WB the participation rate is 68.9% for men aged 15 years and over, the participation rate for women is only 35.2%. In Israel, the participation rate is 70.3% for men aged 15 years and over, while the participation rate for women is only 45.7%.

Table: 14

Labor Force Participation Rate Classified by Sex (Aged 15 yrs & Above)		
West Bank	Sex	Israel
68.9%	Male	70.3%
35.2%	Female	45.7%

Although the Christian population in the WB and Israel is relatively liberal, educated and highly urbanized, regardless of their geographic locality, the participation rate for Christian women is way below the participation rate for men. These differences can easily be explained and attributed to economic conditions more than to social and cultural conditions among Christians, especially in the WB.

Not In the Labor Force (unemployed)

The **Inactive portion** of the population aged 15 years and over includes those who cannot work due to illness and disability, home duty, culture, old age, or study. In the WB the unemployed portion of the Christian sample population aged 15 years and over is slightly larger than that of Christians in Israel. While the unemployed portion represents 46% of the sample population aged 15 years and over in the WB, the inactive portion for Christians in Israel represents 42% of the sample population aged 15 years and over.

The most striking feature of this unemployed category is that it represents a large portion of the Christian population in the WB and Israel. This portion poses a real problem to the community as it increases dependency and the demand for health facilities and other social services. But in general such listless dependency could be an important push factor especially for young unemployed Christians who would contemplate emigration.

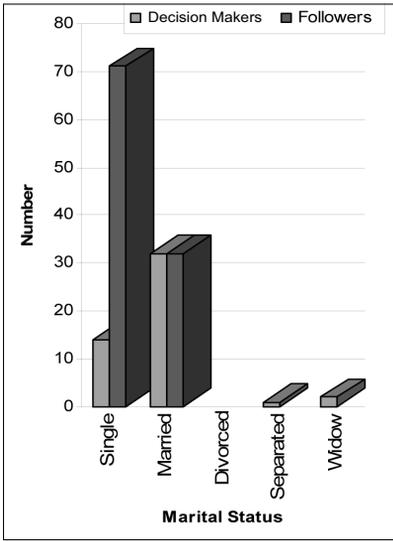
V. Emigration

The most alarming factor affecting the Christian population and threatening its future existence is the steady stream of emigration. With the passage of time, more and more Christians are leaving their homeland every year. In recent years, this stream of emigrants has increased and reached new dimensions as the causes of flight have multiplied.

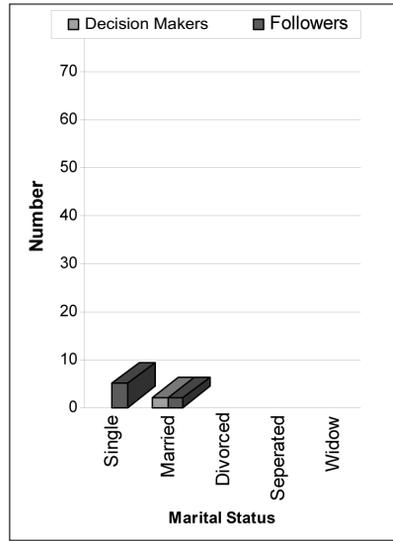
The Christian community in the WB suffers from waves of emigration more than the Christian community in Israel. Figure 3 shows those Christians who are now processing emigration papers and waiting for host country approval.

Figure: 3

Christians Processing Papers to Emigrate Classified by Marital Status, Decision Maker and Follower- WB



Christians Processing Papers to Emigrate Classified by Marital Status, Decision Maker and Follower- Israel



*Source: Christian sample population in late 2005 and early 2006.

It is clear that the size of the Christian emigration problem in the WB is far larger than that among Christians in Israel. This is due to the political and economic situation in the WB. However, the graphs are marked with a sizable portion of singles as they represent the largest portion of emigrants from the WB and Israel. The most striking figures among emigrants are married persons. Married persons represent a large portion of emigrants because most of the single emigrants are their followers.

Table 15 shows percentages of the Christian sample population who are processing their papers classified by marital status, decision making, followers and region. The division between the principal decision maker and followers is of considerable importance in emigration analysis.

Table: 15

Persons Processing Papers to Emigrate Classified by Marital Status, Decision Makers & Followers

West Bank		Marital Status	Israel	
Followers	Decision Makers		Decision Makers	Followers
68.9%	28.6%	Single		71.4%
31.1%	65.3%	Married	100%	28.6%
	2%	Separated		
	4.1%	Widowed		
100%	100%	Total	100%	100%
67.8%	32.2%	100%	22.2%	77.8%

Although singles represent the largest portion and married persons represent a lower portion in the WB (as in figure 3), Table 15 shows that the percentages are reversed with respect to who makes the decision and who has to follow. While singles represent only 28.6%, married (with separated and widowed) represent 71.4% of the decision makers. The followers are far more than the decision makers. Table 15 shows that while decision makers represent 32.2%, followers represent 67.8% of those who intend to leave. Therefore, Christian

emigration from the WB is characterized by family type emigration marked with a large number of followers. This is the most harmful type of emigration and has adverse effects on the whole community.

Emigration today poses a real problem to the Christian community in the WB. It is most important to point out that those who are processing papers to leave represent 4.5% of the total Christian sample population in the WB, which is double the annual Christian population natural growth rate. It not only cancels the population natural growth rate but causes a sharp decrease in population size.

Christians in Israel suffer far less than Christians in the WB from emigration. Figure 3 shows that a very small portion of Israeli Arab Christians intend to leave as compared to those in the WB. This can be attributed to differences in general living conditions between the two communities. In general, Christians in the WB, like all other Palestinians, suffer from a wide range of Israeli oppressive measures that negatively affect every sphere of life. In Israel, Christians are conducting their lives under relatively normal conditions.

Causes of Emigration:

Christians in the Holy Land have been influenced by their religious beliefs and their educational background. Palestinian Christians have become highly urbanized and more ambitious on a personal level. Their hopes and aims for a better life, better schooling, and better living conditions preoccupy their thinking.

Although the survey reveals a vast number of causes inviting and causing emigration, these causes are complex and interrelated. However, they can be classified under five reasons as shown by Table 16.

Table: 16
Causes of Emigration

West Bank	Reason	Israel
44.7%	To Work	
42.6%	Bad Economic and Political Situation	
	Living Conditions	100%
8.5%	To Join Family	
4.2%	To Work and Study	

For Christians in the WB, Table 16 shows that a sum of 44.7% of the respondents want to leave in order to find work, 42.6% want to leave because of the existing bad economic and political situation, 8.5% want to leave to join their families, and only 4.2% want to leave to work and study. This confirms the findings in previous researches concerning the inviting causes of Christian emigration from the Holy Land⁴.

It is of importance to point out that there are two separate sets of questions in the survey that dealt with the issue of emigration and the factors causing it. One set of questions did not identify religious extremism as a separate factor causing emigration, but subsumed it within the categories of political and economic causes; thus the results did not incorporate any information to that effect as in Table 16. However, the other question identified religious extremism as a separate factor causing emigration and thus the results clearly depict its effect. It shows that a sum of 8% of the respondents attributed emigration to religious extremism as reported and discussed in the

⁴ Soudah, Romell (1996). "Christians in the Holy-Land: The Search for a Different Way of Life (1967 - 1995)", *Unpublished paper, Bethlehem University*. See also Bernard Sabella, "A Study of Palestinian Christian Emigration in Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem Districts", in *The Emigration Problem, Aliqa, Jerusalem 1991*.

accompanying article of Dr. Sabella. Although religious extremism counts for a small percentage as a cause of emigration, it cannot be ignored during a time marked with the rising wave of religious extremism in the area.

Overall, the most inviting reason to emigrate is an economic one. Those who are leaving in order to work and those who are leaving because of the bad economic and political situation represent 87.3% of the total respondents. This is not surprising. The WB economy, during the past three decades, has experienced poor performance, absence of economic confidence, and high uncertainty. Therefore, the lack of job security and opportunity, associated with the high cost of living, has pushed many Christians to emigrate in search of a better life and economic opportunities.

Christian emigration is highly influenced by political factors. Considering that the political situation in the area is marked with spiraling conflict and instability, this cannot but be a pressuring and pushing factor encouraging emigration. Israeli drastic measures against the Palestinians affect and touch every sphere of life in a most negative manner. Christians, as Palestinian Arabs, have suffered as a consequence. Many individuals and families voluntarily emigrate in search of freedom and security as well as to ensure income and a secure future for their children.

To conclude, although emigration is a normal process among all nations, Christian emigration from the Holy Land is a unique one. It has its own special causes and different consequences. Emigration from such a small Christian community represents one of the major constraints, retarding its population growth and threatening its future existence. In fact, it

*continues to increase the fear and worry of many remaining Christians about their future prospects and development.*⁵

Now is the time for the Christian churches to act in order to reduce emigration and eliminate its effects. Churches must act and do everything possible before holy places become mere monuments. There is still time to overcome this problem but not much time before the population reaches its irreversible size.

VI. Economic and Welfare Inequities

The survey indicates that the similarities are far greater than the differences between the two Christian communities in the WB and Israel. Although their population structure, education and labor force indicators are the same, their welfare and emigration patterns are different. Christian welfare in the West Bank is far below that in Israel and the problem of Christian emigration is far greater in the WB than that in Israel. Several factors such as social, economic, educational, and political conditions are responsible for this but the factor most influencing welfare and emigration is the political one.

Like all Palestinians, Christians in the WB are living under occupation with serious human rights infractions by Israel. The confiscation of Palestinian land took a sizable portion of Christian private property especially in the Bethlehem area, where 50% of Christians in the WB live, thus making many of those who depend on the land to think seriously of emigration.

⁵ Fortney, Judith A. "International Migration of Professionals", *Population Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2, July 1970, p. 227. See also G. Beijer, "Brain Drain as a Burden, a Stimulus, and a Challenge to European Integration", in F. Bechhofer (ed.) *Population Growth and The Brain Drain*, University Press, Edinburgh, 1969, pp. 16-17.

The Separation Wall has also cut off the Bethlehem area from its vital connection with Jerusalem, as well as with other Palestinian areas. As a consequence, people become separated from their families and loved ones, from work and from essential facilities such as health centers, schools and universities. It creates a new harsh environment of ghettoization for Christians living in the Bethlehem area in particular and for other Palestinians as well.

To conclude, the continuous confiscation of land, military roadblocks and the Separation Wall, coupled with restrictions on mobility and access, give the impression that people are living in a cage, dehumanized, with little hope for freedom and normal living.⁶ This situation really affects the core of the Christian community in Palestine and is the primary factor for forcing Christian Palestinians to leave.

Conclusion

The study shows that the indicators of Christian values and preferences with respect to population structure, education, labor force, and life style are very much similar in both Christian communities in the WB and Israel. The differences between them result from the differences between two distinct economies and two different political situations. Christians in the WB live in an abnormal economic and political situation marked by a ruined economy and an unstable political environment, while on the other hand, Christians in Israel live in a relatively normal economic and political situation marked by an advanced economy and stability in the political situation and judicial and governmental institutions.

⁶ World Bank. *"The Impending Palestinian Fiscal Crisis, Potential Remedies"*, May 7, 2006. See also *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "Report on UNCTAD'S Assistance to the Palestinian People"*, TD/B/53/2, 19 July 2006.

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Palestinian Christians: Historical Demographic Developments, Current Politics and Attitudes Towards Church, Society and Human Rights

Dr. Bernard Sabella*

Introduction:

Undertaken in the Summer of 2006, the Sabeel Sample Survey of Palestinian Christians in both the West Bank and Israel has presented new material for understanding the responses of the Christian communities to a variety of issues. The richness of the Survey also provides a challenge to look at the historical-demographic or

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population context in which Palestinian Christians in both the West Bank and Israel find themselves. Accordingly, the following article starts with a historical overview of the Palestinian Christian population. The establishment of the state of Israel caused a population shock that saw numerous localities in Israel lose their Christian populations. Comparing Jordan's Census of 1961 with Israel's census of 1967 and pitting the figures and data of these two censuses against the most recent estimates give an idea of what has happened to the Christian Palestinian population during recent years. The more recent developments and Israeli control measures such as the Separation Wall bring us to the expected repercussions of these measures, particularly on the emigration of Palestinian Christians. The internal Palestinian situation characterized by a political impasse, factional infighting and institutional paralysis over the last year since the Palestinian elections of January 2006 is also discussed as is its impact on migratory pressures on Middle Class Palestinians, among whom are most Palestinian Christians. The Sabeel Survey and its various results as well as background characteristics of the Palestinian Christian population are discussed in depth and so are some of the findings, particularly those pertaining to Church Affiliation, Locality of Residence and the responses to the various statements posed in the Survey.

This essay includes responses in which all the respondents participated, and I sincerely hope that its findings and conclusions will give all of us some light as to how to progress towards building a society and a region that is at peace with itself and among its various nationalities and religions.

The Palestinian Christian Population Since Mid-16th Century

Table 1: Population of Palestine by Religion Mid-Sixteenth Century to Mid-Twentieth Century

Year	Total	Muslims	Christians	Jews
1533-1539	157,000	145,000-92.4%	6,000-3.8%	5,000-3.1%
1690-1691	232,000	219,000-94.4%	11,000-4.7%	2,000-1.0%
1890	532,000	432,000-81.2%	57,000-10.7%	43,000-8.1%
1914	689,000	525,000-76.2%	70,000-10.2%	94,000-13.6%
1922	752,000	589,000-78.3%	71,000-9.4%	84,000-11.2%
1931	1,033,000	760,000-73.4%	89,000-8.6%	175,000- 16.9%
1947	1,970,000	1,181,000-59.9%	143,000-7.3%	630,000- 32.0%

Source: Sergio Della Pergola: "Demography in Israel/Palestine: Trends, Prospects, Policy Implications," IUSSP XXIV General Population Conference, Salvador de Bahia, August 2001 S64. Population Change and Political Transitions.

An examination of population numbers and percentages between the mid-16th Century and the mid-20th Century shows an increasing Christian community in absolute numbers from 6,000 or 3.8% of the total population in the mid 16th Century to 143,000 or 7.3% of the population in the mid 20th Century. Percentage wise, the Christian population declined throughout the centuries as more Jews made their way to the country. This is also applicable to the Muslim population of the country, in spite of its higher absolute numbers and a higher growth rate.

The Anglo-American Survey 1945-1946

In 1945, according to a survey conducted by the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, the breakdown of the 145,060 Christians in Palestine according to district of residence was as follows:

Table 2: Demographics of Palestine by district as of 1945

Data from the Survey of Palestine

District	Muslim	%	Jewish	%	Christian	%	Total
Acre	51,130	69%	3,030	4%	11,800 - 8.1%	16%	73,600
Beersheba	6,270	90%	510	7%	210 - 0.1%	3%	7,000
Beisan	16,660	67%	7,590	30%	680 - 0.5%	3%	24,950
Gaza	145,700	97%	3,540	2%	1,300 - 0.9%	1%	150,540
Haifa	95,970	38%	119,020	47%	33,710 - 23.2%	13%	253,450
Hebron	92,640	99%	300	<1%	170 - 0.1%	<1%	93,120
Jaffa	95,980	24%	295,160	72%	17,790 - 12.3%	4%	409,290
Jenin	60,000	98%	Negligible	<1%	1,210 - 0.8%	2%	61,210
Jerusalem	104,460	42%	102,520	40%	46,130 - 31.8%	18%	253,270
Nablus	92,810	98%	Negligible	<1%	1,560 - 1.1%	2%	94,600
Nazareth	30,160	60%	7,980	16%	11,770 - 8.1%	24%	49,910
Ramallah	40,520	83%	Negligible	<1%	8,410 - 5.6%	17%	48,930
Ramle	95,590	71%	31,590	24%	5,840 - 4.0%	4%	134,030
Safad	47,310	83%	7,170	13%	1,630 - 1.1%	3%	56,970
Tiberias	23,940	58%	13,640	33%	2,470 - 1.7%	6%	41,470
Tulkarm	76,460	82%	16,180	17%	380 - 0.3%	1%	93,220
Total	1,076,780	58%	608,230	33%	145,060	9%	1,845,560

Source: A Survey of Palestine: Prepared in December, 1945 and January, 1946 for the Information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. Institute for Palestine Studies. (1991).

From the district data, Jerusalem district, which then included the Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour towns, stands at number one with 31.8% of Christians, followed by Haifa district with 23.2%; Jaffa with 12.3%; Acre and Nazareth with 8.1% each; Ramallah with 5.6% and Ramle with 4.0%. Some localities in Israel such as Tiberias, Safad, Beisan and Beersheba, which had small Christian populations in the 1940s, have none today. Others such as Haifa, Nazareth, Jaffa and Ramle continue to have Christian populations but only in Nazareth does the number of Christians today surpass their numbers in 1945. In the other localities, the numbers have definitely dwindled or altogether disappeared.

The Palestinian Christian Population in the Palestinian Territories

In the Palestinian Territories, the Jerusalem and Bethlehem Christian population today is definitely lower than it was in 1945. Today's estimates place the number of Christians in Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour towns at roughly 22,000 while the estimate for Jerusalem is 8,000 (The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics in 2005 places the Arab Christian population of Jerusalem at slightly over 12,000 with over 2,000 non-Arab Christians.) which makes for a total of 32,000 Christians. If compared with the figure of 46,130 Christians back in 1945, including 31,330 in Jerusalem, 6,490 in Bethlehem, 3,540 in Beit Jala and 4,770 in Beit Sahour, we can conclude that Jerusalem today has less than one-third of the Christian population of 1945 even if we subscribe to the higher numbers of the Christian population in Jerusalem given by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics for 2005. The Jerusalem-Bethlehem areas today have a Christian Palestinian population that is at least 12,000 less than the numbers of 1945. Bethlehem town itself has retained the same numbers, more or less, after 62 years! The fact that there is no growth in Bethlehem means that Bethlehem has been on a zero population growth path due primarily to the emigration of its Christians, especially among the

youth. The situation in Beit Jala is slightly better with roughly 6,400 Christians there, a fact which means that the town, in spite of massive emigration especially to Central and South American countries, has added close to 3,000 to its population in 62 years. Beit Sahour also scores better than Bethlehem, with an addition of 2,600 to its population since 1945. But whereas Beit Sahour is known for lower emigration trends than its neighboring Bethlehem and Beit Jala, if we estimate that the growth rate of Christians in the 1940s was 2%, then the Jerusalem Christian population of 31,000 should have doubled to a population of 62,000 by 1980 and to roughly 93,000 by 2007. Using the same formula, Bethlehem should have had a population of 12,980 by 1980 and 19,470 by 2007. Beit Jala's figures should have been 7,080 by 1980 and 10,620 by 2007 if no emigration had taken place and the growth rate of 2% per year had held. Likewise, Beit Sahour's figures should have been 9,540 in 1980 and 14,310 by 2007.

The Christian Population in Jericho, Ramallah, Nablus Districts and the Gaza Strip

In discussing the Jerusalem district population, special attention needs to be given to Jericho, where traditionally a living Christian community took root. While the statistics for 1945 do not specify Jericho, most likely it is included in the Jerusalem district statistics. Today, Jericho's Christian community is estimated at roughly 450. The community runs schools, has convents and offers social and caritative services to the larger community. It lies in proximity to the baptismal place of Jesus on the River Jordan.

If we examine Ramallah and the villages surrounding it in the Palestinian Territories, Ramallah itself had a Christian population of 4,520 in 1945. This population should have increased to 9,040 in

1980 and should be, according to the prediction formula used, 13,560 by 2007. The villages surrounding Ramallah numbered 3,890 in 1945; using the same calculation method, these villages should have reached a population of 7,780 by 1980 and 11,670 by 2007. At present the Ramallah Christian population is estimated at 6,450; if we add the Christian populations of the villages of Aboud (roughly 1200); Ein Arik (400); Jifna (1100); Taybeh (1600) and the town of Bir Zeit (2200), their total will not exceed 6,500.

The Nablus district and its suburb Rafidia, where most Christians reside, had a Christian population of 1,560 in 1945; today the estimates are that Nablus and its villages have a Christian population of 1000. The Jenin district, with Zababdeh being a major Christian population center, had a population of 1,210 in 1945, with most living in Zababdeh and only 160 living in Jenin itself. Today the Jenin district has a Christian population of roughly 2000, but if we apply the same calculation method of expected population growth, then Jenin district should have had a Christian population of 2,420 in 1980 and 3,630 by 2007. In spite of the apparently steady numbers in Jenin district, the effects of emigration are apparent, even though indicators of emigration trends in the Jenin district point to internal, i.e., rural-urban migration, rather than to external or out of the country emigration, as is more often the experience of Christians in Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Ramallah areas.

The Gaza Strip area has had a Christian population for centuries. The historical fact that Gaza was one of the first localities where Christianity spread is authenticated by the relics and archaeology of the place and by the fact that the Gaza Christian community is alive and participates actively in the concerns and welfare of the larger society. In 1945 Gaza's Christian community was put at 1,300, mostly

congregating in Gaza City itself. Today, Gaza's Christian population is estimated roughly at 2,500-3,000, mostly Greek Orthodox. As in the Jenin district, while the continuity of the community is assured, still in the most ideal conditions, the Christian community should have numbered over 4,000 today.

Israel and the Christian Palestinian Population

Towards the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, the total number of the Christian population was estimated at 156,000. When in 1949 the population of Israel was first broken down by religion, the Palestinians in Israel numbered 160,000, of whom 111,500 were Muslims or 69.7%; the Christians numbered 34,000 or 21.3% and the Druze 14,500 or 9.0%. (Population by Religion and Population Group, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2006 p.85.) Based on figures that speak of between 50,000 and 60,000 Palestinian Christians or roughly 35% of all Palestinian Christians who became refugees following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and the establishment of Israel, and considering the figure of 34,000 Christians who remained in Israel, then the Christian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1948 should have numbered 62,000. This is confirmed by figures of the above Table of Demographics of Palestine by District as of 1945, which gives the total number of Christians in the localities of the West Bank and Gaza Strip at 59,160 in 1945.

It is of interest to compare the number of Palestinian Christians in the various Israeli localities in 2005 (according to Israeli Statistics of the Central Bureau of Statistics) with the numbers given in 1945 for the same localities according to the Anglo-American Survey:

Table 3: Christian Palestinian Population by District 1945 and 1948 and Estimated Number of Refugees and Displaced and Christian Population in 2005 and Expected in 1980 and 2007.

Locality	1945	1948	Estimated Number of Christian Palestinian Refugees or Displaced	2005	Expected	Expected
					1980	2007
					Based on 1945 Data on 2% annual rate of growth	
Acre - Shefar'am	16,800	10,900	-5,900	40,900	33,600	50,400
Beersheba & South	210	270	+60	400	420	630
Haifa	33,710	5,184	-28,526	15,200	67,420	101,130
Jaffa Tel Aviv	17,790	1,900	-15,890	35,580	71,160	106,740
Jerusalem	31,330	1,100	-30,230	62,660	125,230	187,845
Nazareth	11,770	10,900	-870	23,540	47,080	70,620
Ramle & Lod	5,840	1,400	-4440	3,700	11,680	17,520
Total	117,450	31,654	-85,796	96,300	234,900	534,885

The figures for 1945 are from the Demographics of Palestine by District as of 1945 of the Anglo-American Survey while the figures for 2005 are from the Statistical Abstract of Israel 2005 - Central Bureau of Statistics - Jerusalem 2006.

The above Table indicates what happened following the 1948 War in the localities where Palestinian Christians were found. Almost 90,000 Palestinian Christians became refugees outside the boundaries of Israel (60,000 Refugees) or were displaced within the newly-created Jewish state (estimated at 30,000 Internally Displaced Christians) considering all areas of Israel. In some localities, such as Ramle and Jaffa, only

hundreds remained of what had been flourishing communities. Haifa, one of the major cities with a large concentration of Christian Palestinians, ended up with roughly 5,000 Christians from a population of almost 34,000 in 1945. In general the 145,060 Palestinian Christians of 1945, given an annual growth rate of 2% should have become close to 534,885 by 2007. But even if we calculate the expected population in 2007 by basing it on the lower growth rate of 1.5%, then the expected Christian Palestinian population today, worldwide, should number no less than 400,000 at a conservative estimate.

If this conservative figure is to be trusted, given that in Israel the number of Christians today is 110,000 (not including East Jerusalem) and in the Palestinian National Authority close to 50,000 (including East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip), the conclusion hence is that 160,000 Christians are left in the Land called Holy (or 40% of all Palestinian Christians worldwide) while 240,000 Palestinian Christians (or 60% of all Palestinian Christians worldwide) are living outside their homeland. Some would dispute the total number of Palestinian Christians worldwide presented here as being too low and would argue for the higher number, thus placing the total population of Palestinian Christians as well over half-a-million.

In any case the statistics, even the conservative ones, speak of a sad reality. The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 was a major push factor that resulted in Christian Palestinians, along with other Palestinians, leaving their homes, towns, villages and cities. Yet, since the 1948 exodus, the flow of emigration of Palestinian Christians towards the East Bank of the Jordan became a virtual stream where tens of thousands found their way either to neighboring countries or, most often, to further destinations such as Australia, USA, Canada and other traditional places of refuge in Central and South American countries.

Jordan Census 1961, Israel Census 1967 and 2006 Estimates of Christian Population in the Palestinian Territories

Figures and data from both the Jordanian Census of 1961 and the Israeli Census of 1967 following the June War of 1967 give a view of Christian Palestinian numbers in specific years that can be compared with the latest estimates.

Table 4: Palestinian Christian Population According to Jordanian Census 1961, Israeli Census 1967 and Estimates 2006

Locality	Jordanian Census 1961	Israeli Census 1967	Estimate December 2006
Bethlehem	7246	6405	7000
Beit Jala	4530	4271	7000
Beit Sahour	3458	3730	8000
Jericho	1212	539	450
Jerusalem	10795	10813	8000
'Abud	716	500	1200
'Ain Arik	260	86	400
Ramallah	8745	6966	6000
Jifna	—	538	1100
Bir Zeit	—	1351	2200
Taiyiba	—	1156	1600
Nablus & Rafidiya	—	688	700
Tulkarm	—	100	50
Jenin Birquin	—	123	300
Zababdeh	—	922	1800
Gaza Strip	—	2478	3000
Total	45,855*	42,494**	48,800

* The Jordanian Census of 1961 divides the West Bank into three major census areas: Nablus, covering all the North West Bank with 3,069 Christians; Jerusalem in the Center West Bank with 42,618 Christians; and Hebron in the South West Bank with 168 Christians. See Jordan Department of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 1961, Vol. 1, Amman, 1964, p.115.

** (10,813 Christians in Jerusalem are drawn from State of Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, East Jerusalem, 1967, Jerusalem 1968 and 29,400 Christians in West Bank are drawn from Israel Defense Forces, Census of Population 1967 Conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics, West Bank of Jordan, Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai, Golan Heights, Vol. 1. Jerusalem 1967.)

Today, a most generous estimate of the total number of Palestinian Christians in the Palestinian Territories would not surpass the 50,000 mark. Again, using the calculation method based on 2% annual growth back in 1967, the Christian population by 2007 should have been at least 100,000. Accordingly, the total number of Palestinian Christians and their children born abroad who have left the Palestinian Territories since 1967 would be estimated at no less than 50,000 Christians. In the years since 2000 alone, with the political impasse caused by continued Israeli occupation and the resulting the Second Intifada, close to 4000 Christian Palestinians have left, primarily from the Bethlehem area.

Palestinian Christian Emigration: The Israeli Separation Barrier and Other Measures of Continued Military Occupation.

The current situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories does not help to reduce the urge towards emigration among all Middle

Class Palestinians, including Christians, who most often characterize themselves as belonging to the Middle Class. This situation emphasizes the continuing effect Israeli occupation measures and methods, highlighted by the Separation Barrier and its impact on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem-Ramallah area, have in terms of the exodus of Middle Class Palestinians, including Christians. The negative effects of the Separation Barrier touch all Palestinians in all geographic areas of the West Bank, including Qalqilya and Tulkarm in the North and Hebron in the South, where the population suffers daily at the hands of a few hundred Jewish settlers, as documented by B'Tselem, the Israeli Human Rights Organization. The special situation of Bethlehem-Jerusalem calls for an in-depth examination since the traditional historical religious ties between the two biblical cities make a pilgrimage visit to the Holy Land unthinkable without free access and mobility between them. Nowadays, the Separation Barrier has created a concrete separation between the two cities that is neither aesthetically acceptable nor suitable to honor the One born in the city 2000 or so years ago. The sight of the Separation Barrier makes any visitor or pilgrim's heart cry with sadness at the ugliness of surrounding Bethlehem of the Nativity with such a concrete structure. Although the Israeli authorities claim that all this is being done for security reasons, it is actually leading to thousands of Palestinians in Bethlehem and in Jerusalem being denied access to each other's cities. All this encourages the exodus of Christians from the Holy Land and from the Bethlehem area in particular. Israel should be held responsible as its measures of population control are clearly a factor that pushes Palestinians in the Bethlehem area, as elsewhere, to leave for good. Those who speak of "good will" gestures in order to advance peace and conflict resolution prospects should be reminded that the denial of freedom of movement and access to Jerusalem, Bethlehem and numerous other localities in the West Bank and Gaza is pushing

Palestinians to leave, particularly those with skills, some capital and entrepreneurial capacities. This migratory end result of denial of free movement and access goes specifically counter to efforts at peace and conflict resolution in the troubled land.

The Need for Political Stability and Law and Order in the Palestinian Territories.

However, there are also other push factors for emigration. The absence of political stability is one such factor. This is felt in the ineffectiveness of the agents of law and order in the Palestinian Territories, the ongoing factional impasse between Hamas and Fatah and the breakdown of institutions such as the Palestinian Legislative Council. The January 2006 election of Hamas and the subsequent international boycott of the Palestinian government have led to increasing economic and psychological pressures that touch everyone, irrespective of social standing or religious background. The boycott has economic repercussions that affect the lives of almost everyone in the Palestinian Territories. Methods such as the Temporary International Mechanisms (TIM) undertaken by the international community to ease the situation are helping some but do not address the core issues of economic, social and institutional needs. The victory of Hamas in the Palestinian parliamentary elections necessitates also some reflection on the role of the Palestinian Christians in politics as well as a more in-depth examination of the current inter-religious relations in Palestinian society. Palestinian Christians have played an important part in developing the national identity as an open, nationalist, secularist identity in which religion plays a tolerant and accommodating role. This has become so much part of the Palestinian culture that whenever Christian-Muslim relations in Palestine are discussed, they are referred to as exemplary and model relations.

As the Sabeel Survey indicates, most Christian Palestinian respondents want to have open and frank relations between Muslims and Christians and to nurture more trust in ongoing dialogue. Without frankness and without subscription to joint agendas rather than to strictly religious agendas for ending occupation and building an open and pluralistic Palestinian society, there is fear that the gulf that separates Muslims and Christians may increase and that those who attempt to use religion to separate, unfortunately, may gain the upper hand. In the Gaza Strip, the factional fighting is quite serious and could have some far-reaching repercussions on the entire population, including the small Christian community. Israel has made the Gaza Strip a virtual big prison which has no secure crossing either to Israel or to Egypt because the Israeli Occupation Authorities have turned freedom of crossing the Rafah and the Erez crossing points to Egypt and Israel, respectively, into pressure chips and not as a basic human right for the over 1.4 million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip. In such a situation, enterprising groups and citizens start thinking seriously about leaving. Stability and normalcy, beside open links to the outside world, are all necessary if the Gaza Strip is going to be viable as an integral part of the Palestinian Authority and Territories. If the current state of affairs continues, then there is real fear that what is left of the Christian Palestinian community there, estimated at 3000, will opt to go somewhere else, thus ending centuries of indigenous Christian presence in that part of Palestine. All these factors, the political, economic and social are interdependently becoming the PUSH factors that lead to emigration of thousands of promising Palestinians, including Palestinian Christians. In particular, educated, skilled, intelligent and aspiring young people, irrespective of religious background, are the first to be tempted to leave. The Sabeel Survey has pointed out that Joining Family Members Abroad is an important reason for emigration and while often younger members of a family

use this pretext to leave, older members also make this difficult choice in turbulent and unstable times.

The Sabeel Survey: Palestinian Christians by Church & Locality

Table 5: Palestinian Christian Respondents by Church and Locality

Church	West Bank	Israel	Total
GOrthodox	377 - 54%	322 - 46%	699 - 100%
GCatholics	35 - 15%	207 - 85%	242 - 100%
Latins	271 - 81%	62 - 19%	333 - 100%
Others	67 - 30%	159 - 70%	226 - 100%
Total	750 - 100%	750 - 100%	1500 - 100%

The concentration of the Greek Orthodox is 54% and 46% in the West Bank and Israel, respectively. The Greek Catholic respondents have uneven percentages of 15% West Bank to 85% Israel; the Latins also have an uneven distribution that goes the other way with 81% West Bank to only 19% in Israel; Others are 30% West Bank and 70% Israel respondents, respectively.

Education by Church - Percentage within Church

Table 6: Palestinian Christian Respondents by Education Level by Church

Church	Preparatory	Secondary	Diploma	BA	MA	PhD
GOrthodox	51 - 47%	96 - 14%	270 - 39%	113 - 16%	138 - 20%	18 - 3%
GCatholics	18 - 7%	19 - 8%	77 - 32%	41 - 17%	74 - 31%	6 - 3%
Latins	24 - 7%	50 - 15%	115 - 35%	53 - 16%	70 - 21%	14 - 4%
Others	9 - 4%	12 - 5%	94 - 42%	42 - 19%	57 - 25%	11 - 5%

Once again these statistics showing the educational level of respondents by Church affiliation point to a community intent on education. The Greek Orthodox have 78% of their respondents with a Diploma and higher; the Greek Catholics have 83%; the Latins have 76% and Others have 90%. The Greek Orthodox have the highest percentage of those reporting only Preparatory education while in Secondary education, they are similar to the Latins with 14% and 15% respectively. The Greek Orthodox and Others are highest on Diploma with 39% and 42% respectively. But when counts of those with a BA or above are made, the Greek Orthodox and Latins have lower percentages with 39% and 41%, respectively, to those of Greek Catholics and Others with higher percentages of 51% and 49% respectively. With respect to education and with the exception of the Preparatory category, both Greek Orthodox and Latins are rather similar while Greek Catholics and Others show similar educational trends.

Education and Locality:

The following figures and percentages indicate the educational level of respondents by locality:

Table 7: Educational Level of Palestinian Christians Respondents by Locality

Educational Level	Preparatory	Secondary	Diploma	BA-MA	PhD
West Bank	52	120	265	131-152	19
Israel	50	57	291	118-187	30

The educational background of respondents is more or less similar. There are twice as many respondents in the West Bank with Secondary level education as in Israel. The other noticeable difference is that there are more PhD respondents in Israel than in the West Bank.

There are relatively more respondents with a Bachelor degree in the West Bank (131) to (118) in Israel but more respondents with a Masters degree in Israel (187) to only (152) in the West Bank. This educational background points to an indigenous Christian population that is actively pursuing education and while, for the purpose of this study, there are no comparative data with their Muslim or Jewish neighbors, it is clear that educational achievement is one of the background factors of a Middle Class community which is itself a characteristic of the Christian Palestinian community. In circumstances of political instability and economic depression, this educational background can become a factor to propel emigration as those whose prospects are constrained by the bad political and economic conditions opt to go somewhere else to fulfill their potential and to develop their career and life prospects. This is important since it points to the personal element in making the choice of emigration. In practice, this choice of emigration, as has been argued again and again by population and migration experts, is least affected by inter-religious factors, in our case. People, especially young people, leave or start the process of emigration because on personal and career levels they see no real prospects for advancement. Certainly, the general circumstances and conditions, including heightened inter-religious tensions, help in the process but the choice remains personal and for practical reasons rather than for ideological-religious reasons. One other important conclusion on educational achievement of Palestinian Christians is that historically, educated groups have been able to conduct an active community life amidst very difficult odds. Hence, the educated Christian Palestinians could be challenged to stay put and to find means, especially with the help of their educational achievement, to persevere rather than to give up and opt for emigration as a way out.

The Civil Status of Respondents by Church Affiliation:

Table 8: Civil Status of Palestinian Christian Respondents by Church

Church	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
GOrthodox	112 - 42.1%	549 - 47.9%	11 - 61.1%	27 - 46.6%
GCatholics	41 - 15.4%	177 - 15.4%	4 - 22.2%	20 - 28.6%
Latin	69 - 25.9%	251 - 21.9%	1 - 5.6%	12 - 17.1%
Others	44 - 16.5%	169 - 14.7%	2 - 11.1%	11 - 15.7%
TOTAL	266 - 100%	1146 - 100%	18 - 100%	70 - 100%

One conclusion from these figures and percentages is that the Christian Palestinian community in both the West Bank and Israel is a marriage-centered community; i.e., marriage is one of the essential cultural and social factors. This is similar to the overall Palestinian society and culture and reflects the fact that Palestinian Christians are impacted by their cultural and social environment, irrespective of whether in West Bank or in Israel. The fact that there are more Latins reporting their status as Single may in reality reflect the preference of Latins and likewise of Others to marry at a later age in contrast to Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics. At least in some localities, such as in Jerusalem, Latins are known to marry at a later age.

Church and Employment

Table 9: Employment Status of Palestinian Christian Respondents by Church

Church	Employed	Self-Employed	Unemployed	Student	Other
GOrthodox	270 - 38.6%	194 - 27.8%	33 - 4.7%	38 - 5.4%	164 - 23.5%
GCatholics	95 - 39.3%	51 - 21.1%	14 - 5.8%	13 - 5.4%	69 - 28.5%
Latins	129 - 38.9%	94 - 28.3%	20 - 6.0%	23 - 6.9%	66 - 19.9%
Others	96 - 42.5%	56 - 24.8%	10 - 4.4%	12 - 5.3%	52 - 23.0%
Total	590 - 100%	395 - 100%	77 - 100%	86 - 100%	351 - 100%

The Table on church and employment shows a more or less uniform employment status for the respondents across Churches. Others tend to be slightly more Employed; Latins tend to be slightly higher on Self-Employed; Latins and Greek Catholics show slightly higher percentages of Unemployed while Latins show slightly higher percentage on Student.

Economic Standing by Church Affiliation and Residence

Table 10: Income of Palestinian Christian Respondents by Locality and Church.

West Bank	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Latin	Other Denominations (Lutherans, Anglicans, Armenian Orthodox & Catholic, Syrian Orthodox and Catholic, Copts, Maronites, Others.)
Less than 2500 NIS	133 - 35%	15 - 42%	105 - 38%	16 - 23%
2500 - 4999 NIS	172 - 45%	16 - 45%	99 - 36%	28 - 41%
5000 - 7499 NIS	54 - 14%	2 - 5%	47 - 17%	21 - 31%
7500 NIS +	16 - 4%	2 - 5%	20 - 7%	2 - 2%
Israel				
Less than 2500 NIS	3 - 1%	9 - 4%	0 - 0%	8 - 5%
2500 - 4999 NIS	43 - 17%	33 - 17%	3 - 6%	19 - 13%
5000 - 7499 NIS	79 - 32%	43 - 23%	9 - 18%	35 - 24%
7500 NIS +	122- 49%	100 - 54%	38 - 76%	84 - 57%

In the West Bank, the Greek Orthodox have 80% of respondents reporting income in the 2 lowest income brackets in comparison to 87% of Greek Catholics; 74% of Latins and 64% of Other Denominations. In contrast there are 18% of Greek Orthodox who report income in the 2 highest brackets; 10% of Greek Catholics; 24% of Latins and 33% of Other Denominations. Judging from these figures, the Greek Catholics in the West Bank are reporting the lowest income of all denominations with 87% in lowest 2 brackets and only 10% in highest 2 brackets; the Greek Orthodox are second in

reporting lowest income with 80% in lowest 2 brackets and only 18% in highest 2 brackets. The Latins come in third place with 74% reporting income in the lowest 2 brackets and 24% reporting income in the highest 2 brackets. Others in the West Bank fare best with only 64% reporting income in lowest 2 brackets and 33% reporting income in the highest 2 brackets.

In Israel all denominations report higher percentages in the highest 2 income brackets when compared to the West Bank. The Greek Orthodox in Israel have only 18% in the lowest two income brackets while 81% of them report income in the two highest brackets with almost 50% above 7500NIS+. The same applies to all other Denominations in Israel; the Greek Catholics with only 21% reporting lower income brackets and 77% reporting higher income with 54% in the bracket of 7500NIS+; the Latins have only 6% reporting lower income brackets with 94% reporting higher income brackets of whom 76% are in the 7500NIS+ bracket. Others fare in much the same way in terms of income reporting with only 18% reporting lower income brackets and 81% reporting higher income brackets with 57% of them over 7500NIS+ bracket.

Church and Income Irrespective of Locality

Table 11: Church and Income of Palestinian Christian Respondents Irrespective of Locality

Church	0 - 2499 NIS	2500 - 4999 NIS	5000 - 7499 NIS	7500 NIS +	Total
GOrthodox	136 - 21%	216 - 34%	133 - 21%	138 - 22%	623
GCatholics	24 - 11%	49 - 22%	45 - 20%	102 - 46%	220
Latins	105 - 33%	102 - 32%	56 - 17%	58 - 18%	316
Others	24 - 11%	47 - 22%	56 - 26%	86 - 40%	213

The Latins overall appear to report in the two lowest income brackets with 65% and only 35% in two highest brackets. In contrast the GOrthodox report 55% in the two lowest income brackets and 43% in the two highest; the GCatholics report almost the exact opposite of Latins with 33% in the two lowest brackets and 66% in the two highest. The Others report similarly to the GCatholics.

Judging from these figures and percentages and comparing them to the figures and percentages presented in the previous Table, it becomes clear that the ranking of Latins as reporting the two lowest incomes is affected by the preponderance of numbers of Latins in the West Bank in contrast to Israel. The same argument applies to the Greek Orthodox. But these conclusions do not change the overall reporting picture, which is that Palestinian Christians in Israel consistently report themselves in higher income brackets than their parallels in the West Bank. **This is important in confirming the thesis that Palestinian Christians in the West Bank migrate because of the bad economic conditions (employment specified number one reason for emigration by one of the highest percentages of West Bank respondents) caused by continued political turmoil of Occupation, Separation Wall, internal political strife and other destabilizing factors. (The Political Conditions item was specified as the number one reason for emigration by one of the highest percentages of West Bank respondents.)** The fact that there is no large indigenous Christian migration out of Israel is due primarily to their relatively good overall economic conditions and the relatively stable political situation. The word “relatively” must be emphasized because in the Sabeel Survey it was also clear that Palestinian Christians in Israel are not altogether comfortable with Political Conditions or with Employment since 30% and 22% of Israeli respondents, respectively, pointed out these two as primary reasons for emigration. But there are other factors that

help Palestinian Christians in Israel stay put, among which is the educational background of Arabs in Israel with limited acquisition of foreign languages, a facilitating factor in migration. Also there is a more limited history of migration out of the country, especially after 1948, due to restrictions by the Israeli government for the then historically and politically expedient security reasons. That West Bank Palestinian Christians have more access to educational opportunities than their peers in Israel may be concluded from the fact that 13% of Israeli respondents pointed to Education as the primary reason for emigration in contrast to only 4% of West Bank respondents. This thesis is further confirmed by the fact that Nazareth, the largest Arab city in Israel, has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country and yet there is no strong trend towards emigration among the unemployed there. The reason is that the unemployed are generally unskilled or semi-skilled and also lack knowledge of foreign tongues, which is usually an additional facilitating factor in making the choice to emigrate. Besides, the Israeli system of social security which caters to the unemployed helps in keeping the unemployed youngsters within the country while it also contributes to a host of social and other ills.

Reporting on Income: Disparities between the West Bank and Israel Respondents

Palestinian Christians show clear differences in reporting on income in Israel and in the West Bank. Christians in the West Bank are far poorer in terms of income reported than their counterparts in Israel. In the lowest income bracket (0 - 2499NIS) there are 269 in the West Bank who report their families in this bracket in contrast to only 15 in Israel. While in the highest income bracket (7500NIS+) only 40 reported their families in this bracket in contrast to 344 in Israel.

Overall, 78% of Palestinian Christians in the West Bank report income less than 5000NIS monthly in contrast to only 17% in Israel who so report. In the income brackets of 5000NIS and above, 21% of West Bank Christians report their families as having this income in comparison to 81% in Israel. These are exact opposites overall on income reporting by Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel. The only income bracket or group in which both groups come closest to each other is the income bracket of (5000 - 7499 NIS) with 122 in the West Bank (16%) to 166 in Israel (26%) reporting that their families are in this income bracket. The significance of this is that there is a group of Christians in both the West Bank and Israel that tend to cluster towards a “Middle Income” group. And while this group is stronger in Israel, according to the Sabeel Survey respondents, still the figures and percentages presented here point to similar socio-economic developments or trends that are happening among Christians in the West Bank and in Israel. It is clear, once again, that the political situation with its economic repercussions in the West Bank has a constraining effect on the full development of socio-economic processes which in turn stops Palestinian Christians and the general population in the Palestinian Territories from realizing their prospects. This apparently impacts the painful decision of people to eventually opt for emigration because of the political and socio-economic conditions prevailing in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Palestinian Christian Respondents: Reasons for Emigration and Challenges to Community

The importance of the Diakonia-supported Sabeel Survey of Palestinian Christians is that it reflects the thinking of Christian Palestinian respondents on some of the problems and concerns that confront all Palestinians, Christians among them. If placed within

the context of the historical demographic-population realities that were explored above and the background characteristics of respondents in both the West Bank and Israel, then it should lead all concerned to think of a strategy that would enable Palestinians, including Palestinian Christians, to overcome the challenges and to stay put in their country as it strives to end Israeli occupation and to start on the road to reconstruction and independence. The emigration of Middle Class Palestinians, besides weakening those who can be instrumental in reconstruction efforts, can also weaken secularist forces that believe in an open and pluralist society.

Political Conditions and Employment: Primary Reasons for Emigration

In the Sabeel Survey conducted on a random sample of 1,500 Palestinian Christians equally divided between Israel and the West Bank during the summer months of 2006, it was clear that factors which drive emigration are political and economic in the first place. 36% of the respondents chose Political Conditions as the number one reason for emigration while one-third of the respondents chose Employment as the number one reason for emigration. There was no significant difference among the Church communities on the primacy of Political Conditions as cause for emigration as 37% of Greek Orthodox, 34% of both Greek Catholics and Others and 35% of Latins placed Political Conditions as the number one reason for emigration. As to Employment, the Latin (Roman Catholic) respondents placed it number one with 44% of respondents while 22% of Others (which include Lutherans, Anglicans, Armenians, Syriacs, Maronites, etc.) named it the number one reason for emigration. 35% of Greek Orthodox respondents but only 25% of Greek Catholics designated employment as the number one reason for emigration. One tentative conclusion from this specific response

could be that Greek Catholic and Other respondents are more secure with employment and that Greek Orthodox and Latins are least secure. What is surprising is that 3 out of 10 in Israel (30%) point to Political Conditions as the reason for emigration in comparison to 42% in the West Bank. This indicates that Christians in Israel do worry about the political side of things and that the relative political stability in Israel is not problem-free. Even though almost twice (44%) as many respondents in the West Bank as in Israel place Employment as the primary reason for emigration, the fact that 22% of respondents in Israel also chose this as the number one reason for emigration points to the overall precarious situation in which Palestinian Christians in Israel find themselves. This finding quite clearly confirms previous studies undertaken by the author and others since the early nineties that point out that the primary reasons for emigration from the Palestinian Territories are political and economic conditions.

Clearly, all Palestinians are faced with the overarching political and economic challenges that result from a situation of prolonged military occupation by Israel and from lack of equal rights within Israel itself. Again, it is easy to argue for the need to end Israeli occupation, to make peace, to bring down the Separation Barrier and to remedy all other ills that stand between the two neighbors living side by side in relatively good neighborly relations. It is clear, though, that without a permanent resolution of the current Arab-Israeli conflict, the political conditions will remain a number one reason for emigration for a substantial number of Palestinians, Christians included. As these results show, Palestinian Christians in Israel are not immune from the same pressures and push factors, albeit to a lesser extent, than those affecting their counterparts in the West Bank. The status of the Palestinian Christian and other Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel does need to be addressed in the long run in order for them to feel more

security about their prospects as equal citizens in a democratic and pluralist state. (See Appendix I)

Joys of life, Education, Religious Extremism and Joining Family Members Abroad: Respective Secondary Reasons for Emigration

Only 9% of the respondents specified Joys of Life as the primary reason for emigration: the Greek Orthodox with 8%; the Greek Catholics with 10%; the Latins with 7% and Others with 17%. Education was picked by 8% of the respondents as the primary reason for emigration with 10% of Greek Orthodox, 11% of Greek Catholics, 7% of Latins and 5% of Others citing this reason. Religious Extremism, like Education, was chosen by 8% of the respondents as the primary reason with 6% Greek Orthodox, 11% of Greek Catholics, 5% of Latins and 19% of Others selecting this as the primary factor. Finally, Joining Family Members Abroad was chosen as the primary reason by 5% of respondents with 5% of Greek Orthodox, 9% of Greek Catholics, 2% of Latins and 5% of Others.

Clearly the primary reasons remain the political and the economic. The fact that Religious Fanaticism has received 8% should be cause for concern and for bringing attention to possible remedial action that should be taken in order to minimize the negative effects of this issue. Palestinian society traditionally and historically has been known, and continues to be known, as an open, tolerant and accommodating society. Christian and Muslim Palestinian children go to schools together, especially to the private schools in the Jerusalem-Ramallah-Bethlehem areas; they join the same social, sports and political groups; they make lifetime friendships and they both aspire to an end of Israeli occupation and to a time when they contribute to reconstructing an independent Palestinian state. This is not ideal utopianism but the shared experience of Christians and Muslims who

both went through the refugee experience of 1948 and the dispersal of their people. They also have experienced together the effects and constraints of Israeli occupation since 1967 and they have joined in efforts to get rid of Israeli occupation and to liberate themselves as a people. It is in this context and with respect to the rich heritage of Muslim-Christian relations that the heightened religiosity of the public sphere becomes a point for further examination and discussion. An exclusive religious parameter or preference that can interfere with the history and heritage of a pluralistic, tolerant and open Palestinian society calls for serious reflection not simply by Christian Palestinians but by all Palestinians. Our society is likely to lose if sectarianism becomes a dominant feature replacing the all accommodating national and social agenda so characteristic of Palestine and its culture of openness, frankness and mutual trust and accommodation.

Challenges as Perceived by Palestinian Christians

The number one challenge picked by 25% of respondents is Job Opportunities with 26% of Greek Orthodox specifying it as the number one challenge along with 14% of Greek Catholics, 35% of Latins and 17% of Others. It seems that the Greek Catholics and Others are relatively secure in their employment as compared with Latins and with Greek Orthodox, judging from this response. Housing Projects as primary challenge was picked by 21% of respondents with 22% among Greek Orthodox, 17% among Greek Catholics, 20% among Latins and 23% among Others. Thus, one out of 4 respondents consider Housing Projects as a primary challenge that needs to be addressed. This explains why the Churches of the Holy Land have been active in promoting housing projects among their faithful. Surprisingly, only 18% of all respondents chose Emigration as the number one challenge, with little difference in percentage points between the Latins, highest with 21% and Others,

lowest with 13%. 19% of Greek Orthodox and 15% of Greek Catholics place Emigration as the number one challenge. Regarding the challenge of Justice and Peace, 17% of respondents cite it as the number one challenge with 26% of Greek Catholics, 24% of Others, 16% of Greek Orthodox and 9% of Latins. Religious Fanaticism is chosen by 11% as the number one challenge with 9% among Greek Orthodox, 10% among Latins, 12% among Greek Catholics and 16% among Others. Education is named the number one challenge by 9% of the respondents with 15% of Greek Catholics, 9% of Greek Orthodox, 8% of Others and 6% of Latins.

Challenges as Perceived by West Bank and Israel Christians

Of interest in assessing challenges according to whether respondents are in the West Bank or Israel is that there are clear differences of perception of Job Opportunities where 39% of West Bank respondents to only 11% of Israel respondents place it as the number one challenge. Justice and Peace is a challenge for 7% of West Bank respondents in contrast to 27% of Israel respondents while 7% of West Bank respondents place Religious Extremism as the number one challenge in contrast to 14% in Israel. Surprisingly, only 19% of West Bank respondents place Housing Projects as the number one challenge to 22% of Israel respondents. Emigration is a worrisome challenge for 23% of West Bank respondents in contrast to 13% in Israel while Education evokes the concern of only 6% of West Bank respondents to 13% in Israel.

Clearly, West Bankers worry most about employment opportunities, followed by emigration and by housing projects. The other issues of peace and justice, religious extremism and education are not high on their agenda of concern and worry. In Israel, the picture is somewhat

different with justice and peace issues a top priority, followed by housing projects and almost equally by religious extremism, emigration and education. Employment opportunity is the least concern of the Israeli respondents with only 11% of them mentioning it as a primary challenge.

These results speak to the environmental concerns of the two populations: in the West Bank employment and economic conditions are on the mind of 4 out of 10 respondents while in Israel, it is only 1 out of 10. West Bankers are also worried about employment prospects as these pose a real challenge which, within an unstable political environment, becomes even more of a pressing challenge. Emigration and Housing are also challenges on the mind of 2 out of 10 respondents, but almost double the percentage of respondents in the West Bank (23%) are worried about Emigration to only 13% in Israel. Both populations share their concern over Housing Projects with 22% in Israel to 19% in the West Bank. In Israel, almost 3 of 10 are concerned about issues pertaining to Justice and Peace while less than one person out of 10 in the West Bank (7%) shares that concern. Of interest is that twice the percentage of Israeli respondents (14%) to those of the West Bank (7%) chose Religious Extremism as a challenge. (See Appendix II).

Church Affiliation, Locality and Attitudes Towards Important Issues

Church affiliation and locality of residence (West Bank or Israel) point to significant differences among respondents on issues of importance to the community and the society. Because these differences may reflect the religious and socio-economic and political context in which the various church respondents find themselves, it is imperative to take a closer look at them. (The full percentages by

Church and Locality are given at the end in Appendices III and IV.)

The Survey was divided into questions pertaining to five areas: 1) Adult Religious Education; 2) Participation in Church and Parish Life; 3) Participation in Public Life; 4) Inter-Religious Dialogue and 5) Church and Human Rights and the Separation Wall.

On Adult Religious Education

Greek Orthodox agree most that there is no close relationship between Church and most adults (78%) and agree also that there is not enough interest from the religious authorities in adult education (76%).

Greek Catholics agree least that there is no close relationship between Church and most adults (64%) and also agree least that there is not enough interest from religious authorities in adult education (63%).

Latins follow Greek Catholics in agreeing that there is no close relationship between Church and most adults (68%) and agree least that audio-visual technologies are to blame for distance from religion (63%).

Others are foremost in saying that adults are distant from religion (86%); that there is no close relationship between Church and most adults (81%) and that audio-visual technologies are to blame for the distance from religion.

West Bank respondents are less convinced that adults are distant from religion (77%) while Israel respondents are more so (84%).

West Bank respondents and Israel respondents are similar in that there is no close relationship between Church and most adults with

73% and 75%, respectively.

West Bank respondents indicate less agreement with the statement that audio-visual technologies distance people from religion (61%) to (75%) respondents in Israel who believe so.

West Bank respondents are more of the belief that not enough interest is shown by religious authorities in adult education (78%) to only (66%) in Israel.

Conclusions:

- Others perceive the greatest distance of adults from the Church; Greek Catholics perceive closest relationship between the Church and its interest in adult education.
- Greek Orthodox perceive the greatest distance between the Church and its interest in adult education; Latins perceive second closest relationship to the Church and adult education and are least convinced that audio-visual technologies are the reason for people distancing themselves from religion.
- Overall the Church authorities ought to be worried that close to three-quarters of respondents perceive no close relationship between the Church and most adults and that 7 out of 10 respondents perceive not enough interest from religious authorities in adult education. Regarding distance between the Church and most adults as well as the interest of religious authorities in adult education, the responses are a clear warning call to all churches in spite of some apparent variations in the response among different church respondents. Some churches may have a more severe problem but all of the Churches face the same problem with a

majority of the respondents, irrespective of Church affiliation.

- One general conclusion about respondents by Locality on obstacles to adult religious education is that the Israel respondents seem to be less religious, judging from the responses they give. More of them than West Bank respondents think that adults are distant from religion and that audio-visual technologies are the reason for this distance. Two-thirds of them agree that there is not enough interest from religious authorities in adult education in contrast to almost 8 out of 10 respondents in the West Bank. The lower percentage of agreement by the Israel respondents does not necessarily mean that they are looking for more interest by religious authorities; on the contrary, it could point to a possibility that they care less or they actually do not know what the religious authority is doing on adult education.

On Participation in Church and Parish Life:

Greek Orthodox are highest in agreeing that they do not see real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity in pastoral activities (61%) and also highest in agreeing that the Church does not undertake activities special to the family (63%).

Greek Catholics are highest on esteem of Priests and Nuns (89%) and lowest on asserting that Priests and Nuns should do more (57%) as well as lowest on seeing a lack of real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity (52%) and lowest in feeling that the Church does not undertake family activities (43%).

Latins are highest on Christian family commitment to Sunday Mass (91%) and highest in saying that Priests and Nuns should do more (75%).

Others are second highest in asserting that Priests and Nuns should do more (74%).

Israel respondents are less committed to the attendance of the whole family at Sunday Mass (79%) while 91% of West Bank respondents show such commitment.

Israel respondents, however, show more esteem towards Clergy (84%) than West Bank respondents (81%).

Israel respondents are less of the opinion that Priests and Nuns should do more (61%) than West Bank respondents (81%) who believe so.

Israel respondents show less agreement with the idea that interdependence between Clergy and Laity is the basis for a spirit of mutual support and solidarity in the Church (62%) than do those in the West Bank who agree with this statement (79%).

Israel respondents agree less with the statement that there is no real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity (50%) than do West Bank respondents (63%).

Israel respondents are less willing to agree that the Church does not undertake activities or programs special to the family (48%) than are West Bank respondents (61%).

Conclusions:

- Well over 85% of all respondents are committed to Sunday Mass with Latins highest.
- 8 out of 10 respondents respect Priests and Nuns.
- Only Greek Catholics differ from rest in that only 57% of them

believe that Priests and Nuns should do more to 71% of the rest of the respondents. More Greek Catholics are apparently satisfied with the performance of clergy.

- Greek Orthodox differ significantly from Others (61% to 53%) in that they do not see real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity and they do not see that Church undertakes activities special to the family (63% to 46%).
- Overall, Sunday Mass is the event that holds most respondents together, followed by the esteem of and respect for clergy. But clearly Priests and Nuns are expected to do more by 7 out of 10 respondents, and almost 6 out of 10 respondents do not see that there is real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity. Slightly more than 5 out of 10 respondents do not see the Church as undertaking family activities. The Churches can be happy that the perception of the importance of Sunday Mass and the role of the Clergy are very positive but they need to work in order to improve cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity in pastoral activities and especially in family activities.
- One general conclusion about responses by Locality shows that the West Bank respondents have clearly higher expectations of the Church and religious authority. This is exemplified by their wanting the Clergy to do more and by stressing interdependence between Clergy and Laity as basis of Church solidarity. They also seek, 6 out of 10 of West Bank respondents, to have more cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity and for the Church to undertake more family activities and programs. Over 91% of them show a clear commitment to the whole family attending Sunday Mass. Israeli respondents hence can be characterized as having gone some way towards secularization but they still

maintain a religious orientation as exemplified by 82% of them showing respect for Priests and Nuns who are active in community life. This means that the Church could do more to attract them more closely to the Church and its activities, while in the West Bank, the Church needs to examine how best to keep the faithful within the Church by offering and encouraging activities that appeal to most groups. In particular, the Church in both the West Bank and Israel can develop these activities based on the Sunday Mass participation of families. Shyness in using this very important and significant event in the life of the Christian family can lead to further distancing of adults and the lack of interest by the younger members of the community.

On Participation in Public Life:

Greek Orthodox are lowest (36%) in their view of the active participation of Church Related Organizations (CROs).

Greek Catholics are highest in agreeing that the Christian is like others in participation in public life (98%) but they are lowest in seeing the presence of Christians in public positions as affirmation of commitment to country (74%). They are as low on CROs' active participation as the Greek Orthodox with (37%).

Latins are second highest on Christian participation in public life (97%) and highest on presence in public life as commitment to country (85%). They are also highest in saying that the Church should develop the potential of needy persons rather than give charity (85%).

Others are highest in seeing that the CROs are active (53%).

West Bank respondents are more in agreement with the statement that the Christian is like others in bearing the burden of participation in public life (98%) to (93%) of Israel respondents.

West Bank respondents see overwhelmingly that the presence of Christians in public positions is an affirmation of commitment and loyalty to country (92%) whereas only 63% of Israel respondents agree.

West Bank respondents agree overwhelmingly that Church should work to develop the potential of the needy person rather than becoming a charitable society itself (90%) as opposed to 68% who have that view in Israel. West Bank respondents are more of the opinion that Church Related Organizations (CROs) are not participating actively to fill the needs of the society (44%) to 37% in Israel who are of the same opinion.

Conclusions:

- Almost all respondents are unanimous (96%) that they are like others in bearing the burden of participation in public life.
- 76% see service in public positions as affirmation of their commitment and loyalty to country with 85% of Latin respondents adopting this perception.
- Almost 8 out of 10 respondents see the Church role as empowering needy people and not in providing charity; again Latins are the most in agreement with 85%.
- Church Related Organizations do not receive high scores as only 4 out of 10 respondents think that they are participating actively in filling society's needs. Others tend to be more conciliatory to CROs as 53% of them see them actively participating.

- Overall, Christians see themselves as an integral part of their society. Commitment and loyalty through public participation scores relatively high but it is problematic, especially when locality is considered, as will be shown below. The challenge posed by almost 8 out of 10 respondents is that the Church should stop being a charitable organization and should set itself on a course of empowering the needy. This challenge goes hand in hand with a rather clear disapproval by a majority of respondents on the performance of the CROs.
- The conclusions on responses by Locality show that 96% of all respondents are committed to bearing the burden of participation in public life like others in the society. But more in the West Bank see participation in public life as a sign of commitment and loyalty to country. This is understandable since in Israel serving in public positions is an ambivalent situation in terms of loyalty and commitment to the country, in contrast to the West Bank. Also in Israel, serving in the public sphere may be seen as a competitive proposition in a non-sectarian and open environment and not necessarily a reflection of loyalty or commitment. West Bank respondents do not want their Church to be a charitable institution; rather they seek empowerment that can set them on the road to fulfilling their own needs. This is perhaps reflected in the fact that there is a split of 41% (pro) to 44% (con) in viewing CROs and their work in society. Hence the expectations in the West Bank are higher from the Church and its involvement in society and public life than is the case in Israel.

On Inter-Religious Dialogue:

Greek Orthodox rank highest on starting Christian-Muslim dialogue centers (78%) and second highest on reminding participants of Christian-Jewish dialogue of the injustice suffered by the Arab Palestinian people (57%).

Greek Catholics are lowest in agreeing that inter-religious relations today are characterized by lack of understanding and lack of frankness (76%) and high on the benefits of starting Christian-Muslim dialogue centers (77%). They are highest in saying that religious dialogue with Judaism is necessary (69%), high on the purpose of Christian-Jewish dialogue as instilling a spirit of mutual respect (85%) and highest on there being no need to remind Christian-Jewish dialogue participants of the injustice suffered by the Arab Palestinian people (44%).

Latins are highest on the urgent need for mutual understanding of religious principles of monotheism (91%) and lowest on benefits of starting Christian-Muslim dialogue centers (73%). They are lowest on Christian-Jewish dialogue as instilling a spirit of mutual respect (79%) and highest on reminding Christian-Jewish dialogue participants of the historic injustice suffered by the Arab Palestinian people (58%).

Others are highest on staying in open dialogue between Islam and Christianity (85%) and on inter-religious relations today lacking understanding and frankness (88%). They are highest, similarly to the Greek Orthodox, on the benefit of starting Christian-Muslim dialogue centers (78%) and also highest in seeing that Christian-Jewish dialogue would instill a spirit of mutual respect (86%).

Israel respondents are less in agreement on the urgent need for mutual understanding across monotheistic religions (85%) than those in the West Bank (91%) who agree to an urgent need.

Israel respondents, like West Bank respondents, are of the same opinion on the need for open dialogue with Islam. 83% in both localities agree.

Israel respondents are slightly less in agreement that inter-religious relations today lack understanding and frankness (81%) than West Bank respondents (85%).

Israel respondents definitely see dialogue with Judaism as more necessary (57%) than West Bank respondents (42%).

Israel respondents are less concerned about reminding Christian-Jewish dialogue participants of the historic injustice that befell the Arab Palestinian people (45%) than West Bank respondents (60%) who believe so.

Conclusions:

- Almost 9 out of 10 respondents are for mutual understanding of religious principles of monotheism.
- 83% of respondents want ongoing dialogue between Islam and Christianity.
- 83% believe that the relations between the religions today are characterized by lack of understanding and the frankness needed for a fruitful dialogue.

- 77% of respondents are for starting Christian-Muslim dialogue centers.
- At least 50% believe that religious dialogue with Judaism is necessary.
- 82% expect Christian-Jewish dialogue to instill a spirit of mutual respect.
- One out of two respondents wants to remind Christian-Jewish dialogue participants of the historic injustice suffered by Arab Palestinian people.
- Overall, the Christian respondents are dialoguers par excellence. While an overwhelming majority would want to have Christian-Muslim dialogue, a similar majority would want to see more understanding and frankness in order to make the dialogue fruitful. Even with Judaism, half the respondents believe that dialogue is necessary and an overwhelming majority is of the opinion that such a dialogue should instill a spirit of mutual respect and understanding of the various religious positions, irrespective of political positions. Half of the respondents believe that Christian-Jewish dialogue should also include reminders of the injustice suffered by the Arab Palestinian people.
- The overall conclusion on responses by Locality is that the Christian Palestinians, irrespective of locality, seek dialogue across religious lines. But they also realize that inter-religious relations lack frankness and the openness needed to bear fruit. They are almost synonymous in their majority agreement of having a dialogue with Islam and of establishing Christian-Muslim Centers for this purpose. They disagree, however, on the necessity of dialogue with Judaism even though 1 out of 2 respondents think that such a dialogue is necessary. Christian respondents in Israel

are in favor of dialogue with Judaism by (57%) to only (42%) of West Bank respondents. More West Bank respondents, though, make dialogue with Judaism conditional on reminding participants of the historic injustice that befell the Palestinian people. Clearly the Israeli and West Bank respondents are shaped by their social, religious and overall environments. But the fact that, given the current political situation, 4 out of 10 Palestinian Christians in the West Bank favor dialogue with Judaism is a strong indication of a realistic and pragmatic approach to understanding the religions of others. It is possible that such a basis could lead all of us to see things in others that could bring forth some hope that the current situation in which we all find ourselves is amenable to a working solution after all.

On the Church, Human Rights and the Separation Wall:

Greek Orthodox are highest in asserting that the Separation Wall provides security to Israelis (15%)

Greek Catholics are lowest in saying that the Separation Wall provides security to Israelis (10%)

Latins rank highest on the Church's important role in a society based on respect of the person and her/his rights (94%) and lowest on the Church's taking a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice and Human Rights (50%). The Latins are highest on the Separation Wall increasing hatred, enmity and violence (95%) and the belief that it has increased the suffering of Palestinians (98%). Latins are also second highest in thinking that the Separation Wall provides security to the Israelis (14%).

Others are highest on the view that the Church takes a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice (65%) and lowest on the Separation Wall providing security to Israelis (10%).

West Bank respondents are more inclined to think that the Church has an important role to form a society based on respect of human rights (93%) to (88%) in Israel.

West Bank respondents feel less that the Church takes a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice (49%) than their counterparts (62%) in Israel.

West Bank respondents think more that the Separation Wall increases hatred, enmity and violence (95%) than those in Israel (90%).

West Bank respondents think less that the Separation Wall will bring security to the Israelis (10%) than those Israel respondents (15%) who think so.

West Bank respondents are almost unanimous that the Separation Wall has increased the suffering of the Palestinians (99%) while 90% of Israel respondents agree.

Conclusions:

- 9 out of 10 respondents believe that the Church has an important role in forming a society based on respect of the person and her/his rights.
- 55% think that the Church takes a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice and Human Rights.

- 93% of respondents believe that the Separation Wall increases hatred, enmity and violence.
- Only 13% believe that the Separation Wall provides security to Israelis.
- 94% believe that the Separation Wall has increased the suffering of the Palestinians.
- Overall the respondents are of the opinion that the Church has a role and an important one in building a society based on respect of human rights. But only a slight majority of 55% thinks that the Church takes a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice and Human Rights. Hence the perception is that the Church is expected to act on Human Rights but that it is not doing enough. The Separation Wall is not seen as providing security to the Israelis; on the contrary it is seen as increasing hatred and the suffering of the Palestinians.
- On the responses by Locality, it is clear that there is a consensus of over 9 of 10 respondents in both localities that the Separation Wall is conducive to more hatred and to causing more suffering to the Palestinians. A small minority of respondents in both localities think that the Wall provides security to the Israelis. But the main agreement of both localities is that of the important role of the Church in forming a society that is based on respect for the person and her/his rights. This is indeed affirmative of the tendencies and preferences of educated, entrepreneurial and aspiring Middle Class communities. This is also proof that such a Middle Class community would want an open, pluralistic and, most likely, a secular system of governance.

Appendix I

Reasons for Emigration according to Church by Church Affiliation:

GO stands for Greek Orthodox; GC stands for Greek Catholics. Others include Lutherans, Anglicans, Syriacs, Armenians, Maronites, and Copts.

	GO	GC	Latins	Others
Political Conditions (36%)	37%	34%	35%	34%
Employment (33%)	35%	25%	44%	22%
Joys of Life (9%)	8%	10%	7%	17%
Education (8%)	10%	11%	7%	5%
Religious Fanaticism (8%)	6%	11%	5%	19%
Joining Family Members Abroad (5%)	5%	9%	2%	5%

Reasons for Emigration by Residence:	WB	Israel
Political Conditions (36%)	42%	30%
Employment (33%)	44%	22%
Joys of Life (9%)	7%	12%
Education (8%)	4%	13%
Religious Fanaticism (8%)	3%	14%
Joining Family Members Abroad (5%)	1%	9%

Appendix II

Challenges Confronting Christians in the Holy Land by Church Affiliation:

	GO	GC	Latins	Others
Job Opportunities (25%)	26%	14%	35%	17%
Housing Projects (21%)	22%	17%	20%	23%
Emigration (18%)	19%	15%	21%	13%
Justice and Peace (17%)	16%	26%	9%	24%
Religious Fanaticism (11%)	9%	12%	10%	16%
Education (9%)	9%	15%	6%	8%

Challenges Confronting Christians in the Holy Land by Residence:

	WB	Israel
Job Opportunities (25%)	39%	11%
Housing Projects (21%)	19%	22%
Emigration (18%)	23%	13%
Justice and Peace (17%)	7%	27%
Religious Fanaticism (11%)	7%	14%
Education (9%)	6%	13%

Appendix III

Church Affiliation and Responses to Statements

Among the obstacles that stand in the way of adult religious education:

Statement	GO	GC	Latins	Others
There is no close relationship between the Church and most Adults	78%	64%	68%	81%
Audio Visual technologies distance people from religion	66%	69%	63%	79%
Not enough interest from religious authority in adult education	76%	63%	71%	72%

About Participation in the Church and Parish Life:

The Christian family has to commit to attend Sunday mass with all its members	85%	80%	91%	81%
I esteem and respect Priests and Nuns that I know because of their willingness to participate in the Parish life and to care for families' religious, spiritual and material needs	82%	89%	80%	81%
Priests and Nuns should do more than what they are doing now in parish activities especially those related to parochial matters	72%	57%	75%	74%
I do not see that there is real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity in pastoral activities and confronting evil and corruption	61%	52%	54%	56%

Statement	GO	GC	Latins	Others
I do not see that the Church undertakes activities or programs special to the family and its various issues	63%	43%	49%	48%

About Participation in Public Life:

The Christian is like others in bearing the burden of participation in public life	95%	98%	97%	93%
The presence of Christians in public positions and in various fields of public life is an affirmation of their commitment and loyalty to their country	76%	74%	85%	76%
Church should work to develop the potential and capacities of the needy person rather than to turn itself into a charitable society	78%	78%	85%	76%
Church Related Developmental and charitable organizations are participating actively to fill the needs of the society and its various demands	36%	37%	45%	53%

About Inter-Religious Dialogue:

There is an urgent need for mutual understanding of the religious principles of the monotheistic Religions	87%	87%	91%	88%
We need to stay in open dialogue between Islam and Christianity	83%	84%	81%	85%

Statement	GO	GC	Latins	Others
Unfortunately, relations today are characterized by lack of understanding and lack of the needed frankness for a fruitful dialogue	86%	76%	78%	88%
I see it is beneficial to start Christian - Muslim dialogue centers wherever possible	78%	77%	73%	78%
Religious Dialogue with Judaism is not necessary now as long as the political situation is unresolved	41%	19%	42%	32%
(Religious Dialogue with Judaism is necessary)	(44%)	69%	43%	57%)
Christian - Jewish dialogue should instill the spirit of mutual respect and understanding of the various religious positions of each religion, irrespective of political positions	82%	85%	79%	86%
In any Christian-Jewish dialogue, there is need to remind participants of the historic injustice suffered by the Arab people in Palestine	57%	36%	58%	48%
(In any Christian-Jewish dialogue, there is no need to remind participants of the historic injustice suffered by the Arab people in Palestine)	(28%)	44%	26%	36 %)
<i>About the Church, Human Rights and the Separation Wall:</i>				
The Church has an important role to form a society that is based on respect for the person and her/his rights	89%	90%	94%	91%

Statement	GO	GC	Latins	Others
The Church takes a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice and Human Rights	53%	61%	50%	65%
The Separation Wall increases hatred, enmity and violence	93%	88%	95%	93%
The Separation Wall provides security to the Israelis	15%	10%	14%	10%
The Separation Wall does not provide security to the Israelis	78%	77%	78%	83%
The Separation Wall has increased the suffering of the Palestinians	95%	86%	98%	96%

Appendix IV

Locality of Residence and Responses to Statements

Among the obstacles that stand in the way of adult religious education:

Statement	Total	WB	Israel
Adults are preoccupied in matters distant from Religion	81%	77%	84%
There is no close relationship between the Church and most Adults	74%	73%	75%
Audio Visual technologies distance people from religion	68%	61%	75%
Not enough interest from religious authority in adult education	72%	78%	66%

Statement	Total	WB	Israel
<i>About Participation in the Church and Parish Life:</i>			
The Christian family has to commit to attend Sunday mass with all its members	85%	91%	79%
I esteem and respect Priests and Nuns that I know because of their willingness to participate in the Parish life and to care for families' religious, spiritual and material needs	82%	81%	84%
Priests and Nuns should do more than what they are doing now in parish activities especially those related to parochial matters	71%	81%	61%
The spirit of mutual support and solidarity in the Church depends in the final analysis on interdependence between Clergy and Laity	71%	79%	62%
I do not see that there is real cooperation between Parish Priest and Laity in pastoral activities and confronting evil and corruption	57%	63%	50%
I do not see that the Church undertakes activities or programs special to the family and its various issues	54%	61%	48%

Statement	Total	WB	Israel
<i>About Participation in Public Life:</i>			
The Christian is like others in bearing the burden of participation in public life	96%	98%	93%
The presence of Christians in public positions and in various fields of public life is an affirmation of their commitment and loyalty to their country	76%	92%	63%
Church should work to develop the potential and capacities of the needy person rather than to turn itself into a charitable society	79%	90%	68%
Church Related Developmental and charitable organizations are participating actively to fill the needs of the society and its various demands	41%	41%	40%
(Church Related Developmental and charitable organizations are NOT participating actively to fill the needs of the society and its various demands)	(40%	44%	37%)

Statement	Total	WB	Israel
<i>About Inter-Religious Dialogue:</i>			
There is an urgent need for mutual understanding of the religious principles of the monotheistic Religions	88%	91%	85%
We need to stay in open dialogue between Islam and Christianity	83%	83%	83%
Unfortunately, relations today are characterized by lack of understanding and lack of the needed frankness for a fruitful dialogue	83%	85%	81%
I see it is beneficial to start Christian - Muslim dialogue centers wherever possible	77%	76%	78%
Religious Dialogue with Judaism is not necessary now as long as the political situation is unresolved	36%	45%	28%
(Religious Dialogue with Judaism is necessary)	(50%	42%	57 %)
Christian - Jewish dialogue should instill the spirit of mutual respect and understanding of the various religious positions of each religion, irrespective of political positions	82%	82%	82%
In any Christian-Jewish dialogue, there is need to remind participants of the historic injustice suffered by the Arab people in Palestine	53%	60%	45%

Statement	Total	WB	Israel
(In any Christian-Jewish dialogue, there is no need to remind participants of the historic injustice suffered by the Arab people in Palestine)	(31%	24%	39 %)

About the Church, Human Rights and the Separation Wall:

The Church has an important role to form a society that is based on respect for the person and her/his rights	90%	93%	88%
The Church takes a courageous stand on issues of Peace and Justice and Human Rights	55%	49%	62%
The Separation Wall increases hatred, enmity and violence	93%	95%	90%
The Separation Wall provides security to the Israelis	13%	10%	16%
(The Separation Wall does not provide security to the Israelis)	(78%	82%	74 %)
The Separation Wall has increased the suffering of the Palestinians	94%	99%	90%

