

# Non-Catholic Ministers of Religion in Zacatecas. Religious discrimination and culture of peace.

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DOI < 10.26821/IJSRC.8.12.2020.81205 >

## ABSTRACT

*The case study we present analyses religious discrimination and culture of peace in ministers of non-Catholic religions in Fresnillo, Guadalupe and Zacatecas, Mexico. For this, we have researched religious growth and the principle characteristics of the aforementioned ministers, such as their number, religious affiliation, gender, schooling and religious discrimination, in order to draw attention to the obstacles and opportunities for the implementation of culture of peace and the recognition of human rights, especially freedom of conscience, thought and religion.*

**Keywords: Change, minorities, discrimination and religious tolerance, culture of peace, human rights.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Fresnillo, Guadalupe and Zacatecas are the three largest municipalities in the State of Zacatecas; they are also the three largest towns in their respective municipalities and those that experience the highest levels of religious change, but this change is narrowed down to Christian “diversity” since outside of the denominations belonging to this faith, only a negligible minority exists that is not Christian. The research we present has focused on this non-Catholic religious dissent formed by 17

denominations, of which only five are not Christian –and whose faith, number-wise, is insignificant –, but contribute to qualifying a field that is so uniform it is hard to believe since it is completely overpowered by the aforementioned faith.

In terms of land, politics and administration, Mexico is divided into 32 States (also called Federative entities); each state is divided into municipalities, and each municipality is formed by towns. *“Town. Place occupied by one or more inhabited homes, recognized by the name given by the law or tradition. By the amount of population, they are divided into urban (over 2500 inhabitants) and rural (below 2500 inhabitants).”* [10]

We based our work on data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, better known by its Spanish acronym INEGI [10], specifically its Religion Classification, in which four levels are established: the first, and most generic, is that of religious faith, the second is religious group, the third, religious denomination, and the fourth, religious society. For example, the religious society “Christian Friendship” belongs to the “Pentecostal” denomination, which can be found within the “Evangelical Pentecostal Christians” group, which in turn, belongs to the “Christian” faith.

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography [6] in the 2010 census, as municipalities, the first has 213,139 inhabitants, the second 159,991 and the third 138,176, which makes up 34.3% of the state’s population. This means that one out of every three inhabitants of Zacatecas lives in one of them. As towns, Fresnillo has 120,944 inhabitants, Guadalupe 124,623 and Zacatecas 129,011, which together represent 25.23% of the state’s population. In other words, one out of every four inhabitants of the State of Zacatecas lives in one of these three towns. In short, a third of the state’s population lives

in one of these three municipalities, and a quarter of the said population lives in these three towns.

The term ministers of religion refers to those who are recognized as such by their religious organisations, who are responsible for the corresponding parish and operate the religious and social activities, as well as the upkeep of the temple –in a personal or collective manner – and Religious Associations (RAs). With this we intend to cover the broad spectrum that ranges from the Christian pastor to the *enablers*, from Oriental religions, knowing that the term is very inclusive. This is an ethnographic study of 134 RAs and 159 non-Catholic religious ministers in the localities mentioned, and we must add that these numbers represent the entirety of the existent universe during those years, both RAs and ministers.

What are the non-Catholic religious ministers like and how do they perceive religious discrimination in their everyday life? What are the challenges and opportunities for the establishment of a culture of peace and human rights?

Here we show a statistical image of them in intriguing aspects, such as their religious memberships, the proportion of men and women that serve the ministry –since traditionally this would have been a male-exclusive activity –, their age range and averages, their level of schooling and the years of preparation they had to be able to carry out their work, if they are exclusively devoted to it or not, where their economic income originates from, and finally, how they experience and perceive religious discrimination in a mainly Catholic society, as well as the challenges a culture of peace will have to face in the future.

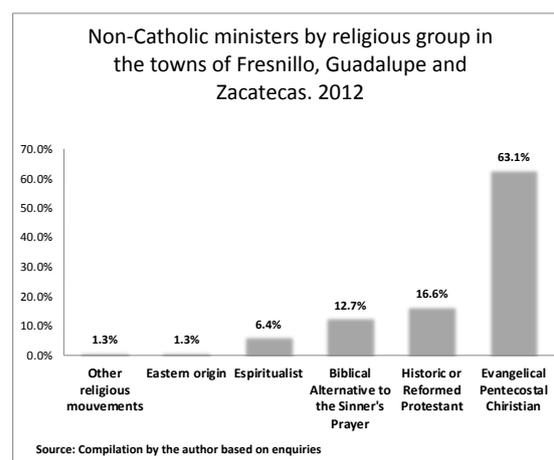
## 2. QUANTITY, AFFILIATION AND PROFESSIONALISATION

The phenomena of religious change in Mexico started after the Reform period (1857) from a process of secularization, religious openness and the implementation of Protestantism within the country, which finally yields results in the present day, over time and with the confluence of different factors. For example, Pentecostalism, although not alone, has played an essential part in the “nationalization” and dispersion of protestant beliefs, and even converted many of those into, so to speak, native beliefs. We consider the emergence of this doctrine a significant element in said religious change, together with the new agent that it implies: a different type of religious minister that has charismatic, rhetorical and mediatic qualities, and one which is not required to go through the lengthy formal academic education required for the catholic priesthood, nor needs a “professional license” for their service, which results in many becoming incorporated into the pastoral ministry, or forming groups, cells and protestant or non-Catholic churches.

According to statistics provided by the Division of Religious Affairs of the State of Zacatecas (DAREZ by its name in Spanish: *Dirección de Asuntos Religiosos del Estado de Zacatecas*), in 2012, a total of 17 religious ministers who are officially registered by the General Management of Religious Affiliations (DGAR by its name in Spanish: *Dirección General de Asociaciones Religiosas*), existed in all three towns. But our field study [11] identified 159 ministers; if we remove the 17 that are mentioned, the rest of the non-registered would be a total of 142. Out of the officially registered ministers, we were only able to locate one, three had already been replaced –since rotations exist within the denominations, so that pastors come and go from

different religious centres– and one died during the enquiries [11], although we did manage to interview him prior to that. If we deduct the one we did not contact, the three who were replaced and the deceased, we have only 12 officially registered ministers in the DGAR. Accordingly, the final amount of non-registered ministers is 147, which represents 92.4% of the total.

Many of those non-registered ministers are placed or recognized as such through a religious affiliation (AR), but the vast majority do not necessarily meet either of the formalities (the registry issued by the DGAR or by the AR), but they are ministers *de facto*, without regulations or formal preparation, only the will to serve the ministry, a place to preach and a parish to guide. Evidently, the breadth of religious activity does not go through the DGAR’s registry, but rather, it has a vast field that it does not register or regulate, in practice, they are the real religious movement, made up by all of the ARs, ministers and parishes that interact in a particular social context to conform to the universe of non-Catholic religions and their everyday nature.

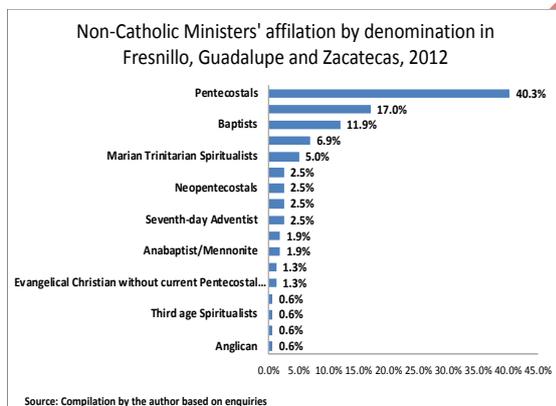


**Fig 1: Ministers by religious group**

In figure 1, we present the formation of ministers by religious group. The largest, making up almost two-thirds of the total, are attached to the group

denominated Evangelical Pentecostal Christians (PECs by the Spanish acronym); they are the dominant non-Catholic belief, and their freedom and independence for their ministerial activity can be seen most clearly. A large percentage of their temples are independent, meaning they do not belong to a religious society. The second group is linked to the Historic or Reformed Protestants (PHoR), which is the oldest in the country and in the three towns. The third, Biblical Alternative to the Sinner's Prayer (BDdE), which is formed by the three large international denominations: Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS Church) and Seventh-Day Adventists.

In fourth place is the group formed by the Spiritualists and the last two of Eastern origin, geographically speaking: Hare Krishna and Sai Baba.

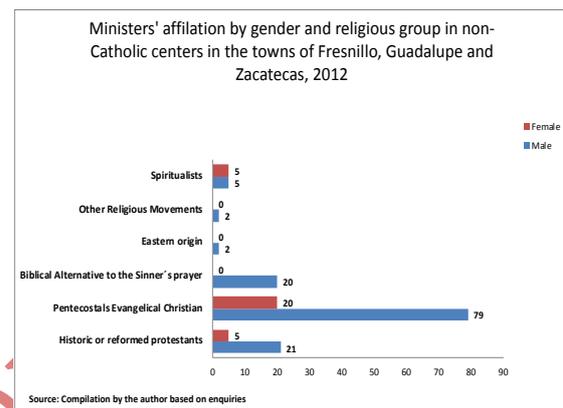


**Fig 2: Cult ministers by denomination**

Figure 2 shows the following structure, in which we disaggregate the previous data. Here, the ministers' affiliations are shown by denomination. Out of the 17 denominations that make up the total, only five of them occupy the whole spectrum, covering 84%, and almost half of the spectrum is occupied by the Pentecostals. We pointed out above how Pentecostalism came to modify the religious field's dynamics but, we must add that it changed its

numeric distribution, since here it represents just under half of the group.

It also had an impact on the conception of the part played by women and their relationship with the ministry. In the non-Catholic faiths, especially in the Pentecostal, a substantial opening for females' integration in ministerial labour exists, although the profession still fundamentally falls on males.



**Fig 3: Cult ministers by gender**

Figure 3 enlightens the proportion in which the different religious groups have incorporated women into the ministry, where the Pentecostal group stands out, particularly Evangelicals and Christians; in second place, spiritualists, where the proportion is equal between men and women, and the third, Historic or Reformed Protestants. Those who still forbid such activity for women are the traditionalist groups, such as the Eastern ones, non-Evangelical Biblical or those with a tradition-oriented towards the Old Testament. In general, for all the non-Catholic groups, women's participation is 19%, against 81% for men, a significant number if we consider that traditionally, the Christian faith has had its doors closed to women's ministry.

If we explore how people become ministers, we find that 46% had formal training in a seminary or other ministerial institute, 30% by religious guidance

provided by their denomination's temple, 18% by revelation and/or divine appointment, 4% were self-taught, and the remainder by correspondence courses or other non-specified media. Thus, more than half were not required to go through a formal religious training institution. The average time dedicated to training for the ministry is 4 years; this includes both cases in which future pastors "receive the call by divine revelation" and can exercise immediately and those who claimed to have studied "their whole life" to be able to do so.

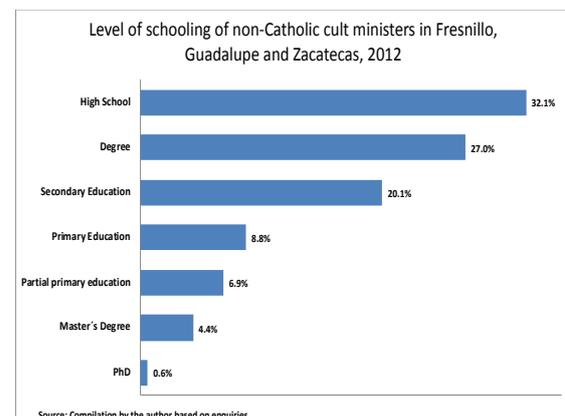
All of this makes the cycle much shorter and more flexible than that of future Catholic priests. Therefore, the availability of the former arrives much faster than that of the latter. Most have not served in the ministry for long, relatively speaking, since more than half do not have more than ten years' experience, and 71% do not have more than fifteen. The average age of the ministers is 46 years old, not very old, but not very young; since it is a field where, given the ease with which they become to practicing ministers, one might expect the average to be lower—since they do not have to study for ten years after high school before initiation, unlike Catholic priests—, but it seems that the profession is in the hands of mature people, rather than young aspirants. However, if we contrast said average with that of the Catholic ministry, it is clearly low.

For Masferrer [12], the average age of a Catholic minister in 2004 was 61, and in an interview given to Vyaira [20], it was pointed out that it rose to 68 in that year. Either way, non-Catholic ministries are younger, and their ordination mechanisms or serving access are less strict, briefer and more versatile than Catholic ones; this is an element in favour of non-Catholic religions, seeing as the ministry is essential for spreading and conserving the beliefs.

Thus, we can say that many more non-Catholic Evangelical ministers exist than Catholic ministers, still, and the difference is accentuated when seen proportionally, since, as established by Masferrer [13], one priest for every 6 thousand 339 Catholics existed by 2009, while there was one Evangelical minister for every 229 parishioners. The author therefore points out the crisis in the ecclesial model and the risk of collapse of the Mexican Catholic Church in the future.

That said, a widespread opinion exists, even more so among Catholics, that non-Catholic ministers, specifically Evangelical, have poor formal education, or are even uncultured.

We wanted to know how true this was, so we looked into the matter and found the following; in gross terms: a third of them had at least a degree, another third had finished high school, and the remaining third only finished secondary studies, where a significant 15.7% had either primary or partial primary studies. This is shown in Figure 4.

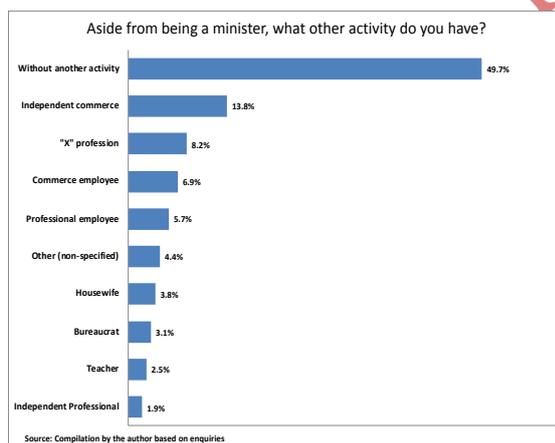


**Fig 4: Cult ministers by level of schooling**

Needless to say, if compared to a Catholic priest's training, two-thirds of the non-Catholic ministers remain where they start their career, that is to say, with a high school level. But in general, they cannot be regarded as uncultured or people without formal

education. Education certainly helps their pastoral work, as in any human activity, but in this case, it is not an element that prevents the development of their profession. We were able to capture opinions in which certain ministers were pointed out as role models in their endeavours, even while lacking considerable formal academic preparation, and others that on the contrary, were not perceived as ministers even though they had graduated from an institute and had a good academic background. But neither of these cases is a rule since we have proved that what is essential is to complement the degree of education with other attitudes, qualities and characteristics of the ministry.

Other essential elements are dedication and professionalization that every minister has or should have towards their ministry. Many are dedicated exclusively, full-time; others work part-time, combining the ministry with another activity from which they earn their livelihood. In the stated field, 49.7% were committed full time, and the remaining 50.3% did so part-time.



**Fig 5: Ministers by complementary professions**

Figure 5 illustrates the proportion of full-time ministers, as well as the proportions and percentages of part-time ministers. Of the latter, the most significant complementary activities are, by

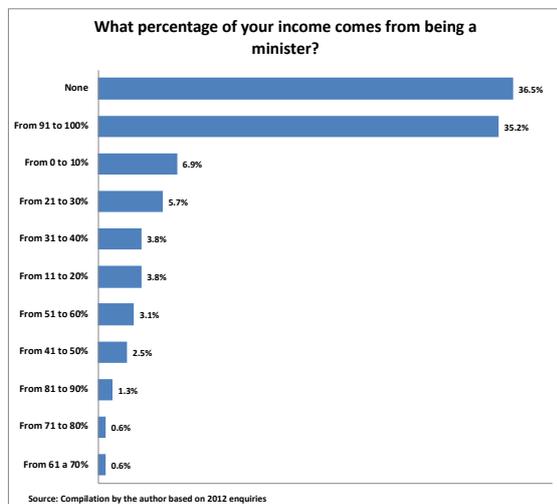
importance and classified in four extensive captions: 1) commercial, integrated by those who are independent and those who work at establishments. 2) Professions including mechanics, builders, bakers, blacksmiths, plumbers, electricians, painters and a small non-specified amount. 3) Employed or independent professionals such as theologian/religious studies graduates, engineers or architects, accountants, public accountants or business administration graduates, lawyers, agronomists or veterinarians, doctors and science and communication graduates.

As seen, a vast proportion works in commerce, professions—including domestic activities—and bureaucracy; the remainder have a profession that coincides with the ministry of their faith accordingly.

On par with the latter, we asked what percentage of their income derives from being a minister. Figure 5 tells us that more than one third receives no payment for ministry, others earn between 91 and 100% and the remaining percentage varies considerably, but as can be seen, in general, financial compensation is received. Strictly speaking, only the first percentage mentioned get no remuneration.

That said, is the fact that a minister works full time or not, and is financially supported, either entirely or partially, positive or negative for the religious activity? Two stances exist regarding this: the first voices that the positive aspect to working full time and living off from the ministry is the possibility of engaging with the profession in a more organic and fulfilling manner, which redounds in benefit of the parish and of the specific faith. But some consider that religion is not a field that one should profit or live from; in other words, not to live from it, rather live for it. In this second stance, it is believed that it is better for the minister not to receive any financial

benefits in return, this way it will assure that the work is done in a purely cordial manner, and out of love for their neighbour.



**Fig 6: Ministers by source of income**

We have seen that both stances have their pros and cons and that neither one assures or prevents what the other denies or defends, but we also realise that a minister must meet a minimum of time and material conditions to be able to undertake their labour, seeing as it is of no help if most of their time, effort and energy is devoted to ensure their sustenance, and what little is left is devoted to their pastoral labour. But in many cases, they have no choice, some parishes are so small and poor economically speaking, that they cannot afford the material sustenance of a pastor that works exclusively for them.

### 3. EQUALITY, TOLERANCE AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

In the National Survey on Discrimination in Mexico (ENADIS by its name in Spanish: *Encuesta Nacional Sobre Discriminación en México*), made by CONAPRED [2], discrimination is established as the denial of the equal exercise of rights, freedom and opportunities of any person compared to others.

Such a condition excludes them, puts them at a disadvantage to fully develop their life and puts them in a vulnerable position. This disadvantage is systematic, unfair, undeserved and causes the violation of the rights of who suffer it. There are few words such as discrimination that can connote so much negativity, but it is a fact that when addressing it, there will always be much to say and much that will remain unsaid. In general, we could add that discrimination is the act through which an individual is degraded, and their human condition is denied due to the lack of recognition and the removal of their human and civil rights.

This way, the ENADIS shows that the focal causes of discrimination in Mexico, in hierarchical order, are: wealth, political parties, education, distribution of government assistance, sexual preferences, political beliefs, values, religion, ethnic, and lastly, “people who come from outside” (xenophobia). Six out of every ten Mexicans view wealth as the main cause of discrimination, and religion as almost in last place; but to declare that it occupies that position in the country does not mean it ceases to be a social problem of discrimination.

For Hernández [5], religious intolerance in Mexico does not seem too severe. While he dedicates a page to addressing the subject, he concludes that the sentiment of intolerance is due to a fanatic population, rather than to Catholic priests. He describes the case of the murder of pastor C.J.L. Stephens and his attendant in Ahualulco, Jalisco, at the hands of the priest, Reynoso, and another 200 men in April 1874, and the attempted murder of pastor Merrill N. Hutchinson in Acapulco, by a group of Catholics incited by the local priest. The pastor’s life was saved, unlike those of six of his believers. Such events are classified as extreme and rare. He states that the Catholic hierarchy did indeed combat

protestantism, but the general rule was one of tolerance, and there were even cases where Catholic priests protected protestants from folk fanaticism [5, p. 106).

Such a stance opposes that of Masferrer [14] and Rivera [16], who believe the contrary. For the former, discrimination in Mexico starts with the European invasion, especially from the Spanish. The enforcement of colonial Catholicism marked the beginning of the plundering of native villages from their land, culture and rights, including religious ones. Three hundred years of history of the inquisition in America left a mark in the memory of those who lived in the new continent, the extent of which is unknown to this day. For the author, Mexican society has been ambiguous towards ethnic-religious minorities, since they are consented and fought; it was kind to Mennonites, slaughtered the Chinese; warmly welcomed Spanish republican exiles and expelled boats full of Jewish people to Nazi lands. Nowadays, protestant communities, particularly in the south, are subject to removal, withdrawal of their rights, dispossession, rape and murder.

Except for the enactment of the Law of Religious Associations and Public Worship (LARCP by its name in Spanish: *Ley de Asociaciones Religiosas y Culto Público*) [18], the author considers that some steps, although small, have been taken to fight religious discrimination. For example, the fact that the CNDH has resolved some of the most prominent issues revolving religious rights, as is the case of declaring the right of Jehovah's Witnesses' children to not salute the national flag. CONAPRED itself, with two of their enquiries made in (2005) and (2010), contribute to highlighting discrimination, but the reach of the said organism is insufficient due to structural limitations, since it depends on the

SEGOB, whose nature until now has been eminently political, therefore impartial and subject to other interests.

A similar stance on discrimination is shared by Rivera in his local analysis on the religious conflict in Chiapas, where intolerance reaches severely alarming levels, as during the period between 1960-2001 (41 years) 339 conflicts were registered, that translate into 432 acts of aggression or violations of human rights towards people of non-Catholic faith, and 18 kinds of settled violence, such as: ejection, physical aggressions, threats of removal, arrests, imprisonment, destruction of property, closure of temples, kidnappings, bans on school attendance, homicide, temple destruction, blockage of temple construction, aggression due to political affiliation, threats of physical aggression, seizure of public goods, threats due to political-religious affiliation, bans on the usage of public services and threats of arson towards the temples. [16, pp. 140-146]. As you can see, the list is varied and resourceful.

It is easy to perceive how religious diversity, when not accompanied by the recognition of the others, of both their civil and human rights, can lead to violence; as pointed out by Sandoval-Forero [17, p. 28], since time immemorial, religious diversity has existed, but also intolerance when certain groups denote their religion as exclusive, valid and true, claiming to communicate with the divine and represent what is holy on Earth, which is why they have exerted, and continue to exert, verbal and physical violence against members of other religions or faiths.

For the author, peace studies related to religious diversity must cover the macro and micro, from regions to communities, going through the villages and towns, and in these, case studies (such as the one we present) are a significant contribution and must

be addressed with a multidisciplinary approach, in order to, as in the case of indigenous communities, build tolerance and the recognition of non-Catholics. Although there is a vast number of studies on religious change and conflicts in Mexico, “*There is a lack of studies with a focus on peace and development, that link religion with tolerance, recognition and peaceful harmony*” [17, pp. 40-42]

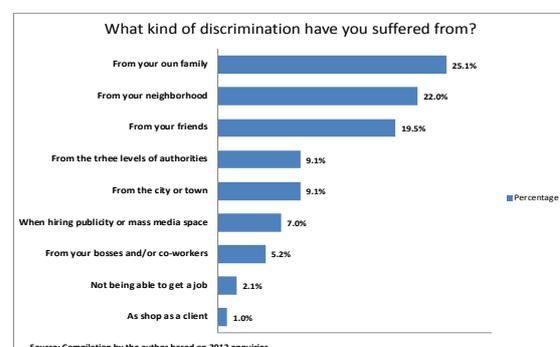
“*Religion is one of the defining elements of any culture, and that turns it into a decisive factor for building cultures of peace*” [17, p. 43]. Up to here, we have spoken about how religion can be, and is, a source of violence due to the intrareligious conflicts it creates, but we have not discussed how it can be a resource against social violence in countries that, like Mexico, suffer from it. This approach is developed by Valenzuela & Odgers [19] when analysing the case of Tijuana city, B.C. to see how Catholicism, Evangelism and Jehovah’s Witnesses have different understandings and stances on the problem, as well as the possible solutions or impossibilities. At present, it is not our case to discuss said stance, although we find it very interesting, enlightening and necessary when talking about culture of peace studies.

Alzate et al [3, pp. 179-183] define a culture of peace not as an ideal state that lacks conflict but rather one in which conflicts, instead of resulting in war, produce cooperative relationships, understanding, and therefore peace, which is both an output and input for new values, attitudes and behaviours between diverse parties such as professors, opinion leaders, politicians and groups, to the community itself, or any agent involved in the process. For this, mediation is an essential element, since it promotes empowerment, or the reinforcement of those involved through education, politicization and collective actions.

Together with the previous stance, another fact that we consider of equal importance is the recognition of otherness through openness, attention, empathy and sensitivity. This seems essential in our analysis, and we assert it as such seeing as the beginning of understanding is, firstly, the recognition of one’s neighbour, using religious jargon, since recognition is the path to openness, empathy, attention and sensibility, in a nutshell, for a culture of peace. This is our purpose, and that is the aim we pursue with the publication of this work.

This is why we carried out this research in the field to capture the level and type of discrimination suffered individually by ministers. From there, we have been able to observe that the opinions of the majority tend to not coincide with those of the minority, but must somehow be compared in order to arrive at more precise results and conclusions on this subject. Therefore, we include the results of the National Survey on Discrimination in Mexico, regarding the religious aspect, in order to to have both references at once, both national and local.

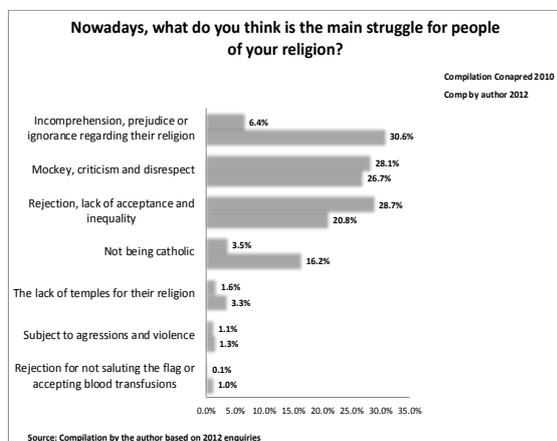
We asked whether the aforementioned ministers had suffered any discrimination or not, for exercising and/or preaching their religion. The answer was that 77% had suffered, against the 23% that had not. On the most part, pastors feel that they are an object of religious discrimination in the society of Zacatecas.



**Fig 7: Sources of discrimination towards ministers**

Regarding the discriminatory agents they are subject to, Figure 7 shows them in descending order. It illustrates how the place where discrimination starts is in the family of those who decide to embrace another religion. The family core consists of the first circle, and is perhaps the most unwilling to allow religious freedom, in second place are neighbours, and in third, the new believer’s friendship circle. These are the main three sources of religious discrimination; with a smaller percentage, they are then followed by authorities from the three levels of government —federal, state and municipal—, then the city or town, mass media (when hiring publicity or access to it), bosses and co-workers (when not being accepted after applying for a job, or when being rejected at their workplace), and lastly, discrimination suffered in shops when being consumers.

Concerning the question What do you think the main struggle is for people of your religion in Mexico? We compared the national survey by CONAPRED to ours. To clarify, as well as in the case of INEGI, while CONAPRED’s survey was carried out in 2010, ours was performed in 2012, and we only examined cult ministers.



**Fig 8: Main struggles faced by ministers**

In Figure 8 we present a comparison of answers from non-Catholic religious communities and their ministers, captured by us, between which certain coincidences and vast differences exist, since for the population polled by the CONAPRED the main motives of religious discrimination are: in first place rejection, lack of acceptance, discrimination and inequality; in second place mockery, criticism and disrespect, and thirdly, incomprehension, prejudice or ignorance about their religion. On the other hand, for ministers the perception was that discrimination followed incomprehension, prejudice or ignorance in the first place; secondly, mockery, criticism and lack of respect, and thirdly, rejection, lack of acceptance, discrimination and inequality, furthermore, a very significant motive to them is added, that is the fact of not being Catholic. In this field, aggression and violence were the least listed. The last rubric was only presented for Jehovah’s Witnesses, but those interviewed claimed to not have had no such issues.

This is the analysis of the composition, characteristics and overview of discrimination registered by non-Catholic ministers in the analysed towns.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

We can say that the great proliferation of non-Catholic ministers (of which the Evangelical Pentecostals and Christians stand out) is due to not having to go through long years of formal ministerial training in order to exercise their profession, in addition to the fact that in Pentecostalism a great opening for the incorporation of women in ministerial labour exists, which has permeated to other religious groups.

The majority receive formal training —out of religious instruction institutes— to be able to exercise ministry. The average years of schooling are very low (4 years), a little over half have less than ten years of experience in their activity, and 71% do not have over fifteen, this shows us very recent and short religious dissent.

The average age of these ministers is 46 years, but it is still much younger than that of a Catholic priest (which was 68 in 2009), and their ordination mechanisms and access to ministry are briefer and more flexible than those of Catholicism.

The stigma that a non-Catholic minister is uncultured and poorly prepared exists, but as it has been proven, this statement cannot be categorical, since one third has a degree or above, another third finished high school, and the remaining third studied up to secondary school. Some did not even finish primary school, while others have postgraduate studies.

Half work full time in the ministry, and the other half complements it with another work activity. Only a third receives no financial compensation for their ministry, another third acquires 91 to 100% of their income from it, and the rest receive diverse percentages of it. This way, the ministerial activity fully sustains some, others partially, and for some, not at all; although —and this is what is most important— they all live for it, not all live from it.

In the most part, ministers perceive the treatment they receive from government authorities, mass media and the society in general, as unfair compared to that received by those belonging to the Catholic Church. 77% said to have suffered some variation of religious discrimination, and this manifests mainly within their family circle, their friends, and in the neighbourhood they live and/or minister in, that is to

say, amongst the people closest to the pastor, in their immediate social circle.

It is important to highlight that religious change in Zacatecas (whilst of the lowest in the country) is not exempt of religious conflicts, and although not as alarming as those cases mentioned by Rivera [16]— that range from simple discrimination to physical violence, plundering, closure of temples and murder—, and are of a much smaller scale, friction and problems between members of faiths other than Catholicism and society, mainly Catholic, do not cease to exist, and must not be ignored or hidden. In order to move towards a culture of peace the first step is to know the characteristics of religious field analysed, in order to demystify and then remove demonization and/or stereotypes of non-Christian religions, so as to eliminate friction and problems within the social medium.

To reiterate, the first step is having knowledge and recognition of others, of those who think differently, who are different, who have different beliefs, of religion or different faiths, from where comprehension, openness, empathy, dialogue and religious tolerance can emerge regarding said minorities, from minorities towards the Catholic majority, and amongst themselves. Recognition and respect must be mutual, and not only in one sense, seen as, and it is important to stress this, there is not only discrimination from majorities towards minorities, but also vice versa, but this aspect has not been studied to a great extent, analysed or taken into consideration.

It is also necessary to share among society, the authorities from the three government levels and mass media, information regarding civil and human rights in terms of the religious aspects, since many problems arise due to ignorance or the lack of

knowledge of said rights, both from those who transgress to those who suffer transgression.

Although formally and legally the right to religious freedom is recognized and established in Article 18 of the Declaration of Human Rights [15], and the Law of Religious Associations and Public Cult (LARCP) enacted in 1992, in Mexico, in practice, this right tends to be ignored, denied and conditioned by authorities, mass media and a large fraction of civil society. These are the challenges that the culture of peace and human rights face.

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