

## §PICTURE – Priests’ ICT Use in their Religious Experience

### MEXICO REPORT

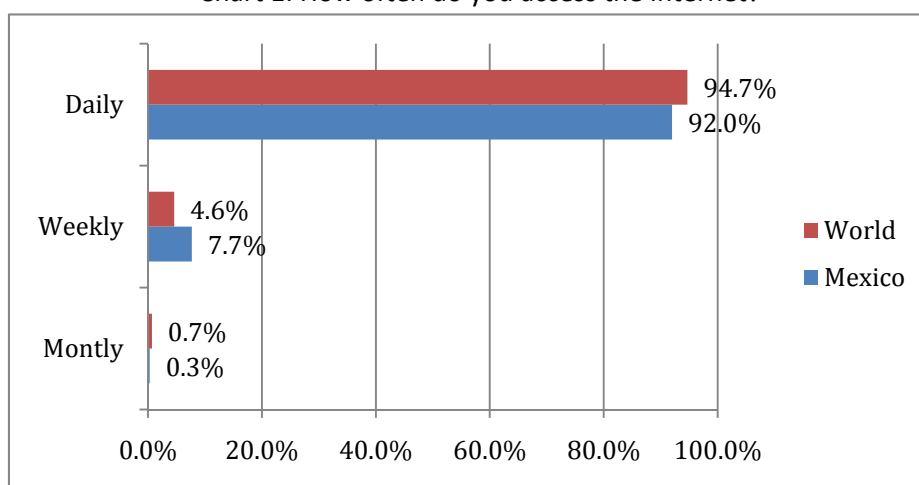
**Research description:** PICTURE studies the usages of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and of the Internet in particular, by the priests of the Catholic Church all over the world. PICTURE was conducted by NewMinE – New Media in Education, and by webatelier.net laboratories of the Università della Svizzera italiana (Lugano, Switzerland), in collaboration with the School of Church Communications of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome), and was supported by the Congregation for the Clergy. PICTURE does not intend to answer the question: how many priests do use ICTs? The research aims instead to offer a picture of which are the religious activities done by priests online, and which are their attitudes toward digital technologies. PICTURE studies only priests who access the internet, who are named in this report “ePriests”.

**Main results:** Respondents to the questionnaire were 4’992, namely 1.2% of the total number of priests in the world (source: Congregation for the Clergy, 2007): 6.6% of the questionnaires were filled in on paper (328) and 93.4% online (4’664). Respondents come from 117 countries, spread across all the continents: 54.6% from Europe, 37.3% from the Americas, 3.9% from Asia, 2.6% from Africa and 1.6% from Oceania. The percentage of respondents from Europe, Americas and Oceania is higher than the percentage of priests present in those areas, while Asia and Africa are slightly under-represented; in order to balance this difference, the data have been weighted. The answers from Mexico (considered in this report) are 362, which equals 2.3% of the priests in this area (15’602, ref: Congregation for the Clergy, 2007).

DEMOGRAPHICS					
PICTURE WORLD DATA			PICTURE MEXICO DATA		
N. ePriests	4’992		N. ePriests (Mexico):	362	
Age mean	48 years old	22.9% religious 77.1% secular	Age mean	47 years old	17.6% religious 82.4% secular
Priesthood years mean	20 years	Religious: 21 years Secular: 19 years	Priesthood years mean	17 years	Religious: 19 years Secular: 16 years

#### OWNERSHIP AND FREQUENCY OF ICT’s USE

Chart 1: How often do you access the Internet?



#### Comments:

92.0% of the ePriests in Mexico access the Internet on a daily basis, with a percentage slightly lower than the world average (94.7%). However, they use more mobile technologies than ePriests worldwide: 89.2% of Mexican ePriests possess a laptop (world: 82.8%), 74.9% a desktop computer (world: 81.2%), 91.2% a mobile phone (world: 90.6%), 72.7% a digital camera (world: 73.1%), 52.5% an mp3 player (world: 44.0%), and 30.7% other handheld devices (palm, etc.; world: 25.7%).

KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE PRIESTLY MISSION

**Homilies (preaching):**

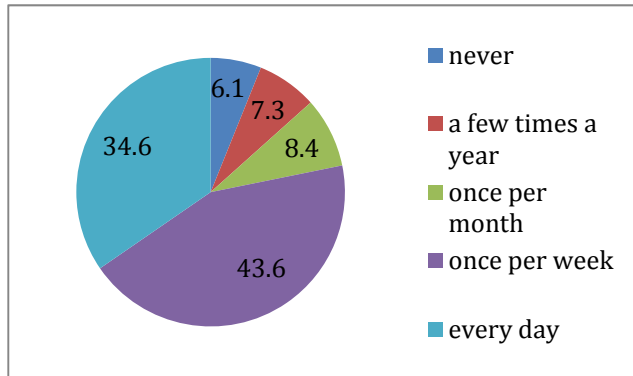
**Comments:**

The Internet is a highly valued resource to prepare preaching activities. 78.2% of the respondents from Mexico search online for homily materials at least once per week, (much higher than the world average of 61.4%), 34.6% of which do it every day (worldwide: 14.7%).

72.1% of them consider using the Internet as *useful* or *very useful* for a better preparation of homilies (the world average is at 50.6%); only 3.5% do not consider it useful *at all* for this purpose (less than the world average, which is 6.8%).

Chart 2:

How often do you search for homily material online?

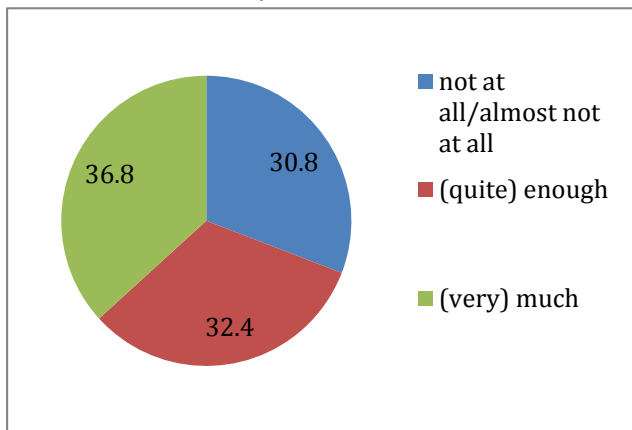


(Data are presented in percentages)

**Spiritual advice:**

Chart 3:

How useful do you consider the Internet for offering spiritual advice?



(Data are presented in percentages)

**Comments:**

The percentage of ePriests who consider the Internet almost *not useful* or *not at all useful* for offering spiritual advice is 30.8% in Mexico, while 36.8% consider it *useful* or *very useful* for this purpose. These percentages reverse the world averages: 38.6% in the first case and 26.7% in the second.

Furthermore, ePriests in Mexico see the Internet as *useful* or *very useful* for reading about current events (86.4% of the respondents), for finding data (84.1%) or for research/study purposes (77.0%). Again, 76.0% of them consider the Internet as *useful* or *very useful* to support parish activities (globally the percentage is at 60.6%).

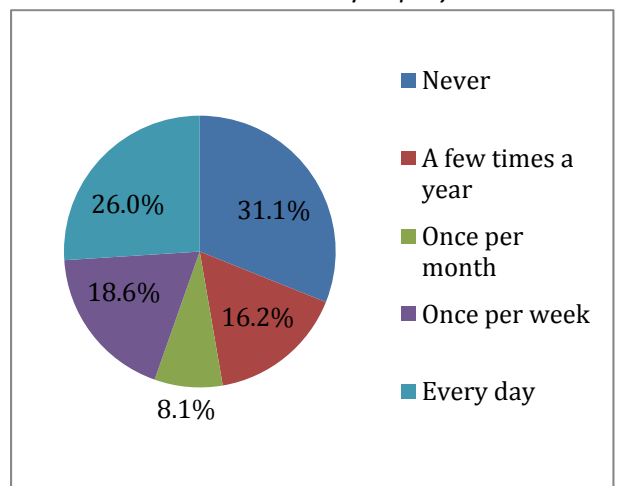
**Praying:**

**Comments:**

31.1% of the respondents from Mexico never use the Internet to pray online (this refers mainly to the Liturgy of the Hours loaded and accessed through a portable device), but 18.6% of them do it once a week and 26.0% every day (worldwide: 35.7%, 18.4% and 17.5%, respectively).

As for their level of appreciation of the Internet for praying, 33.4% of them do not consider it useful *at all* (less than the world average of 53.6%) and 15.7% consider it *very useful* for the purpose (higher than the world average of 9.4%).

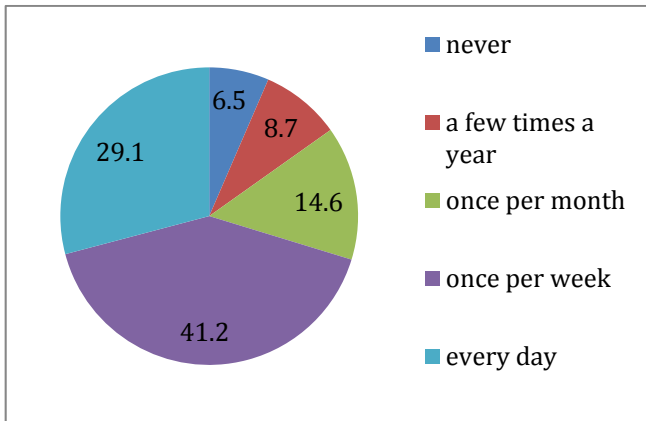
Chart 4: How often do you pray online?



(Data are presented in percentages)

FORMATION

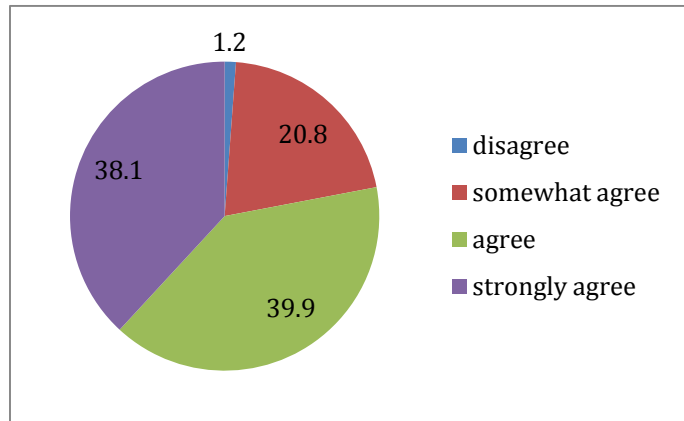
Chart 5:  
How often do you *study* online?



(Data are presented in percentages)

Chart 6:

How much do you agree with the statement *technology enables the improvement of the formation of priests?*



(Data are presented in percentages)

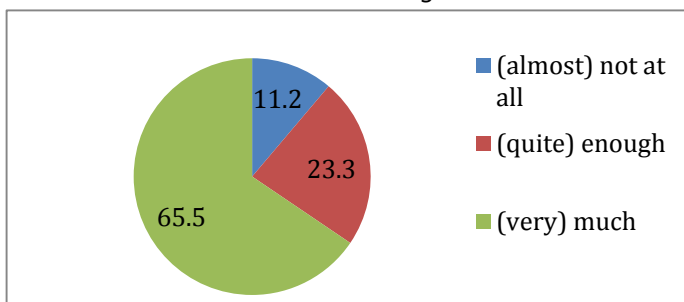
Comments:

29.1% of ePriests in Mexico study online approximately every day and 41.2% do so approximately once per week. Only 6.5% never study online. These percentages suggest that ePriests in Mexico use the Internet more than the world average for study purpose (26.0%, 34.1% and 9.4%, respectively). 39.9% of the Mexican ePriests *agree* with the statement that “technology enables the improvement of the formation of priests”, and 38.1% of them even *strongly agree* with this statement. Also here, respondents seem to appreciate ICTs much more than the world average (world percentages are, respectively, 23.8% and 40.6%). Requested about their appreciation for the most useful instruments to learn something new, 19.3% of the ePriests prefer to use search engines and 16.4% prefer to read magazines or books. 7.0% of them prefer to use online education, and 4.8% social networks (these percentages are aligned to the world ones).

ENCULTURATION OF FAITH

Chart 7:

How useful do you consider the Internet for... *spreading the Christian message?*

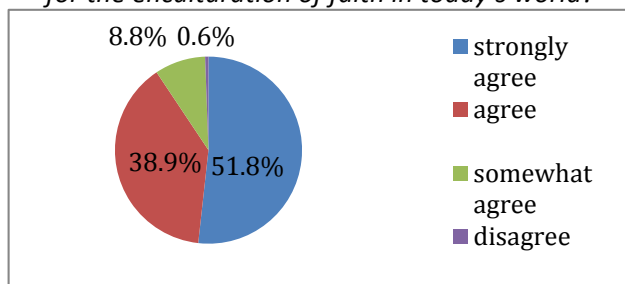


(Data are presented in percentages)

Comments:

65.5% of the ePriests in Mexico consider the Internet *useful* or *very useful* to present or spread the Christian message, in much higher percentage with respect to the world (52.5%). 11.2% consider the Internet *not useful* or *almost not useful* for this purpose (worldwide: 17.5%). Moreover, 90.7% of the ePriests in Mexico *agree* or *strongly agree* that “new technologies allow for the enculturation of faith in today’s world”. 81.0% of them agree or strongly agree that “technology allows for the better evangelization of young people”, and 63.2% that “digital technologies make it possible to better evangelize people” (75.1% and 56.8% in the world average respectively). Furthermore, 38.1% also agree or strongly agree that “the Christian message doesn’t get to the elderly through technology” (worldwide: 34.3%).

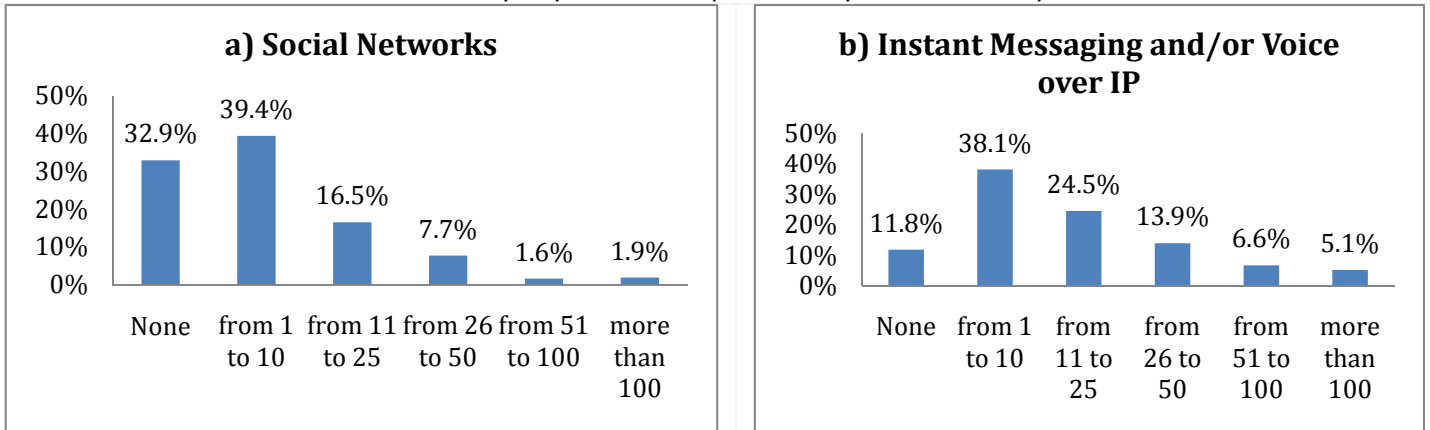
How much do you agree with the statement *new technologies allow for the enculturation of faith in today’s world?*



(Data are presented in percentages)

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIALIZATION IN THE ‘DIGITAL CONTINENT’

Chart 9: With how many of your brother priests are you in contact by means of ...?



Comments:

79.1% of the ePriests in Mexico consider using the Internet for communication with other people as *useful* or *very useful*. Like in the rest of the world, Mexican ePriests seem to be not much inclined to use social networks: although 20.1% of them access social networks on a daily basis (worldwide: 26.4%) and 16.4% once a week (worldwide: 17.6%), 36.5% never access them (worldwide: 35.3%). When using social networks, 39.4% of them are in contact with 1 to 10 other priests and even 1.9% declares to be in contact with more than 100 priests. 32.9% do not use social networks for getting in touch with other priests, a lower percentage than the world one (41.0%). Also, 38.1% of ePriests in Mexico is in contact with 1 to 10 of their brother priests through Instant Messaging or VoIP (worldwide: 36.3%), and only 11.8% are not in contact with any of their brother priests through these means (worldwide: 26.4%).

CONCLUSION

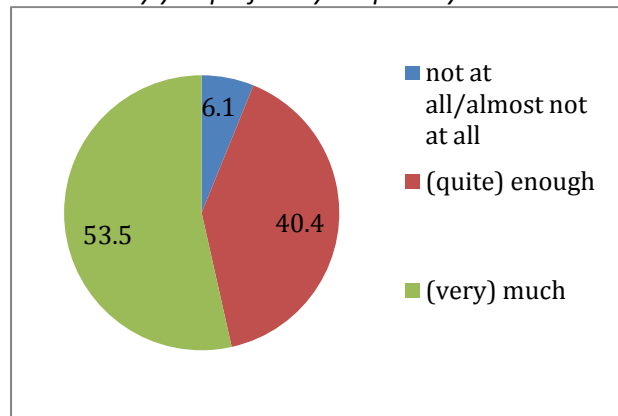
Comments:

53.5% of the ePriests in Mexico consider that the use of digital technologies has improved much or very much (values 4 and 5) the way they perform their priestly mission (much higher than the world percentage of 41.6%); 40.4 of them do not perceive big improvements (values 2 and 3), and only 6.1% see very small or no improvements at all (values 0 and 1; worldwide: 12.2%).

Indeed, while 23.8% of the ePriests *agree* or *strongly agree* that “the dangers of technology are greater than the opportunities it offers” (worldwide: 17.5%), 23.2% *disagree* with this statement (worldwide: 38.2%). In conclusion, the general perception of the opportunities offered by ICTs is very positive among ePriests in Mexico (often much more positive than in the rest of the world), and, at the same time, prudent.

Chart 10: How much has the use of digital technologies improved...

*the way you perform your priestly mission?*



(Data are presented in percentages)

Methodology:

The research was meant to collect the testimony of 1% of Catholic priests, considered proportionately in the countries where priests perform their pastoral activity.

The collection of questionnaires began on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and ended on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The questionnaire, available in seven languages (English, French, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish and German), was compiled both online and on paper. In order to ensure the widest possible distribution, the questionnaire was diffused in several ways: all the Bishops Conferences of the world were contacted, both via email and ordinary mail; all the dioceses of the 50 countries with the largest number of priests and the largest religious orders were contacted by e-mail as well. The questionnaire was also advertised through several catholic news agencies. To prevent errors and frauds, the research was publicized only through Catholic agencies and the incoming traffic to the web page of the research was constantly monitored; in addition, although the questionnaire was anonymous, many priests left their names and contact data.

An important *caveat*: PICTURE does not intend to answer the question: *how many priests do use ICTs?* The research aims instead to offer a picture of which are the religious activities done by priests online, and which are their attitudes toward digital technologies. PICTURE studies only priests who access the internet, who are named in this report “ePriests”. Percentages offered are calculated only from the effective answers and do not consider those who did not respond.