

FALLING RATIO OF PRIESTS

The number of priests is failing to keep pace with the growth of the world's Catholic population, and the situation is likely to become worse before it becomes better, according to statistics supplied in the Holy See's newly-published yearbook. There were 1,379 Catholics per priest in 1965, 1,401 Catholics per priest in 1966, and 1,437 Catholics per priest the following year.

The figures were taken from 41 nations of the western world and do not include mission countries or states with Communist regimes.

Over that three-year period the number of Catholics in the cited nations grew to 507,505,420 from 493,632,180. Priests grew in number by 639, to 352,691. However, the number of seminarians, both minor and major dropped by 8,913 to 146,996.

In mission countries the prospects seemed to be brighter, with the number of entries into major seminaries growing from 1,433 in 1965 to 1,704 in 1968. However during the same period the number of ordinations dropped from 460 to 438.

WOMEN IN VATICAN POSTS

The 1970 edition of the *Annuario Pontificio* has the names of five women, including two nuns and three laywomen, employees of the Secretariat of State. Two other nuns are listed as employees of another office connected with the state secretariat, the Council for Public Affairs.

A Vatican spokesman confirmed that women have been employed in various Vatican offices for a long time and that there are 66 women employees on the payrolls of Vatican offices.

The names of our nuns named to staff positions on the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes have been carried in the *Annuario* for several years. The spokesman said that a few nuns have been working for the past three years in the secret archives of the Holy See, which comes under the jurisdiction of the state secretariat, helping