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## Document 1670C

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# 1669 & 1670 reports on the Propagation of the Faith in the Marianas

*Source: ARSI Phil. 13, fol. 54-55.*

*Notes: The translated endorsement, or title of this report, is as follows: "Report on baptisms for the year 1669-1670, also by Fr. Diego Luis de Sanvitores and his four companions, sent to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith about the number of conversions and baptisms made in the Mariana Islands, between 26 April 1669 and 25 May 1670, dated Guahan." Since there was no galleon in 1670, this report was mailed only in 1671.*

### Original text in Latin.

*Jhs + M<sup>a</sup>*

[Note in margin:] *Cum exemplar de num<sup>o</sup> Baptizorum anni 1669 cum additione anni 1670.*

*Pervenit [ad] Manilam in Philippinis Insulis R.P.N. Præpositi Generalis Societatis Jesu litteris mandatum, quod è SS. D.N. nutu profectum credimus: de referendo scilicet ad Sacram Congregationem Eminentiss. Cardinalium de Propaganda Fide numero eorum, quos Dominus in hac Provincia ad suam sanctam gratiam, fontemque Baptismatis ex Infidelitate vocare dignatur.*

*Huic parère cupientes pro nostra tenui parte Missionarij Societatis Jesu, qui ad has **Marianas Insulas** (de Latronibus antea vocatas) intra eandem Philippinarum Provinciam constitutas, Regijs Catholica Maiestatis iussu, et expensis die 16 Junij superioris anni 1668 pervenimus: testamur Dei misericordia, ac Sanctissimæ Virginis patrocinio præstante, quominus nostra Ministrorum obstaret tepiditas, necnon et acris Dæmonum resistentia Sanctæ Fidei in has Insulas ingressui facta per quemdam Idolorum Ministrum **Choco** nomine è Sinarum terra in has Insulas, naufragio facto, viginti adhinc annis advectum, qui et ipse in veræ Fidei portum (utinam vero animo) se tandem recepit: cuius, et reliquorum eventuum ad R.P.N. relationem mittimus prolixiolem.*

***Testamur, inquam, horum indigenarum 13289.—ad sacrum Baptisma accessisse intra hunc primum annum Missionis Nostræ.***

*Horum sex millia, et quinquaginta quinque sunt ex Incolis Insulæ **Guan**, vocatæ iam de **S. Juan**, site sub 164 gradu longitudinis ab Insula Palma una ex Canarijs, et 13 lati-*

*tudinis gradu ab Æquinoctiali ad Boream, quæ intra triginta, et quinque leucas circuitus continet centum, et octoginta oppida, in quorum uno ex præcipuis vocato **Agadña** habemus templum pro nostra licet terminate, iam exædificatum, dieque Purificationis Sanctissimæ Virginis huius anni 1669. Deo Opt. Max. rite sacratum in peculiarem honorem Sanctissimi Nominis Mariæ, totiusque eius SSæ Familiæ: quæ Ecclesia sub proximiorie iam censetur Dioecessi Zebuanæ Urbis; etsi trecentis abhinc maritimis leucis distantis, in prædictis Insulis Philippinis, Sanctissimo Jesu nomine insignita, cuius Ill[ustriss]imi Domini Episcopi D. Fr. Joannis Lopez litteris, ac benedictione, facultateque amplissima harum Insularum reductio, et Administratio Missionis nomine nobis demandata est.*

*Reliqui autem Baptizati ex supra dicto numero sunt ex alijs decem—. Huic finitimis Insulis, quæ fere sub eodem longitudinis gradu protenditur a decimo tertio prædicto latitudinis ad usque vigessimum circiter versus Boream: Huc usque scilicet ducente Jesu, ipsiusque Stella maris, pauci hi Sacerdotes, nimirum non amplius quinque, excurrere potuimus hoc primo anno Naviculis horum indigenarum vere papyri vasis; sed ex optima arbore **Maria** scilicet in Indijs appellata, huc illhuc [sic] feliciter circumvecti, extrema tot animarum perurgente indigentia, necnon et invitatione plurim[um], mira que contentione Insularum pro Evangelij Ministris in unaquaque Insula retinendis.*

*Expectamus autem ulterius Beatam Spem, Clemen- [fol. 54v] -tiamque Marianam super hanc divulsam, ac dilaceratam Gentem tot hactenus sæculis expectantem, expectantem [sic], ac conculcatam, quo usque maioribus navigijs instructi percurrere possint Sacerdotes, quos speramus complures, per latissimum hunc Insularum, et terrarum campum, quæ continuo quasi tractu, modicis discreto fretis, ab Australi terra vastissima, antea incognita, protenditur ad Japoniam usque quæ omnes interim terræ iacent adhuc in tenebris, et umbra mortis; sed benedictus Dominus, qui Mariæ Virgini lucis nomen donavit, ut illuminaret eos, qui in tenebris sedent, lucemque suam supereffunderet in Reges, qui per eam regnant, legumque conditores Ecclesiæ Principes, ac Senatus, qui per eam decernunt iustitiam, quæ erga Marianos pauperes utique erit misericordia amplissima, et æquissima; qua peculiariter foveantur, et pro tot annis, quibus tot mala extremæ miseræ viderunt, omni ope, et doctrina in sua mortis umbra destituti, duplo iam, si fas est dicere, Evangelicæ lucit, æternæque lætitiæ splendore illuminentur, per quamplurimos exculi Operarios; quos in tam multam, et albam messem suam dignetur mittere Dominus, eiusque in terris Vicarius, et Administri, Mariani nominis suavissima operante efficacia, suffragantibusque Marianis omnibus, qui sive in Coelis, sive in terris, rerum quarumlibet, quanto magis animarum ad Sanctissimam Deiparam quoquo modo expectantium, tenero simul, et valido feruntur studio in maiorem Dei gloriam, quam absit impediunt peccata nostra, incuriaque in tot animarum avertendo interitu.*

*Sic testamur, ac suppliciter petimus ubi oporteat, huiusmodi miserorum felici iam nomine, scilicet Mariano, ipsorumque in prædictorum fidem eiusdem Societatis Nostræ siggillo firmantes, subscriptioneque Sociorum, qui huc in præsens convenire potu-*



**Translation.***Jesus + Mary*

[Note in margin:] With a copy of the number of Baptisms for the year 1669, with the addition for the year 1670.

There arrived at Manila in the Philippine Islands a letter from our Rev. Fr. General in charge of the Society of Jesus, with an order that we believe originated from the will of His Holiness; in fact, his letter was addressed to their Eminences the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, asking them for the number of those who in this Province have been called by God to His holy grace, and to the baptismal font out of heathenism.

By the present, we are pleased to forward the following report that concern us, the missionaries of the Society of Jesus, who arrived at these **Mariana Islands** (formerly called Ladrones) that belong to the Province of the Philippines, on 16 June of the past year of 1668, at the order and expenses of His Majesty the Catholic King. We attest that, through God's mercy, and the patronage of the most Blessed Virgin, to offset a lack of fervor in our ministries and the energetic resistance of the Devil to the holy Faith in these islands introduced through a Minister of Idolatry named **Choco**, from the land of the Chinese, shipwrecked in these islands 20 years ago, and who has himself finally reached the port of the true Faith (sincerely we hope); we have sent a longer relation about this and other events to our Rev. Father.

**We do certify that 13,289 of these natives have been admitted to the sacred baptism within the first year of our Mission here.**<sup>1</sup>

Of this number, 6,055 comes from the inhabitants of the Island of **Guan**, now called **San Juan**, situated at 164 degrees in longitude [west] of the Island of Palma in the Canary Islands and at 13 degrees of latitude north of the Equator; within 35 leagues of circumference it contains 180 places. In one of main ones, called **Agadña**, we have a church, built within our means, and on the feast-day of the Purification of the most Blessed Virgin of the year 1669, it was properly consecrated to Almighty God, but specifically to honor the Most Holy Name of Mary, and of her whole most Holy Family. This church has already been added to the roll of the nearest Diocese of the City of Cebu, although it is 300 nautical leagues from here, in the said Philippine Islands, bearing the remarkable name of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, whose bishop is His Illustrious Don Fray Juan Lopez. He has entrusted it to us in a letter, and blessing, with amplest powers to reduce these Islands and administer a Mission.<sup>2</sup>

1 Ed. note: In 1673, Fr. Coomans was to review these statistics in greater detail (see Doc. 1673L). By doing so, he unwittingly supplied the information that has finally given me the proof that the officially-reported numbers were exaggerated. The above total is a **simple error in arithmetics** made when the number for Guam was double-counted, as follows: the number for the whole of the Marianas (including Guam) was 7,234 and it was added to the number for Guam alone 6,055 to yield the erroneous 13,289. There was never any tampering of population/baptism statistics by anyone living away from Guam.

2 Ed. note: See Doc. 1667C.

Moreover, the rest of the above-mentioned baptisms are for the other 10 islands. These are neighboring islands, which extend almost along the same longitude from the above-mentioned 13 degrees to about 20 degrees of latitude north. In fact, the number of priests being small (never more than 15), this is how far we have been able to cover this first year aboard native canoes, which are mere paper boats, but are in fact made out of the excellent wood called **palo Maria** in the Indies. With Jesus and the Star of the Sea herself as pilots, we made it safely here and there, urged on by the extreme need of so many souls, and at the invitation of many, but blocked by the surprising opposition of the Islanders toward the Gospel Ministers in every island.

Furthermore we expect beyond this [island] the Blessed Hope and the Marian kindness, [that is] so many torn and dislocated people that have been waiting for centuries up to now; oppressed and waiting to be instructed by priests, who might reach them aboard larger vessels. We hope that there are many of them, throughout these widely-spread islands, and mainlands, that lie along a continuous line, with a few straits in-between, from the very vast Southern Continent, heretofore unknown, extending all the way to Japan. In the meantime, all of these lands have remained in darkness and the shadow of death so far. However, the blessed Lord, who has given them the name of Mary, the Virgin light, to enlighten them, who sit in darkness, and to direct her light at the Kings, who reign over it, and the Princes of the Church, who are keepers of the laws, and the Council, who carry out justice in it, so that a very generous and fair pity be applied to these poor Marianos, which is to be specially fostered, as they have known nothing but extremely bad needs over so many years, destitute as they were of all hope and knowledge within their shadow of death. Let the light of the Gospel shine two times stronger, if it is possible to say this; let them be illuminated by the splendor of eternal happiness, through very many dedicated Workers, whom God, and his Vicar, and Administrators, on Earth be pleased to send to this, his large and ripe harvest, in the most sweet name of Mary, with the effectiveness and all the Marian intercessions which, either in Heaven or on Earth, in any affairs, can be so greatly expected anyway for the souls from the Immaculate Virgin, to be brought about after a tender as well as proper study, for the greater glory of God, in spite of our sins that may impede it, to avert the careless destruction of so many souls.

Thus we certify, and we humbly petition those to whom it may concern, in the name of these miserable ones, who now bear a lucky name, that of Mariano. We, the undersigned, their preachers of the faith, have affixed the seal of our Society, and the signatures of those among us who were able to be present:

At the Residence in the said place of **Agaña**, of the Island called **Guan**, one of the Mariana Islands, on the 26th day of the month of April of the year 1669.

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+ Diego Luis de S. Vitores + Luis de Medina. Luis de Morales.

and the Scholastic Brother of the Society of Jesus who is assisting the Fathers in this Mission, who had written this report:

+ Lorenzo Bustillo +

