

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

### POLAND REPORT (VER. 1.1)

**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 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”.

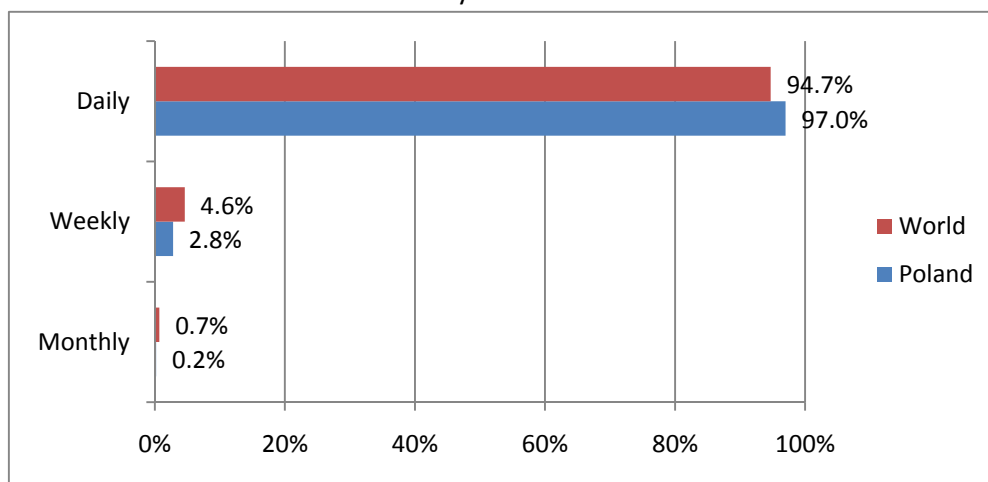
PICTURE was conducted by NewMinE – New Media in Education, and by webatelier.net laboratories of the Università della Svizzera italiana (Lugano, Switzerland), in collaboration with the School of Church Communications of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome), and was supported by the Congregation for the Clergy

**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 Poland (considered in this report) are 470, 1.6% of the priests in this area (29’014, ref: Congregation for the Clergy, 2007).

DEMOGRAPHICS					
PICTURE WORLD DATA			PICTURE POLAND DATA		
N. ePriests	4’992		N. ePriests (Poland):	470	
Age mean	48 years old	22.9% religious 77.1% secular	Age mean	43 years old	14.4% religious 85.6% secular
Priesthood years mean	20 years	Religious: 21 years Secular: 19 years	Priesthood years mean	16 years	Religious: 15 years Secular: 17 years

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

Chart 1: How often do you access the Internet?



#### Comments:

97.0% of the ePriests in Poland access the Internet on a daily basis, with a percentage slightly higher than the world average (94.7%). 81.1% of them possess a laptop and 78.9% a desktop computer. The access to other mobile technologies ranges from 96.8% of mobile phones (world percentage: 90.6%), to 79.8% of digital cameras, 44.5% of mp3 players and 17.0% of other handheld devices (palm, etc.; world percentage: 25.7%).

KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE PRIESTLY MISSION

**Homilies (preaching):**

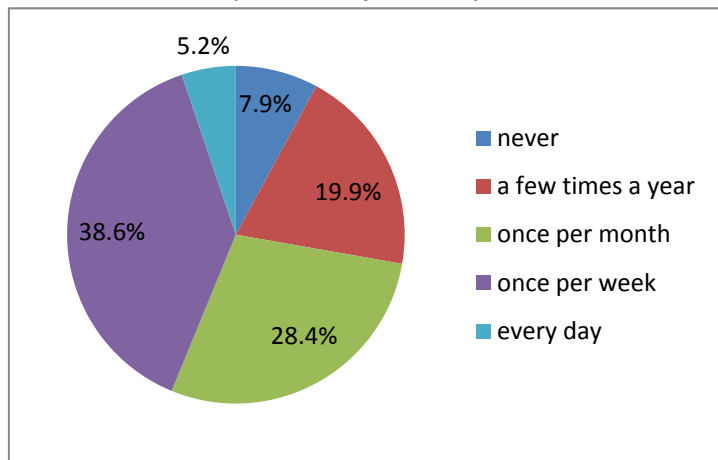
**Comments:**

The Internet is a valued resource to prepare preaching activities, but it is not used for this purpose as much as in the rest of the world: 43.8% of ePriests in Poland search online for homily materials at least once per week, while this percentage grows up to 61.4% worldwide.

42.9% of ePriests in Poland consider using the Internet as *useful* or *very useful* for a better preparation of homilies; 18.7% of them do not consider it *useful at all* for this purpose (the world average is 50.6% and 6.8% respectively).

Chart 2:

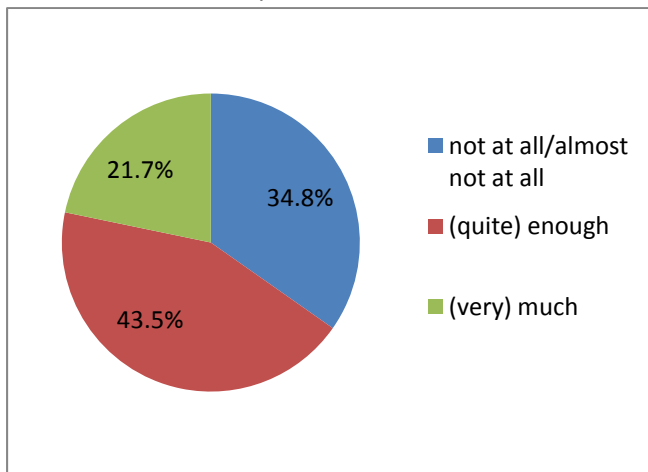
How often do you search for homily material online?



**Spiritual advice:**

Chart 3:

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



**Comments:**

The percentage of ePriests who consider the Internet almost *not useful* or *not at all useful* for offering spiritual advice reaches 34.8% in Poland, while 21.7% consider it *useful* or *very useful* for this purpose.

Conversely, ePriests in Poland see the Internet as *useful* or *very useful* for finding data (90.5% of the respondents), for reading about current events (84.3%) or for research/study (70.7%). Furthermore, 63.7% of the respondents in Poland consider the Internet as *useful* or *very useful* to support parish activities (world percentage: 60.6%).

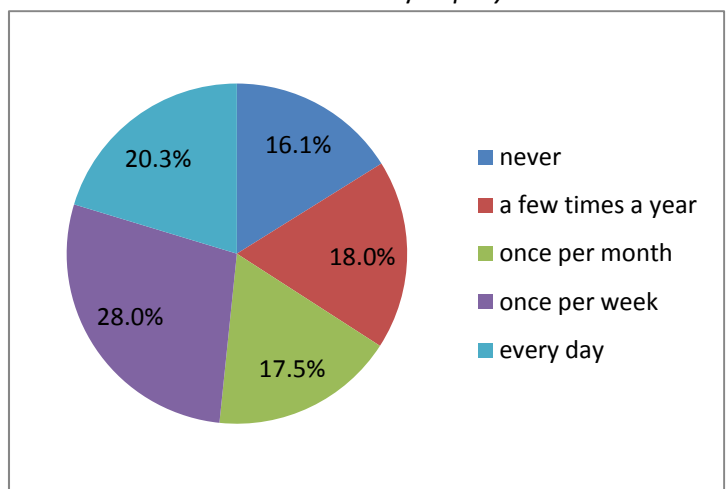
**Praying:**

**Comments:**

Only 16.1% of the respondents in Poland never use the Internet to pray online (this refers mainly to the Liturgy of the Hours loaded and accessed through a portable device), and 48.3% of them do it at least once a week (the worldwide percentages are 35.7% and 35.9% respectively). 20.3% affirm to pray online daily

As for their level of appreciation of the Internet for praying, 21.8% do not consider it *useful at all* (less than the worldwide average: 31.9%), and 10.4% consider it *very useful* for the purpose (world: 9.4%)

Chart 4: How often do you pray online?



FORMATION

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

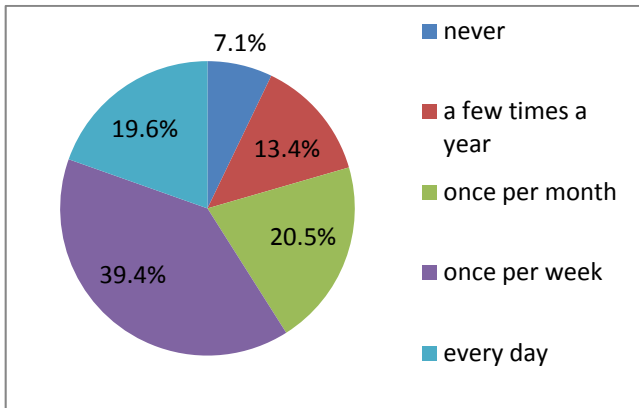
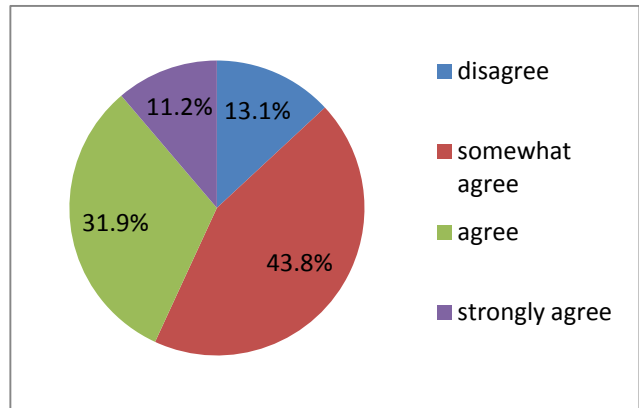


Chart 6:

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



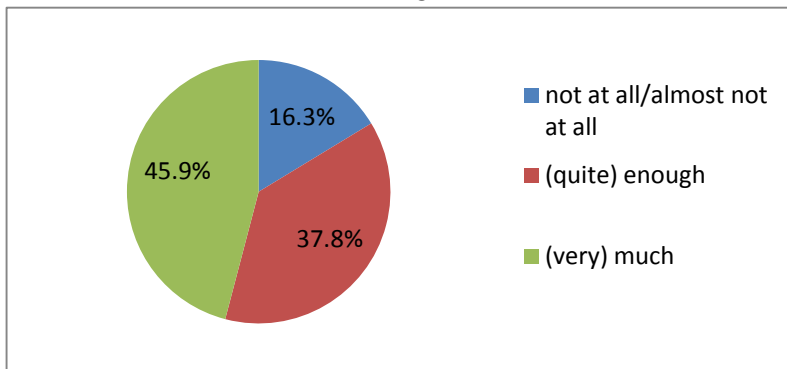
Comments:

19.6% of ePriests in Poland study online approximately every day and 39.4% do so approximately once per week. Only 7.1% never study online. These percentages suggest that ePriests in Poland use the Internet slightly more than the world average for study purpose (worldwide, 26.0% study online daily, 34.1% weekly, and 9.4% never). 31.9% of the ePriests in Poland *agree* that “technology enables the improvement of the formation of priests”, and 11.2% even *strongly agree* with this statement. Here, on the contrary, respondents from Poland show to appreciate ICTs much less than the world average (40.6% and 23.8%, respectively). Requested about their appreciation for the most useful instruments to learn something new, 20.0% of the Polish ePriests prefer to use search engines and 16.1% prefer reading magazines and books. 6.0% prefer to use online education, as well as 6.0% social networks.

ENCULTURATION OF FAITH

Chart 7:

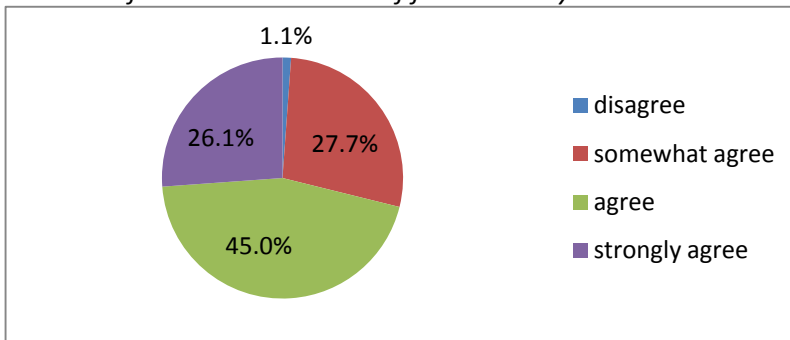
How useful do you consider the Internet for *spreading the Christian message?*



Comments:

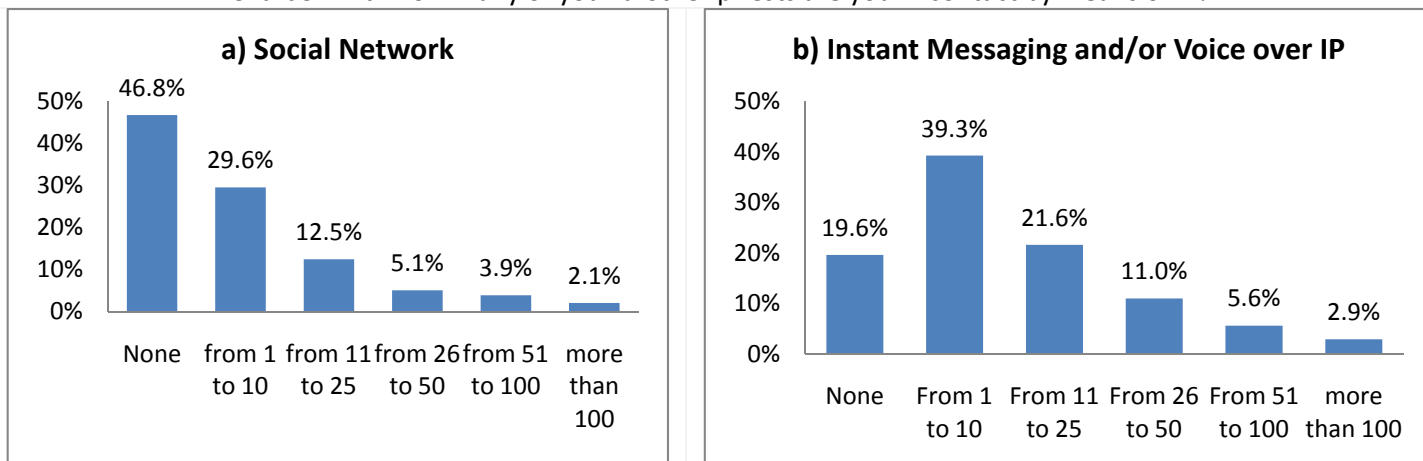
45.9% of the ePriests in Poland consider the Internet *useful* or *very useful* to present or spread the Christian message. 16.3% of them consider it *not useful* or *almost not useful* for this purpose (globally the averages lie at 52.5% and 7.0% respectively). Moreover, almost three quarters of the ePriests in Poland (71.1%) *agree* or *strongly agree* that “new technologies allow for the enculturation of faith in today’s world”; only 1.1% of them disagree with it (world percentages: 72.9% and 2.7%, respectively). 75.5% of the ePriests in Poland *agree* or *strongly agree* that “technology allows for the better evangelization of young people” (worldwide: 75.1%), and 66.9% that “digital technologies make it possible to better evangelize people” (higher than the world average of 56.8%). Furthermore, 32.9% of them also *agree* or *strongly agree* that “the Christian message doesn’t get to the elderly through technology”.

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



COMMUNICATION AND SOCIALIZATION IN THE ‘DIGITAL CONTINENT’

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



Comments:

76.9% of the ePriests in Poland consider using the Internet for communication with other people as useful or very useful. However, also in Poland ePriests seem to be less inclined to use social networks: though 19.2% access social networks on a daily basis (world: 26.4%) and 18.7% once a week (world: 17.6%), 31.7% of them never access them (world 35.3%). When using social networks, 29.6% of ePriests in Poland are in contact with 1 to 10 of their brother priests, and 2.1% declares to be in contact with more than 100 of them; nonetheless, the majority (46.8%) do not use social networks for getting in touch with other priests. Also, 39.3% of ePriests in Poland are in contact with 1 to 10 of their brother priests through Instant Messaging or VoIP (more than the 36.3% in the world), while only 19.6% are not in contact with any of their brother priests through these means (world: 26.4%).

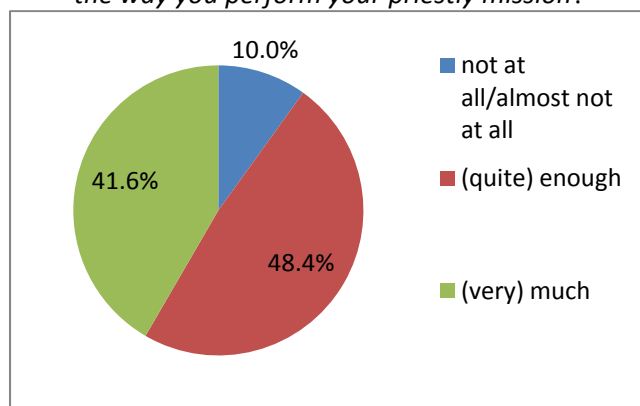
CONCLUSION

Comments:

41.6% of ePriests in Poland consider that the use of digital technologies has improved much or very much (values 4 and 5) the way they perform their priestly mission, exactly like in the rest of the world; 48.4% of them do not perceive big improvements (values 2 and 3), and only 10.0% see very small or no improvements at all (values 0 and 1; worldwide: 12.2%).

Indeed, while 16.4% of the ePriests in Poland agree or strongly agree that “the dangers of technology are greater than the opportunities it offers”, 28.4% disagree with this statement. Therefore, although the general perception of the opportunities offered by ICTs is positive among ePriests in Poland, nonetheless this is often less positive than in the rest of the world.

Chart 10: How much has the use of digital technologies improved the way you perform your priestly mission?



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.