

NMI CENTRAL



NAZARENE MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

8 October 2025

NMI SNAPSHOT 

Historic Events in Cuba



In late July, the first-ever National Congress on Pastoral Theology of the Church of the Nazarene in Cuba took place on the campus of the Seminario Teológico Nazareno Cubano (SETENAC) in Punta Brava, Havana.

This historic gathering, which drew 300 participants, provided space for learning, reflection, and spiritual renewal centered on the work of the Holy Spirit. The main plenary sessions focused on three key areas: The Spirit and the Church (past, present, and future of the Church of the Nazarene in Cuba), The Spirit and the Call, and The Spirit and Ministry.

The event was planned and organized by the *Seminario Teológico Nazareno Cubano*, with the support of the Mesoamerica Regional Office, the Central Mesoamerica Field Office, the Regional Theological Education Office, and the four districts of Nazarene churches in Cuba.

The congress opened with a message from Dr. Carlos Sáenz, regional director for Mesoamerica, and included a special word for pastors by Nazarene General Superintendent Christian Sarmiento. Until recent years, it was not possible for general superintendents and other global church leaders to enter Cuba or conduct official meetings or gatherings of this type. A deeply meaningful moment in this historic gathering was the ordination of fifteen (15) pastors, a testimony to the vitality of Nazarene ministry in Cuba.

The event concluded with the largest graduation ceremony in the history of the *Seminario Teológico Nazareno Cubano*. There were 192 graduates from various academic programs, and 51 certificates were awarded to students from short-term courses.

Adapted from a missions update provided by Howard Culbertson, Emeritus Professor of Missions, Southern Nazarene University.

MESOAMERICA REGION

CUBA



With the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492, the demographic of native Amerindians began to decline as the Spanish colony developed there. With large numbers of African slaves imported to tend the sugar and coffee plantations, and growing recognition of the negative impact of Spanish rule over several centuries, independence movements and occasional rebellions led to US intervention during the Spanish-American War in 1898, which helped Cubans to overthrow Spanish rule. The Treaty of Paris that same year established Cuban independence from Spain. After three-and-a-half years of US military rule, Cuba became an independent republic in 1902. The Church of the Nazarene established its work in Cuba in that year (1902), making it one of the earliest Nazarene missions fields. Cuba erupted into revolution that lasted over five years, establishing a socialist political system in

1959, under the authoritarian rule of Fidel Castro, which held together for nearly five decades. Constitutionally a Marxist-Leninist socialist state, Cuba has a one-party system. The Church of the Nazarene has continued to grow and develop over the years, and God is at work, liberating lives by his grace, and bringing hope.



9,507 Members



144 Fully Organized Churches; 3 Not Yet Organized Churches



22 District Licensed, and 76 Ordained Ministers on 3 Districts

PRAY

- Pray that many will sense the call of God on their lives for ministry in Cuba, and that the Church of the Nazarene will continue to flourish, entering new areas unimpeded.
- Pray for this new class of ordinands as they, along with the many who were graduated from the Course of Study at the seminary, will be empowered for effective ministries.



PRAISE

- Praise the Lord for the movement of his Spirit to break down walls and open hearts to the message of his love and grace in Cuba.
- Praise God for the historic events that have made 2025 a significant year in the history of the Church of the Nazarene in Cuba.
- Praise the Lord for the Cuban Nazarene Theological Seminary and its excellent work in the preparation of a new generation of ministers for the work in Cuba.



COULD YOU SERVE?

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