

Nostra Aetate and the Abiding Response:
The Case of Fifty-Years of Graduates of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of
Religion

Michael E. Harvey

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Cincinnati, Ohio

2015

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for Ordination

Referee: Professor Michael J. Cook

Chapter	Page
Acknowledgements	iv
Digest	v
I: Analyses: Nostra Aetate and Its Follow-up Documents Including Impact and Implications.	1
II: Process: The Goals, Challenges, and Results Of the Survey.	25
III: Conclusions: Micro & Macro Analyses and Implications.	77
Appendix A – The Full Text of the Survey.	88
Appendix B – The Sequenced Slides of the Survey.	97
Bibliography	127

Dedication:

For my wife,
The eternal candle to my darkness,
And the ever-steady bridge to my success.

Acknowledgements

I would like to, first, thank my thesis advisor and professor, Dr. Michael Cook, who not only helped me develop the idea for the thesis, but also provided immense support for this project. Students at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion are not provided with a manual for thesis writing, and I would like to both apologize to, and thank, Dr. Cook for taking the time to answer questions stemming from simple ignorance of the process and layout of a project such as this.

Additionally, I offer thanks to the professors, Rabbis, Priests, Pastors, Jewish and Christian laypeople and professionals who have continued to inspire me and fan the flames of my passion for interfaith discourse: Dr. David H. Aaron, Rabbi David F. Sandmel, Rabbi Jonah Pesner, Rabbi Norman M. Cohen, The Reverend Whit Stodghill, & Maureen Rovegno.

Finally, I thank with all my heart and being, my wife, my *besht*, Dr. Barrie Harvey. Your motivation, support, comfort, rationality, and tough love, were all necessary for me to have completed this project. With your dissertation written, and this thesis now complete, I believe we have successfully jumped through the flaming hoop. I love you.

Nostra Aetate and the Abiding Response by Modern American Reform Rabbis:
The Case of Fifty-Years of Graduates of the
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Thesis Digest

On October 28th, 2015, a significant amount of Jews and Catholics, including the Catholic leadership at the Vatican, will acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate: Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*. It is rarely disputed that this document served, at the time of its proclamation, as a watershed event for the *aggiornamento* (bringing up-to-date to meet current needs) of the Catholic Church and for Jewish-Catholic relations. What is unknown is the long-term extent: the legacy of *Nostra Aetate* in terms of its current effect on Jewish-Catholic or Jewish-Christian relations of "lower echelon" Catholics and Jews. A burgeoning complication is the unprecedented new interest in New Testament by many Jews, even laypeople, who -- were they now first exposed to *Nostra Aetate* -- might react differently than did their forebears five decades ago.

While the Second Vatican Council is a well-known event of religious history, there has yet to be a study done analyzing how the Second Vatican Council's declaration of *Nostra Aetate*, specifically paragraph 4, remains processed within the minds of current and retired Jewish professionals, including Rabbis, Cantors, and educators, and the laypeople under their charge. This lack of study and information necessitated this thesis.

The core investigative procedure of this thesis took the form of a carefully constructed electronic survey-questionnaire sent out to all current Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion alumni (permission was secured for receiving an e-mail list from the College-Institute's alumni office).

The aim of this survey and the analysis of its results are to secure information regarding Jewish professionals' degree of familiarity with and understanding, appreciation, and use of *Nostra Aetate* in their personal and general religious education and adult education teaching and in their communal involvement in interfaith relations (including pulpit exchanges and adjunct teaching positions in nearby universities and Catholic seminaries).

My analysis has led me to draw the following three conclusions. First, I have concluded that most Jewish professionals believe they are very involved in Jewish-Christian relations. Second, I have concluded these professionals report that their expertise in this area is primarily a result of self-training. And finally, I conclude that, unfortunately, this self-training may be the reason for a notable disconnect between how involved people think they are in Jewish-Christian relations and their reported degree of genuine expertise, even knowledge on that subject.

Chapter 1

Analysis: *Nostra Aetate* and Its Follow-up Documents Including Impact and Implications

The Catholic Church's Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions—*Nostra Aetate* (Latin for *In our age*)—was developed by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and declared by Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965.

Though the declaration contains general comments and concerns about the Catholic Church's relationship to all non-Christian religions, roughly the majority of the document deals specifically with the Jews. Paragraph 4, the section discussing Jewish-Catholic relations, makes up almost half of the entire document and outlines specific points on the Church's position in relation to Judaism. The points are significant because they had never before been seen in official Church doctrine.

The points were as follows: First, the Church acknowledged a unique connection between itself and the Jewish people, calling it the “bond that spiritually ties the people of the New Covenant to Abraham's stock.”¹ The Church honored the Jewish religion as its predecessor and all Church revelation had been preceded by acts of God in the Old Testament. Second, the Church decided that, as an organization, it should work to “foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect” be developed through discourse within biblical and theological settings. This suggestion acknowledged that, though a large number of Jews did not accept the Gospel, and the Church, members of the Church

¹ Pope Paul VI. “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” *The Vatican*, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html.

must recognize that “nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear.”² Accordingly, because Jews and Christians enjoyed a shared “spiritual patrimony” entailing recognition of the same God, they assuredly had a great deal to learn from one another.

In its third point, the document addressed the deicide charge against the Jews. At the time, this was the most heavily debated point, especially where the word *deicide* itself was concerned. After much debate, the word *deicide* was omitted from the document entirely, but the message remained clear: only a small group of Jews should be held responsible for the death of Jesus, rather than all Jews for all time. The section also argued against claims of supersessionism, stating that “although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God.”³ The section then concluded with a general polemic against persecution in general, and that the Church rejected antisemitism and acts of antisemitism “at any time and by anyone.”⁴

The original declaration was followed up in 1974 by *Nostra Aetate: Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate* and again in 1985 by *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in the Teaching and Catechesis of the Roman Catholic Church*. These follow-up documents, like *Nostra Aetate*, worked to further foster positive Judeo-Christian relations by offering suggestions on how to teach the major points from the original document.

Now, fifty years later, *Nostra Aetate* and its follow-up documents continue to be some of the most important writings on Jewish-Catholic relations. However, because of the time that has passed since their promulgation, it is unclear how relevant they remain

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

for modern Jewish professionals together with their lay constituents. Thus, in this thesis, I examine the degree to which modern Jewish professionals maintain an abiding awareness, interest, and even depth of understanding of these documents and the changes they helped create. While the main focus of this project will be an electronic survey-questionnaire sent out to most Reform Jewish professionals in North America, I will begin by offering a brief over-view of the systemic, Church-sponsored antisemitism that rendered necessary the drafting of *Nostra Aetate* and its follow-up documents. I will then discuss the more recent scholarship on *Nostra Aetate*, which this thesis will in turn modestly extend.

An Overview of Church-Sponsored Antisemitism

The Catholic Church and the Jewish people have a many centuries-long history of conflict. One can trace this tumultuous history to, at least in part, lessons derived from the New Testament, where the presence of anti-Jewish rhetoric appears in alarming quantities or at the least is claimed to have been misinferred therefrom. For example, Jews are called a “brood of Vipers” in Luke 3:7, and Jews attempt to assassinate Jesus in Luke 4:28. In John, chapter 8, Jesus calls the Jews descendants of the devil, and in Chapter 10, Jesus argues that all the Jewish prophets and leaders who came before him were “thieves and bandits.” In multiple New Testament passages, including 1 Thessalonians, chapter 2, the Jews are charged with Jesus’ murder. Given Jesus’ figurehead stature in the Catholic Church, for Jews these kinds of passages were not only alarming but even damning in nature.

The anti-Jewish rhetoric in the New Testament was not the only source of conflict between Jews and Christians during the early decades of the Church. Though loosely connected, Jews and Christians began to compete for the gentile population. This all changed in the 4th century CE, when Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. Beginning with 315 CE, Constantine the Great enacted laws targeted at Jews. One law, for example, stated that “any one of them [Jews] dares to attack with stones or some other manifestation of anger another who has fled their dangerous sect and attached himself to the worship of God [Christianity], he must speedily be given to the flames and burnt together with all his accomplices.”⁵ Laws such as this one marked the first legal precedent for a state sponsored protection of one religious group from another, here Christians from Jews.

In 339 CE, the Laws of Constantius followed, stating: “The prohibition [of intermarriage] is to be preserved for the future lest the Jews induce Christian women to share their shameful lives.”⁶ Laws such as this painted Jews as threats to the Christian way of life. Intermarriage was prohibited not for fear of the intermingling of religions, but because, through the eyes of the empire, marrying a Jew would negatively influence the Christian woman involved.

These laws sponsored antisemitism in conjunction with Church fathers and bishops, including Augustine and John Chrysostom, who argued publicly that Jews lived only to serve as reminders of Jesus’ murder. These individuals further stated that Satan was a partner to the Jewish people. Outspoken ideas such as these, coupled with the Church’s apprehensions lest Christians be coerced back to Judaism through

⁵ Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book, 315-1791* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1938), 4.

⁶ Ibid.

proselytization, resulted in Christians gaining a higher legal status than Jews in the Roman Empire. Additionally, Jewish revolts against Rome, including the Great Revolt (leading to the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem) in 70 CE and the Bar-Kokhba Revolt in the early 2nd Century CE, caused political distrust of Jews by the Roman government.

The Catholic Church continued to grow stronger throughout the Middle Ages and, through its power and influence, its anti-Jewish teachings generated anti-Jewish policies all over Europe. During this period, Church-sanctioned violence against Jews by civilians became commonplace. For example, in 388 CE, “a Christian mob led by the bishop burned the synagogue in Mesopotamia [and] in Palestine a group of monks under Barsauma attacked synagogues and massacred Jews.”⁷ By the 5th century, the Church had approved Christian-sponsored anti-Judaism, and, “now that Christianity had become the religion of the empire, Jews were defenseless against the Christian onslaught.”⁸ When Recared, a Visigothic king of Spain, converted to Catholicism in the 6th century, he instituted a series of increasingly anti-Jewish laws that were maintained for the next hundred years until the state was overthrown by the Arabs. This *Visigothic Code* included the confiscation of Jewish property, and the requirement that Jews be either baptized or exiled.

By the 11th century CE, Jews under Catholic rule were taxed heavily, barred from certain occupations or owning land, and even restricted to certain areas. These restrictions were only the beginning. In 1095, Pope Urban II began the First Crusade in defense of the Roman Catholic Church. While the Crusade’s original goal was to reclaim

⁷ Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Anti-Semitism: A History* (Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2002), 49.

⁸ Ibid.

holy places in and near Jerusalem, the Crusaders passed through Central Europe, beginning in Spain and traveling throughout the Rhineland. For Christians living in Europe, the Muslim occupiers of the Holy Land were out of reach. Instead, they turned their attention to the more immediately “labeled category of outsider close at hand—the Jew.”⁹

The First Crusade initiated the “People’s Crusade” or “Peasants’ Crusade,” leading to pogroms in France and Germany in which “probably one-fourth to one-third of the Jewish population and Germany and Northern France at that time”¹⁰ was massacred or driven to suicide under threat of conversion. The First Crusade, sponsored by the Catholic Church and encouraged by local bishops, initiated the massacre, forced conversion, and forced suicide of thousands of Jews all over Central Europe.

A century later, when Philip Augustus came to power in France in 1179, he confiscated a great deal of Jewish wealth in order to secure capital for himself and the Catholic Church. He gained further assets by imprisoning all Jews under his rule and allowing their release only for ransom. Meanwhile, in Spain, under Alfonso X, the creation and initiation of *Las siete partidas* (the Seven-Part Code) was taking place. These laws included the restriction of Jews from preaching or attempting to convert a Christian under penalty of death and confiscation of all property. Additionally, Christians who were found to have converted to Judaism were put to death. Moreover, the Seven-Part Code forbade Jews to appear in public during Good Friday, banned them from Christian homes, and prohibited them from eating or drinking with a Christian.

⁹ James Carroll, *Constantine’s Sword: The Church and the Jews* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2001), 243.

¹⁰ Edward H. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-Three Centuries of Antisemitism* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985), 93.

Finally, Jews were required to wear a “distinguishing mark upon their heads”¹¹ to avoid them being confused with their Christian counterparts.

Though various individual rulers were responsible for the oppression of Jews, the Vatican was, frequently, directly behind these rulers. For example, in the 13th century, Pope Gregory IX ordered the monarchs of France, England, Spain, and Portugal to seize all Jewish books within their borders so that they could be investigated for any “objectionable statements.” Though only the king of France, Louis IV, agreed to the mandate, and all Jewish books in France were seized in 1240, the Church’s agenda at the time was made quite clear. Their intent was furthered in 1248, when Pope Innocent IV ordered the Talmud specifically to be investigated by the French papal legate, Odo of Chateauroux. Following his investigation, Odo wrote the following in a letter to the Pope:

These books cannot be tolerated in the name of God without injury to the Christian faith; therefore, with the advice of those pious men whom we caused to be gathered especially for that purpose, we pronounce that the said books are unworthy of tolerance, and that they are not to be restored to the Jewish matters, and we decisively condemn them.¹²

As a result of this mandate and subsequent investigation, the Talmud was publicly burnt, together with many other Jewish and rabbinic works.

Unfortunately, Jewish books were not the only items burned under the influence of the Catholic Church in Western Europe. Almost 200 years later, in an attempt to maintain Christian orthodoxy in their kingdoms, Catholic rulers Ferdinand II and Isabella I established the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, or what is more commonly known as the Spanish Inquisition. In 1492 and 1501, royal decrees were

¹¹ Marcus, *Medieval* , 43.

¹² Ibid., 167.

issued that ordered Jews to convert or leave the Catholic-ruled Empire. Over the next 300 years, as the Inquisition continued in one form or another, hundreds of thousands of Jews were expelled from Spain and Portugal and tens of thousands of Jews who did not forcibly convert were subsequently subjected to confiscation of wealth, biased trials, and torture or death. Jews who were condemned to death were burned at the stake. The oppression and marginalizing of Jews, including the investigation into the lives of *conversos* in order to authenticate their Christian identity, continued well into the 18th century.

By the 17th century, Church sponsored or supported antisemitism had spread across Eastern Europe to Poland. In 1648, the Greek Orthodox Cossacks, who had been mistreated by the Roman Catholics, staged an uprising that engendered bitterness towards Polish Jewry. The Cossacks united with the Ukrainian peasants and targeted misplaced hatred against the Jews because of the seeming success of Jewish merchants. Together the Cossacks and the peasants entered the Jewish fortress of Nemirov, killing, raping, and torturing Jews in huge numbers. While the Catholic Church was not *directly* involved in this incident, the cause of the latter has been at least partly attributed to the Church's history of anti-Jewish sentiment, which had deeply imbedded itself in society at large.

In the late 19th century, the Catholic Church in France, despite being unpopular at the time due to the support of revolutionaries, still had enough influence to divide the country over the issue of a single Jewish man. In 1894, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish French officer, was accused of being a spy, convicted of the crime, and sentenced to life imprisonment. Two years after his conviction, evidence appeared identifying another officer as the true culprit. The military court attempted to suppress the truth and frame

Dreyfus due to his Jewish heritage, causing France to be divided into two groups: those who supported the army, who were mostly Catholic, and then those who were *anti-clerical* and supported Dreyfus. While one might argue the political overtones of the affair, one cannot ignore that, when Dreyfus was returned to court in 1899, the pro-military crowds “gathered outside the courtroom, shouting ‘Death to the Jews!’”¹³ In France at this time, the words “Judas” and “traitor” were commonly used interchangeably, as were the words “Judas” and “Jew.”

By the 20th century, the detrimental effects of imbedded antisemitism were made all too apparent. The genocidal acts in Nazi Germany and its occupied territories were the result of centuries-long buildup of anti-Jewish rhetoric within specifically Catholic Churches. As Jack Bemporad states,

On the surface, the Nazis appeared to look like ordinary Christians. Indeed, many Nazis came from Christian families, some attended Church, and it is undeniable that virtually all came from a Christian culture, which had for too long tolerated anti-Semitism.¹⁴

An example of Catholic-born anti-Jewish rhetoric that evolved into Nazi policy in Germany was that of the expressions of antisemitism within the arts. A decade before the Cossack pogroms and 300 years before the Nuremburg Laws, the first recorded “passion play” was performed in Oberammergau, Bavaria in 1634. Other such plays, produced often in Europe, staged the “passion” of Jesus—the last part of his life, including his execution. These plays were explicit in blaming Jews for the “murder” of

¹³ Jonathan Sacks, *The Home We Build Together: Recreating Society* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007), 30.

¹⁴ Jack Bemporad and Michael Shevack, *Our Age: The Historic New Era of Christian-Jewish Understanding* (Hyde Park: New City Press, 1996), 15.

Jesus. Some argue that the “passion play” genre led to a trickle-down effect of anti-Jewish sentiment from the arts to the commoners.

While the inherent antisemitic nature of these plays led to a negative view of the Jews of Germany for the 300 years before the Nazi regime, “it gained an extra dose of notoriety after Hitler endorsed the 1934 production.”¹⁵ Adolf Hitler, though not Catholic, grew up in a Germany that had already been infected with an accepted antisemitic lifestyle. His intense hatred for the Jewish people, it is argued, arose out of “what was probably lower-middle class bigotry shared by many at the time.”¹⁶

The Passion Plays, combined with antisemitic stereotypes and misplaced anger from the German loss of World War I, all laid the foundations for organized public antisemitic oppression and the Holocaust. While the Catholic Church had its disagreements with the Protestant-favored Nazi regime, much of the Nazi antisemitic attitudes could be traced to Catholic doctrine. For example, 19th century German politicians such as Adolf Stoecker, founder of the Christian Social Party, could not have preached that in order to be fully German one must be spiritually Christian without the influence of the Church. The German historian and political writer Heinrich Gotthard von Treischke, the possible writer of the Nazi slogan “the Jews of our misfortune,” would not have viewed Jews as “guests” of Germany rather than citizens if not for the history of Church-sponsored dehumanization of Jews over the course of centuries. European antisemitism even led to self-hatred among Jewish intellectuals such as Kafka, who wrote in his diary “What have I in common with the Jews? I have scarcely anything in

¹⁵ A.J. Goldman, “New Kind of Passion in an ‘Alipine Jerusalem’, Letter from Oberammergau,” *The Jewish Daily Forward* (New York, NY), June 4, 2010.

¹⁶ Allan Hall, “Has Historian Finally Discovered Real Reason for Hitler’s Obsessive Hatred of Jews?” *The Daily Mail Online*, June 19, 2009. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1194194>.

common with myself.”¹⁷ Beginning in the 20th century, Jewish leaders such as Theodor Herzl and Israel Zangwill, decided, as Lord Jonathan Sacks wrote, that

There was no future for Jews in Europe. A half-century later Herzl’s fears came true in a way he could not have imagined in his worst nightmare. By 1945, more than half of Europe’s Jews had been murdered, turned to ash in Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Bergen-Belsen.¹⁸

The Catholic Church’s role during the actual Nazi period is a controversial topic. Throughout the Holocaust and World War II, the Vatican, and specifically Pope Pius XII, was “besieged with pleas for help on behalf of Jews.”¹⁹ Unfortunately, when asked to condemn the Nazi’s atrocities, the Holy See expressed a desire to remain neutral, fearing that Church disapproval would potentially harm Catholics living in Germany and the occupied territories. Pope Pius XII also refused to condemn Nazi violence in Poland when asked to do so by Wladislaw Raczkiewicz, the president of the Polish government-in-exile.

That being said, when Germany invaded Italy in 1943, Pope Pius XII, who was well aware of the upcoming deportation of Italian Jews to concentration and death camps, instructed Catholic institutions, including the Vatican itself, to protect the Jews of Italy. Unfortunately, the Vatican and Catholic institutions were unable to save even half the number of Jews arrested and gassed at Auschwitz that October. Recently discovered letters and diaries from the Holy See at the time shed further light on Pope Pius XII’s view of Jews and the Holocaust during the Nazi period. In 2005, for example, a letter

¹⁷ Louis Begley, “King of Infinite Space: Louis Begley’s Kafka Book,” *The New York Sun* (New York, NY), July 9, 2008.

¹⁸ Sacks, *Home*, 30.

¹⁹ “The Vatican & the Holocaust: Pope Pius XII & the Holocaust,” *Jewishvirtuallibrary.org*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/anti-semitism/pius.html>.

was discovered “showing that Pope Pius XII ordered Jewish babies baptized by Catholics during the Holocaust not to be returned to their parents.”²⁰

Furthermore, at many points during the war, public Catholic assistance of the Jews led only to worsening conditions. For example, in 1942, when Catholic bishops in Holland publicly protested the rounding up of Jews in their state, “in retaliation, the Nazis sent to Auschwitz the Catholics of Jewish descent first. And they hastened the deportation of all the Jews.”²¹ Still, whether Pope Pius XII was simply unwilling or truly unable to help the Jews in Europe is still under dispute by historians.

The Development of *Nostra Aetate*

At the end of World War II, and in the years that followed, the truth about the Holocaust, specifically the systematic extermination of millions of Jews, came to light. These discoveries brought with them feelings of shock and guilt from a great number of Catholics, including those in the Vatican. On October 28, 1958, thirteen years after World War II’s end, Angelo Roncalli was elected pope, succeeding Pope Pius XII. Roncalli took John XXIII as his name. In 1959, Pope John XXIII, described as “the roly-poly peasant pope,”²² surprised the Church, including his closest bishops, with his announcement of his intention to convene an Ecumenical Council. The Second Vatican Council did not officially open until years later, on October 11th, 1962. In the Council’s

²⁰ “The Vatican & the Holocaust: Pope Pius XII & the Holocaust,” *Jewishvirtuallibrary.org*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/anti-semitism/pius.html>.

²¹ William H. Keeler and Eugene J. Fisher. *Memoria Futuri: Catholic-Jewish Dialogue Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Texts and Addresses of Cardinal William H. Keeler* (New York: Paulist Press, 2012) 15.

²² Carroll, *Constantine*, 37.

opening mass, Pope John XXIII “called for an *aggiornamento*, the task, that is, of bringing the church ‘up to date.’”²³

The preparation began before the council, when Pope John XXIII created a new office in the Roman Curia called the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. The Secretariat was one of many ways that Pope John XXIII distanced himself from his predecessor, as John XXIII was extremely sensitive to the genocidal acts of the Holocaust and “the complicity of many Catholics in them.”²⁴ Pope John XXIII, in an unprecedented move, even invited Jewish historian Jules Isaac to the Vatican for a personal meeting in 1960. Isaac had not only lost his entire family, including wife and daughter, to Auschwitz’s gas chambers, but two years after the war’s end founded *Amities Judeo-chretiennes* (Jewish-Christian Friendships). This movement sought to combat antisemitism by helping Christians in “developing a deeper appreciation of Christianity’s Jewish roots.”²⁵

Isaac’s visit to the Vatican was a catalyst in both the formation of the Secretariat and for Pope John XXIII’s charging of Cardinal Augustine Bea to meet with Isaac and other Jewish leaders including Nahum Goldmann, the president of the World Jewish Congress and co-chair of the World Conference of Jewish Organizations. The purpose of those meetings was to secure “a commitment to work toward Catholic-Jewish cooperation in the struggle against racial prejudice and religious intolerance.”²⁶ When Isaac departed from his meeting with Pope John XXIII, Isaac asked him, “‘Can I leave

²³ Ibid., xxiii.

²⁴ John W. O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008), 219.

²⁵ Richard R. Gaillardetz and Catherine E. Clifford, *Keys to the Council: Unlocking the Teaching of Vatican II* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012), 180.

²⁶ Ibid., 187.

with hope?’ A question to which the Pope replied, ‘you are entitled to more than hope.’”²⁷

In 1961, the Secretariat prepared a schema titled “On the Jews,” a significant predecessor to *Nostra Aetate*. “On the Jews,” and the topic of Jewish-Catholic relations more generally, encountered significant opposition before the council even opened. When “On the Jews” leaked out to the world, a very vocal Arab community voiced their dissent. The 1960s were a time of war between the State of Israel and the surrounding Arab nations and when the Arab leaders learned about the Pope’s intentions to address the *Jewish Question*, “they dispatched diplomatic envoys to the Vatican to express their displeasure. They viewed any support for the Jewish community as a political matter, not a religious one.”²⁸ The Egyptian government, in particular, began to spread the message that a “world Zionist plot had been hatched to take advantage of Vatican II.”²⁹ This led Christian and, specifically, Eastern Catholic bishops to worry that if Pope John XXIII’s initiative for dialogue with the Jews was misinterpreted as a political endorsement of the State of Israel, Christians living within Arab lands could be in danger. As a result, the Central Preparatory Commission removed “On the Jews” from the Council’s agenda.

Cardinal Bea, however, sent Pope John XXIII a convincing memo on why the issue of Judeo-Christian relations should be addressed by the Council. Bea’s memo detailed reasons including the direct and indirect actions by the Church that led to the Holocaust, the continued preaching of Catholic clergy who “accused the Jews of deicide

²⁷ Gary Spruch, “Abraham Joshua Heschel, the AJC, and the Spirit of *Nostra Aetate*,” *The American Jewish Committee: Wide Horizons* (2008): 7, accessed October 8, 2014, <http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/%7B42d75369-d582-4380-8395-d25925b85eaf%7D/WIDE%20HORIZONS.PDF>.

²⁸ Gaillardetz and Clifford, *Keys*, 181.

²⁹ Spruch, “Heschel,” 3, accessed October 8, 2014.

and presented them as accursed and rejected by God,”³⁰ as well as seeing that other Christian movements, including the World Council of Churches, were publicly calling upon their associated churches to condemn antisemitism. The Vatican, Bea argued, could no longer ignore the issue due to political pressure.

Bea traveled to the American Jewish Committee’s headquarters in New York a year later to continue his meetings with Jewish leaders such as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. This series of meetings over the years preceding and during Vatican II produced two memoranda. These memoranda, entitled *The Image of the Jew in Catholic Teaching*, and *Anti-Jewish Elements in Catholic Liturgy*, were created by Cardinal Bea after asking Heschel and Tanenbaum a series of questions. The two Rabbis responded to the questions, and discussed “instances in which the Jews were portrayed in an extremely negative light”³¹ in Catholic liturgy and teachings. In 1962, Heschel, working closely with Tanenbaum, produced a third memorandum, which took a different approach. *On Improving Catholic-Jewish Relations* was a series of recommendations from the Jewish community to the Catholic Church, rather than a response to questions by the Church. In this memorandum, Heschel spoke on positive assertive topics such as the need for *Tikkun Olam*. He also discussed the negative and sometimes harmful results of *lashon hara*, speaking ill of others. Heschel proposed, among other things, that the Church

‘reject and condemn those who assert that the Jews as a people’ are responsible for the crucifixion and because of this are ‘accursed and condemned to suffer dispersion and deprivation throughout the ages.’ Second he proposed that the Church cease its efforts to convert the Jew and instead acknowledge the ‘existence of the Jew as Jews,’ ‘their loyalty to the Torah,’ and the ‘high price in

³⁰ John W. O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008), 220.

³¹ Spruch, “Heschel,” 5, accessed October 8, 2014.

suffering and martyrdom' the Jews have paid for 'preserving the Covenant and the legacy of holiness in faith and devotion.'³²

When Vatican II officially opened in 1962, Cardinal Augustine Bea introduced to the floor of the council *De Judaeis et de non Christianis*, the preceding declaration that eventually evolved into *Nostra Aetate*. *De Judaeis et de non Christianis* was a direct result of his meetings with Heschel and Tanenbaum. Opposition was quickly voiced. Cardinals such as Ignace Tappouni of Syrian rite stated, without apology, that this kind of document was both “inopportune” and would “cause them grave difficulties in their pastoral activities.”³³ Unsurprisingly, the former Pope Pius XII, now Pope Emeritus Ruffini, was one of the sternest opponents to this movement towards a Jewish schema document. His more unapologetic statements included that “We do not need exhortations to love the Jews...they need exhortations to love us”³⁴ and “We need to pray that God will ‘remove the veil’ from their eyes that prevents them from seeing Christ as the Messiah.” Ruffini continued, arguing that “that is a sign of our love for them, as is the fact that during the last war we protected them from the Nazis and prevented their deportation.”³⁵

He additionally pushed for a doctrine to be more inclusive of all non-Christian religions, including Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, without “singling out any one of them for special mention.”³⁶ In addition to Ruffini, a group of bishops from Italy, Spain, and Latin America voiced their concerns during the debate, stating “the view that an anti-

³² Ibid., 6.

³³ O'Malley, *What Happened*, 223.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

Jewish position was an integral part of Catholic tradition supported by the Scriptures and could not be reversed.”³⁷

In a more surprising move, bishops from Asia and Africa spoke in favor of the doctrine, stating that the Church should not only speak to its relationship with the Jews, but to “other religions to which two-thirds of the world’s population belong.”³⁸ In response, Cardinal Bea, in 1964, opened his presentation about the newly forming

Declaration, insisting that it

has nothing to do with any political questions, specifically nothing to do with Zionism or with the state of Israel. Yes, it will be possible for people to misinterpret the text and manipulate it for political ends, but we must not for that reason forsake our duty...what is at stake here is our responsibility to truth and justice, our duty of gratitude to God...in setting forth these matters the church and this council absolutely cannot tolerate that any political authority or political considerations intrude.³⁹

Despite a great deal of turmoil and debate within the commissions in the Vatican, a revised schema, now known as *Nostra Aetate*, was passed, by large majority (2,221 to 88), in the final session of the Vatican Council. The message from both Cardinal Bea and Jewish leaders was too overwhelming for those who spoke in dissent, and Pope Paul VI promulgated it in October of 1965.

The 1974 Guidelines and the 1985 Notes

Shortly after the 9th anniversary of the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*, Pope Paul VI, working with Cardinal Willebrands, the president of the new Commission for the Catholic Church’s religious relations with the Jews, published the document: *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration “Nostra Aetate” (n.4)*.

Unlike the previous document, which spoke of the Catholic Church’s relationship to all

³⁷ Gaillardetz and Clifford, *Keys*, 182.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ O’Malley, *What Happened*, 222.

non-Christian religions, the *Guidelines* speaks specifically to the topic of paragraph 4 of *Nostra Aetate*, namely the Church's relationship with the Jewish people. The four sections of the *Guidelines* consist of *Dialogue*, which speaks to the need for Christians to be aware of the difficulties and offense their missionizing presents to Jews; *Liturgy*, which addresses the problematic anti-Jewish texts in both the New Testament and Christian liturgy; *Teaching and Education*, which emphasizes a better understanding by Christians of Judaism in general; and *Joint Social Action*, pledging that Jews and Christians will work together "seeking social justice and peace at every level – local, national and international."⁴⁰

The *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in the Teaching and Catechesis of the Roman Catholic Church* was published under the leadership of Pope John Paul II, who was the first pope to visit Auschwitz, and the first pope to make an official papal visit to a synagogue. Three years before the *Notes* were published, Pope John Paul II spoke to a delegation of experts, all of whom had met in Rome to study Jewish-Catholic relations,

We should aim...that Catholic teaching at its different levels in catechesis to children and young people, presents Jews and Judaism, not only in an honest and objective manner, free from prejudices and without any offences, but also with full awareness of the heritage common [to Jews and Christians].

The six sections of the *Notes*, a far longer set of documentation than its 1974 predecessor, were "intended to put into ecclesial practice the recommendations contained in *Nostra Aetate* and the 1974 *Guidelines*."⁴¹ Section I speaks on the respect for religious liberty towards the Jews, and recognizes the need for accurate teaching on Jews and

⁴⁰ Cardinal Willebrands, "Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*," *The Vatican*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19741201_nostra-aetate_en.html.

⁴¹ Dermot A. Lane, *Stepping Stones to Other Religions: A Christian Theology of Inter-religious Dialogue*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011), 75-76.

Judaism to avoid the dangers of antisemitism. Section II discusses the idea of typology, and that Christians and Jews may read the Old Testament differently. Section III discusses Jesus' Jewish heritage and that there were times when his "relations with the Pharisees were not always or wholly polemical."⁴² Sections IV and V reiterate the needs set forth in the *Guidelines* to reflect on the representation of Jews in both the New Testament and Christian liturgy. Part F of Section IV forcibly states what was argued in the original *Nostra Aetate* document in regards to the charge of deicide on all Jews: "There is no putting the Jews who knew Jesus and did not believe in him, or those who opposed the preaching of the apostles, on the same plane with Jews who came after or those of today...The Catechism of the Council of Trent teaches that Christian sinners are more to blame for the death of Christ than those few Jews who brought it about."

Most notably, the *Notes* offered for the first time in a Vatican document the recognition of both the State of Israel, and an acknowledgement of the Holocaust. Overall, the *Notes* were meant to put all previous *Guidelines* into realistic practice for both lay Catholics and Catholic clergy. The *Notes* conclude by stating that "Our two traditions are so related, they cannot ignore each other. Mutual knowledge must be encouraged at every level."

Impact and Implications

⁴² Pope John Paul II, "Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church," *The Vatican*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19820306_jews-judaism_en.html.

A great deal has been accomplished by the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* and its follow-up documents. The Catholic Church has recognized the dangers of anti-Jewish rhetoric within the New Testament and its liturgy, including words such as *perfidies Judaeis* (perfidious Jews) that stood proudly within the pages of the Good Friday prayers. The Church has acknowledged the direct line from this rhetoric to antisemitic acts of hatred and violence, including the genocidal acts of the Holocaust. Catholic scholars and preachers have tried since *Nostra Aetate* to “shift the blame for the death of Jesus to the Romans, who after all invented crucifixion.”⁴³ In addition, there was an inherent shift in Catholic Church politics and its view towards Jewish-Catholic relations, leading to Pope John Paul II’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and its subsequent document by Cardinal Edward Cassidy: *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, which states:

At the end of this Millennium the Catholic Church desires to express her deep sorrow for the failures of her sons and daughters in every age. This is an act of repentance (teshuva), since, as members of the Church, we are linked to the sins as well as the merits of all her children.

An official Vatican commission would never have uttered those words, let alone published them in an official Church document, if it had not been for the preceding documents of *Nostra Aetate*, *Guidelines*, and *Notes*, as well as their succeeding impact and influence. When John Paul II visited Jerusalem in 2000, he spoke a prayer that reflects a significant transition of thinking within the Holy See and papal authority:

God of our fathers, You chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your Name to the Nations. We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant.⁴⁴

⁴³ Carroll, *Constantine*, 39.

⁴⁴ “Nostra Aetate: Transforming the Catholic-Jewish Relationship.” *Archive.adl.org*, <http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/a9659c0f-2958-4e48-8418-530a140f02d4,db7611a2-02cd-43af-8147-649e26813571,frameless.html>.

Though the work is not yet complete, *Nostra Aetate* appears to have had a lasting impact on the Catholic Church and its authority in terms of the view of the Jewish people through the eyes of the Christian. Even the view of Jewish-Christian dialogue has shifted to a more positive light, which has provided the Catholic Church, with what Dr. Eugene Fisher, the Emeritus Associate Director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, calls “uncounted spiritual insights and enrichments from Judaism's ongoing reflection on, and interpretation and current application of our shared sacred texts in the Old Testament.”⁴⁵

The reaction from the Jewish side of the dialogue since *Nostra Aetate* has not been insignificant either. Positive Jewish response can be seen at the organizational level, through the formation, for example, of groups such as the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Relations, which was established to specifically represent World Jewry to the Catholic Church. The president at the time, Rabbi David Rosen, speaking at a conference in 2005 celebrating the 40th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, stated,

These forty years since the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* have seen a remarkable reckoning of the soul on the part of the Church and its rediscovery of its unique relationship with Judaism and the Jewish People which itself is now at the beginning of its own reappraisal of this relationship.⁴⁶

Additionally, in 1995, over two hundred Rabbis and intellectuals signed the document *Dabru Emet* (Speak [the] Truth), which specifically addressed Jewish-Christian issues, though from an admittedly skewed Jewish point of view. The document, while acknowledging the positive shift in Jewish-Christian relations, speaks to

⁴⁵ Eugene Fisher, “Vatican II, 40 Years Later: “*Nostra Aetate*” *www.zenit.org*. Last modified June 27, 2003, <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/vatican-ii-40-years-later-nostra-aetate>.

⁴⁶ Rabbi David Rosen, “*Nostra Aetate*, Forty Years After Vatican II. Present and Future Perspectives.” *The Vatican*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20051027_rabbi-rosen_en.html.

the need for a “thoughtful Jewish response.”⁴⁷ The document includes headings such as “Jews and Christians worship the same God,”⁴⁸ and “A new relationship between Jews and Christians will not weaken Jewish practice.”⁴⁹ Despite being viewed by many as one of the two key documents of Jewish-Catholic dialogue, the other being *Nostra Aetate*, some hold serious reservations of its legitimacy. Many of the Rabbis and intellectuals who had signed the document, it was discovered, knew little about the New Testament; moreover, no signatory knew the identity of the others until the document was published. The document is also criticized for being created by a mostly American cohort that chose not to consult with Jews outside of the United States. After the publication of *Dabru Emet*, like many aspects of Jewish-Catholic and Jewish-Christian relations, the Jewish reaction was mixed, “Some Jews have applauded it; other Jews have rejected it; other Jews have ignored it.”⁵⁰

Present State of Affairs

The beginning of the 21st century seemed to be an unprecedented time in the relationship between the Vatican and the Jewish people, both on the institutional and grass roots level. That being said, certain events have often challenged the Jewish confidence in the impact of Vatican II and the progress made. One of the more recent instances was the production of Mel Gibson’s 2004 *Passion of the Christ*, which stirred up concerns dating back to the original Oberammergau Passion Play, once again

⁴⁷ “Dabru Emet,” *Dabru Emet*, *jcrelations.net*, http://www.jcrelations.net/Dabru_Emet_-_A_Jewish_Statement_on_Christians_and_Christianity.2395.0.html.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ David Novak, “The Two Key Documents of Jewish-Catholic Dialogue.” *www.zenit.org*, Last modified April 18, 2002, <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/the-two-key-documents-of-jewish-catholic-dialogue>.

depicting Jews responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. The movie, which opened on February 25th (Ash Wednesday), 2004, became the highest grossing R-rated film in United States history. Many Rabbis believed that this production outright rejected the progress made at Vatican II and by the subsequent documents, and put the Catholic Church at risk of erasing decades of progress in Jewish-Catholic relations. Even the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs called the movie “one of the most troublesome texts, relative to anti-Semitic potential, that any of us had seen in twenty-five years.”⁵¹ The problem was that, incomprehensibly from a Jewish perspective, the film-review office of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops ended up endorsing the film, and so also, it appears, did Pope John Paul II.

What is not clear, therefore, as the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* approaches, is the view of the document and its impact within the minds of Jewish professionals, namely Rabbis, Cantors, and educators not to mention the Jew in the pew. In recent months, organizations such as the Council of the Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations, currently document the upcoming plans by the Church to celebrate the anniversary, including events on the institutional level. In 2013, the Times of Israel reported that 22nd International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee held a meeting in which the official statement said “that the upcoming 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* in 2015 is an opportune time to reaffirm its denunciation of Anti-Semitism.”⁵²

⁵¹ John T. Pawlikowski, “Christian Anti-Semitism: Past History, Present Challenges Reflections in Light of Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ*,” *Journal of Religion and Film* 8, no. 1 (2004), accessed October 8, 2014, <http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/2004Symposium/Pawlikowski.htm>.

⁵² Lazar Berman, “Protect Christians and Jews, Says Major Catholic-Jewish Conference,” www.timesofisrael.com, last modified October 18, 2013, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/protect-christians-and-jews-says-major-catholic-jewish-conference/>.

Catholic parishes, on the local level, are intending to publish the document on their websites, discuss the impact and influence of *Nostra Aetate* in sermons, and even remodel their churches to better serve the teachings *Nostra Aetate* produced. Bishops and archdioceses around the world intend to send resource materials and ideas for celebration to parishes in order for them to properly honor the anniversary. While essays, books, and articles by Catholics and Jews were written at the 40th year anniversary, in 2005) there is, as of yet, no critical study of the modern Jewish (in our case) HUC graduate professionals' (Rabbis, Cantors, educators—even their well-read laity) understanding of *Nostra Aetate* after the 50th anniversary (see, however, the forthcoming *scholar* production: *A Jubilant Jubilee: Vatican II at Fifty Years*, ed. Gilbert Rosenthal [Eugene: Wipf and Stock]). The view of the impact of *Nostra Aetate* may very well differ among Jewish professionals who were alive during its proclamation from those who were born long after. The amount of learning Jewish professionals have or are given about the New Testament and Catholic Church documents in seminaries, or universities, since *Nostra Aetate* may also vary. Finally, while the Jewish professionals of today may view *Nostra Aetate* as a watershed event of its time, it is unknown how much interest the document continues to command among Jews more widely: the overall problem that this thesis attempts to address.

Chapter 2

Process: The Goals, Challenges, and Results Of the Survey

Thought Process of Survey and Goals

On October 28th, 1965, the Second Vatican Council released the final version of *Nostra Aetate: Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* §4. The 50th anniversary presents an opportunity to evaluate the question of the *Declaration's* abiding significance. Despite numerous academic discussions of *Nostra Aetate* over the decades, existing research on relevant attitudes of Jewish non-specialists is insufficient. Some kind of a survey of current Jewish professionals (e.g., Rabbis, Cantors, educators, communal service workers, chaplains, and their constituents, etc.) would provide new data to broaden the conversation on the document's continued impact.

The survey was carefully crafted to both collect relevant data and to appeal to the intended respondents, members of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Alumni Email List (comprising various schools: seminary, cantorial, education, communal service, chaplaincy, graduate study [masters and doctoral programs], etc.) As an HUC-JIR student, I chose to confine the project to that institution rather than extend to other Reform Jewish institutions, such as the Union for Reform Judaism or Central Conference of American Rabbis (although many individuals among these other institutions will indeed also be found among HUC-JIR graduates). In order to utilize the necessary email list, I sought approval from the Dean of the Cincinnati Campus, the Manager of Institutional Research & Development, the International Registrar, and both

the Local and National Directors of Alumni Engagement. I was then given access to the Survey Monkey account held by HUC-JIR.

The survey canvassing the HUC-JIR Alumni list as expected received the greatest degree of response from graduates of the rabbinical program. Because Rabbis, especially, tend to have limited free time (perhaps true of everyone) the survey was designed to be both concise and comprehensive.

Process of Drafting the Survey

The Email title was carefully crafted to encourage a high response rate. I sent sample Email subject-line titles to several Rabbis to gauge their opinion as to what might entice an average Rabbi to respond. A few Rabbis suggested that a humorous title would be ideal, while others recommended emphasizing that the author is an HUC-JIR student in need of assistance. However, the most effective title style sparked intellectual curiosity, “Deicide & the Jews.” While the subject of deicide is only one aspect of the survey, it is perhaps the most well-known and intriguing term in connection with *Nostra Aetate* from a Jewish perspective.

The survey, in its final draft, included twenty-nine (29) multiple-choice questions. Two additional questions in essay format followed: the first asked for contact information for potential follow-up questions; the second invited further comments on the issue and/or the survey itself. The survey introduction needed to encourage potential respondents to participate. I emphasized that the data was being collected for a thesis project at HUC-JIR, rather than for private personal interest. Given the prominence of the thesis advisor, a professor at HUC-JIR, I made sure to acknowledge his involvement

in the project. The introduction also included the research goals and purpose of the study. In order to encourage thoughtful responses, I explained that the data for this thesis were to depend entirely upon the answers to the survey.

The original draft featured more than thirty-five (35) questions, which were evaluated for effectiveness. I removed repetitive or complicated questions, as well as those that were outside the contours of the study. For example, the question, “Deicide issues coming up in my community have been substantially on the wane in recent decades,” was deemed too convoluted. The question, “Within the lives of interfaith (Jewish/Catholic) couples whom I know — whether formal conversion has or has not been undergone — *Nostra Aetate* is familiar to approximately what percentage of such couples?” was removed due to lack of relevance.

In addition to the questions that spoke directly on the topic, the survey included a series of demographic questions, including gender, age-range, degree earned, and profession. The most important demographic questions focused on location, i.e., to where the respondents had relocated since leaving HUC-JIR, as well as from which campus they received their degree or professional training. These questions were vital to ascertain if Jewish-Christian relations show regional differences.

Assumptions Going Into the Project

The Likert Scale is the most effective and widely-used instrument for research of this kind and was thus used in this survey. While critics of the Likert Scale argue that any particular attitude would not truly exist on the scale, its universal usage makes it easy for respondents to use accurately. The scale, ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly

Disagree,” does not push the respondent to answer with a concrete “yes” or “no” on the topic, allowing for a range of attitudes.

I also included the response option, “I am not informed enough to have an opinion,” even with the concern that this option, in addition to the “Neither agree nor disagree” option, would provide too many neutral choices for the respondents. However, the omission of this option could force respondents to choose an inaccurate response, thus corrupting the data. If a respondent were to choose the option “I am not informed enough to have an opinion” for every answer, that would provide data as to the level of knowledge on the topic. While it is unlikely that a Jewish professional would not have an opinion about Jewish-Christian relations in general, a respondent might not have an opinion about a specific question. Each question also included an option for further comment. The comment sections provided the respondents a place to expand upon a strongly held opinion, to clarify a response, or to critique the question.

The survey examined the degree to which modern Reform Rabbis, especially, maintain an abiding awareness, interest, and depth of understanding of the declaration in *Nostra Aetate*, specifically section 4. I assumed that Reform Rabbis, and perhaps other Jewish professionals, were at least generally aware of *Nostra Aetate* and its upcoming 50th anniversary. I also assumed that most Reform Rabbis, Cantors, and educators are involved in some form of Jewish-Christian relations.

While it was assumed that while Reform Rabbis knew of the existence of *Nostra Aetate*, it seemed unlikely to serve as an educational tool in their congregations. While most Reform congregations have a significant population of interfaith couples, the assumption was that *Nostra Aetate* would not regularly be included in conversation with

clergy. I also assumed that most Reform Rabbis were unfamiliar with the teachings about Jews in Catholic textbooks and how these teachings have evolved.

Generally, it was assumed that most Jewish professionals would be able to effectively answer the majority of the survey questions. Many of the questions ask the respondents to answer for *others*, including what they believe their congregants or fellow Jewish professionals think about certain issues. I assumed that most of the respondents would be able to make informed conjectures on these questions.

Results of the Survey by Constituency and Overall

I sent the survey to the HUC-JIR Alumni Email list twice, on April 28th, 2014 and May 19th, 2014. The timing was chosen specifically to coincide with a working Jewish professional's schedule, i.e., after the Passover holiday, and before Memorial Day Weekend and the summer. The survey received 762 total respondents from the roughly 1,500 in the HUC-JIR alumni mailing list. 477 responses were made on April 28th, 2014, 53 responses followed on May 5th, 2014, and 6 responses on May 12th, 2014. When the second Email went out on May 19th, 2014, 209 responses were collected, and 13 more on May 26th, 2014.

The typical respondent was male, between 40-65 years of age, Reform Rabbi, from the Northeastern United States, educated in the Midwestern United States, and receiving Jewish professional training from a seminary. Jewish-Christian relations, according to the survey, play a major role in the work of over half the respondents. The survey showed that Jewish-Christian relations were important to the majority of the respondents, even if not a part of their professional work. Only about 1% of the

respondents strongly disagreed that Jewish-Christian matters and relations were a major concern outside of professional work.

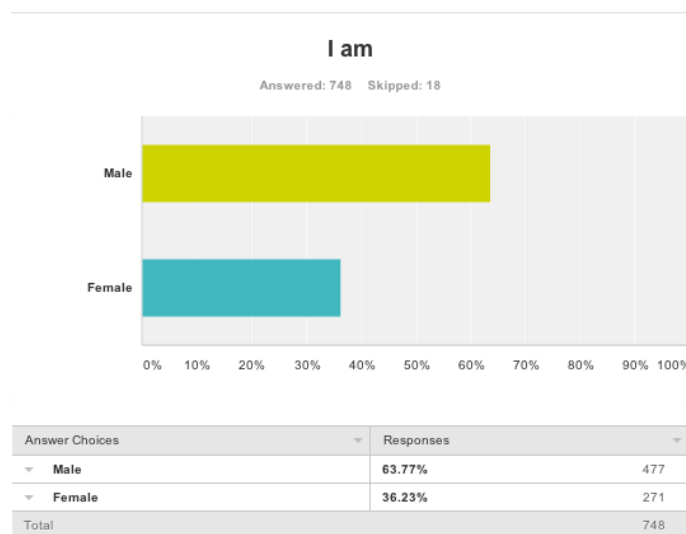
Survey Questions and Their Corresponding Categories

Due to the nature of qualitative research, the conclusions drawn from the survey are somewhat subjective. The comments appended are clarifying to the writer but not necessarily discernible from the graphics.

Demographic Questions (Questions 1–6)

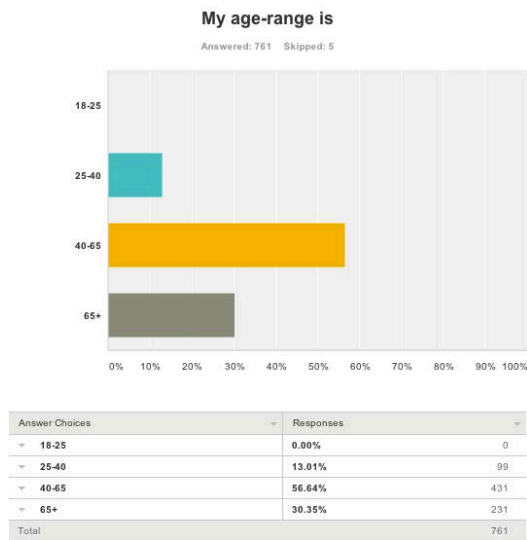
Questions 1-6 served purely demographic purposes and allow one to get a clearer picture of the respondents. The data allows the reader to see if the responses are representative of the larger population of Reform Rabbis and to gauge the range of professions, and the degree of participation among professions, represented amongst respondents.

Question 1



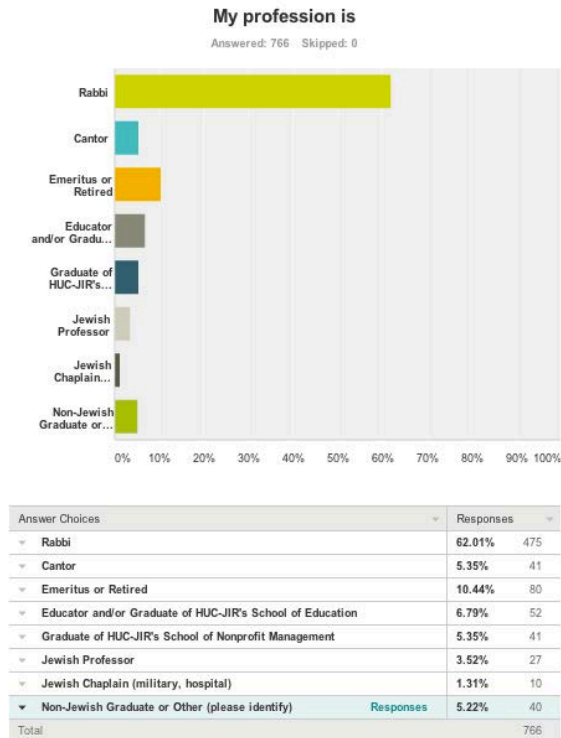
64% of the respondents identified as male, while 36% identified as female, which is expected. Men have historically filled the position of Rabbi, and HUC-JIR has only been ordaining women since 1972. The progress towards a large constituency of women in the pulpit was slow, and therefore it is logical that, at present day, the percentage of women Rabbis would still be smaller.

Question 2



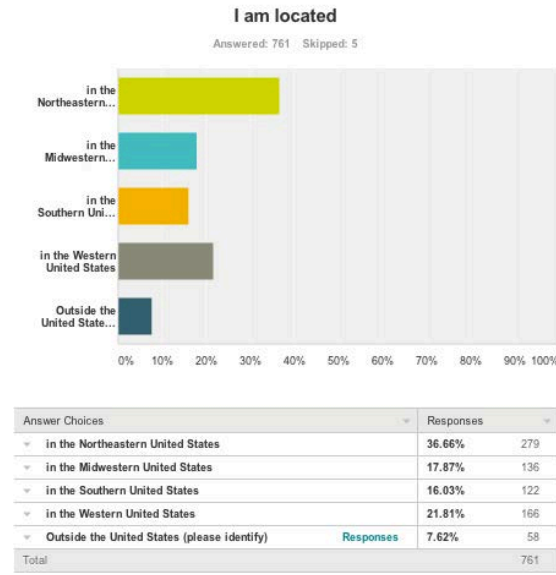
The majority of respondents in the 40-65 age-range is expected, due to the higher enrollment at HUC-JIR in previous decades. Given these numbers, it is unlikely that I will be able to draw meaningful correlations between age and outlook on Jewish-Christian relations. The number of respondents over the age of 65 was surprising, as this group is most likely retired (and perhaps less likely to regularly read CCAR emails) and potentially less computer savvy. However, it is possible that the much larger class sizes during their tenure at HUC-JIR could account for this.

Question 3



The survey questions were crafted to be relevant and inclusive for most Jewish professions, not just the rabbinate. It is expected that the majority of respondents would be Rabbis (nearly 75%, including emeriti and chaplains), as they would perhaps have the highest chance of traveling in Jewish-Christian relations circles. Other Jewish professionals, such as educators, might encounter Jewish-Christian relations in their work, but this is uncertain. The low number of respondents identifying as Cantors (5%) was surprising.

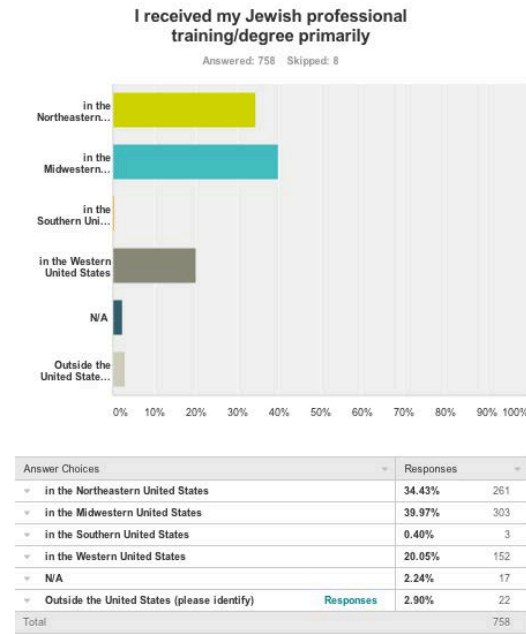
Question 4



I assumed that most of the respondents would be located in the Northeastern United States, as Jewish populations in that area are dense, i.e., New York, and Boston. Due to the large Jewish population in Los Angeles and other California cities, it is not unexpected to see this area as the next highest percentage. It was surprising that only 30 more people responded from the West Coast than the Midwest; with such a large Jewish population in the Western United States, I expected to see the number significantly more skewed. Due to the smaller Jewish populations in the Midwest and Southern United States, these numbers too, are as expected.

It was also expected that a low percentage of respondents would be currently residing outside of the United States; nevertheless, 8% is a significant number. Respondents of this survey were represented in Israel, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, South America, Korea, Ireland, France, and the Netherlands.

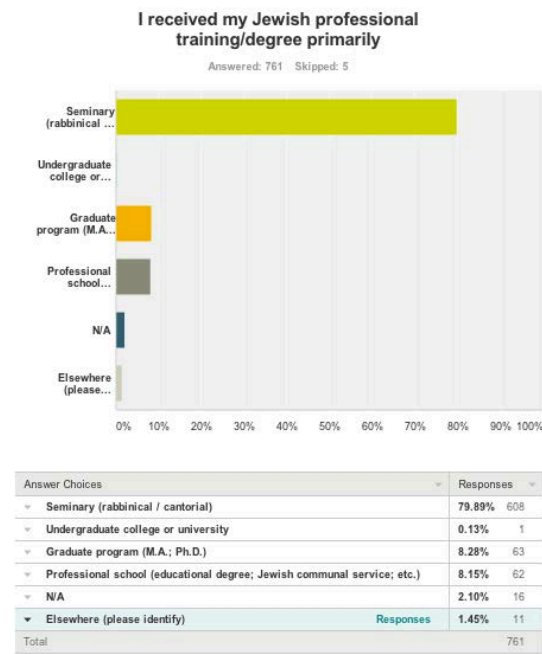
Question 5



The survey did not wish to assume that all of the respondents received their education from only HUC-JIR, and therefore I worded the question with regional areas rather than specific schools or campuses. A respondent could have, for instance, studied Jewish studies at an undergraduate institution and felt that was primary, next to an educational program at HUC-JIR. At the same time, in all probability the answers will suggest at which HUC-JIR campus respondents studied (Cincinnati, New York, or Los Angeles). The results showed only a tiny percentage of respondents whose education came from areas without an HUC-JIR campus. Approximately, then, the percentage of respondents from the New York and Cincinnati campuses is almost equal in number, while the percentage from Los Angeles is 20% lower. This is to be expected, as the Los Angeles campus did not begin to ordain students for decades after the other campuses. Only 0.4% of respondents stated they received their Jewish professional training or degree in the Southern United States, which was anticipated as no HUC-JIR campus exists in that region. Finally, 3% of respondents stated they received their Jewish

professional degree/training outside of the United States, and were given the option to specify where. Most of these received their training/degree in Israel; however, several respondents wished to clarify that they spent time at more than one HUC-JIR campus. A small minority of respondents studied at the Leo Baeck College in London.

Question 6



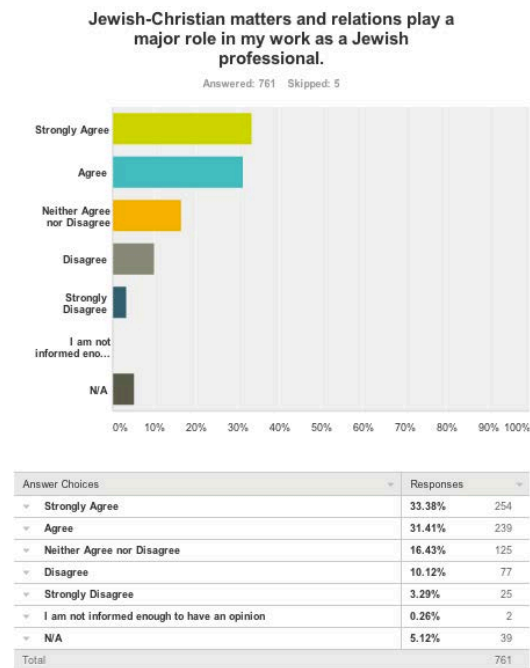
Considering the HUC-JIR alumni list was the sample, 80% of seminary graduates is in line with the assumed set of respondents. The other results, 8% from a graduate program outside of HUC-JIR and 8% from a professional school, are not insignificant and elicit curiosity as to what was studied and where. It is possible that by “professional school,” respondents were referring to their graduation of the HUC-JIR School of Education. 1% of respondents indicated that they received training or degrees “elsewhere,” including multiple institutions such as seminaries and PhD programs. Comments from this option included: “PhD in Australia,” and “10 years in the field prior

to attending HUC-JIR.” Other respondents commented: “Both seminary and PhD programs at two different institutions,” “both undergraduate, rabbinical school, study in Israel,” and “HUC and the Hebrew Univ.”

Respondent Involvement in Jewish-Christian Relations (Questions 7-8, 16-17)

This set of questions gauges respondents’ involvement in Jewish-Christian relations. Questions 7 and 8 examine respondents’ current connection and genuine attention in Jewish-Christian matters in and outside of their professional work. Questions 16 and 17 ask about future involvement, assuming the existence of future anniversary events for *Nostra Aetate*. These questions inquire if Jewish professionals would take an active or passive role in those coming anniversary events, and if they would do so out of personal enthusiasm rather than professional obligation.

Question 7



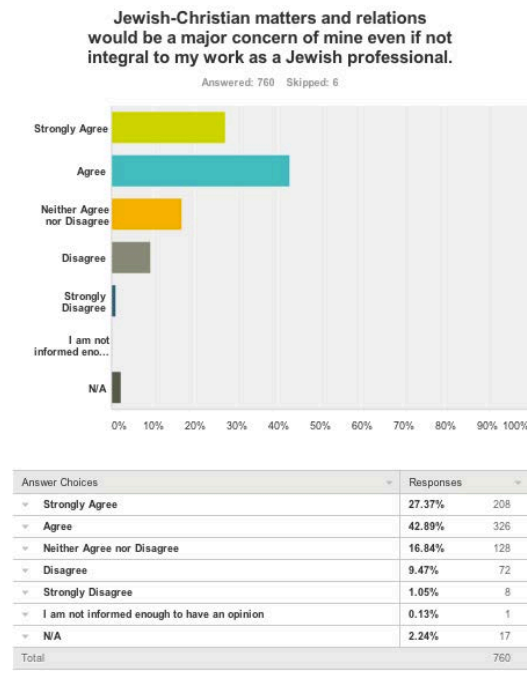
While interaction with Christian clergy may be commonplace in the Reform rabbinate, the question asks if Jewish-Christian relations play a *major* role in the respondents' work. This question should, in theory, separate respondents who simply encounter Jewish-Christian matters and those who actively work in Jewish-Christian relations. The percentage of those who agree is large, with over 60% stating that Jewish-Christian matters play a major role. Respondents who took the survey may be, by default, more interested in Jewish-Christian relations, which could account for this high number. Two respondents stated that they were not informed enough to have an opinion. It is difficult to understand how one cannot be informed enough to decide if Jewish-Christian matters play a role in one's own work.

The question prompted 70 comments. Some offered additional background: "I'm not Jewish," "I am not working as a Jewish professional," or "I am retired." Some wished to clarify that Jewish-Christian matters do play a role, but not a "major" role: "I quibble with 'major'—it comes up but is not core to what I do." Some respondents mentioned that they teach at Christian institutes, "I teach at Aquinas Institute of Theology—A Roman Catholic (Dominican Order) seminary and graduate school," and "I teach at a Disciples of Christ seminary part-time."

Another respondent commented in the same vein: "our congregation shares space with a church. We relate to the church on a daily basis for administrative purposes. But theological and practical issues come up all the time." Finally, several respondents commented that Jewish-Christian matters at one time played a major role in their professional lives, but they do not currently: "they did at one time but less so now. I was

previously in community relations work,” as well as, “early in my career, in the late 70’s and 80’s, they were very important in my work.”

Question 8

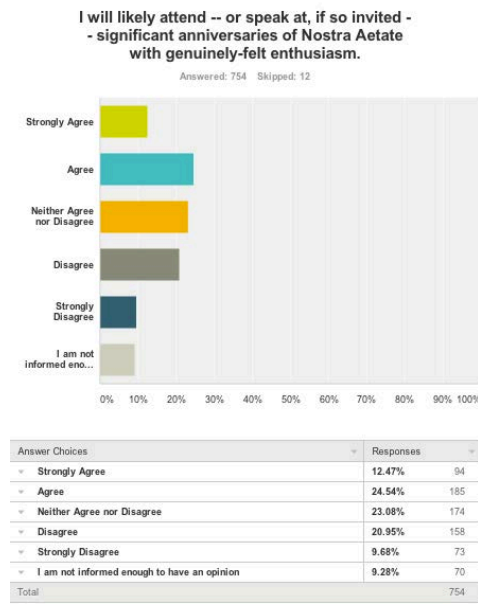


Almost 70% of respondents agreed with the statement that Jewish-Christian matters and relations would be a major concern of theirs, even if they were not part of their work as Jewish professionals. This is a surprisingly high number. About 10% of the respondents felt that Jewish-Christian matters are simply a part of their work and not a personal interest. Comments included: “I agree with this assertion in my work as a Christian professional,” and “I coteach [*sic*] Judaism and Christianity with a pastor whose church meets in my synagogue, and have done this several times before while I was at Stanford Hillel.” Two respondents commented that the question was challenging to answer; comments included: “Greater clarification of ‘Jewish-Christian’ matters is

required for me to form an opinion,” “I think I agree but really a hypothetical question,” and finally “this question is very poorly designed.” One respondent commented in detail:

I didn’t have an early awareness of Jewish-Christian matters because both my parents are Jewish and neither of them were interested in interfaith issues or work. I think such issues would only be a concern if they affected me in a personal way (i.e. if I was living in a more Christian environment than New York or San Francisco).

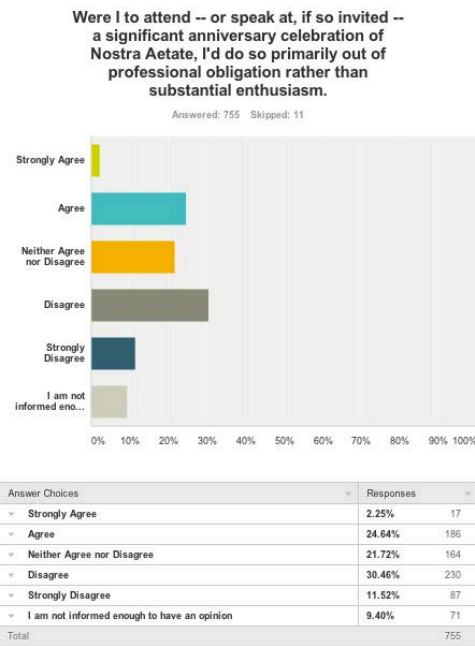
Question 16



It is assumed that most Jewish professionals who take an active role in Jewish-Christian relations would be enthusiastic to be part of future anniversary events for *Nostra Aetate*. About 1/3 of the respondents stated they would be part of this discussion, taking a speaking or participatory role in anniversary events. Considering the data already collected, this percentage seems on par. With the exception of the respondents who indicated that they would probably not be invited or were not able to travel to such events, it is interesting that a significant number of Jewish professionals are unsure or would decline to be a part of the discussion regarding the 50th anniversary of a document that affects Jewry.

The question prompted 32 respondents to comment further. Several respondents commented that it would be unlikely that they would be invited, but would consider it if asked: “nothing against them, just don’t think an invitation is ‘likely’.” Others mentioned that the setting and situation would be factors that would guide their decision: “attend and speak at are two different things with two different answers. I would speak with enthusiasm if invited. I would not go to sit in the audience.” Still other respondents commented that they have already attended such events and would do so again. A small amount of respondents stated that they would most likely attend or speak at such events, but would not be enthusiastic to do so, “maybe cautiously optimistic, and hopeful for more work to bring the communities together in the future?” Other comments included: “I suspect you think that N/A is of major concern to the Church. Really, we Catholics are far more concerned with cleaning up our act in Rome (sorry!)” as well as, “And then call Dr. Cook for a reading list in order to be informed!!!” In addition to this comment being humorous, it is actually quite telling. Given the previous data, it seems that, even if invited to speak, many of the respondents do not possess expertise on the subject.

Question 17



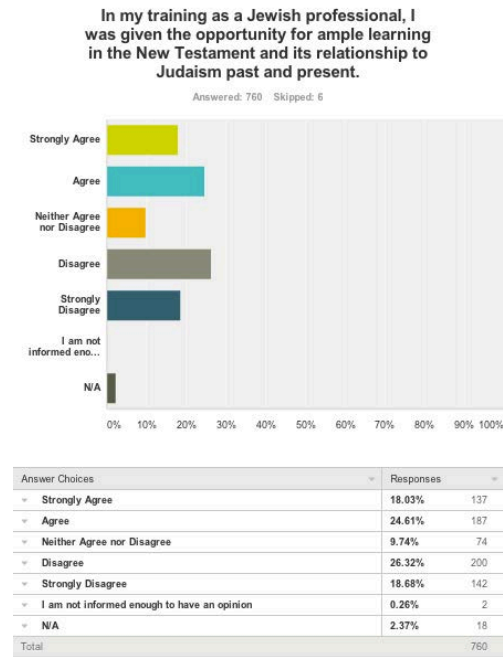
A significant number of respondents, 22%, stated they neither agree nor disagree with this statement. Looking at Questions 16 & 17 side-by-side, one can see that when questions are phrased in the positive, as in the former, and in the negative, as in the latter, they can yield different responses. 37% of respondents stated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they would attend an event with genuinely felt enthusiasm (Question 16); however, when the question is reversed, 42% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would attend an event out of professional obligation rather than substantial enthusiasm (Question 17). Question 17, admittedly, can be read as a bit more accusatory than Question 16. The comments vary, some stating the importance of a Jewish presence at such events, “If we aren’t there to speak, who is speaking for us?”

Training and/or Knowledge of Respondents (Questions 9-12, 19-21)

This set of questions is designed to understand the learning that took place in the training of Jewish professionals, and the knowledge by respondents of specific aspects of

Jewish-Christian relations. Question 9, for example is meant to examine if one could equate knowledge of the New Testament, when given the opportunity, with increased comfort and/or interest in Jewish-Christian relations, while Question 10 examines sources of knowledge by Jewish professionals, separate from those discussed in the previous questions. Questions 11 and 12, and 19 narrow the focus to respondents' understanding of *Nostra Aetate* and the common terms within the arena of Jewish-Christian relations. Question 19, for example, is designed to get a sense if Jewish professionals use these essential terms during Jewish-Christian dialogue. Questions 20-21 gauge respondents' knowledge of Roman Catholic textbooks, and the changes within, with the assumption that *Nostra Aetate* may have been a factor.

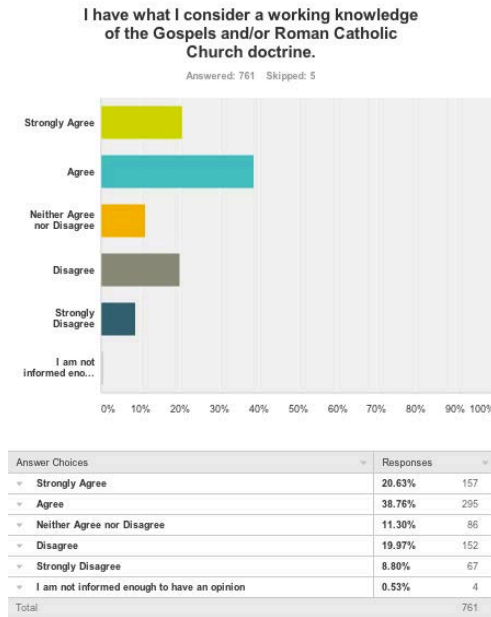
Question 9



It is disconcerting to see such a high percentage of respondents, most of whom are, by default, interested in Jewish-Christian relations, state they did not receive opportunity for ample learning.

In the comment section, a significant number of respondents stated that they were given the opportunity for learning, but not ample, or that they were given the opportunity to learn about New Testament, but not its relationship to Judaism. Comments of this kind included: “I found the teaching to be dry and uninteresting almost a focus of debunking the text,” as well as, “Had a course in NT but would hardly consider it ‘ample learning’.” A large number of respondents spoke highly of the required courses taken at HUC-JIR Cincinnati, under the professorship of Dr. Samuel Sandmel and/or Dr. Michael Cook, “Michael Cook offered a great course even distance learning to NY and I also was able to take classes at Union Theological for credit.” A small number of respondents commented that the learning they received was not sufficient: “could have used one additional class in this area,” and that a great deal of self-teaching is necessary, “I had to educate myself.” Others stated that their learning in the New Testament and its relationship to Judaism came from undergraduate work, not during their training as a Jewish professional. Finally, some commented other factors influenced their training, such as, “just wasn’t enough time,” and “I don’t think I needed or would have wanted more.”

Question 10

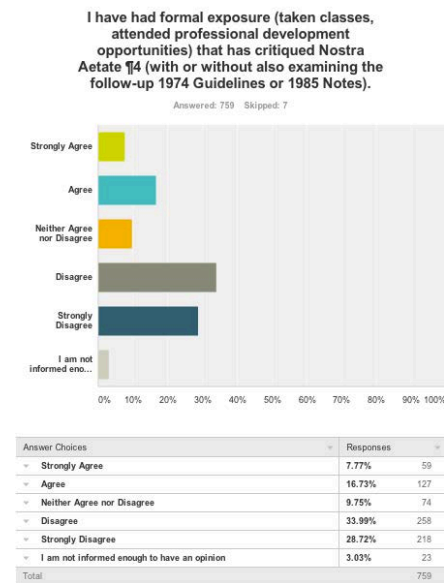


Almost 60% of the respondents felt they had a working knowledge of both the Gospels and Roman Catholic Church doctrine. This is a surprisingly high number, as it shows that many respondents must have attained knowledge outside of their professional training, given what we learned from the previous question. Still, close to 30% of respondents claimed the opposite.

Most of the respondents who commented that they do not have a great deal of working knowledge seemed to express disappointment or regret that they did not receive proper training, or are “rusty” and wished to improve. Some specified that they have working knowledge of one area but not the other: “Strong yes for Gospels, less strong on Roman Catholic specifically,” and “Agree to the Gospels but strongly disagree to knowing Roman Catholic Church doctrine.” Several respondents commented that they are currently in interfaith relationships or work in Catholic organizations, through which they have gained knowledge on these subjects. Still others commented that they only have basic knowledge of both the Gospels and Catholic Church doctrine, but not a

working knowledge: “working knowledge may be a bit generous, but I have a much better understanding now than when I graduated from HUC, thanks to my work as a military chaplain.” Finally, some respondents seemed to be far ahead of others: “I have written a book on the difference between Judaism & Christianity,” “I majored in Religion at an Ivy League College as an undergrad and studied the NT to a considerable degree,” and “Taught NT as a college professor.”

Question 11

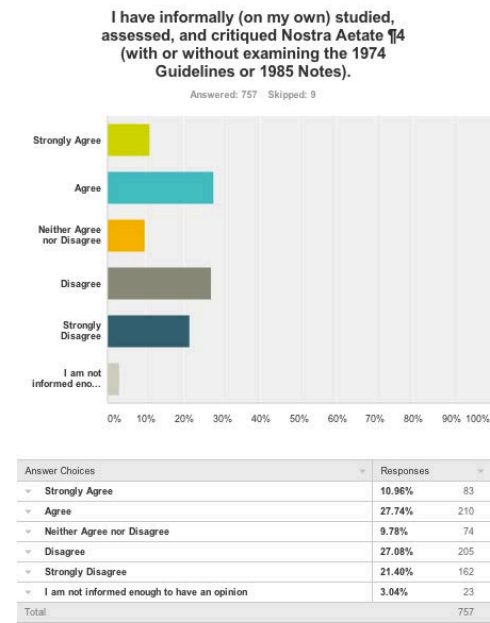


Overall, almost 65% of the respondents state they have not had formal exposure to *Nostra Aetate* that critiques paragraph 4, which deals specifically with the relationship of the Church to the Jewish people. While this is expected, it is also disappointing; while 70% of respondents stated that Jewish-Christian matters were a major part of their work, almost as many stated they have not had exposure to the critique of a major Church document. The question also allows for the possibility of exposure to the 1974 *Guidelines* and 1985 *Notes* that followed. While responses in Question 10 showed that

the majority of respondents had a working knowledge of the Gospels and Catholic Church doctrine, Question 11 showed that within that majority, very little of that working knowledge may have come from formal exposure, or at least not formal exposure that included *Nostra Aetate*. For Questions 10 and 11, the number of respondents who chose the option that they were not informed enough to have an opinion jumped exponentially, from under 5 to over 20. It is difficult to understand how one cannot be informed enough to form an opinion on their formal or informal studies of a topic.

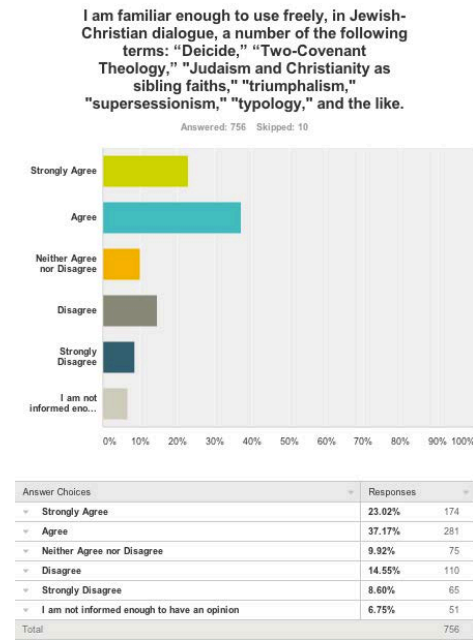
The majority of respondents who chose to comment wished to clarify that they received exposure but not formal exposure: “I was ordained before the notes, and had to do my own research to sit on a panel on these matters,” “I have not had formal...” and “I may have read the document, but I’m not familiar with it. I am more familiar with (perhaps) similar UCC and ecumenical documents.” Respondents also mentioned that they did not receive formal training in this particular aspect of Christian matters in seminary: “not mentioned in a class during my HUC years.” Some respondents, however, wished to mention their exposure in detail. Comments of this type included: “For 25 plus years I have led a priest/rabbi dialogue group in St. Louis, MO,” “Wrote rabbinic thesis on formal Jewish-Christian Dialogue including *Nostra Aetate* and AJHeschel’s [*sic*] role in conversations leading up to *Nostra Aetate*,” and “I am chair of the advisory board to the steering committee of Seton Hill University’s National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education. Because of my work with Seton Hill and the Center (which was founded in part because of *Nostra Aetate*) I have become very aware of the document.”

Question 12



While Jewish professionals may not have received formal training on *Nostra Aetate*, they may have studied it independently. Just fewer than 40% of respondents stated that they had *informally* studied and critiqued *Nostra Aetate*, specifically paragraph 4. This is a great deal higher than the results from the previous question, which asked if they had *formally* studied *Nostra Aetate* (less than 25%). Most who commented stated that they were generally aware of the document *Nostra Aetate* but had not focused on it.

Question 19



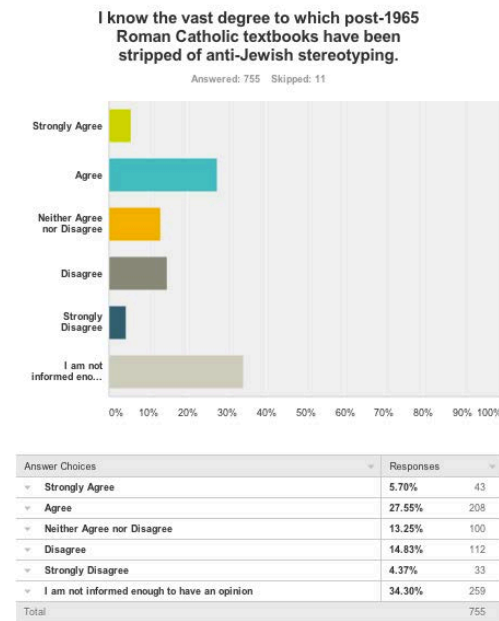
Listing specific examples was designed to give respondents an idea of the terms that are present in *Nostra Aetate* and Roman Catholic Church doctrine in reference to the Jews. About 60% of respondents stated they were familiar with the terms, which is surprisingly high, considering that the terms listed are not used in Jewish life except within Jewish-Christian studies or dialogue.

The majority of respondents who commented wished to clarify that they were only familiar with some of the terms, but not all of them. The comments indicate that “typology” appears to be the least common used or known term. Other respondents stated they were hesitant to use the terms in dialogue, as “the terms listed are way too politically and emotionally loaded to use freely in interfaith situations,” and “I could use these words but would probably choose others.” Other respondents had a more positive reaction, “Having never formally studied these concepts, I wouldn’t say I’d use these terms freely. I feel somewhat comfortable having Jewish-Christian dialogue, or Jewish-Catholic dialogue in general, though.” Another respondent stated in the same vein,

I might not pull out phrases from the decree however my WHOLE life I have referenced this in conversation. I grew up in the south and from elementary school on I had to dialogue with classmates whose parents and preachers still used hateful speech about Jews.

Other respondents reacted strongly, “Most of your categories are Protestant rubbish and have nothing to do with what Catholics even talk about (sorry!)” (N.B. The surveyor could find this assertion problematic since countless published analyses of Roman-Catholic relations, as well as the agenda items printed on their very symposia programs, regularly include [sometimes even multiply so] the identical rubrics alleged by the commenter not to be apt. If, however, the critic means Roman Catholic laypersons do not discuss these rubrics, then, if correct, posed for us here is whether the Nostra Aetate teachings are, in point of fact, not being adequately disseminated among the laity as they were intended to be.)

Question 20



While some respondents may have thought this question is leading, perhaps indicating that post-1965 Roman Catholic textbooks *have* been stripped of anti-Jewish

stereotyping to a vast degree, the question actually asks the respondents to comment on their knowledge of how *much* textbooks have changed since *Nostra Aetate*. About 35% of respondents stated they were unable to answer as they were not informed enough, which is about equal to the amount of respondents who agree that the degree of change has been vast, and that they were aware of it (33%). Respondents could disagree that they knew the vast degree to which textbooks have changed, yet many chose the option that they were not informed enough to have an opinion. In theory, a Jewish professional either knows, or does not know.

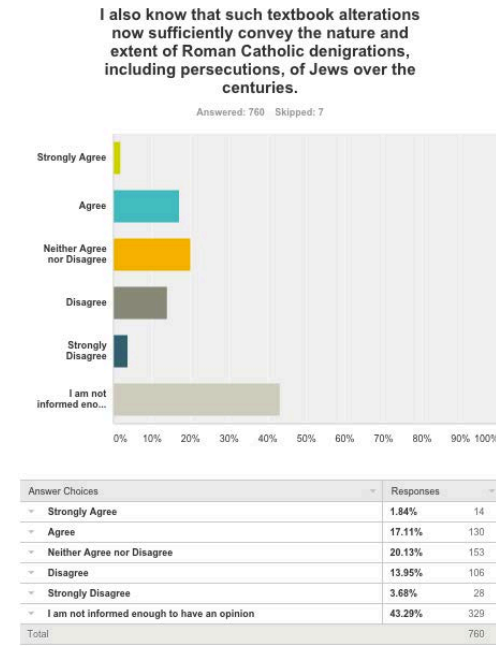
Most of the comments seemed to criticize or have issues with the question itself. Respondents stated that as Jewish professionals they would not have seen Roman Catholic textbooks, or the pre-1965 versions of them: “How would I know ‘vast degree’ unless I researched it,” and “No clue about their text books.” Critical comments on the question included: “Not a great question...mostly stripped,” and “ambiguous question.” Most of the comments of this kind were short, however one respondent stated:

A catechism book I read back in the late 1980’s still spoke of the ‘crowd’ calling for Jesus’ crucifixion. Any student who could figure out that the people in the crowd in Jerusalem were Jews would still be receiving the same anti-Semitic Gospel message.

Another respondent commented at length with a different perspective:

But we have to translate this into the way we teach our children. Please remember that the Catholic Church in Hitler’s Germany has moved on. Be Careful [*sic*] about making broad generalisations [*sic*]. It would be like my saying that Jews are anti-Catholic because there are polemic attacks on the Church in the Talmud. Will you change the Shas of all its subtle digs at Christians? Do you even accept the Talmud for Reform Jewish life?

Question 21



The fact that so many respondents (43%) indicated that they were not informed enough to have an opinion shows the lack of knowledge about the changes within Roman Catholic textbooks since *Nostra Aetate*. While in the previous question, 28% of respondents agreed that they knew of the textbook alterations, in this question, only 17% agreed.

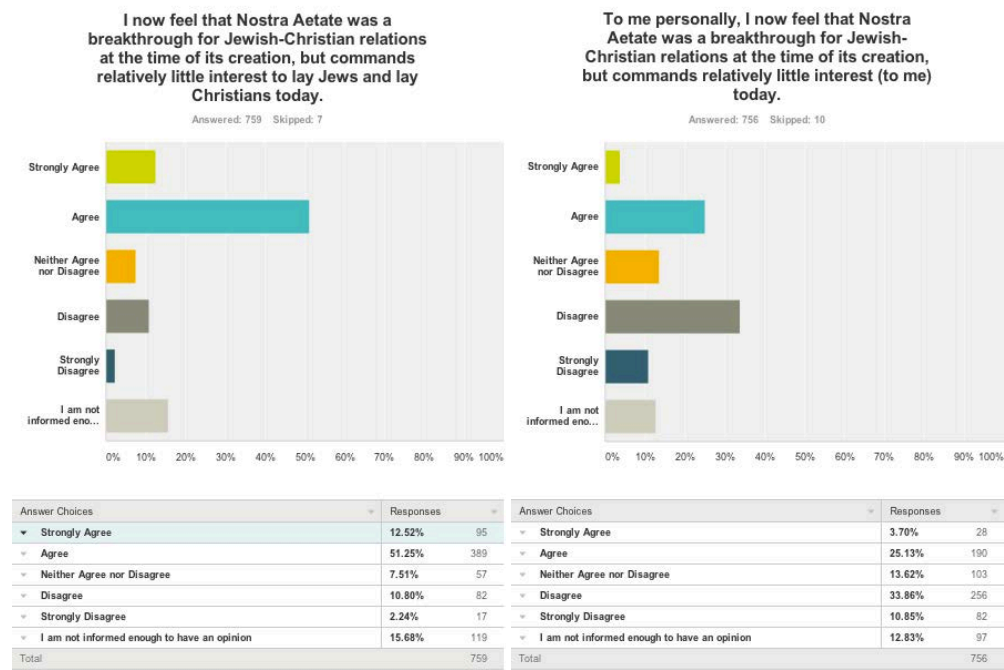
Most of the comments left by respondents are similar to those made in Question 20. Many respondents stated they were not familiar with textbooks, but hoped that it the statement is true: “I suspect they do but I don’t know for sure,” and “I think I hope/imagined that this was happening but it’s nice to hear it confirmed.” One respondent stated, “I haven’t been checking textbooks for Catholic schools. I do have a copy of Dennis Doyle’s ‘The Church Emerging from Vatican II’.” A respondent disagreed stating, “I disagree only because Most Christians I speak with (including my age) have no idea about the level of persecution experienced by Jews at the hands of Europeans and elsewhere.” One respondent, surprisingly, found the question offensive,

stating, “I object to your sweeping attack on the RC Church and myself!” Finally, respondents mentioned that the case might be different depending on where and when: “In later years, Most Catholic students had never heard of the decide [sic] charge or blood libel,” and “I doubt that they do in the Arab-speaking world.” Overall, the respondents showed that there is limited knowledge of Roman Catholic textbooks and their changes within the Jewish professional world. This was in line with my expectations, as this type of knowledge would hardly be a priority for Jewish professionals.

The Impact of *Nostra Aetate* (Questions 14-15, 18, 22, 24-25, 28-29)

This set of questions asks about the impact of *Nostra Aetate* on laypersons, Jew and Christian alike, and on Jewish professionals personally. Questions 14, 15, and 28 ask Jewish professionals about their view of this impact, while Question 29 examines how *Nostra Aetate* and its impact are viewed by lay Jews, 50 years later. The remaining questions in this set ask about the impact of *Nostra Aetate* through specific lenses. Questions 22 and 24, for example, gauge respectively the Jewish professionals’ understanding of Catholic education about *Nostra Aetate* in general, as well as the respondents’ speculation of the progress of *Nostra Aetate*’s influence. Question 25’s purpose is to ascertain if respondents have attended, or are aware of, symposia where Catholic and/or Jewish laypersons were in attendance and if these symposia are a new phenomenon. Finally, Question 18 examines specific views of *Nostra Aetate*, and how they might differ between Jews and Christians.

Questions 14 and 15



When looking at the results of Question 14 and 15, it is clear that respondents feel that that *Nostra Aetate* means something different to the larger population than it does to them individually. In general, the majority of respondents indicated that *Nostra Aetate* was a breakthrough at its time but commands little interest to lay Jews and Christians today. While the majority of respondents agreed with the statement (51%), few were ready to strongly agree (only 13%). Another significant data point in Question 15 is that a full 25% of respondents chose a “neutral” answer.

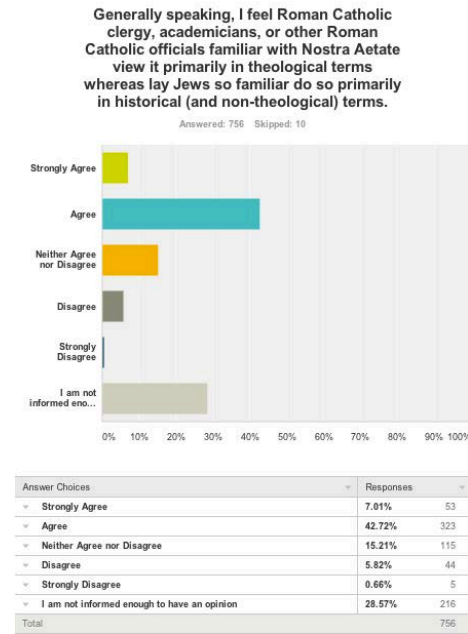
Comments on Question 14 included a wide variety of responses. Several respondents commented that the question asks for two opinions, and therefore they clarified in the comment section about which part they agreed: “I agree with the first statement...it was a breakthrough. I disagree with the second statement. While most might not understand what *Nostra Aetate* is, the ramifications ARE [sic] felt by the lay people today.” In addition, a few respondents commented that the question asks about lay Christians, but not lay Catholics specifically. Others commented on the effect of

Nostra Aetate, and its use within other communities, “Protestants and, I dare say, Protestant seminarians, do not study the document.” Other respondents felt strongly about the issue: “Why would non-Catholic Christians care?” and “They really didn’t know much about it before. Why should they after?” Finally, many respondents commented that while *Nostra Aetate* may have been an important step, what is more crucial is the education and the lasting effects in Christian teaching: “I live in a rural area; a family in our congregation moved to a big city last year after their second grade son had a classmate say ‘I can’t be friends with you; you killed Jesus’.”

The majority of those respondents who commented on Question 15 stated that they felt *Nostra Aetate* was a breakthrough at the time of its creation, and it still commands interest to them today, “It was a breakthrough and continues to have value,” and “disagree with the second part – I’m still interested.” Other respondents included, “I teach a Comparative Religion Course at our local college and I constantly emphasize *Nostra Aetate* which most students, Catholic and otherwise know nothing about,” and “Of course, as a non-doctrinal Christian, the document would only be informative in my religious practice.” Another respondent stated, “If I were confident that all elements of the Vatican and Roman Catholicism were united in accepting and praising N.A., I’d feel more enthused about its meaningfulness, but I feel the disagreement is still palpable in some circles, regrettably.” One respondent chose to leave a very detailed comment:

The whole subject of Jesus’ death makes no sense to me. As I understand Christian beliefs, Jesus HAD to die in order to atone for the sins of mankind. He could not fulfill that mission and remain alive because his blood had to be spilled, just like an animal sacrifice at the Temple. So what never made sense to me was why the people who were responsible for Jesus’ death (whether the Jews or the Romans) should have become vilified in Catholic thought and/or practice...

Question 18



By *historical* terms, Jews may view *Nostra Aetate* through the lens of history of persecution. By *theological* terms, I mean that Catholics may focus on the more abstract aspects, such as chosenness, covenant, supersessionism, missionizing, typology, and the like. The question is meant to gauge the respondents' view of Roman Catholic professionals next to their own views, and the views of the lay Jews they know. It was not surprising that almost 1/3 of the respondents “opted out” of the question, stating they were not informed enough to have an opinion. Many respondents simply chose not to speculate on something they did not know.

Some respondents stated that Catholics are more theologically oriented than Jews in general; others stated that the answer varies, and that it depends on the generation, or the clergy person, “I agree that Jews see it in historical terms but mostly so do Catholic officials; either they view the gospels as being historical in this respect or they realize that the issues [*sic*] is one that is really historical/political in terms of church history.” One respondent stated, “in the local diocese, there’s a tremendous diversity of opinion on

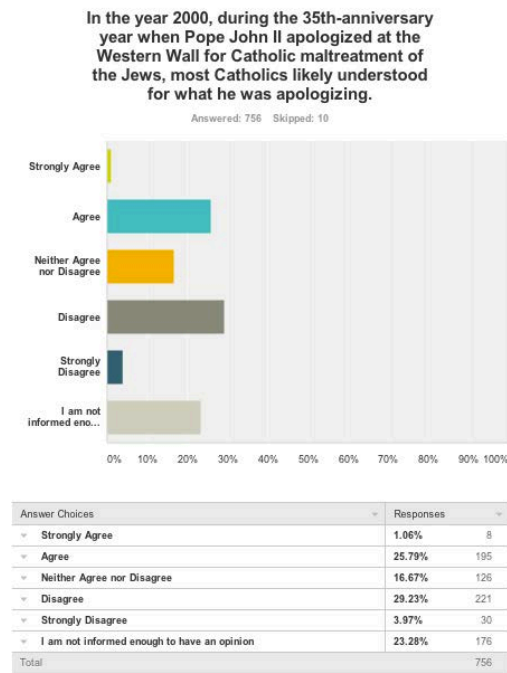
this question.” A good number of respondents did not feel comfortable with the question: “question is poorly phrased,” and “Way too hard for me to generalize.” The question also prompted the strong response, “I am RC priest and academician – we are not just theologians and are quite sensitive to history as well. We are just as sensitive to Jewish ignorance to us as you are to Christian ignorance (I use Christian as Roman Catholic and NOT Protestant).” Other responses included,

Although Catholics tend to be much more theological than Jews, they do realize the difficult history of Catholic-Jewish relations in the past. On the other hand, although Jews tend to see things through a historical lens, they do understand the idea that Jesus’s [*sic*] death is seen in salvific terms for Catholics.

As well as a different perspective:

As a ‘church’ musician, my interest in N.A. is how it changed the music. Going from Latin to English erased the use of hundreds of years of traditional music. This, in turn, has greatly influenced the musical trends of Jewish music over the last 40 years.

Question 22



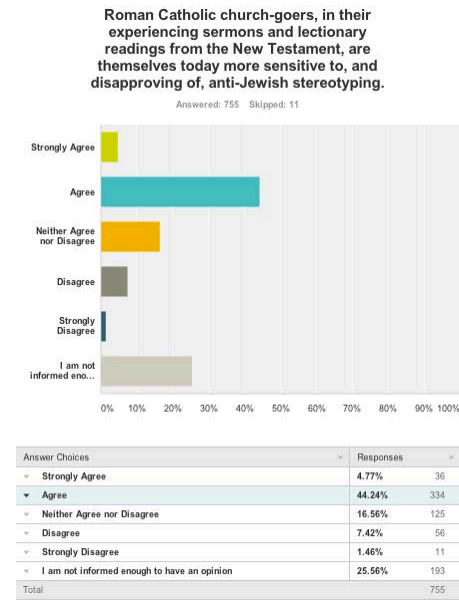
With about 27% agreeing, and 33% disagreeing, it appears that Jewish professionals may be split in their understanding of the average Catholic layperson.

Many of those who commented stated that they were uncomfortable speculating: “I cannot speak for most Catholics, know only a few righteous ones,” “How can I speak for ‘the Catholic people,’” “I don’t know what most Catholics thought at the time,” and “...I don’t know that the lay people know/or care what their clergy think, do...etc.”

However, others commented that such awareness would have geographical differences: “Most North American Catholics. As for Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe I have no idea,” “In regard to Western Catholics; it probably was less meaningful to African and other Third World Catholics.” One respondent mentioned other factors, “‘Catholics’ is a tough term to define. Do you mean practicing Catholics? If so, I’d say Agree. If you mean all those who identify themselves as Catholic, many of whom never go to church, I would strongly disagree.” One respondent commented at length:

As someone with many Catholic relatives, friends, and former classmates, I can tell you that most of my catholic ties had ‘no idea what the big deal’ was. My classmates and I were taught this not out of the assigned textbook (which I read on my own), but by a priest who ave [*sic*] his opinions and ideas as fact and did ‘lovingly forgive the jews [*sic*].’ This was in the late 1990’s to early 2000’s.

Question 24

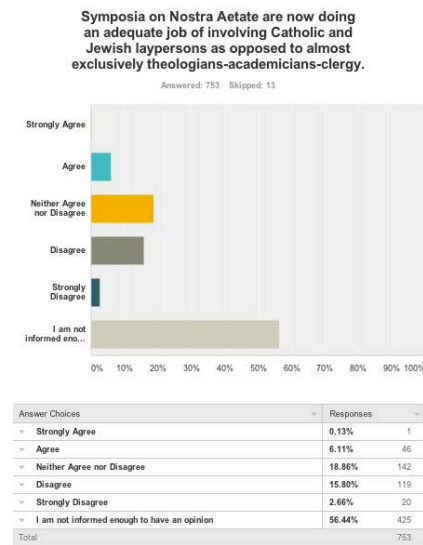


While this question also asked for the respondent to speculate on the views of Catholic lay people, only 26% of respondents chose the option that they were not informed enough to have an opinion, almost half as many as those who chose that option in the previous question. Jewish professionals may be more willing to comment on Roman Catholic churchgoers than on the Third World or the Pope. Respondents were comfortable speculating about the sensitivity of churchgoers to anti-Jewish stereotyping, and 50% of respondents agreed with the statement.

Most of the respondents commented that their answer depends on the churchgoers, whether that be by community, parish, or region, while others have a different view: “depends on the diocese,” “not in this town,” “it depends what part of the world they live in,” and “When I have attended church to honor non-Jewish friends before Easter, e.g., liturgy still reflects anti-Jewish bias in betrayal and crucifixion of Christ. If *Nostra Aetate* were authentic, the liturgy would be purged of Jewish responsibility, in my opinion.” As seen previously, the respondents appear to see a great divide between Catholicism in North American and elsewhere: “I agree, if we are talking American

Catholics; in the third world where anti-Zionism reigns, not so sure.” Some respondents, had different views: “The Catholic laity remains a bunch of morons,” as well as “I know only what Catholic friends tell me. As you know, they, like other Christians and Jews, may or may not listen to sermons.” Finally, a select number of respondents found difficulty with the question itself, stating: “more sensitive than what? When? It is confusing to answer a ‘more than’ question without a comparison to something else,” as well as, “Once again, not sure this [is] an opinion question. You’re asking my opinion on what needs to be a poll of this community.”

Question 25



While 19% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, the majority of respondents, in this case 56%, stated they were not informed enough to have an opinion. One can speculate, therefore, that over half of the respondents have not attended or were not aware of who was in attendance at symposia on *Nostra Aetate*. The high percentage of respondents who are not informed enough to have an opinion shows the lack of

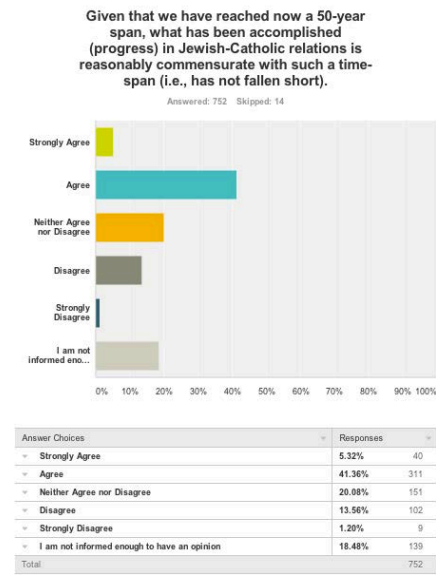
knowledge of symposia on *Nostra Aetate*. With over half the respondents unaware of such symposia, the data collected for this question was inadequate.

Respondents wished to clarify that they cannot comment if they do not have the opportunity to attend such events: “are there symposia on this? Not in my town,” “there is nothing at all about it here and I am not aware of lay involvement in any other community in which I lived,” and “I’m not aware of symposia on NA for laypeople. I suspect most Jews and Catholics aren’t familiar with NA at all. They may live their lives differently because of NA, but they probably don’t know what NA meant or did.”

Another respondent commented at length:

The wonderful theologians who attend have my profound respect, but the majority of interchange remains overly-limited to theologians, academicians, and clergy who speak the ‘same language’ to one another but whose pedagogical skills and conclusions do not reach a very wide range of potential audience we need. Perhaps some feel that laypersons lack the skills or the interest?

Question 28



If this were the only question in the survey, it would show that almost half of Jewish professionals feel that a great deal has been accomplished since the publishing of

Nostra Aetate. However, considering the answers to previous questions, the survey shows a significant lack of knowledge of the text. Moreover, the survey showed concern about the deficiency of *Nostra Aetate*'s influence outside of the developed world.

The majority of respondents who commented indicated that there is tangible progress that can be seen, but the amount varies geographically. For example, some respondents felt that, within the United States and Europe, tremendous progress has been made, but less so in the developing or "third" world. Responses included, "perhaps in larger, more sophisticated cities," "I doubt that there has been as much progress in Central and South America," and "How can one judge this? On what basis? In which country?" However, many comments seemed to be optimistic no matter the region: "Given what the relationship was like pre-Vatican II, the progress has been phenomenal," "the transformation of the Catholic Church has been remarkable," and "Compared to the nearly 2,000 years before *Nostra Aetate*, we have advanced amazingly far. Always much more to be done and we always have to guard against backsliding."

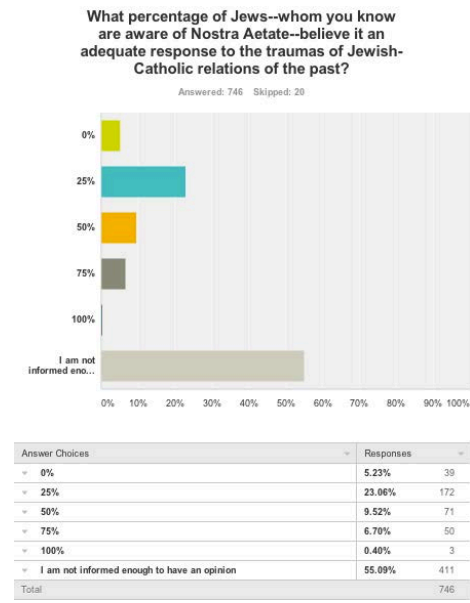
Respondents also mentioned other issues such as Civil Rights, "Catholic – Jewish relations in America has moved as rapidly as Civil Rights, gender equality, etc. We have come a long way, but the task is not over."

One respondent commented at length on this:

I think that there has been considerable progress, but this needs to be assessed in relation to the progress that has been made, at least in this country with regard to Racism, homophobia, anti-immigrant discrimination, etc. The Catholic Church, until Francis' coronation at Pope, has largely disappeared, at least in my area from Interfaith [*sic*] dialogue. This isn't about Catholic-Jewish, it's about a Catholic retreat from much of the Interfaith civic dialogue and action. I've assumed that this is a consequence of the weight of the clergy sex scandals within the Catholic Church.

Several respondents found the question difficult to answer: “I am not sure what you mean,” “weird question,” “Unanswerable.” One of the stronger reactions included, “You’re now on a fishing expedition for your thesis!”

Question 29



While the question asks respondents to speculate, its intention is to understand the view of lay Jews by Jewish professionals on this issue. This question, unlike previous questions in the survey, asks the respondents to choose a percentage. Over half of the respondents, 55%, chose the option that they were not informed enough to answer the question.

This final question prompted a great deal of comments from respondents. Several respondents wished to specify a percentage other than one of the options available. Several respondents wished to comment that they felt *Nostra Aetate* is not something most Jews are aware of but were unsure how to quantify that amount, “I have to say, I’m not sure any Jews in the laity are aware of Nostra Aetate, unless they happen to have read

about it by chance.” Others wished to refine how Jews would view *Nostra Aetate*: “they would think it’s a good faith effort but not something that could ever replace lost families, childhoods, etc.” Some commented further, “most Jews probably think NA is a good response, but those who know more also know that the history of J/C relations has required further clarification etc etc [sic] such as was accomplished thru [sic] the formal papal apology for the past.” One respondent commented, “First of all, I do not believe many of my congregants are ‘aware’ of *Nostra Aetate*, and second, I don’t believe any of us can reasonably believe that one statement, however transformative, can make up for almost two millennia of direct persecution.”

A rather strong response from a non-Jew included:

You don’t believe they are ‘traumas’ – you are really talking about Catholic persecutions of the Jewsd [sic] in the past. They happened. We’re sorry. Get over it. As the People of God, you have more important work to do than continually licking your wounds (sorry). If you thinkwe [sic] were nasty to the Jews, you should read wehat [sic] we did to the Protestants! I’m sorry, you cannot find your internal cohesion by dwelling upon past enemies. God doesn’t like it and you have more important work to do – God said to Abraham, “Get up and go.” Stope [sic] sitting around and mourning not being able to sing the songs of the Lord in a strange land.” You have as much a [sic] missionary work to do as we do”

Another respondent took issue with the question, stating:

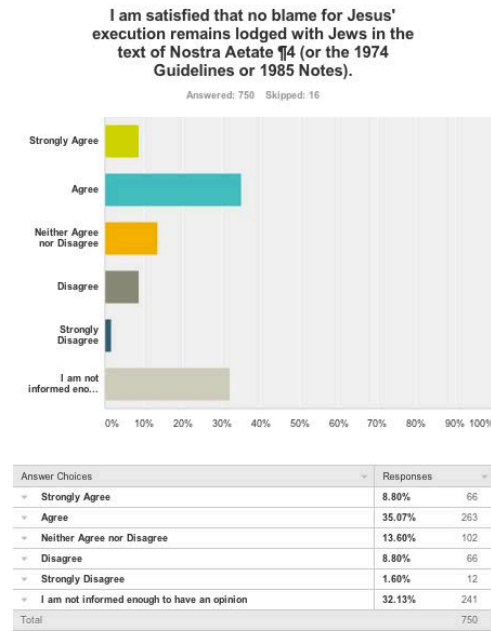
I don’t think any learned Jew would agree with this question. It is written with clear biases. That is not the point. No one set of teachings can erase thousands of years of persecution and death. The point is that these teaches [sic] were a tide shift they changed our relations moving forward. The apologies about the past are important but most important is changing our shared futures!

Specific Aspects of *Nostra Aetate* (Questions 13 and 26)

This set of questions asks about specific aspects and impacts of *Nostra Aetate*.

Question 13’s purpose is to ask the respondents’ opinion of the text of *Nostra Aetate* as it deals with the blame for Jesus’ death. The purpose of Question 26 is to assess if respondents believe that *Nostra Aetate* was a natural evolution of Church teachings, or if the Church chose to address the treatment of Jews as a response to the Holocaust.

Question 13



Paragraph 4 of *Nostra Aetate* states, regarding this issue, “True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ.” Considering the text is explicit about Jewish authorities, it is astonishing that such a high number of respondents (about 44%) felt “no blame” exists. What is not surprising, given the results of previous questions, is that 32% of respondents were not familiar with *Nostra Aetate* enough to analyze this particular aspect of it. Fewer than 10% disagreed, which again is puzzling, considering how many respondents stated they had working knowledge of Church doctrine in previous questions.

Many of those who commented took the opportunity to discuss the complexity of the issue. One respondent stated, “Despite NA, as long as the blame is in the Gospels, the blame will remained lodged with the Jews,” while another stated, “while the text is fairly clear on the denial of Jewish guilt, its application and teaching has not been as

thorough or as transparent as I would have preferred.” Some respondents commented at length on their view of the document:

According to my oqb [*sic*] understanding of the “N.A.” statement, the Church declared that even though some Jewish authorities did call for Jesus’ death when Jesus lived, this fact should NOT ever be connected to Jews who lived after that time or to Jews living in the present time. Jews should not be called ‘rejected’ or accursed by Catholics – and all acts of antisemitism are denounced categorically by the statement. These are the basics of my understanding of N.A,

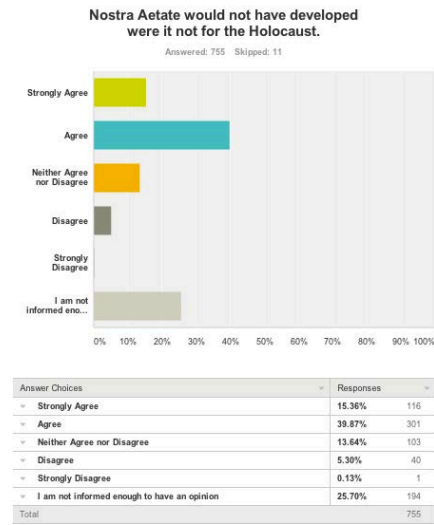
And,

As much as the document itself tries to alleviate such responsibility, the Church is left with a sacred Scripture in Jews are blamed for much of what was wrong with the world and shares identification in the death of Jesus, whether implicit, explicit or implied. That alone is a major sticking point.

Some made sure to distinguish between the Jews living at the time, versus Jews of today, “Jews of today are absolved. Not those present in the first century.” Further, some respondents commented that the text of *Nostra Aetate* is not relevant as long as the blame is continually taught in the schools and within the pews: “as much as the document itself tries to alleviate such responsibility, the Church is left with a sacred scripture in Jews are blamed for much of what was wrong with the world...” Some respondents were hesitant to answer, as they could not remember the text. Finally, some respondents had issues with the question itself: “Question is not clear,” “More complicated that [*sic*] this statement,” and “I don’t understand the phrasing...”

All the while, however, it is not startling that no one commented on the peculiar absence of any mention of Rome’s involvement from any of the *Nostra Aetate* complex of documents-even mention of Pontius Pilate? This could seem peculiar in that the spirit of *Nostra Aetate* was to mitigate the singular Jewish culpability for Jesus’ death. Even the Gospels themselves bring Roman officialdom and personnel into the picture.

Question 26



The results of this question show that over half of the respondents agreed that *Nostra Aetate* would not have developed if the Holocaust had not occurred.

Only one respondent strongly disagreed with this statement, the only time a "singular" reply occurred in this survey. The reactions to the question in the comment section were diverse and particularly strong. A few respondents commented that the Holocaust was not the only reason for *Nostra Aetate*, that there was already a “changing cultural mood” in addition to other factors, “I think that was a powerful motivator, but the Church itself was also due for some introspection, as evidenced by all the other works produced by the Second Vatican Council.” A select number of respondents made sure to specify that *Nostra Aetate* is not simply about Jews, but addresses all non-Catholic faiths. Other respondents found the question to be too speculative, stating they cannot answer “what if” questions. Some of the stronger reactions include a respondent who states that the question is “self-serving Zionist propaganda,” as well as a respondent who asks, “How can you prove a negative?” Longer comments on this subject include:

“The world has become much more diverse and multi-cultural. Even without the Holocaust, Catholicism would have made some rapprochement with Judaism. Perhaps it would be similar to the outreach the Catholic Church has done with Islam, Protestantism, or Orthodox Christianity,”

in addition to:

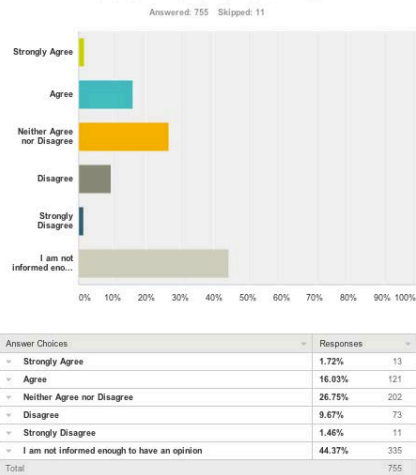
A Catholic priest educated at the Gregorian College confided to me at an archeological dig at Tel Dan that the Jewish people were ‘crucified’ during the Holocaust. This seems much more in line with Jewish ethics, that all human beings are responsible for each other, ‘ze le ze.’

Looking Ahead (Questions 23 and 27)

This set of questions asks the respondents to consider *Nostra Aetate* and its future impact, within the world and society at large (Question 23), and within the Jewish community (Question 27). Question 23 asks the respondents to evaluate *Nostra Aetate*’s power, not just in the developed world, but also in places where perhaps it had not reached before. It also asks the respondents their opinion of the current Pope and his efforts to change the image of the Jews in the Catholic world. Question 27’s purpose is to assess if respondents show interest in the development of a doctrine that would specify the Jewish view of “the other,” meaning non-Jews. This question focuses inward, towards the Jewish community, rather than out to the Catholic laity or clergy. Is the minority (Jews) obligated to spell out its views of the majority (Christians)?

Question 23

Under the current Pope, Francis I, *Nostra Aetate's* teachings will likely catch on in the effort of Third World missionizing.



A significant number of respondents, here 44%, stated they were not informed enough to have an opinion. 27% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The questions that ask the respondents to speculate seem to create higher responses of “I am not informed enough to have an opinion.” It is disappointing that so many Jewish professionals would choose this option, as I expected respondents to be more knowledgeable on the topic.

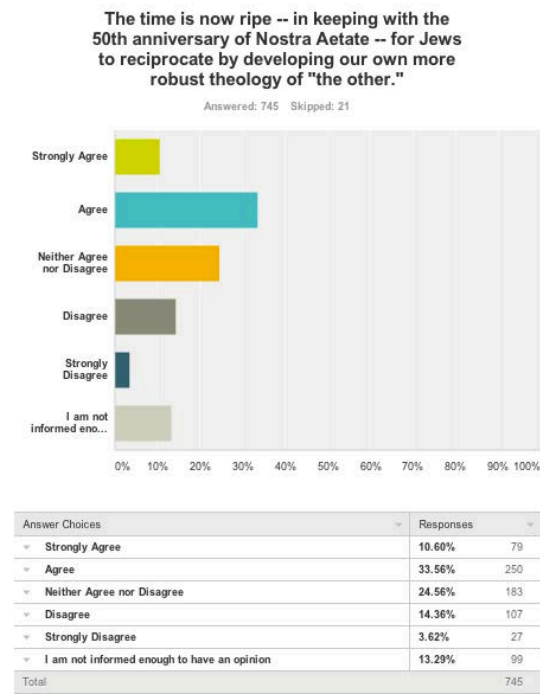
The majority of respondents who commented stated that, while it is too soon to evaluate Francis I and his policies, they hope that *Nostra Aetate* will spread in his effort of Third World missionizing. One respondent spoke in detail, stating,

Again, my question with *Nostra Aetate* is how far it’s penetrated down to the missionary and parish level. I generally have a pessimistic understanding of the Third World’s ideas about Jews. Catholics could do a lot in reversing this, but I’m just not sure it’s high on the priority list (and frankly, it’s questionable how high it should be). Is the first thing we teach Jewish converts about how other religions like Mormonism are misunderstood?

It appears that most respondents who say that they not informed enough wished to clarify that this is what they hope will happen during the current Pope’s tenure. A small number of respondents commented that the level of antisemitism, “anti-Zionism”, and “Judaophobia” is substantial enough to make this task a difficult one. For example, a

respondent stated that the “so-called liberation theology that motivates most Third World missionizing tends to be anti-Zionist and often anti-semitic [sic], which leads to a de-emphasis of historical church anti-semitism [sic] and *Nostra Aetate*.” Finally, some respondents had difficulties with understanding the question itself.

Question 27



A surprisingly high number, almost 35%, of respondents thought that Judaism should develop a theology parallel with *Nostra Aetate* in its views of the Catholic Church or of Christianity in general. Most of the comments for this question were negative, so it appears that the 17% of respondents who disagreed were more vocal. A relatively high percentage (25%) neither agreed nor disagreed, and 13% stated they were not informed enough to have an opinion.

The 98 comments vary, however the majority of respondents commented that they believe that a robust theology of “the other” already does exist in Judaism, “Dabru Emet?” Another respondent stated, “we already have one! ‘The righteous of all nations have a share in the world to come!’” Still others commented, “In Reform Judaism we have this. Theologically have this through Buber, Levinas, etc,” and “I feel that our theology is very clear in our love for the stranger and how we should treat others, both Jewish and non-Jewish. I don’t believe that this requires furthering developing our theology.”

One respondent, however, clarified with a significantly interesting point: “Depends on which Jews you’re talking about. Reform Jewish communities rarely talk about theology at all and our laity knows next to nothing about Jewish theology. We’re also inundated with the ‘other,’ as most of our communities are 50% intermarried or more.”

Finally, a significant number of respondents commented strongly that Jews have no obligation to do so, either because we as Jews have “nothing to apologize for,” or because “anti-Judaism and attendant anti-Semitism [*sic*] is their problem, not mine.”

The question prompted lengthy responses as well:

What do you mean by ‘robust’? It is more important, I think, to focus on our own knowledge of Torah and Yiddishkeit. If you mean ‘forgiveness’, that’s a different story. Retaining hatred and resentment only harms the hater not the hated. It costs nothing to forgive, but it costs too much to forget. The Torah provides ample evidence of that throughout Jewish history. Our vigilance is the price we are obligated to pay for our survival...Moreover, to reciprocate in this manner shows codependence on another’s opinion on us. What’s the point of that?

In addition to:

I do not believe our theological development need or should be shaped by opportunities for reciprocation on matters defined by, well, others! However, I feel the time is ripe for us to respond to concepts, implications and outcomes of N.A. and to develop social, educational and communal responses (which may include reference to our theology, of course).

As well as:

Yes, the current status quo is not inviting but Jews must constantly use every opportunity to engage the Church because the same anti-Jewish narratives persists in the secular as well as the Muslim and Christian worlds as well as in the secular culture. The discussion continues because it seems impossible to put old issues aside once and for all time. Jews are impatient to witness a greater awareness by the Church of its obligation to push forth the agenda of dialogue and reconciliation.

Additional Comments (Question 30)

Question 30

**Please use the space below for any further
comments related to *Nostra Aetate*.**

Answered: 137 Skipped: 629

Question 30 allowed for respondents to offer additional comments. While the prompt asked for further comments on *Nostra Aetate* specifically, respondents took this opportunity to comment on Jewish-Christian relations in general, their own experiences, and on the survey itself. The comments fell into several categories: the effectiveness of *Nostra Aetate*, shortcomings of *Nostra Aetate*, effectiveness of the survey, and Jewish-Christian relations in general.

The majority of comments indicated that *Nostra Aetate* was not a far-reaching document, rather that the impact of the document depends upon location and the denomination of Christianity. Respondents assumed that *Nostra Aetate* was primarily of interest to academics and Catholic clergy, not most laypeople. One respondent stated simply, “it has to get to laypeople---not merely clergy,” while another suggested, “I suspect *Nostra Aetate* in America is exceptional. Bigotry against other religions here in this country are [*sic*] “politically incorrect.” Respondents commented that *Nostra Aetate*

had, and still currently has, a short reach in terms of its influence. Respondents argued that not only is *Nostra Aetate* something unknown to lay Catholics, but all the more so to lay non-Catholic Christians, and Jews. One commenter stated, “I remember when *Nostra Aetate* came into being, but I did not know its formal name until I went to work with the rabbi who represented the Anti Defamation League in the negotiations. I think most American Jews don't recognize the name, and only older ones are likely to remember this momentous event.”

Other respondents disagreed, stating that *Nostra Aetate*: “touched not only the Catholic Church, but it had a profound impact on all Christendom,” as well as, “the overwhelming majority of Catholic priests and active laypeople understand *Nostra Aetate* positively, and are devoted to Jewish-Catholic understanding.” One respondent wrote that *Nostra Aetate* was the “best thing the church has ever done since ending the Inquisition.”

While several of the respondents considered the survey questions “thought provoking” and expressed interest in the results, the overwhelming majority of the any additional comments about the survey itself were critical. Some respondents argued that the questions were at fault, stating they were, “weak and rely upon rapid, but shortsighted and perhaps meaningless answers.” Another critique was that the survey was written with assumptions, one being “too close a relationship between Christian views of the New Testament and Roman Catholic theology.” One argument is that the topic of the survey “(like much of Jewish involvement in inter-religious affairs) takes the stance of ‘victim.’” Here, regarding these last responses, we must grapple with an unknowable answer: are these critical perspectives offered by Jews themselves or perhaps reflections

of HUC-JIR's non-Jewish members of our School of Graduate Studies—if so, this potentially most fruitful avenue cannot, alas, be here pursued given that contributions were anonymous.

Finally, many respondents took the comment space as an opportunity to speak not on *Nostra Aetate* but on Jewish-Christian relations in general. Respondents commented on global issues, stating, “it seems to me that most interfaith relations in America are not related to theological issues, like *Nostra Aetate*, but rather around communal tables, local events, and gatherings, interfaith dialogues (beyond Catholic and/or Christian-Jewish) etc.” In addition, respondents mentioned other issues that create challenges in Jewish-Catholic dialogue, “Sadly, the politics of sexual identity, marriage access, birth control and sexual abuse...has driven the Catholic Church and Synagogue apart. The one place of combined concern as [sic] been, in my experience, protecting the homeless.” Other respondents focused on the issues concerning Jewish-Christian dialogue outside of Catholicism, “Catholics are different than other Christians the way Christians tell it yet many are identifying as Christian in order to fit in. I’m still asked by some Christians how I reconcile with myself that I killed God.”

Results in Relation to Previous Assumptions and Analysis

While it was assumed that most respondents would be over the age of 40, only 13% of the respondents were within the 25-40 range. While this is not surprising due to the declining HUC-JIR class sizes, it is disappointing because I had hoped to make comparisons of perspectives that differed by age. The vast majority of the respondents (over 70%) identified as Rabbis, current, emeritus, or retired. The survey was built with

the assumption that the majority of those responding would be Rabbis, or Rabbi Emeriti, and any non-rabbinical respondents' comments would be minimal. It is surprising to see the varied responses within the 30% of non-Rabbis, Cantors, educators, professors, chaplains, and non-Jewish graduates of HUC-JIR. The 40 non-Jewish graduates offered interesting comments about the survey and about *Nostra Aetate*'s influence in general.

The data seemed to indicate that most of the Rabbis were aware of *Nostra Aetate*, however the specifics of the text were largely unknown. For example, Question 13 asked about the level of blame for Jesus' execution by the Jews in paragraph 4 of *Nostra Aetate*. Almost 32% of respondents chose the option that they were not informed enough to have an opinion. Questions about Catholic textbooks also produced a high number of respondents choosing the option that they were not informed enough to have an opinion. It makes sense that respondents would be resistant to speculating on a subject of which they are not familiar. Moreover, giving respondents the option to essentially "opt out" allowed for more accurate data.

I assumed that most Reform Rabbis are involved in Jewish-Christian relations, specifically those with the Catholic Church. Almost 65% of respondents stated that Jewish-Christian relations played a major role in their work as Jewish professionals. In addition, almost 70% stated that Jewish-Christian relations were a passion of theirs even if it was not integral to their work. The majority of the Rabbis and Jewish professionals surveyed believe that Jewish-Christian relations play a major role in both their professional and personal lives. While the survey did not ask about Jewish-Catholic relations specifically, almost 60% of the respondents have a working knowledge of the Gospels and/or Roman Catholic Church doctrine.

I expected that most Jewish professionals would be able to answer most of the survey questions. Many of the questions ask the respondents to answer for others, asking what they believe their congregants or fellow Jewish professionals think about certain issues. The most fascinating aspect of the survey was the high number of respondents choosing the option “I am not informed enough to have an opinion.” This was most prevalent when the survey asked the respondents to speculate on the thoughts of others (Questions 18, 22, 23, and 25).

It is also important to mention the valuable learning that took place during the survey design and implementation. A major point of criticism by respondents was how the survey questions were phrased. That being said, considering the sheer number of respondents, the implementation was effective. Additionally, there appeared to be a relatively low rate of survey attrition. Even with the length of the survey, the questions seemed to maintain respondents’ attention.

While many Reform congregations have a significant population of interfaith couples, I assumed that the subject of *Nostra Aetate* would not regularly come up in discussion between these clergy and their congregants. The survey did not provide data to specifically confirm or deny this assumption. However, Question 14 shows that over 60% of Rabbis and Jewish professionals feel that *Nostra Aetate* commands little interest to lay Jews and Christians today. This was inherently disappointing, as it shows that a major milestone in Jewish-Christian relations is virtually overlooked in Reform Jewish life, even despite the significant number of non-Jewish partners involved in Reform congregations.

From the data collected, it appears that Jewish professionals express a real interest in interfaith relations, but the interest and knowledge in *Nostra Aetate* specifically is not as prevalent as I had hoped or expected. Part of this can be attributed to the limited opportunities for learning about these topics in the course of professional training. This speaks to a larger problem in terms of the training of Jewish professionals, especially those who have an interest in Jewish-Christian relations. The decisions made by the Church to promulgate *Nostra Aetate*, and the events that led to that decision, as well as the back-and-forth within the Vatican about the eventual phrasing, serve as important learning moments for Jews and Christians in their shared history. Moreover, the progress following *Nostra Aetate* should be the subject of Jewish-Christian discourse, including the changing of textbooks and the larger change in atmosphere in the Vatican. In the following chapter, I will discuss how *Nostra Aetate* can be used as a teaching tool and research for Jewish institutions.

Chapter 3

Conclusions: Micro & Macro Analyses and Implications

I have drawn the following overarching conclusions from my analysis: First, most Jewish professionals believe they are very involved in Jewish-Christian relations. Second, these professionals report that their expertise in this area is primarily a result of self-training. And third, this self-training may be the reason for a notable disconnect between how involved people think they are in Jewish-Christian relations and their reported degree of genuine expertise, even knowledge on that subject.

Jewish Professionals Believe They Are Very Involved in Jewish-Christian Relations

Over 60% of respondents state that Jewish-Christian matters and relations play a major role in their professional work (see Question 7 in Appendix B). In theory, these respondents (including Rabbis, Cantors, educators, chaplains, and communal service workers) not only encounter Jewish-Christian discourse in their work but actively seek out avenues for further involvement. Perhaps more significantly, almost 70% of respondents stated that, even if Jewish-Christian matters were not integral to their work, these subjects would still be a major personal concern (see Question 8 in Appendix B).

There are several reasons, among possibly others, why Rabbis, in particular, may feel that Jewish-Christian relations are a major part of their jobs. First is a change in congregational demographics. A 2013 Pew study reported that Jewish generations include increasing numbers of Jews with only one Jewish parent instead of two.⁵³ With

⁵³ "What Happens When Jews Intermarry?" Pew Research Center RSS. Accessed November 15, 2014. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/11/12/what-happens-when-jews-intermarry/>.

intermarriage on the rise, Rabbis likely consider Jewish-Christian matters to be a necessary part of their work with congregants. Second, global antisemitism appears to be on the rise. The U.S. government went so far as to state that “anti-Semitism today is a more serious issue than it has been in a long time.”⁵⁴ Rabbis may therefore feel compelled to integrate Jewish-Christian matters into their work in order to respond to this issue. Third, conflicting (or at least puzzled) attitudes towards the State of Israel and Israeli-Palestinian issues inevitably bring Jewish professionals into interchange with their Christian, including Roman Catholic, counterparts, on divestment schemes, cause tensions for Jewish students on university campuses, and so forth, and saturate television and internet coverage.

On the other hand, of the 13% of respondents who felt that Jewish-Christian relations and matters do not play a major role in their work (see Questions 7 and 8 in Appendix B), many identify themselves as retired or no longer active members in the Jewish community and simply do not work in that arena any longer.

Involved Jewish Professionals Are Mostly Self-Trained

With the majority of respondents indicating that Jewish-Christian matters play a significant role in their work, it was important to gauge their knowledge of these matters. The results in this area were surprising. Fewer than half of the respondents felt they received adequate training as Jewish professionals on Jewish-Christian matters (see Question 9 in Appendix 9), yet about 60% of respondents felt they have working

⁵⁴ "A 'concerned' US Is Monitoring the Rise of Anti-Semitism Worldwide." A 'concerned' US Is Monitoring the Rise of Anti-Semitism Worldwide. Accessed November 15, 2014. <http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/A-concerned-US-is-monitoring-the-rise-of-anti-Semitism-worldwide-374380>.

knowledge in that area (see Question 10 in Appendix B). This prompted a question of how these involved Jewish professionals gained such working knowledge if they did not feel they received it in their training at undergraduate or graduate institutions.

This survey was specifically interested in knowledge respondents had about *Nostra Aetate* and Catholic teachings on Judaism. It is possible that some respondents received professional training in, let us say, Jewish-Christian relations in the New Testament but not vis-à-vis the Catholic Church itself. However, as this project stresses, *Nostra Aetate* is a key document in all Jewish-Christian relations, and the lack of knowledge respondents' presented on this topic is disappointing.

Specifically, only a quarter of respondents stated that they had received formal training on *Nostra Aetate* (see Question 11 in Appendix B). In contrast, almost 40% of respondents stated that they had informally studied and critiqued *Nostra Aetate* (see Question 12 in Appendix B). Additionally, 60% of respondents, despite not having formal training, were able to identify and acknowledge their familiarity with common terms associated with Jewish-Christian relations (see Question 19 in Appendix B).

I conclude that the majority of Jewish professionals who consider Jewish-Christian relations to be a major aspect of their personal and professional work are informally self-taught. Due to the recent and rapid blossoming of Jewish-Christian relations, some respondents may have felt the need to pursue self-study no matter the quality of the training now or already received. While various courses have been offered at the HUC-JIR campuses on Christian Scriptures, perhaps the Jewish professionals are not able to see the importance and necessity of academic learning on the subject of Jewish-Christian relations until they have been graduated. It is often difficult to gauge

what is important in the field when one is still in the classroom.

How Self-Training Leads to a Disconnect

Despite good intentions by Jewish professionals in self-training, the lack of formal training, unfortunately seemed to have generated among Jewish professionals to only a surface understanding of *Nostra Aetate*. For example, respondents' knowledge of the results of *Nostra Aetate*, specifically Roman Catholic textbooks being stripped of anti-Jewish stereotyping, is diverse. While 40% of respondents state they are aware of these changes, 20% stated they were not and almost 35% stated they were not informed enough to even comment (see Question 20 in Appendix B). This data shows that the majority of Jewish professionals surveyed may not be aware of the influence of *Nostra Aetate* on Catholic methods of learning. Left only to self-study, Jewish professionals may not fully grasp the evolution of the Catholic Church since *Nostra Aetate* and may therefore have a skewed view of their Catholic partner in Jewish-Christian discourse.

Respondents stated that Jewish professionals would not have knowledge of this progression unless they researched it. These comments pointed to the shortcomings of receiving only informal training in this area. As respondents rightfully pointed out, how would they even know what to research? Given its importance in the evolution of Jewish-Christian relations, *Nostra Aetate* may need to be covered in more formal areas of Jewish education (and this likewise may go even to Roman Catholicism's instruction of its own constituents as per the directive that Catholics are to strive to understand themselves). The same was true for the knowledge by Jewish professionals of whether Roman Catholicism textbook alterations also convey the nature and extent of Roman

Catholic denigrations and persecutions of Jews. Despite the majority of respondents having confidence in their self-training of Jewish-Christian relations, over 40% admitted that they were not sufficiently informed on this most basic dimension of whether and if so how Catholic textbooks have changed this aspect of Catholic teaching (see Question 21 in Appendix B). While my expectations were that Jewish professionals would not hold Catholic textbooks as a priority in their learning, the data shows that this may be the result of inadequate self-study or formal training, rather than a general disinterest.

***Nostra Aetate*: 50 Years Later**

When respondents were asked to speculate on the views of lay Jews and Christians, about 65% believed that *Nostra Aetate* commands little interest among these groups today (see Question 15 in Appendix B). When asked if they personally feel that *Nostra Aetate* was a breakthrough at its time, less than 30% agreed (see Question 14 in Appendix B).

Additionally, there appears to be a disconnect not only between how Jewish professionals believe lay people see *Nostra Aetate*, but how they believe Roman Catholic clergy, academicians, and their constituents view *Nostra Aetate*. Over 40% of respondents feel that Jewish professionals still see *Nostra Aetate* differently than their Roman Catholic counterparts, with Roman Catholics viewing the document in more abstract theological terms, and Jewish professionals viewing it as a response to a history of persecution (see Question 18 in Appendix B). While this may appear logical — considering the difference of viewpoint between past-victim and past-aggressor — this disconnect could represent a fundamental barrier in Jewish-Christian discourse.

Interfaith discourse is a delicate matter, and two parties that come to the table with different emotional connections and/or triggers are at risk for inadvertently offending one another by tone or word, which could inhibit progress. One third of the respondents chose to “opt out” of this conversation, choosing not to speculate on their Roman Catholic counterparts and their views.

There appear to be two camps of Jewish professionals interested in Jewish-Christian relations: one that believes they understand average Catholic officials and their constituents, and one that does not. For example, there was an almost equal divide when respondents were asked to speculate if Catholics understood why Pope John II was apologizing at the Western Wall in 2000 (see Question 22 in Appendix B). While Jewish professionals may argue that they care deeply about Jewish-Christian relations, and additionally argue that they are well-informed on various topics within that arena, most are hesitant to speculate on certain topics. Comments on this question showed that Jewish professionals are uncomfortable speaking for Catholic laypeople or Catholic clergy. Others discussed that they did not even know how to define the term “Catholics” from the question. Despite being confident in their knowledge and passion for Jewish-Christian relations, Jewish professionals are limited in their view of the Catholic perspective, specifically that of Catholic clergy.

This conclusion was furthered when only about 25% of respondents stated they were not informed enough to have an opinion on the thoughts of average Catholic church-goers (see Question 24 in Appendix B). This result, quite different from the almost equal divide in Question 22, shows that Jewish professionals seem more comfortable to speculate on the views of average Catholic laypeople than of Catholic

clergy. The comments reinforce this idea. On both counts, however, Jewish professionals — left mostly to self-study on Jewish-Christian relations topics — find themselves limited in their understanding of how both Catholic clergy and Catholic laypersons view the Church's history of anti-Jewish actions and the progress the Church has made since *Nostra Aetate*.

Despite data showing limited understanding by Jewish professionals of various aspects of *Nostra Aetate* and its effects, including the text of the document and the Church's progress, almost half of the respondents stated that a great deal has been accomplished since the promulgation almost 50 years ago (see Question 28 in Appendix B). This once again shows a general understanding of or hope for *Nostra Aetate*'s influence but little knowledge of specific avenues by which this is to be accomplished. While a large number of respondents commented that their optimism lies only in reference to the United States and Europe, they still agreed that there has been significant progress in the last 50 years.

Limitations

While the survey was successful in determining several significant conclusions about Jewish professionals including their interest in and knowledge about Jewish-Christian relations, there were aspects of the survey which were not productive, and certain aspects that were missing, or produced little data. Due to the format of Survey Monkey, I was confined to a certain survey format that did not interconnect the data from question to question. For example, I was unable to see how the results of the demographic questions related to results of other questions. Thus, while the survey

showed the division between male and female respondents, it did not show if one category of respondent manifested a greater propensity towards Jewish-Christian matters. Another example is that while the survey provided the age-range of the respondents, it could not tell me if older or younger respondents had more or less formal exposure to *Nostra Aetate*, or if age played a role in whether or not Jewish professionals felt that *Nostra Aetate* was a breakthrough at its time of creation. This was simply a product of the limitations of the survey program used generally for the HUC-JIR alumni list.

Looking Forward

The data from the survey shows a lack of scholarly learning about many topics in the area of Jewish-Christian relations. This points to both the need for more substantial self-study by Jewish professionals and far more than a superficial understanding of (varied) aspects on the subject. Otherwise, the unfortunate consequence is that this lack of training undermines Jewish professionals in the degree to which they can substantively and constructively be involved in Jewish-Christian relations. For example, a lack of formal training in this area may lead to a lack of scholarly discussion between colleagues. Self-study does not create a learning environment in which one can process complex ideas with others. Therefore, Jewish professionals coming to the table may find their contributions, positive or negative, to be limited, or one-sided.

The glaring need for proper training of Jewish professionals shows that Jewish-Christian relations may not genuinely be as much the priority of the Reform movement as it so often insists. This, unfortunately, is evident in both the educational and organizational sectors of the movement. Today, most once-permanent salaried positions

within the URJ on interfaith issues have been removed due to lack of funds, and measure to fill this lacuna have been makeshift as full-fledged experts cannot be hired. Without a show of substantive priority from the movement, it is difficult for Jewish professionals to engage in the meaningful Jewish-Christian discourse that is needed; moreover, when Jewish professionals do engage in Jewish-Christian discourse, they are at a disadvantage, having relied mostly on self-study.

The solutions to these problems are at least two-fold. The next generation of Jewish professionals should be given access to a more solid foundation of vigorous learning on Christianity and Jewish-Christian relations; and current Jewish professionals must have access to a legitimate and consistent source of continuing education. For future clergy and Jewish professionals, HUC-JIR and other Jewish institutions of higher education should require more courses and faculty appointments in Christian scripture, Church doctrine, and interfaith discourse. This would produce a new generation of Jewish professionals with a stronger foundation of learning than their predecessors. Learned professors at HUC-JIR could teach on not only Christian holy texts (such as the Gospels) but also the Catholic Church doctrine and the evolution of the Vatican throughout the centuries, responding to modernity. While certain programs at HUC-JIR already exist in emphasizing interfaith relations, such as the Gerecht Institute for Outreach at HUC-JIR, these programs are limited. HUC-JIR and other institutions could and should provide further instruction on how to engage in positive, productive interfaith discourse.

For the Jewish professionals already in the field, namely the respondents of the survey, an organization could be created and led by clergy and scholars who would be

hired specifically to educate current Jewish professionals who have a passion for interfaith relations. Funding could come from synagogues, churches, or national Jewish or Christian organizations. With so many Jewish professionals relying on self-study, this organization would serve as a resource to educate them on historically significant background, as well as new scholarship within the interfaith arena. This organization could, in time, create lectures, books, newsletters, and eventually facilitate a change in culture of Jewish-Christian relations for current Jewish professionals. The organization could even have Christian scholars and clergy on staff to help educate Jewish professionals on Christian perspectives.

Additionally, in preparation for the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, Jewish professionals should take the opportunity to reflect on and reevaluate their knowledge and understanding of Jewish-Christian relations. Synagogues should prepare meaningful interfaith educational activities centered on the progress that has been made since *Nostra Aetate*, while national organizations should make their constituents aware of the upcoming anniversaries and their significance. Additionally, *Nostra Aetate* could and should serve as a learning tool itself. *Nostra Aetate* should serve as this tool not only for the 50th anniversary, but continuously within the arena of Jewish-Christian discourse. The format of the *Declaration* is relatively easy to read and understand, and could serve as the central document of discussion for a wide age-range of laypeople.

The survey showed that a great number of Jewish professionals today care deeply about Jewish-Christian relations and that both Jewish and Christian attitudes have changed for the better since *Nostra Aetate*. If this same survey were given after the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, it is possible that, due to new and more substantial Jewish

and Catholic programming surrounding it, Jewish professionals may provide answers fully, different, or at least more nuanced; hopefully more respondents would show specific knowledge about *Nostra Aetate* or Church doctrine. In addition, respondents might, after the anniversary, feel more comfortable not only to speculate on the views of Catholic clergy and/or laypersons but literally to secure solid knowledge so that the percentages of respondents answering “neither agree nor disagree” or “I am insufficiently informed to respond to this question” will be substantially reduced.” It is my hope that Jewish professionals take advantage of the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* as an incentive as well as opportunity to improve their learning.

Appendix A
E-mail Text Body and Survey Questions

E-mail Text Body:

Help HUC-JIR Student: “Deicide & the Jews”

I, student-rabbi Michael Harvey, am working under Dr. Michael Cook on Vatican Two’s 50th anniversary (year 2015). I’m seeking to determine whether the watershed “Nostra Aetate” Declaration (Paragraph 4) – which freed Jews from the “deicide” charge – is still vital, or by contrast, has faded in today’s popular consciousness.

The data for this unique thesis depend ENTIRELY on your short-answers to this anonymous RAPID survey!

Recipients of this E-mail are HUC-JIR graduates. All questions may be answered by Jewish respondents. Responses of non-Jews are likewise welcomed, with some occasional questions having to be answered N/A.

Thank you SO much!

Please answer the following questions as they relate to your work as an HUC-JIR graduate.

Survey Questions:

Question 1:

I am

- Male
- Female

Question 2:

My age-range is

- 18-25
- 25-40
- 40-65
- 65+

Question 3:

My profession is

- Rabbi
- Cantor

- Emeritus or Retired
- Educator and/or Graduate of HUC-JIR's School of Education
- Graduate of HUC-JIR's School of Nonprofit Management
- Jewish Professor
- Jewish Chaplain (military, hospital)
- Non-Jewish Graduate or Other (please identify)

Question 4:

I am located

- In the Northeastern United States
- In the Midwestern United States
- In the Southern United States
- In the Western United States
- Outside the United States (please identify)

Question 5:

I received my Jewish professional training/degree primarily

- In the Northeastern United States
- In the Midwestern United States
- In the Southern United States
- In the Western United States
- N/A
- Outside the United States (please identify)

Question 6:

I received my Jewish professional training/degree primarily in

- Seminary (rabbinical / cantorial)
- Undergraduate college or university
- Graduate program (M.A.; Ph.D.)
- Professional school (educational degree; Jewish communal service; etc.)
- N/A
- Elsewhere (please identify)

Question 7:

Jewish-Christian matters and relations play a major role in my work as a Jewish professional.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- N/A
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 8:

Jewish-Christian matters and relations would be a major concern of mine even if not integral to my work as a Jewish professional.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- N/A
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 9:

In my training as a Jewish professional, I was given the opportunity for ample learning in the New Testament and its relationship to Judaism past and present.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- N/A
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 10:

I have what I consider a working knowledge of the Gospels and/or Roman Catholic Church doctrine.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- N/A
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 11:

I have had formal exposure (taken classes, attended professional development opportunities) that has critiqued Nostra Aetate Paragraph 4 (with or without also examining the follow-up 1974 Guidelines or 1985 Notes).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 12:

I have informally (on my own) studied, assessed, and critiqued Nostra Aetate Paragraph 4 (with or without examining the 1974 Guidelines or 1985 Notes).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 13:

I am satisfied that no blame for Jesus' execution remains lodged with Jews in the text of Nostra Aetate paragraph 4 (or the 1974 Guidelines or 1985 Notes).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 14:

I now feel that Nostra Aetate was a breakthrough for Jewish-Christian relations at the time of its creation, but commands relatively little interest to lay Jews and lay Christians today.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 15:

To me personally, I now feel that Nostra Aetate was a breakthrough for Jewish-Christian relations at the time of its creation, but commands relatively little interest (to me) today.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 16:

I will likely attend – or speak at, if so invited – significant anniversaries of Nostra Aetate with genuinely-felt enthusiasm.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 17:

Were I to attend – or speak at, if so invited – a significant anniversary celebration of Nostra Aetate, I'd do so primarily out of professional obligation rather than substantial enthusiasm.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 18:

Generally speaking, I feel Roman Catholic clergy, academicians, or other Roman Catholics officials familiar with Nostra Aetate view it primarily in theological terms whereas lay Jews so familiar do so primarily in historical (and non-theological) terms.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 19:

I am familiar enough to use freely, in Jewish-Christian dialogue, a number of the following terms: “Deicide,” “Two-Covenant Theology,” “Judaism and Christianity as sibling faiths,” “triumphalism,” “supersessionism,” “typology,” and the like.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 20:

I know the vast degree to which post-1965 Roman Catholic textbooks have been stripped of anti-Jewish stereotyping.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 21:

I also know that such textbook alterations now sufficiently convey the nature and extent of Roman Catholic denigrations, including persecutions, of Jews over the centuries.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 22:

In the year 2000, during the 35th-anniversary year when Pope John II apologized at the Western Wall for Catholic maltreatment of the Jews, most Catholics likely understood for what he was apologizing.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 23:

Under the current Pope, Francis I, Nostra Aetate's teachings will likely catch on in the effort of Third World missionizing.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 24:

Roman Catholic church-goers, in their experiencing sermons and lectionary readings from the New Testament, are themselves today more sensitive to, and disapproving of, anti-Jewish stereotyping.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 25:

Symposia on Nostra Aetate are now doing an adequate job of involving Catholic and Jewish laypersons as opposed to almost exclusively theologians-academicians-clergy.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 26:

Nostra Aetate would not have developed were it not for the Holocaust.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 27:

The time is now ripe – in keeping with the 50th anniversary of Nostra Aetate – for Jews to reciprocate by developing our own more robust theology of “the other.”

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 28:

Given that we have reached now a 50-year span, what has been accomplished (progress) in Jewish-Catholic relations is reasonably commensurate with such a time-span (i.e., has not fallen short).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 29:

What percentage of Jews—who you know are aware of Nostra Aetate—believe it an adequate response to the traumas of Jewish-Catholic relations of the past?

- 0%
- 25%
- 50%
- 75%
- 100%
- I am not informed enough to have an opinion
- Additional Comments – explanatory / clarifying

Question 30:

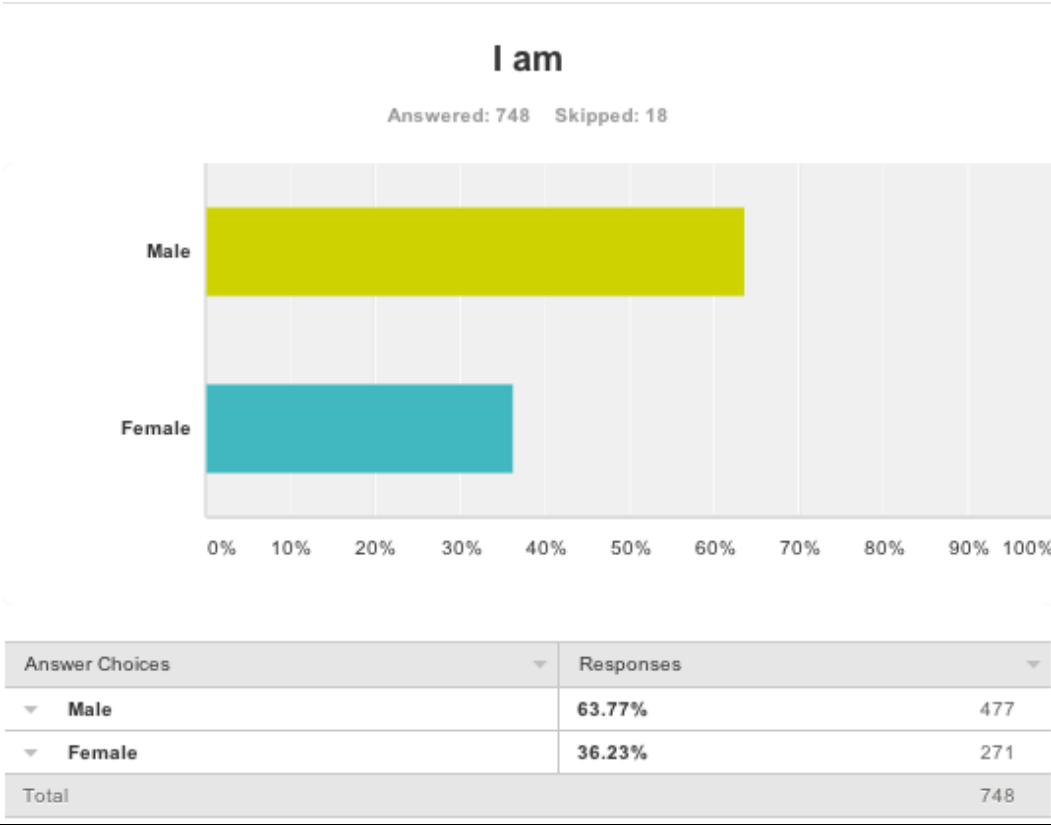
Please use the space below for any further comments related to Nostra Aetate.

Question 31:

If you would be willing to comment further, please provide your name, phone number, and/or e-mail address below.

Appendix B:
The Sequenced Slides of the Survey

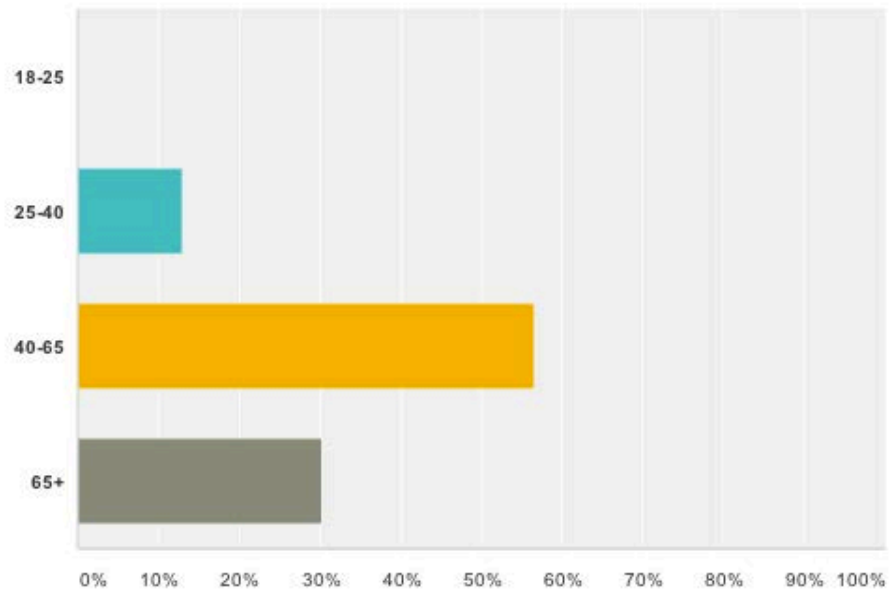
Question 1



Question 2

My age-range is

Answered: 761 Skipped: 5

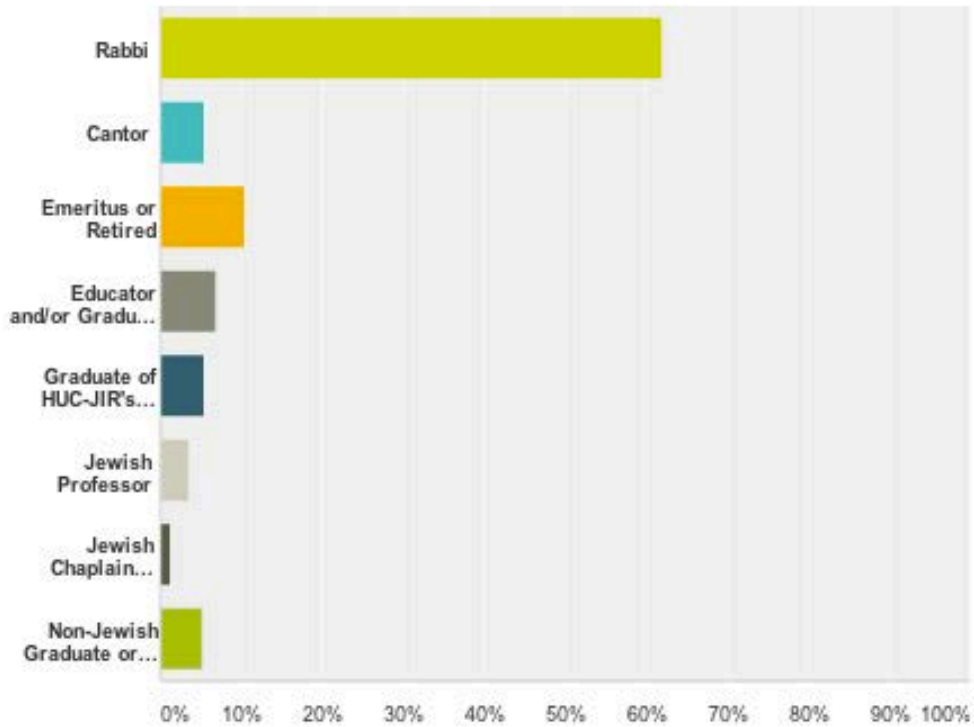


Answer Choices	Responses
18-25	0.00% 0
25-40	13.01% 99
40-65	56.64% 431
65+	30.35% 231
Total	761

Question 3

My profession is

Answered: 766 Skipped: 0

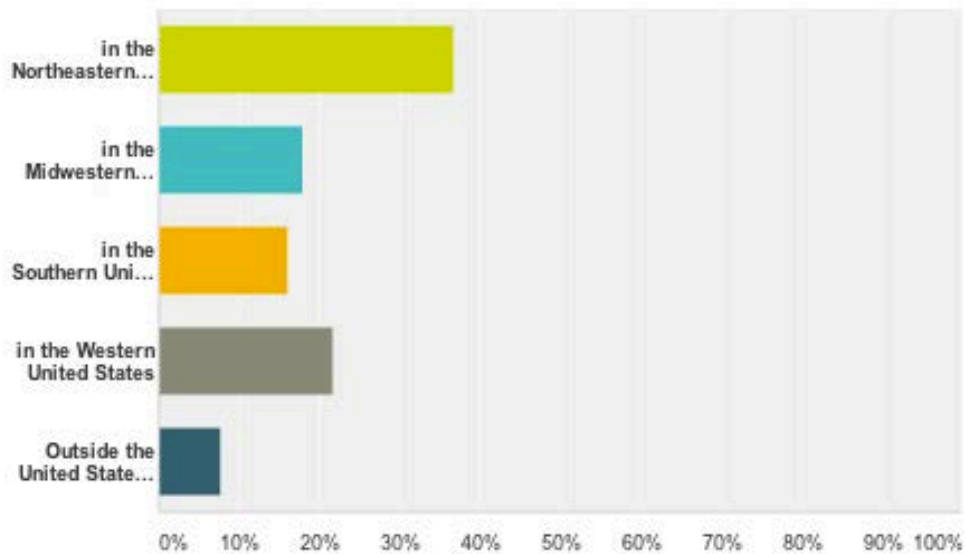


Answer Choices	Responses
▼ Rabbi	62.01% 475
▼ Cantor	5.35% 41
▼ Emeritus or Retired	10.44% 80
▼ Educator and/or Graduate of HUC-JIR's School of Education	6.79% 52
▼ Graduate of HUC-JIR's School of Nonprofit Management	5.35% 41
▼ Jewish Professor	3.52% 27
▼ Jewish Chaplain (military, hospital)	1.31% 10
▼ Non-Jewish Graduate or Other (please identify) Responses	5.22% 40
Total	766

Question 4

I am located

Answered: 761 Skipped: 5

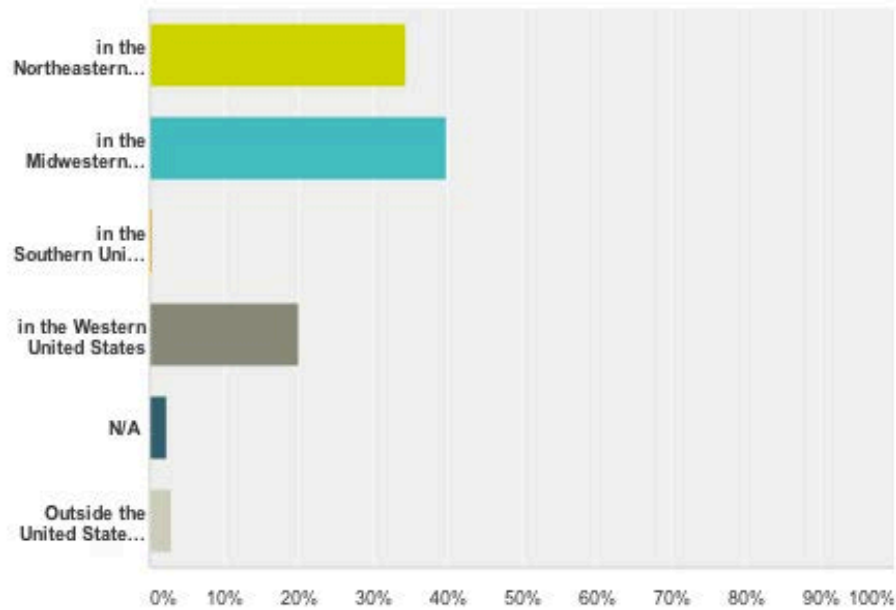


Answer Choices	Responses
in the Northeastern United States	36.66% 279
in the Midwestern United States	17.87% 136
in the Southern United States	16.03% 122
in the Western United States	21.81% 166
Outside the United States (please identify)	7.62% 58
Total	761

Question 5

I received my Jewish professional training/degree primarily

Answered: 758 Skipped: 8

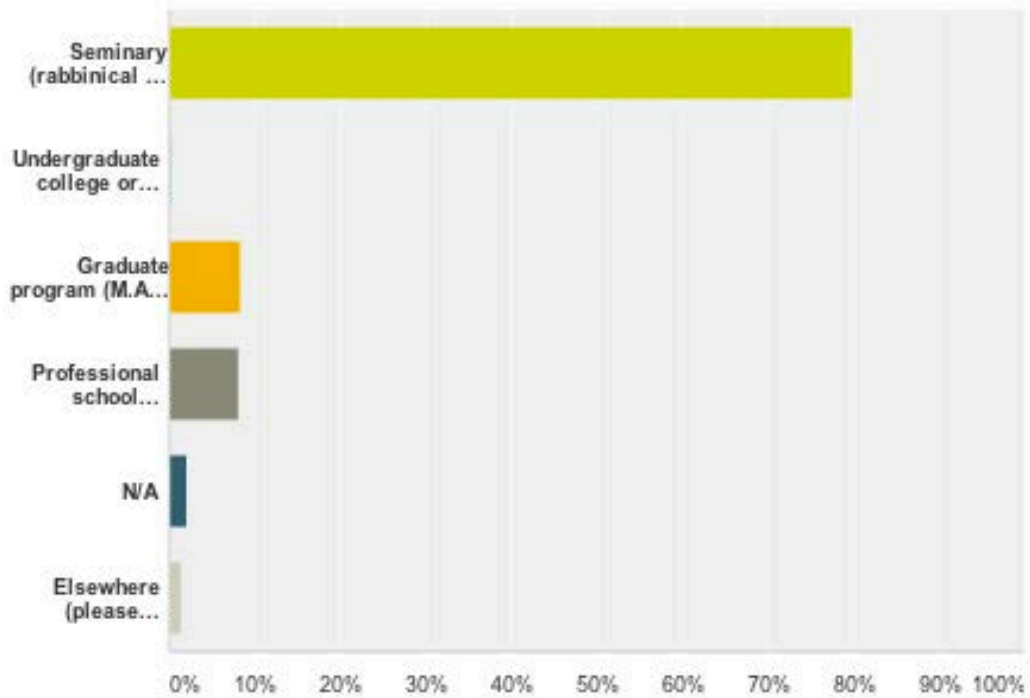


Answer Choices	Responses
in the Northeastern United States	34.43% 261
in the Midwestern United States	39.97% 303
in the Southern United States	0.40% 3
in the Western United States	20.05% 152
N/A	2.24% 17
Outside the United States (please identify) Responses	2.90% 22
Total	758

Question 6

I received my Jewish professional training/degree primarily

Answered: 761 Skipped: 5

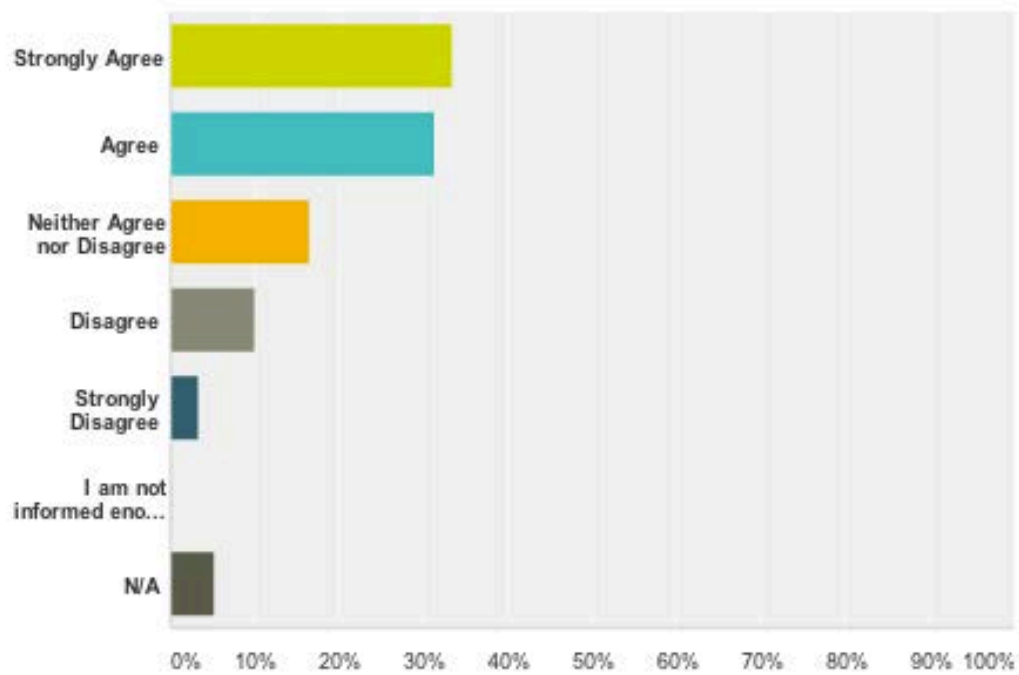


Answer Choices	Responses
▼ Seminary (rabbinical / cantorial)	79.89% 608
▼ Undergraduate college or university	0.13% 1
▼ Graduate program (M.A.; Ph.D.)	8.28% 63
▼ Professional school (educational degree; Jewish communal service; etc.)	8.15% 62
▼ N/A	2.10% 16
▼ Elsewhere (please identify) Responses	1.45% 11
Total	761

Question 7

Jewish-Christian matters and relations play a major role in my work as a Jewish professional.

Answered: 761 Skipped: 5

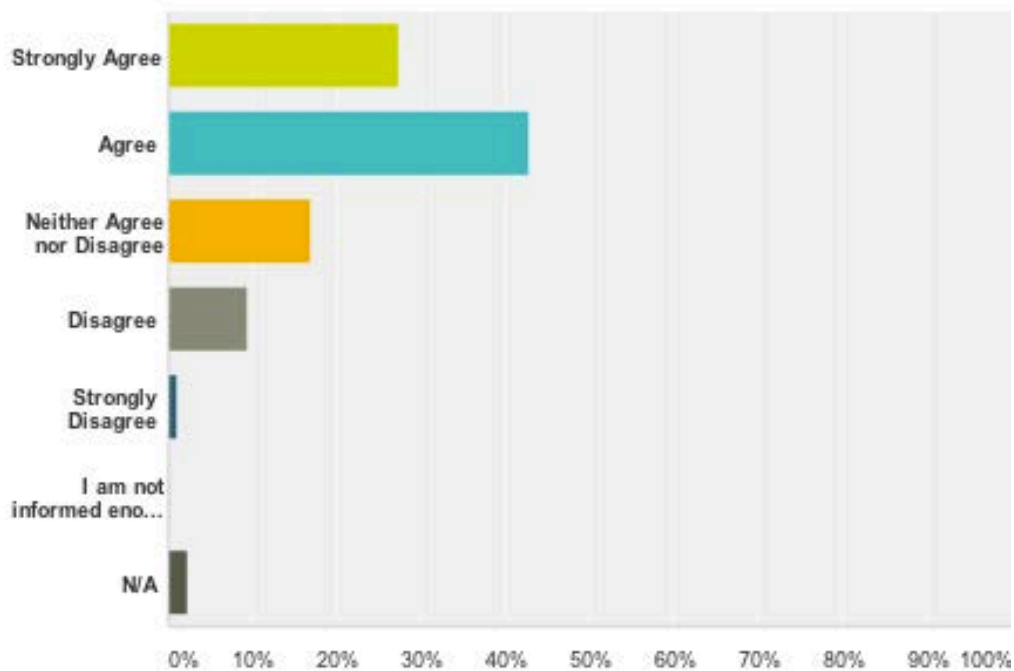


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	33.38%	254
Agree	31.41%	239
Neither Agree nor Disagree	16.43%	125
Disagree	10.12%	77
Strongly Disagree	3.29%	25
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	0.26%	2
N/A	5.12%	39
Total	761	

Question 8

**Jewish-Christian matters and relations
would be a major concern of mine even if not
integral to my work as a Jewish professional.**

Answered: 760 Skipped: 6

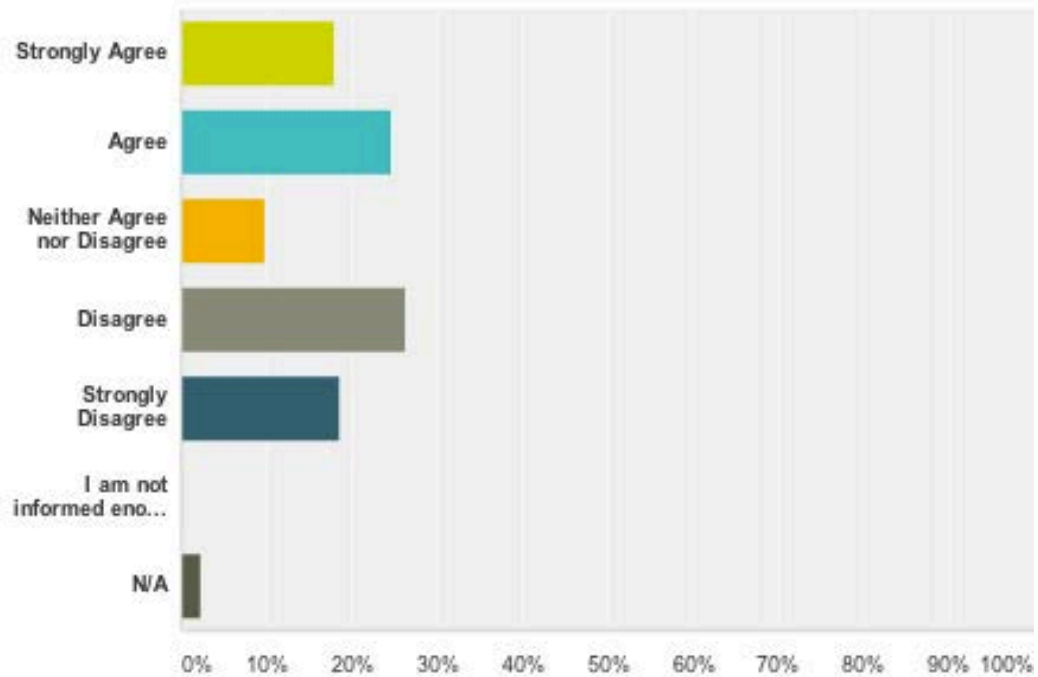


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	27.37%	208
Agree	42.89%	326
Neither Agree nor Disagree	16.84%	128
Disagree	9.47%	72
Strongly Disagree	1.05%	8
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	0.13%	1
N/A	2.24%	17
Total	760	

Question 9

In my training as a Jewish professional, I was given the opportunity for ample learning in the New Testament and its relationship to Judaism past and present.

Answered: 760 Skipped: 6

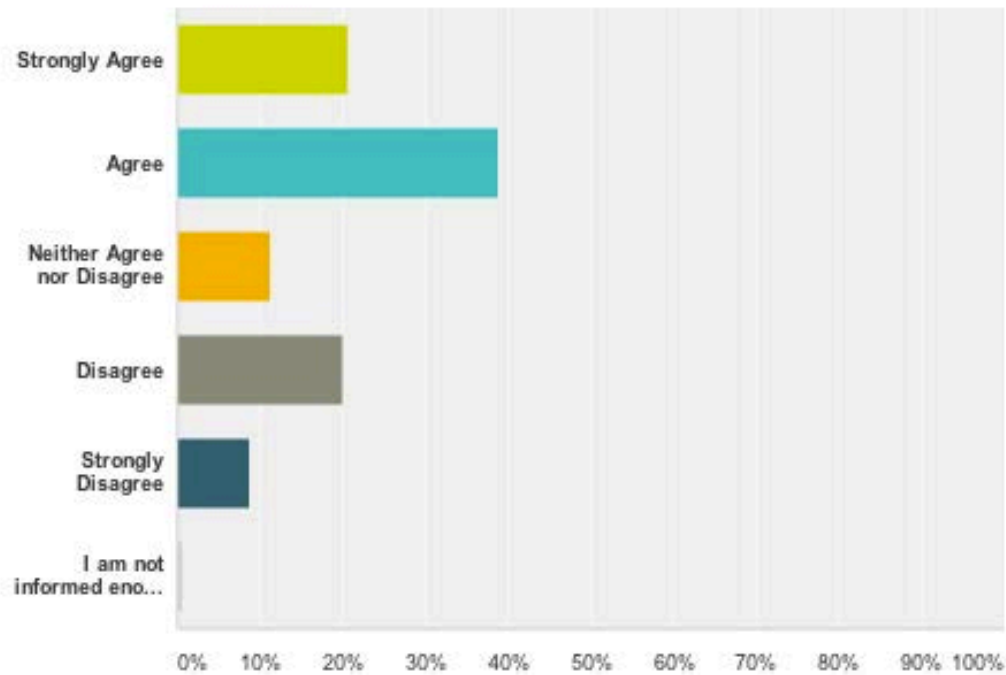


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	18.03%	137
Agree	24.61%	187
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9.74%	74
Disagree	26.32%	200
Strongly Disagree	18.68%	142
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	0.26%	2
N/A	2.37%	18
Total	760	

Question 10

**I have what I consider a working knowledge
of the Gospels and/or Roman Catholic
Church doctrine.**

Answered: 761 Skipped: 5

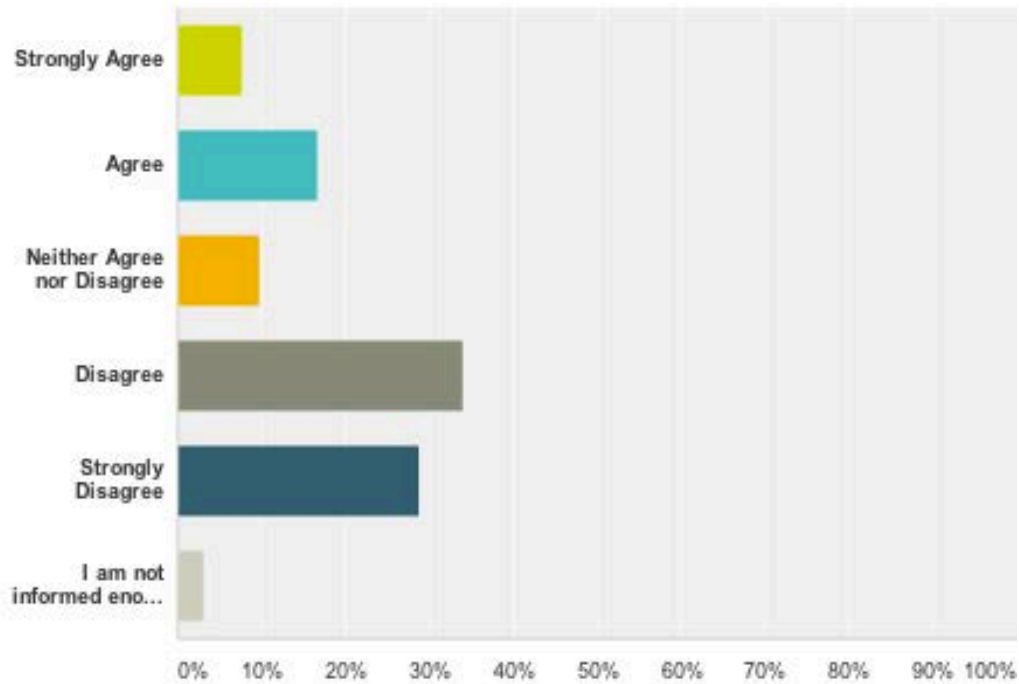


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	20.63%	157
Agree	38.76%	295
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11.30%	86
Disagree	19.97%	152
Strongly Disagree	8.80%	67
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	0.53%	4
Total	761	

Question 11

I have had formal exposure (taken classes, attended professional development opportunities) that has critiqued Nostra Aetate ¶4 (with or without also examining the follow-up 1974 Guidelines or 1985 Notes).

Answered: 759 Skipped: 7

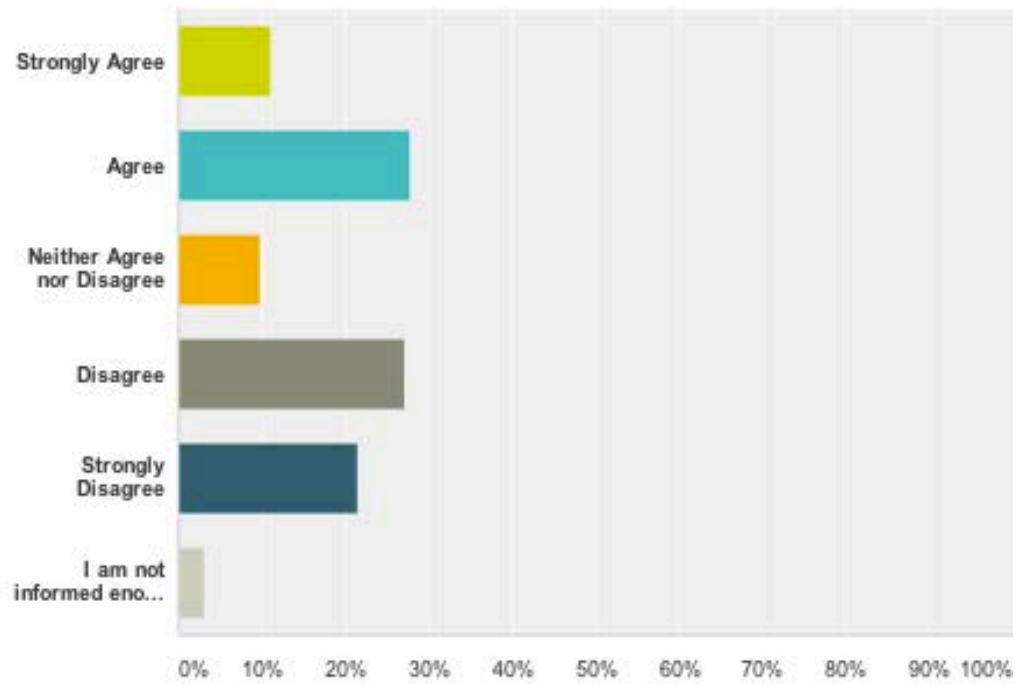


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	7.77%	59
Agree	16.73%	127
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9.75%	74
Disagree	33.99%	258
Strongly Disagree	28.72%	218
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	3.03%	23
Total	759	

Question 12

I have informally (on my own) studied, assessed, and critiqued Nostra Aetate ¶4 (with or without examining the 1974 Guidelines or 1985 Notes).

Answered: 757 Skipped: 9

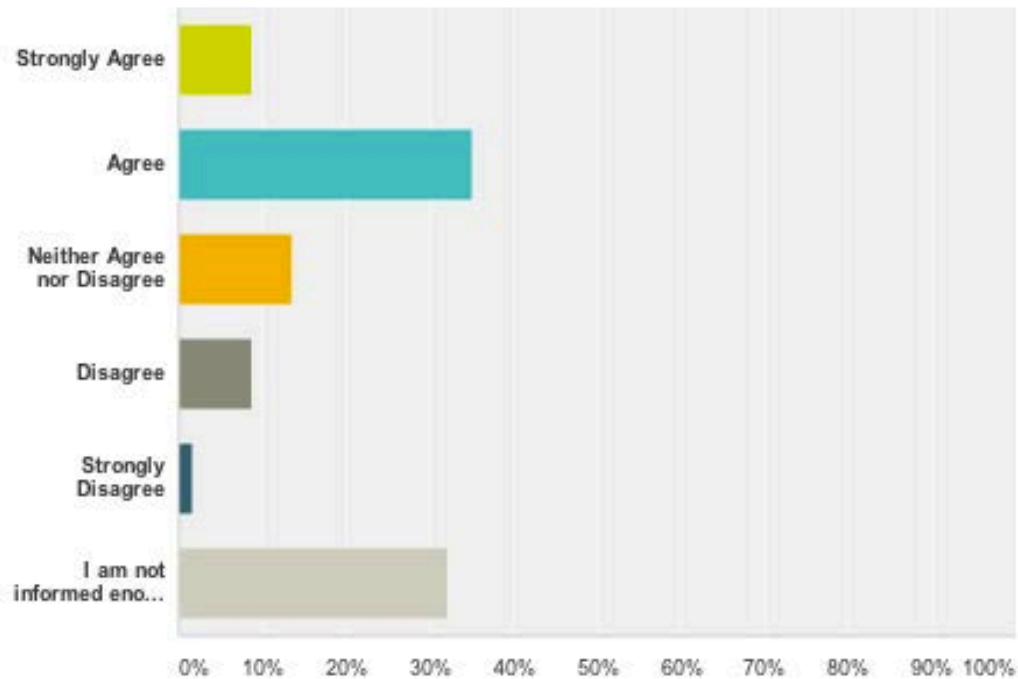


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	10.96%	83
Agree	27.74%	210
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9.78%	74
Disagree	27.08%	205
Strongly Disagree	21.40%	162
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	3.04%	23
Total	757	

Question 13

I am satisfied that no blame for Jesus' execution remains lodged with Jews in the text of Nostra Aetate ¶4 (or the 1974 Guidelines or 1985 Notes).

Answered: 750 Skipped: 16

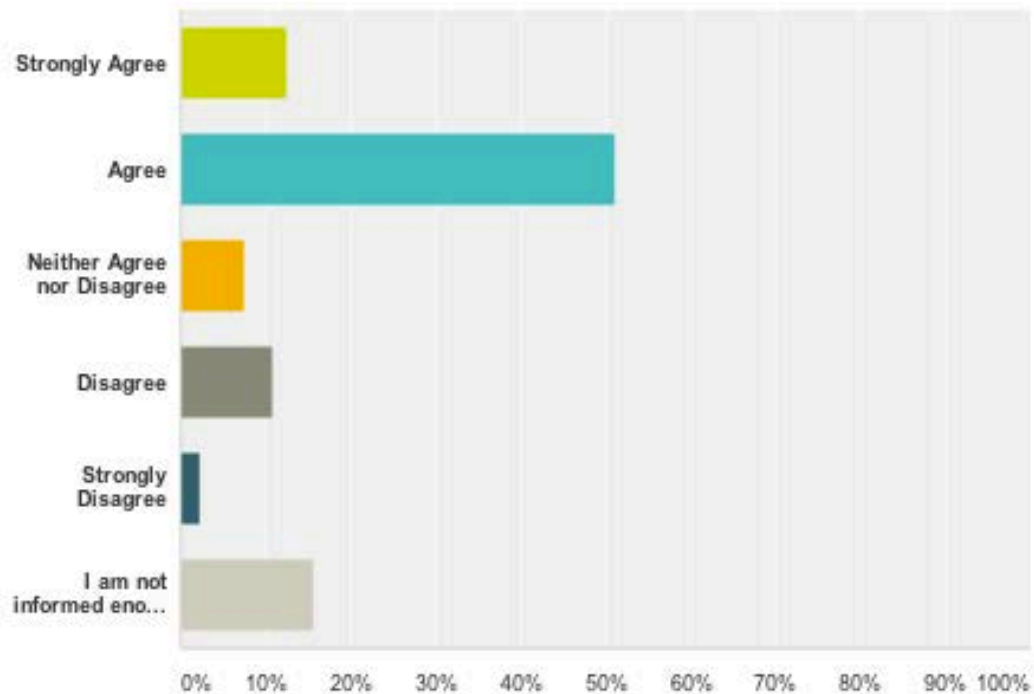


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	8.80%	66
Agree	35.07%	263
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.60%	102
Disagree	8.80%	66
Strongly Disagree	1.60%	12
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	32.13%	241
Total	750	

Question 14

I now feel that Nostra Aetate was a breakthrough for Jewish-Christian relations at the time of its creation, but commands relatively little interest to lay Jews and lay Christians today.

Answered: 759 Skipped: 7

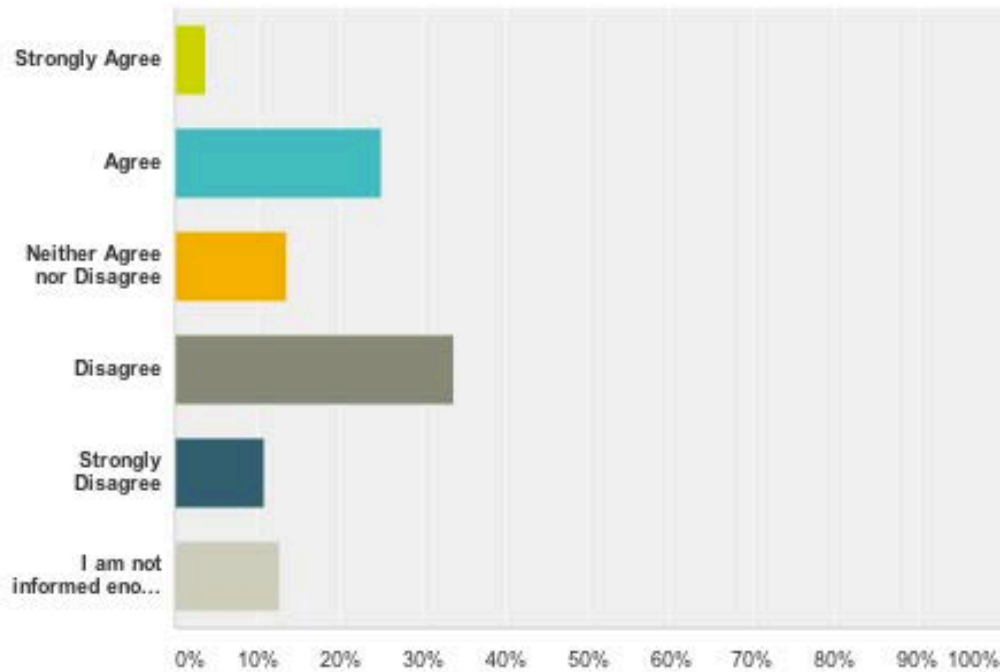


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	12.52%	95
Agree	51.25%	389
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7.51%	57
Disagree	10.80%	82
Strongly Disagree	2.24%	17
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	15.68%	119
Total	759	

Question 15

To me personally, I now feel that Nostra Aetate was a breakthrough for Jewish-Christian relations at the time of its creation, but commands relatively little interest (to me) today.

Answered: 756 Skipped: 10

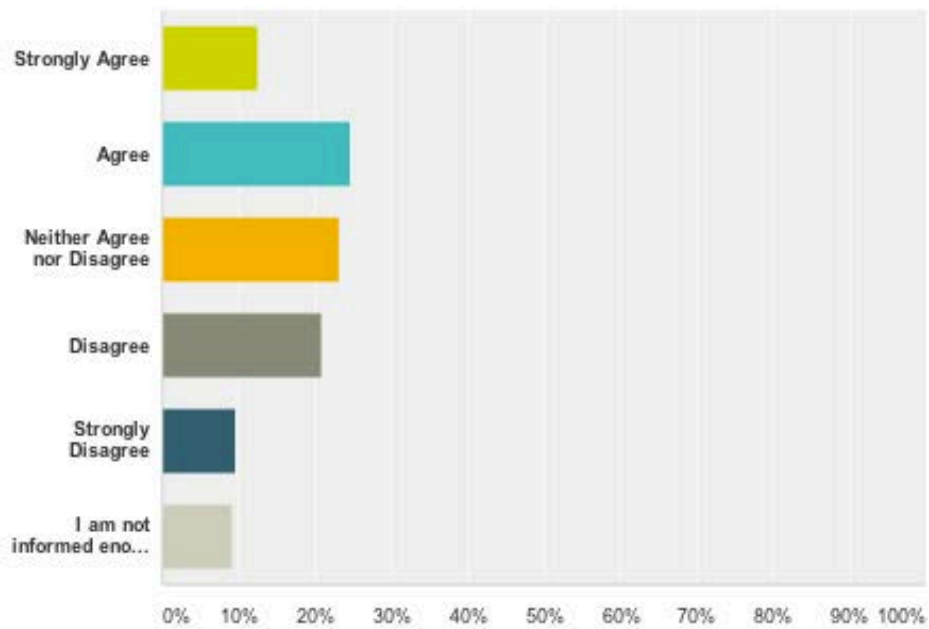


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	3.70%	28
Agree	25.13%	190
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.62%	103
Disagree	33.86%	256
Strongly Disagree	10.85%	82
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	12.83%	97
Total		756

Question 16

**I will likely attend -- or speak at, if so invited -
- significant anniversaries of Nostra Aetate
with genuinely-felt enthusiasm.**

Answered: 754 Skipped: 12

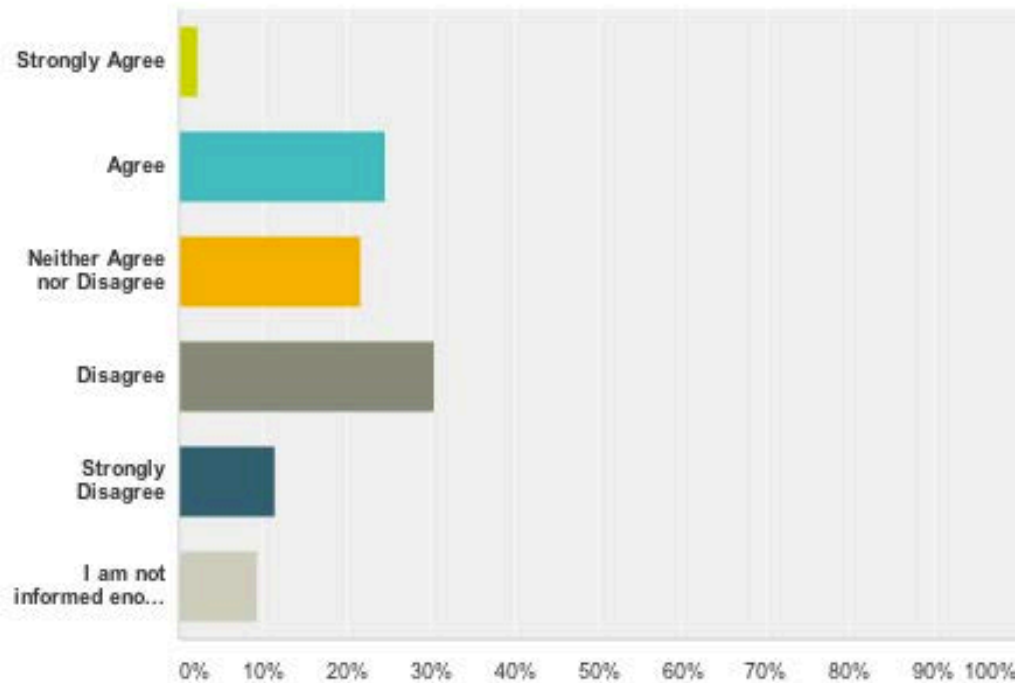


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	12.47%	94
Agree	24.54%	185
Neither Agree nor Disagree	23.08%	174
Disagree	20.95%	158
Strongly Disagree	9.68%	73
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	9.28%	70
Total		754

Question 17

Were I to attend -- or speak at, if so invited -- a significant anniversary celebration of Nostra Aetate, I'd do so primarily out of professional obligation rather than substantial enthusiasm.

Answered: 755 Skipped: 11

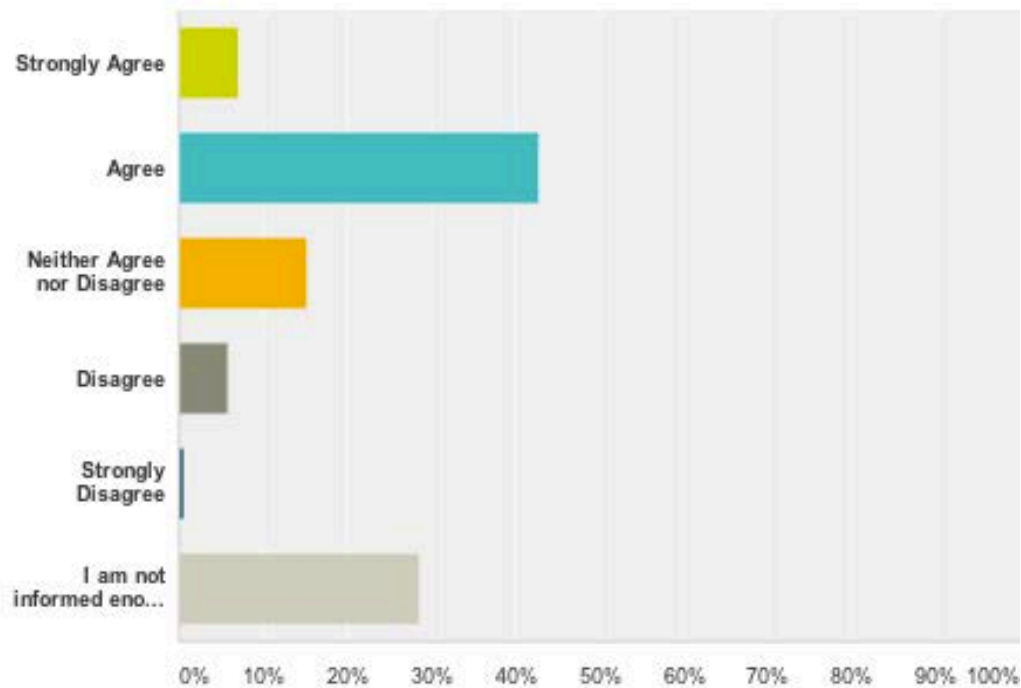


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	2.25%	17
Agree	24.64%	186
Neither Agree nor Disagree	21.72%	164
Disagree	30.46%	230
Strongly Disagree	11.52%	87
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	9.40%	71
Total	755	

Question 18

Generally speaking, I feel Roman Catholic clergy, academicians, or other Roman Catholic officials familiar with Nostra Aetate view it primarily in theological terms whereas lay Jews so familiar do so primarily in historical (and non-theological) terms.

Answered: 756 Skipped: 10

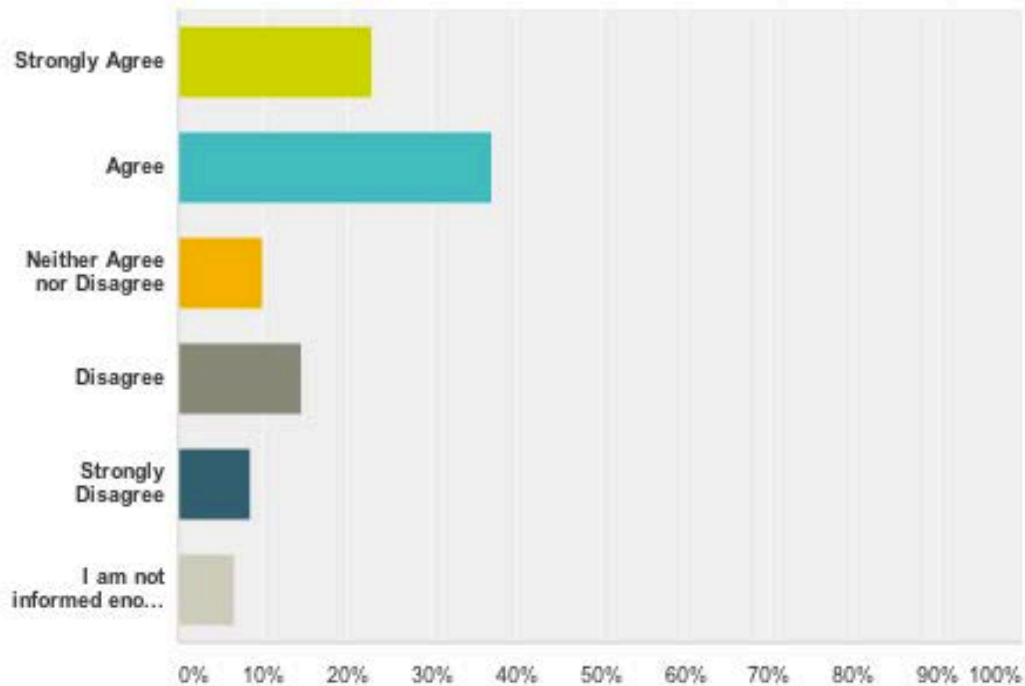


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	7.01%	53
Agree	42.72%	323
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15.21%	115
Disagree	5.82%	44
Strongly Disagree	0.66%	5
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	28.57%	216
Total	756	

Question 19

I am familiar enough to use freely, in Jewish-Christian dialogue, a number of the following terms: "Deicide," "Two-Covenant Theology," "Judaism and Christianity as sibling faiths," "triumphalism," "supersessionism," "typology," and the like.

Answered: 756 Skipped: 10

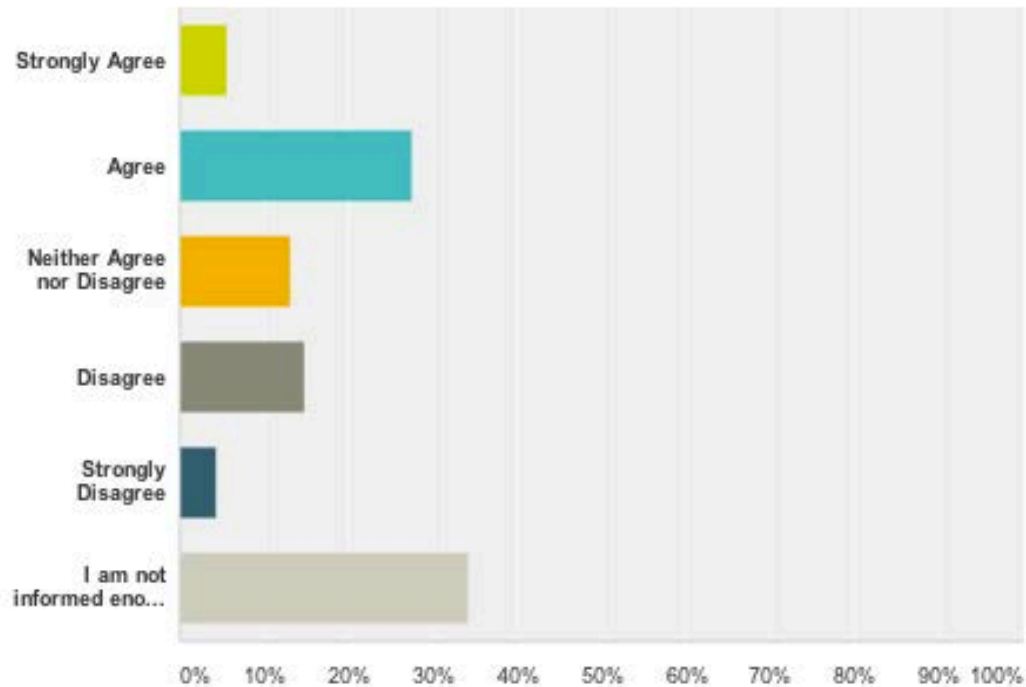


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	23.02%	174
Agree	37.17%	281
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9.92%	75
Disagree	14.55%	110
Strongly Disagree	8.60%	65
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	6.75%	51
Total	756	

Question 20

**I know the vast degree to which post-1965
Roman Catholic textbooks have been
stripped of anti-Jewish stereotyping.**

Answered: 755 Skipped: 11

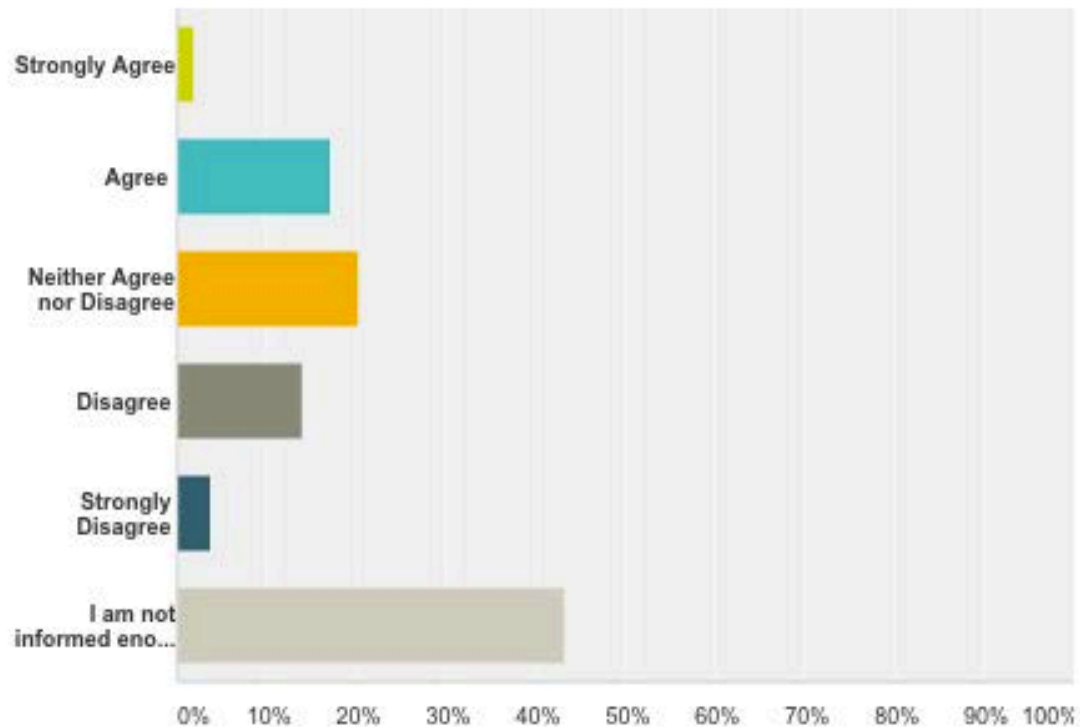


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	5.70%	43
Agree	27.55%	208
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.25%	100
Disagree	14.83%	112
Strongly Disagree	4.37%	33
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	34.30%	259
Total	755	

Question 21

I also know that such textbook alterations now sufficiently convey the nature and extent of Roman Catholic denigrations, including persecutions, of Jews over the centuries.

Answered: 759 Skipped: 7

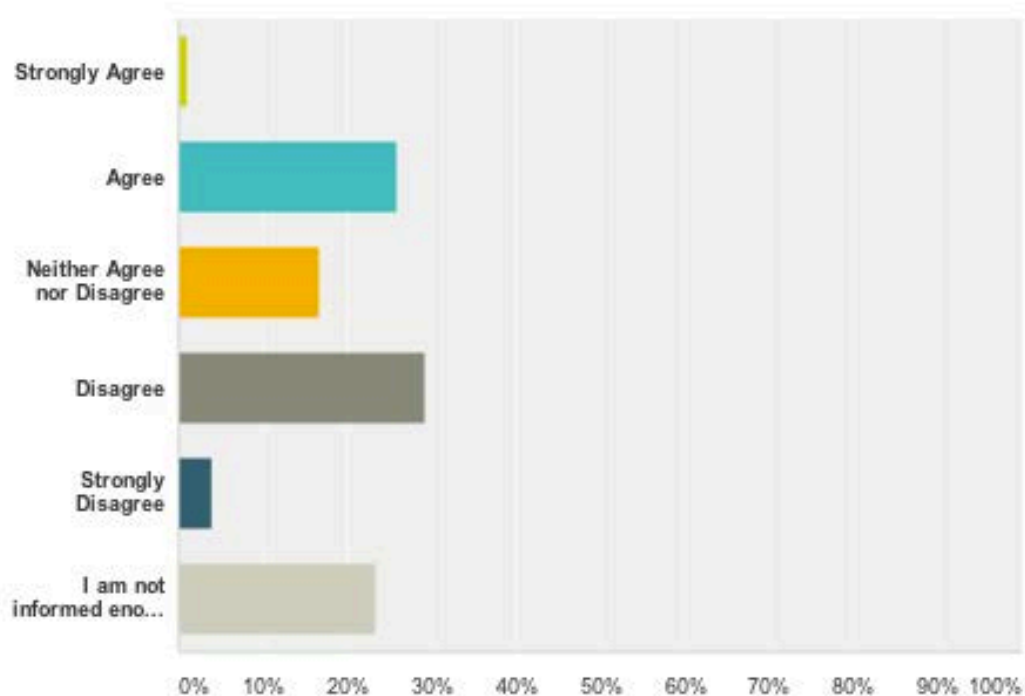


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	1.84%	14
Agree	17.13%	130
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20.16%	153
Disagree	13.97%	106
Strongly Disagree	3.69%	28
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	43.21%	328
Total	759	

Question 22

In the year 2000, during the 35th-anniversary year when Pope John II apologized at the Western Wall for Catholic maltreatment of the Jews, most Catholics likely understood for what he was apologizing.

Answered: 756 Skipped: 10

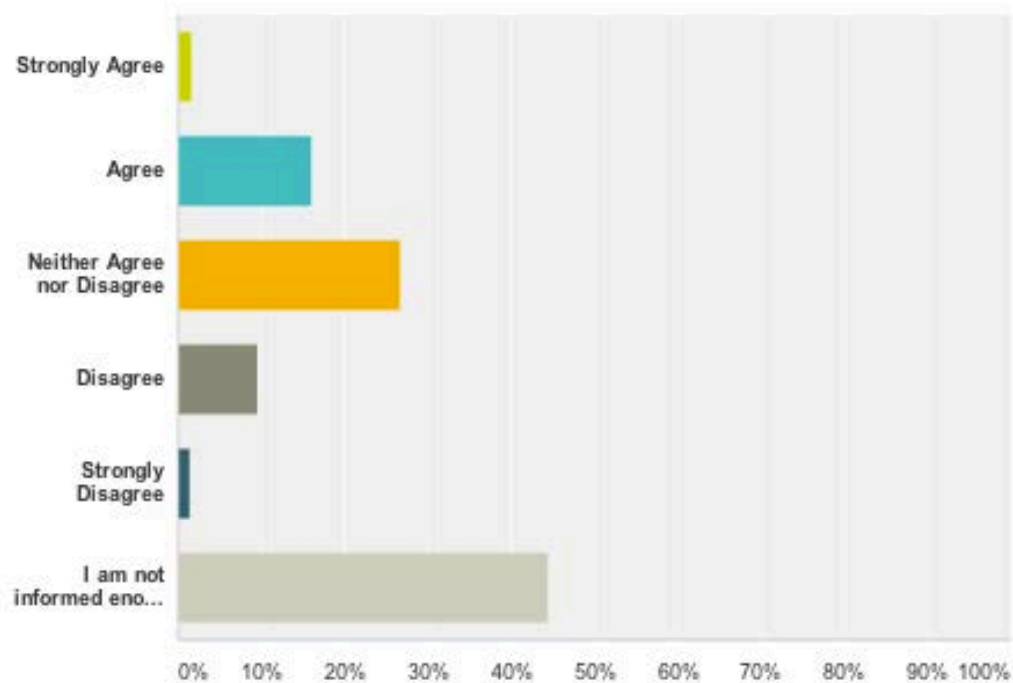


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	1.06%	8
Agree	25.79%	195
Neither Agree nor Disagree	16.67%	126
Disagree	29.23%	221
Strongly Disagree	3.97%	30
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	23.28%	176
Total	756	

Question 23

Under the current Pope, Francis I, Nostra Aetate's teachings will likely catch on in the effort of Third World missionizing.

Answered: 755 Skipped: 11

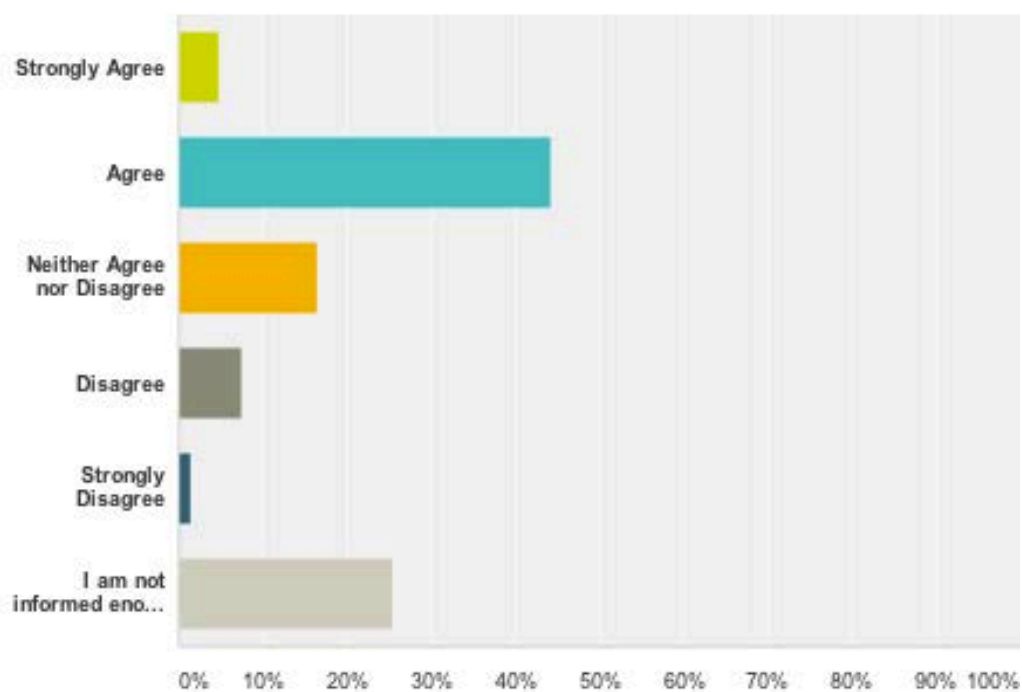


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	1.72%	13
Agree	16.03%	121
Neither Agree nor Disagree	26.75%	202
Disagree	9.67%	73
Strongly Disagree	1.46%	11
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	44.37%	335
Total	755	

Question 24

Roman Catholic church-goers, in their experiencing sermons and lectionary readings from the New Testament, are themselves today more sensitive to, and disapproving of, anti-Jewish stereotyping.

Answered: 755 Skipped: 11

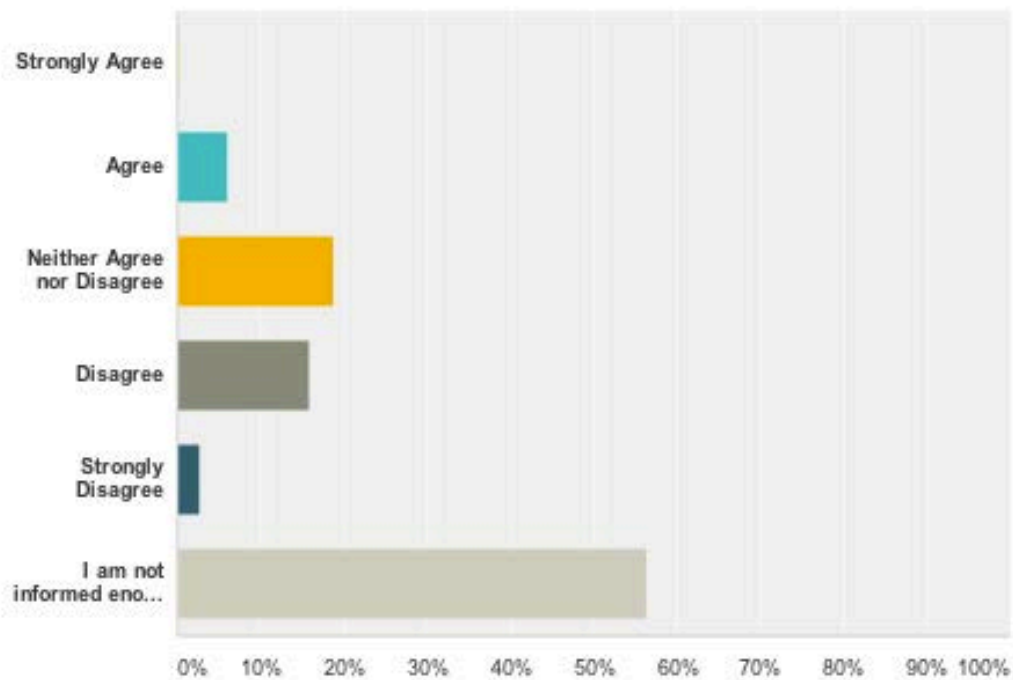


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	4.77%	36
Agree	44.24%	334
Neither Agree nor Disagree	16.56%	125
Disagree	7.42%	56
Strongly Disagree	1.46%	11
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	25.56%	193
Total		755

Question 25

Symposia on Nostra Aetate are now doing an adequate job of involving Catholic and Jewish laypersons as opposed to almost exclusively theologians-academics-clergy.

Answered: 753 Skipped: 13

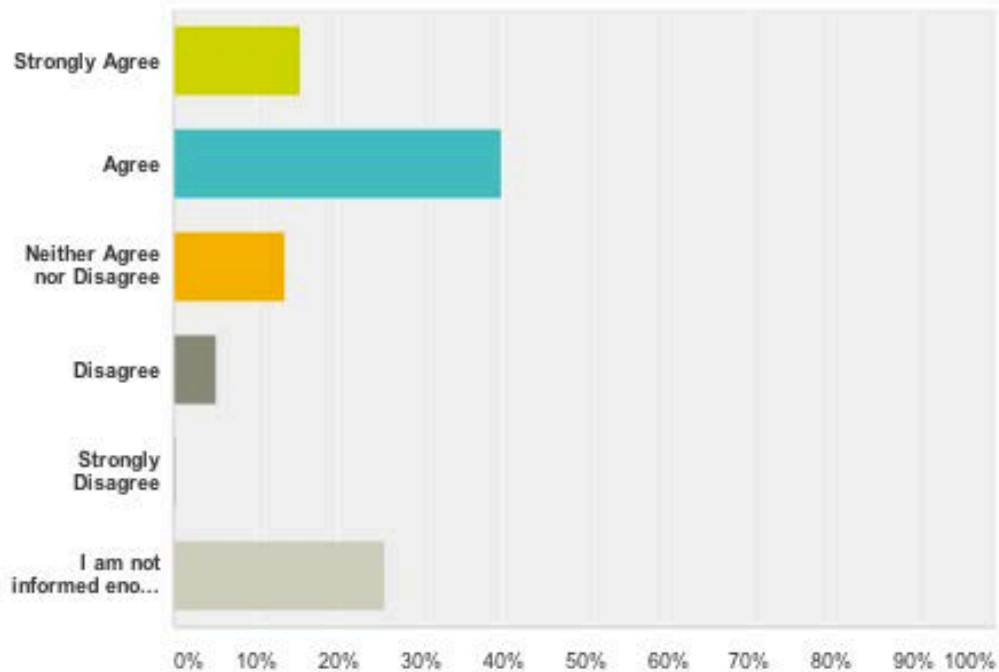


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	0.13%	1
Agree	6.11%	46
Neither Agree nor Disagree	18.86%	142
Disagree	15.80%	119
Strongly Disagree	2.66%	20
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	56.44%	425
Total	753	

Question 26

**Nostra Aetate would not have developed
were it not for the Holocaust.**

Answered: 755 Skipped: 11

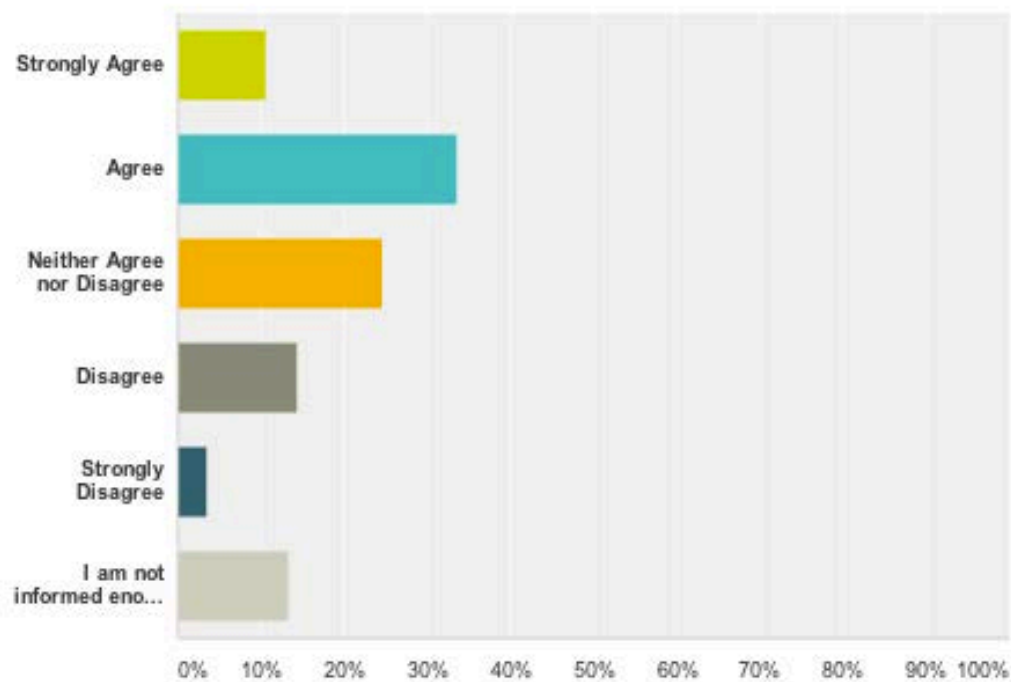


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	15.36%	116
Agree	39.87%	301
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.64%	103
Disagree	5.30%	40
Strongly Disagree	0.13%	1
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	25.70%	194
Total	755	

Question 27

The time is now ripe -- in keeping with the 50th anniversary of Nostra Aetate -- for Jews to reciprocate by developing our own more robust theology of "the other."

Answered: 745 Skipped: 21

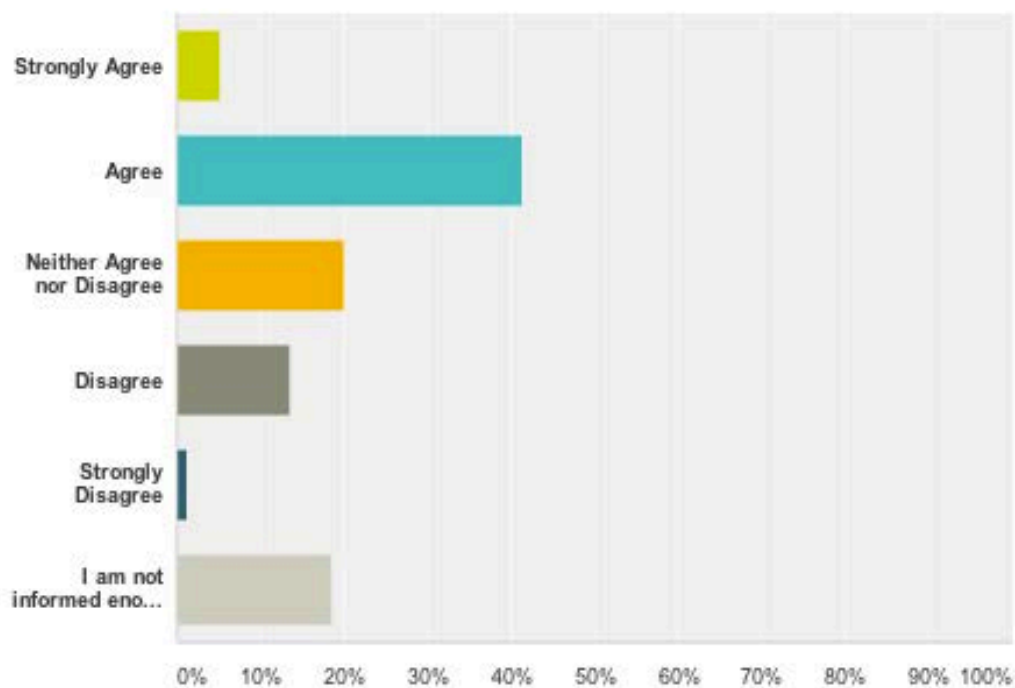


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	10.60%	79
Agree	33.56%	250
Neither Agree nor Disagree	24.56%	183
Disagree	14.36%	107
Strongly Disagree	3.62%	27
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	13.29%	99
Total	745	

Question 28

Given that we have reached now a 50-year span, what has been accomplished (progress) in Jewish-Catholic relations is reasonably commensurate with such a time-span (i.e., has not fallen short).

Answered: 752 Skipped: 14

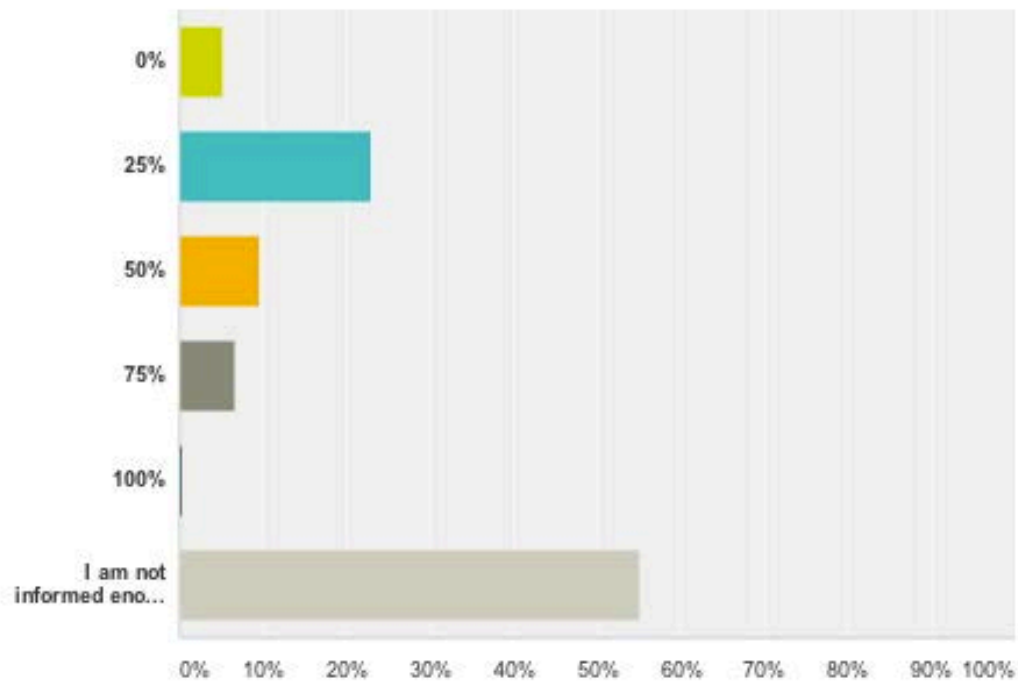


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	5.32%	40
Agree	41.36%	311
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20.08%	151
Disagree	13.56%	102
Strongly Disagree	1.20%	9
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	18.48%	139
Total	752	

Question 29

What percentage of Jews--whom you know are aware of Nostra Aetate--believe it an adequate response to the traumas of Jewish-Catholic relations of the past?

Answered: 746 Skipped: 20



Answer Choices	Responses	
0%	5.23%	39
25%	23.06%	172
50%	9.52%	71
75%	6.70%	50
100%	0.40%	3
I am not informed enough to have an opinion	55.09%	411
Total	746	

Question 30

Please use the space below for any further comments related to Nostra Aetate.

Answered: 137 Skipped: 629

Question 31

If you would be willing to comment further, please provide your name, phone number and/or e-mail address below.

Answered: 163 Skipped: 603

Bibliography

PRIMARY:

“Dabru Emet,” 2000: *Dabru Emet*, *jcrelations.net*,
[http://www.jcrelations.net/Dabru_Emet_-
_A_Jewish_Statement_on_Christians_and_Christianity.2395.0.html](http://www.jcrelations.net/Dabru_Emet_-_A_Jewish_Statement_on_Christians_and_Christianity.2395.0.html).

Cardinal Johannes Willebrands. “Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*,” *The Vatican*, 1974:
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19741201_nostra-aetate_en.html.

Pope John Paul II. “Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church,” *The Vatican*, 1985:
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19820306_jews-judaism_en.html.

Pope Paul VI. “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” *The Vatican*, 1965:
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html.

SECONDARY (by Named Author):

Banki, Judith Hershcopf., and John Pawlikowski. *Ethics in the Shadow of the Holocaust: Christian and Jewish Perspectives*. Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 2001.

Begley, Louis Begley. “King of Infinite Space: Louis Begley’s Kafka Book,” *The New York Sun*. New York, NY: July 9, 2008.

Bemporad, Jack, and Michael Shevack, *Our Age: The Historic New Era of Christian-Jewish Understanding*. Hyde Park: New City Press, 1996.

Berman, Lazar. “Protect Christians and Jews, Says Major Catholic-Jewish Conference,” *www.timesofisrael.com*, last modified October 18, 2013,
<http://www.timesofisrael.com/protect-christians-and-jews-says-major-catholic-jewish-conference/>.

Bretton-Granatoor, Gary M.; Philip A. Cunningham; Eugene J. Fisher; Eric J. Greenberg; and Leon Klenicki. *Transforming the Catholic-Jewish Relationship: Nostra Aetate on Its 40th Anniversary*. New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2005.

Bristow, Edward J. *No Religion Is an Island: The Nostra Aetate Dialogues*. New York: Fordham UP, 1998.

Carroll, James. *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2001.

Cohn-Sherbok, Dan. *Anti-Semitism: A History*. Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2002.

Collins, Gerald. *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Connelly, John. *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2012.

Cunningham, Philip A.; Norbert Johannes Hofmann; and Joseph Sievers. *The Catholic Church and the Jewish People: Recent Reflections from Rome*. New York: Fordham UP, 2007.

Fisher, Eugene J., and Leon Klenicki. *The Saint for Shalom: How Pope John Paul II Transformed Catholic-Jewish Relations*. New York: Crossroad, 2011.

Fisher, Philip A. "Vatican II, 40 Years Later: 'Nostra Aetate'" www.zenit.org. Last modified June 27, 2003, <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/vatican-ii-40-years-later-nostra-aetate>.

Flannery, Edward H. *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-Three Centuries of Antisemitism*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985.

Gaillardetz, Richard R., and Catherine E. Clifford. *Keys to the Council: Unlocking the Teaching of Vatican II*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012.

Goldman, A. J. "New Kind of Passion in an 'Alpine Jerusalem,' Letter from Oberammergau," *The Jewish Daily Forward* (New York, NY), June 4, 2010.

Hall, Allan. "Has Historian Finally Discovered Real Reason for Hitler's Obsessive Hatred of Jews?" *The Daily Mail Online*, June 19, 2009. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1194194>

Hayes, Michael A., and Gerald O'Collins. *The Legacy of John Paul II*. London: Burns & Oates, 2008.

Heft, James. *Catholicism and Interreligious Dialogue*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012.

Kaplan, Edward K. *Spiritual Radical: Abraham Joshua Heschel in America, 1940-1972*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2007.

Keeler, William H., and Eugene J. Fisher. *Memoria Futuri: Catholic-Jewish Dialogue Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Texts and Addresses of Cardinal William H. Keeler*. New York: Paulist Press, 2012.

Kessler, Edward. *An Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010.

Lamdan, Neville, and Alberto Melloni. *Nostra Aetate: Origins, Promulgation, Impact on Jewish-Catholic Relations*. Münster: Lit, 2007.

Lane, Dermot A. *Stepping Stones to Other Religions: A Christian Theology of Inter-religious Dialogue*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011.

Marcus, Jacob Rader. *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book, 315-1791*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1938.

Novak, David. "The Two Key Documents of Jewish-Catholic Dialogue." www.zenit.org, Last modified April 18, 2002, <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/the-two-key-documents-of-jewish-catholic-dialogue>.

O'Malley, John W. *What Happened at Vatican II*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008.

Pawlikowski, John T. "Christian Anti-Semitism: Past History, Present Challenges Reflections in Light of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*," *Journal of Religion and Film* 8, no. 1 (2004), accessed October 8, 2014, <http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/2004Symposium/Pawlikowski.htm>.

Rosen David, "Nostra Aetate, Forty Years After Vatican II. Present and Future Perspectives." *The Vatican*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20051027_rabbi-rosen_en.html.

Rosenthal, Gilbert. *A Jubilant Jubilee: Vatican II at Fifty Years*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock 2014.

Sacks, Jonathan. *The Home We Build Together: Recreating Society*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007.

Spruch, Gary. "Abraham Joshua Heschel, the AJC, and the Spirit of Nostra Aetate," *The American Jewish Committee: Wide Horizons* (2008): 7, accessed October 8, 2014, <http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/%7B42d75369-d582-4380-8395-d25925b85eaf%7D/WIDE%20HORIZONS.PDF>.

Tanenbaum, Marc H., and Judith Hershcopf Banki. *A Prophet for Our Time: An Anthology of the Writings of Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2002.

SECONDARY (other):

"A 'Concerned' US Is Monitoring the Rise of Anti-Semitism Worldwide." Accessed November 15, 2014. <http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/A-concerned-US-is-monitoring-the-rise-of-anti-Semitism-worldwide-374380>.

"Forty Years After Nostra Aetate." N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Dec. 2013.

"Nostra Aetate." Forty Years After Vatican II. Present & Future Perspectives Conference of the Holy See Commission for Religious Relations with Jewry." AJC: Global Jewish Advocacy. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Dec. 2013.

"Nostra Aetate: Transforming the Catholic-Jewish Relationship." *Archive.adl.org*, <http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/a9659c0f-2958-4e48-8418-530a140f02d4,db7611a2-02cd-43af-8147-649e26813571,frameless.html>

"Nostra Aetate." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 30 Nov. 2013. Web. 04 Dec. 2013.

"Op-Ed." Nostra Aetate: 40 Years of Catholic-Jewish Ties. N.p., n.d. Web. 03 Dec.

"The Genesis of Nostra Aetate." America Staging. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Dec. 2013.

"The Interfaith Story behind Nostra Aetate." — Media — United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Dec. 2013.

"The Vatican & the Holocaust: Pope Pius XII & the Holocaust," *Jewishvirtuallibrary.org*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/anti-semitism/pius.html>.

"What Happens When Jews Intermarry?" Pew Research Center RSS. Accessed November 15, 2014. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/11/12/what-happens-when-jews-intermarry/>.