


GOOD FRIDAY: RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE / VIOLENCE IN BRAZIL AND EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Arlete Caetano de Jesus¹.

ABSTRACT

From a post on Brazilian social media, on Good Friday 2024, a reading is made about intolerance and religious violence against the affection of Christians. With this, it is intended to make the problem of the issue visible, in order to think about mutual respect, regardless of the intolerant discourses and practices presented by some, considering that, in order to live in harmony, civility is needed. In this aspect, education for citizenship is put in evidence, as a counterpoint and possible alternative to combat intolerance and religious violence, from the perspective of School Religious Education (ERE), according to new epistemologies guided by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC). To this end, authors such as Fernandes Siqueira (2022), Junqueira (2022), Mahmood (2019), Fonseca (2017), Carvalho (2017), Berger (2017), Teixeira (2013) and Kant (2006) were consulted; in addition to using pertinent articles, news and legal standards, in printed formats and digital texts.

Keywords: Good Friday. Intolerance/Religious violence. Education for Citizenship. Religious Education.

¹Master's student in Religious Sciences
United College of Vitória
E-mail: letecjesus@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-9251-8125>
LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/8996054266370067>

INTRODUCTION

This article is circumscribed in the context of the Brazilian religious field, in the areas of Religious Sciences and Education, in the understanding that episodes of intolerance and religious violence must be made explicit, so that possible solutions can be thought of. Religious Education, due to its specificities, can contribute to the exercise of citizenship, in the promotion of mutual respect among people, regardless of whether their religious convictions belong to the majority or minority segment.

Initially, the existence of intolerance and religious violence against Christians in Brazil is questioned. Next, a post released on social networks on the Christian religious national holiday is visible and analyzed: Good Friday 2024 – a day of great affection for Christians, for what it represents for them². And, finally, education for citizenship is presented, from the perspective of School Religious Education, as a possibility to combat intolerance and religious violence.

It should be noted that Christians are the People of the Book³ and, therefore, when talking about Christianity, it is impossible to dissociate this people from their Book, whose standard translation used in this text is the New Living Bible (NBV). Articles, news and pertinent legislation were consulted on websites and in printed books, in dialogue with some authors: Fernandes Siqueira (2022), Junqueira (2022), Mahmood (2019), Fonseca (2017), Carvalho (2017), Berger (2017), Teixeira (2013) and Kant (2006).

THE BRAZILIAN REALITY

Fonseca (2017), general coordinator of the Report on Intolerance and Religious Violence - RIVIR 2011-2015, analyzes that there is a reality of intolerance and religious violence in Brazil, despite many thinking and saying otherwise.

When talking about religious intolerance, it is noteworthy that this subject still provokes resistance from segments of the population, who claim that it would be an "invention". An example of this was on the occasion of the 2016 ENEM writing test,

2 "Good Friday is the Friday that occurs before Easter Sunday. On this day, Christians remember the day Jesus Christ died crucified. It is also called Good Friday, because with its origin in Latin, passion means suffering. Thus, for Christians, the passion of Christ represents the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Good Friday is a national holiday, according to Law No. 9,093, of September 12, 1995. The date is movable and is part of Holy Week. [...] Currently, the choice of date is made based on the first full moon after the spring equinox (in the Northern Hemisphere) and autumn (in the Southern Hemisphere)". CALENDARR BRAZIL. **Good Friday**. 2024. Available at <https://www.calendarr.com/brasil/sexta-feira-da-paixao/>. Accessed on: 23 May. 2024.

3 This expression "People of the Book" can be verified in two sources:

1st = BERGER, Peter. **The multiple altars of modernity**. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2017, p. 171 – which reads: "[...] Eastern Christians [...] many of them fled to Muslim States, where they were protected as People of the Book";

2nd = WIKIPEDIA. **Peoples of the Book**. Available in https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Povos_do_Livro. 01/03/2017. Accessed on: 25 May. 2024 – which reads: "*People of the Book* (Arabic: أهل الكتاب; romaniz.: *Ahl al-Kitāb*), as well as *Followers of the Holy Books*, is an Islamic term referring to Jews, Christians, and Sabians [...]"

which had the subject as its theme, asking candidates to develop a text on religious intolerance. Much of the discussion around the theme proposed in the press was based on the assertion that this theme referred to something non-existent in Brazil, a country that would be marked by "cordiality and the coexistence of different people" (FONSECA, 2017, p.5-6).

Theoretically, that idea of the welcoming Brazilian persists, but, in practice, the issue is more complex, making the study of this subject relevant, since Fonseca detects that there is an occurrence of violence and intolerance against adherents of all religious expressions, inside and outside each group (FONSECA, 2017, p.14).

Those who declare themselves Christians are the majority in Brazil, as can be read: "Adding Catholics with evangelicals, we reach a percentage of 86.8%, almost 90% of the entire Brazilian declaring population" (TEIXEIRA, 2013, digital text); including, because of this, Law No. 14,419, of July 20, 2022, institutes the "National Day of the Christian, to be celebrated, annually, on the first Sunday of June" (BRASIL, 2022, digital text). It should be noted that, in this article, genuine Christians are considered to be those who are aligned with the commandments of Jesus Christ: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your soul" (NBV Mt 22.37) and "love your neighbor as yourself" (NBV Mt 22.39).

The fact that it is the majority religious phenomenon in Brazil does not exempt Christians from suffering violence and religious intolerance, the proportion of which is ranked second in RIVIR 2011-2015 (FONSECA, 2017, p.9), when the percentages of religion of the victims of Catholic and Evangelical Christian expressions are added – making up a total of 27.46% of the cases disclosed in the aforementioned report. Christians and their faith have been the target of religious affront, as verified in some episodes highlighted on social networks, in the years 2023 and 2024⁴, namely: "Without limits: goat's head on the Holy Bible is exposed at the National Library of Brasilia"⁵; "Actress tears bible during erotic

4 In this article, only a few facts are highlighted, from the several published on social networks, with clippings made in 2023 and 2024.

5 JESUS, Danielly. **No limits: goat's head on the Holy Bible is exhibited at the National Library of Brasilia.** 07/24/2023. Available at <https://mundoconservador.com.br/sem-limites-cabeca-de-bode-sobre-biblia-sagrada-e-exposta-na-biblioteca-nacional-de-brasilia/> Accessed on: 27 May. 2024. In this text, the author cites examples of Misochry; This term is found in two sources:

1st = ALVES, Rodrigo. **From the vilification of religious worship to homicide for reasons of belief.**

08/15/2019. Available at <https://www.jusbrasil.com.br/artigos/busca?q=misocristia>. Accessed on: 27 May.

2024 – which reads: "Misochratic (from the Greek μισέω, miseó, "hatred"; and Χριστός, christós, Christ) is a neologism created to define the action of those who propagate and exercise hatred or horror of Christ, Christians and Christianity".

2nd = BRITO JR. Waltair Pacheco de. **The misochatry of every day.** 02/08/2022. Available in <https://www.horaagora.com.br/2022/02/a-misocristia-de-todos-os-dias-por.html>. Accessed on: 27 May.2024 – which reads a definition similar to that described in the 1st source.

play and Janaina Riva says: 'affront to religions'"⁶; "Monastery of São Bento in Fortaleza suffers acts of depredation and religious intolerance"⁷; "Once again Carnival mocks the Christian faith", says singer"⁸; "Ives Gandra says Madonna attacked the Catholic faith at the show"⁹; "Christian entities repudiate cartoon released by MTST: 'Unprecedented disrespect'"¹⁰. ¹⁰

From now on, the publication made by the Homeless Workers' Movement - MTST on Instagram, on Good Friday 2024, is visible and analyzed, for the emblematic issue of the direct affront to the religious affection of Christians, in which the person of Jesus Christ was exposed on such an important date, of reflection and consternation of his followers, causing even greater pain in each of those who take the Christian faith seriously.

AFFRONT TO AFFECTIVITY

The post made by the MTST on Good Friday 2024, April 26, with a figure indicative of Jesus Christ crucified and the phrase "a good criminal is a dead criminal"¹¹ made Christian hearts ache and sparked outrage on social networks¹². Later, the MTST stated: "The lack of interpretation of the image and message of this *post* is impressive. To help, we recommend reading Luke, chapter 23". ¹³ It is pertinent, therefore, to read some verses from the chapter indicated by the MTST:

35 The crowd looked on. And the leaders laughed and made fun of him. "He was so good at saving others," they said, "let's see if he saves himself, if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One." 36 The soldiers also mocked him, offering him vinegar to

6 FOLHA DO ESTADO. **Actress tears bible during erotic play and Janaina Riva says: "affront to religions"**. 12/10/2023. Available at <https://www.folhadoestado.com.br/geral/atriz-rasga-biblia-durante-peca-erotica-e-janaina-riva-diz-afronta-as-religioes/594988>. Accessed on: 05 May. 2024.

7 GCMAIS PORTAL. **Monastery of São Bento in Fortaleza suffers acts of depredation and religious intolerance**. 10/20/2023. Available at <https://gcmiais.com.br/noticias/2023/10/20/mosteiro-de-sao-bento-em-fortaleza-sofre-atos-de-depredacao-e-intolerancia-religiosa/>. Accessed on: 23 Apr. 2024.

8 GOSPELPRIME. **"Once again Carnival mocks the Christian faith," says the singer**. 02/20/2023. Available at <https://www.gospelprime.com.br/mais-uma-vez-o-carnaval-escarnece-da-fe-crista-diz-cantora/>. Accessed on: 04 May. 2024.

9 LOPES, Leiliane. **Ives Gandra says that Madonna attacked the Catholic faith at the show**. 05/07/24. Available at <https://pleno.news/brasil/cidades/ives-gandra-diz-que-madonna-agrediu-a-fe-catolica-no-show.html>. Accessed on May 12. 2024.

10 LIMA, Bruna. **Christian entities repudiate cartoon released by MTST: 'Unprecedented disrespect'**. 30/03/2024. Available at <https://noticias.r7.com/sao-paulo/entidades-cristas-repudiam-charge-divulgada-por-mtst-desrespeito-sem-precedentes-30032024/>. Accessed on: 22 Apr. 2024.

11 "The motto of 'a good criminal is a dead criminal' is used by a part of the Brazilian right that defends the elimination of criminals as a solution to the problem of public security that affects the entire country" – FIGUEIREDO, Pedro Augusto. Right criticizes Boulos after MTST publishes photo of crucified Jesus with phrase about bandit. Available in <https://www.estadao.com.br/politica/direita-sp-critica-guilherme-boulos-mtst-foto-jesus-crucificado-frase-bandido-bom-bandido-morto-nprp/>. Accessed on: 16 Apr. 2024.

12 STEFENONI, Cristiano. **Pastors criticize MTST post that associates Jesus with "bandit"**. Available at <https://comunhao.com.br/pastores-criticam-post-do-mtst-que-associa-jesus-a-bandido/>. Accessed on: 16 Apr. 2024.

13 RODRIGUES, Ana. **MTST responds to criticism regarding the post "A good bandit is a dead bandit"**. Available at <https://spdiario.com.br/noticias/politica/mtst-responde-criticas-referentes-a-postagem-bandido-bom-e-bandido-morto.html>. Accessed on 16 Apr. 2024.

drink. 37 And they said to him, **"If you are indeed the king of the Jews, save yourself!"** 38 On the cross above him was written, **"THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."** 39 One of the criminals next to him mocked, "Then you are the Christ, aren't you? Prove it by saving yourself and us too!" 40 But the other criminal rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, even though you are under the same sentence? 41 We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man has done no evil." 42 And then he said, "Jesus, remember me when the Lord comes into your kingdom." 43 And Jesus answered, "I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." 44 **By this time it was noon, and darkness covered the whole land until 3 o'clock in the afternoon.** 45 The sunlight disappeared, and suddenly the veil of the sanctuary was torn in the middle. 46 At that time Jesus cried out with a loud voice, **"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," and with these words he died.** 47 When the centurion who was leading the executions saw what had happened, he praised God and said, **"Truly this man was innocent."** (NBV Luke 23:35-47, emphasis added).

According to Luke's recorded text in verse 36, the soldiers mocked Jesus while He was alive, nailed to the cross in a bright setting before noon. However, as can be seen in the post made by the MTST and reproduced on social networks, on April 26, 2024, with the greeting: "Happy Good Friday!": the scenario is one of darkness, with an indication that the crucified person was already dead, by the position of the hanging body and by the phrase of debasement, said by a soldier, written in capital letters, indicating the intensity of the sound...

Figure 1: MTST author



Source: reproduction social networks.

But, according to Luke, in verse 44, the darkness lasted for three hours, and only after the light disappeared, the veil of the sanctuary was torn and Jesus cried out with a loud voice, surrendering his spirit to the Father, did death occur. And when the commander of the soldiers saw what had happened, he cried out loudly, "Truly this man was innocent" (Luke 23:47).

In this biblical understanding, the Archbishop of São Paulo Dom Odilo Scherer remakes the post¹⁴, without inserting a personal comment and without changing the scenario, he rewrites the phrase spoken aloud by the commander of the soldiers...

Figure 2: author Dom Odilo Scherer



Source: reproduction social networks.

Figure 2, in reaction to that made by the MTST, is in line with the Gospel recorded by Matthew – consistent with that context of Good Friday, after the death of Christ: **"The soldiers of the crucifixion and the centurion were very afraid of the earthquake and**

14 MARKET INSIDER. Dom Odilo recreates a phrase from an image of Jesus posted by the MTST. 03/30/2024. Available at <https://marketinsider.com.br/dom-odilo-recria-frase-de-imagem-de-jesus-postada-pelo-mtst/>. Accessed on: 21 Apr. 2024.

everything that happened and exclaimed: 'Truly, this man was the Son of God!'" (NBV Mt 27. 54, emphasis added).

This episode of affront to the person of Jesus Christ, which directly affects the religious feeling of affection of his followers, brings to mind Mahmood's analysis (2019, p.17-56) on the issue of religious violence of disrespect towards the Prophet Muhammad, exposed in Danish cartoons and then republished in various periodicals in Denmark, Europe and the United States. The author narrated feelings of "pain, loss and injury" - an extreme sadness foisted on all Muslims, for the affront to affection with the icon of the religion they profess and live.

An older man, in his sixties, said to me, "I would have felt less hurt if the object of ridicule had been my own parents. And you know how hard it is to hear bad things about your parents, especially when they've passed away. But to have the Prophet despised and mistreated in this way, was too much to bear!" (MAHMOOD, 2019, p.30).

This assessment is in line with the analysis of this Brazilian moment: "What seems to be a symbol of fun and mockery for some may well be interpreted as blasphemy for others" (MAHMOOD, 2019, p.24). Fernandes Siqueira (2022) reinforces this understanding, stating that religious belief is related to affectivity and that it is imperative that "religious feeling" be respected.

Religious *belief* is not the same as an opinion about how the health system should work or how the city should be policing. It **refers to a more intimate sense of affectivity, will, and thought that shapes not only the personality of the individual but also the culture of an entire community**. This does not mean that religion is above the democratic social pact expressed in laws and institutions, but it only means that **religious sentiment must be respected** just as we respect any deep and intimate feeling of an individual or society (FERNANDES SIQUEIRA, 2022, p. 104, emphasis added).

And, in this sense, it is perceived that, for the affront to be noticed and for the faith of others to be respected, the feeling of indignation needs to be expressed. Only after the negative reactions on social networks about the MTST's publication, making explicit the deep disrespect and contempt imposed on the faith of others, did they delete the post. It is the role of citizenship education that the rights provided for in legal norms are known. In addition to the legal aspect, education for citizenship can be contemplated from the perspective of Religious Education due to the character of human formation, specific to this curricular component; Bearing in mind that education is not only watertight for a certain stage of life, but is something dynamic that continues throughout life, continuously.

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education – LDBN No. 9394/1996, conceptualizes the word Education in a very broad way, encompassing all areas of human action, in a continuous way.

Art. 1 Education encompasses the formative processes that take place in family life, in human coexistence, at work, in teaching and research institutions, in social movements and civil society organizations, and in cultural manifestations (BRASIL, 1996, p.01).

According to the LDBN, education is essential for the full exercise of citizenship. Thus, it can be inferred that education for citizenship, through the curricular component Religious Education is a possible way to combat intolerance and religious violence. In this aspect, it is noted that: "Man cannot become a true man except through education. He is what his education does. It should be noted that he can only receive such education from other men, who have also received it from others" (KANT, 2006, p.15). Thus, for the exercise of citizenship, education is required in the sense of knowledge of rights; in the explanation that citizenship is a reality for the person who enjoys rights in society; the citizen is complete when he has civil, political and social rights (CARVALHO, 2017, p, 15). In this regard, the following statement is elementary: "The absence of an educated population has always been one of the main obstacles to the construction of civil and political citizenship" (CARVALHO, 2017, p.17).

With Religious Education, it is possible to have citizens who interact with respect for religious diversity, in the promotion of a "regulative ideal of coexistence that is articulated in three moments. The first: self-esteem. The second: care for the other. And the third: the aspiration to live in just institutions" (JUNQUEIRA, 2022, p 286-292). In this first ideal, in the Religious Education curricular component, there is a focus primarily on the "I", because if the same is well, he will be able to put himself in the place of the other, which is the second ideal. Bearing in mind that what one desires for oneself must be the norm of conduct of what one does for the other. And, in the third ideal, just institutions can only be real if there is application of just laws; since, for coexistence in society, it is necessary to have legal norms valid for all.

In this aspect, it is pertinent to observe the seven competencies for the area of Human Sciences in Elementary Education, according to the National Common Curriculum Base – BNCC. Respect for the other starts from respect for oneself – this is a necessary exercise in today's plurality. The right to be respected is reciprocal. It is basic to understand

the current world and its demands. The dynamics of life require participation in the transformation of the environment. The watchword is welcoming, followed by valuing the other. In this context, there is learning for argumentative communication, for the use of varied languages, so that there is a connection between people, in a fairer and more inclusive society (BRASIL, 2018, p.357).

The National Common Curricular Base – BNCC also lists six basic competencies in the Religious Education curricular component that indicate full exercise for citizenship, in which the new epistemology of this curricular component is perceptible, in which religious knowledge promotes understanding, appreciation and respect for the other. One needs care as much as the other. And this care is an "expression of the value of life". Living with the different teaches empathy and sympathy. Everyone has something to contribute to life in society. Everyone has their value. And one cannot remain silent when there is intolerance and religious violence, this needs to be spoken of in order to be fixed, this is the "exercise of citizenship": not to accept "discourses and practices of intolerance, discrimination and violence, especially of a religious nature", but to take a position, with knowledge, in a peaceful way, exercising citizenship and the "culture of peace" (BRASIL, 2018, p.437).

For the full exercise of citizenship, knowledge of legal norms is necessary. The Penal Code, Decree-Law No. 2,848, of December 7, 1940, in its Chapter I, Article 208, defines punishment for "crimes against religious sentiment" (BRASIL, 1940, digital text). It is interesting to note that the law says that it is a crime when public derision is motivated by "belief" and when public vilification is "an act or object of religious worship". Federal Law **No. 14,532, of January 11, 2023, establishes** a penalty when "the injury consists of the use of elements referring to religion" (BRASIL, 2023, digital text). Observing the 1988 Citizen's Constitution, in its fifth article, sometimes, it sticks to only a part of the right configured in the "protection of places of worship":

All are equal before the law, without distinction of any kind, guaranteeing to Brazilians and foreigners residing in the country the inviolability of the right to life, liberty, equality, security and property, in the following terms: (...) VI – freedom of conscience and belief is inviolable, and the free exercise of religious cults is ensured and the **protection** of places of worship and **their liturgies** is guaranteed, in accordance with the law, [...] (BRASIL, 1988, digital text, emphasis added).

However, in article 5 of the Magna Carta, the protection of "its liturgies" is also guaranteed¹⁵, which denotes, in Christianity, the sense of public religious service that promotes the encounter of the human with the Sacred.

Good Friday indicates a basic milestone of the Christian faith in which the religious feeling of all Christendom is involved, through the liturgies performed, involving consternation and reflection in the contemplation of the Crucified Christ. These liturgies are guaranteed protection in the current Brazilian Constitution. Respect for liturgies can be learned in the Religious Education curricular component and in the recognition that the Christian is also a citizen. Although the State is secular, Fernandes Siqueira (2022) warns about the need for the presence of religion in State affairs to put a nuance of humanity in Science, since the secular voice is not the only one in society (FERNANDES SIQUEIRA, 2022, p. 103). Service to citizens has been a fundamental mark of Christianity that has brought important realities to the world – which are noteworthy.

Many were the contributions of Christianity to the world. For example, hospitals are a Christian invention. When countless cars drive away in traffic for an ambulance to pass carrying a sick person, this is nothing more than the mold of Christianity on the treatment of the sick. Patients were not always treated as a priority. And what about the infanticide practiced by the Romans? In Christianity, infanticide became a horrendous crime. What about universities? Yes, Christianity invented university study (FERNANDES SIQUEIRA, 2022, pp.67-68).

This Christianity contributed not only exclusively to Christians themselves; but they were services provided to communities as a whole, due to looking at the plural neighbor, with love, care and attention. Pluralism is configured in a harmony between those who are different, through the acceptance of the other. This is well defined by Berger: "pluralism is a social situation in which **people of different ethnicities, worldviews, and moralities live together peacefully and interact amicably** (BERGER, 2017. p. 20, emphasis added). The author places this coexistence on the same level as the communion established by people who relate intimately, who commune with each other, with empathy and sympathy, despite the differences between them, in a free, natural and spontaneous way. Regarding the issue of religious freedom, Berger concludes his reflections by praising this freedom, valid even if

¹⁵ The word "**Liturgy**" in Greek, formed by the roots leit- (from "laós", people) and -urgía (work, office) means public service or work. By extension of meaning, it also came to mean, in the Greek world, the religious office, insofar as religion in the ancient world had an eminently public character. [...] **the Liturgy is, therefore, the actualization of Christ's surrender and sacrifice for the salvation of men.** Christ sacrificed himself once and for all, on the Cross. What the liturgy does is the memorial of Christ and of salvation, that is, it makes present, through the celebration, the definitive event of the Paschal Mystery. Through the liturgical celebration, the believer is inserted into the realities of his salvation. Liturgy is first of all "service of the people", this experience is the fruit of a fraternal experience, that is, it is Christian worship, as if to bring the faithful back before the Crucified One, then before God. It is not a staging, since the mystery is contemplated in "spirit and truth". The Liturgy has absolutely Christological roots. Christ breaks with ritualism and makes the liturgy a "worship pleasing to God", as the apostle Paul of Tarsus prescribes in Romans 12:1-2. WIKIPEDIA. Liturgy. 04/08/2024. Available at <https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liturgia>. Accessed 18 May. 2024. (emphasis added).

it is used for political purposes, being a benefit to be thankful (BERGER, 2017, p. 181-182).

Plurality is a "democratic ideal" and that the State must have the understanding that it governs for all: "the religious and the non-religious, the believers and the atheists, the credulous and the agnostics, the mystics and the rationalists, the pre-modern and the post-modern, and so on"; this, he intuitively serves one's neighbor with "selfless love".¹⁶ This love is an expression of the practical good, which can come from education, as Kant says

Man must, first of all, develop his dispositions for the good; Providence did not place them ready in it; they are simple dispositions, without the distinctive mark of morality. To become better, to educate oneself and, if one is bad, to produce morality in oneself: this is man's duty (KANT, 2006, pp.19-20).

At all times, it is time to "educate" oneself for citizenship, in the perspective of Religious Education as a perennial formator, knowing the legal norms and seeking to be better people, recognizing plurality, freedom, the right of the other to be respected, in a just society. And this is "man's duty." At all times, it is time to bring the good into oneself and, consequently, into human relationships. By proposing respect and recognition of the other, not only of oneself, Religious Education is a component for the continuing education of the human being.

CONCLUSION

In the Brazilian religious field, with its diversity and plurality, religious violence and intolerance, configured as an affront and disrespect to the person of Jesus Christ and all that He means to His adherents is completely inappropriate. The Christian is a citizen who contributes to the common good and has the right guaranteed by Brazilian law to have a full and free life, without seeing his faith being degraded. To denigrate the faith of others, regardless of whether it is a majority or a minority, is unjustifiable, because it goes against the legal norms of civility and education. And, despite the differences, everyone can live together, regardless of whether they have faith or not, through education, from the perspective of Religious Education as an agent that forms character and transforms the realities of intolerance and religious violence.

Regarding the number of Christian victims presented in the Report on Intolerance and Religious Violence (RIVIR) 2011-2015, it is inferred that the percentage of 27.46% does not represent the total number of Christian victims; and this can be understood simply: the majority of Christians suffer in silence, keeping in mind the words of Christ in the Sermon on

¹⁶ We live in this world, and we can positively influence it . . . by self-sacrificing love. Jesus said, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples" (John 13:35). FERNANDES SIQUEIRA, 2022. p. 69.

the Mount (NBV Mt 5-7). However, going against everything that Christ taught, there are some who, claiming to be Christians, are not in fact Christians. Therefore, the intolerance and violence committed by some of these so-called "Christians" should not guide new intolerance and violence to be committed against the Christian people who profess a genuine faith in Christ and who follow his commandments governed by love. It is reaffirmed that the genuine Christian is loving just like his Master Jesus Christ who said: "[...] whoever comes to me, that one I will never reject" (NBV Jn 6:37).

Differences must be looked at with a plural view of welcoming and not exclusion. Lack of respect is not freedom of expression; it is violence and intolerance. And it needs to be treated as such, so that freedom of belief, provided for in legal norms, is a reality for everyone, in all aspects of civic life. It is essential that there is civility. It is a choice of each one for the exercise of citizenship, through education and the appreciation of the ideals of human experience present in Religious Education: "self-esteem"; "care for the other" and "the aspiration to live in just institutions" (JUNQUEIRA, 2022, p. 290). Everyone can contribute to a healthy and harmonious coexistence.

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