



**Marist
Poll**

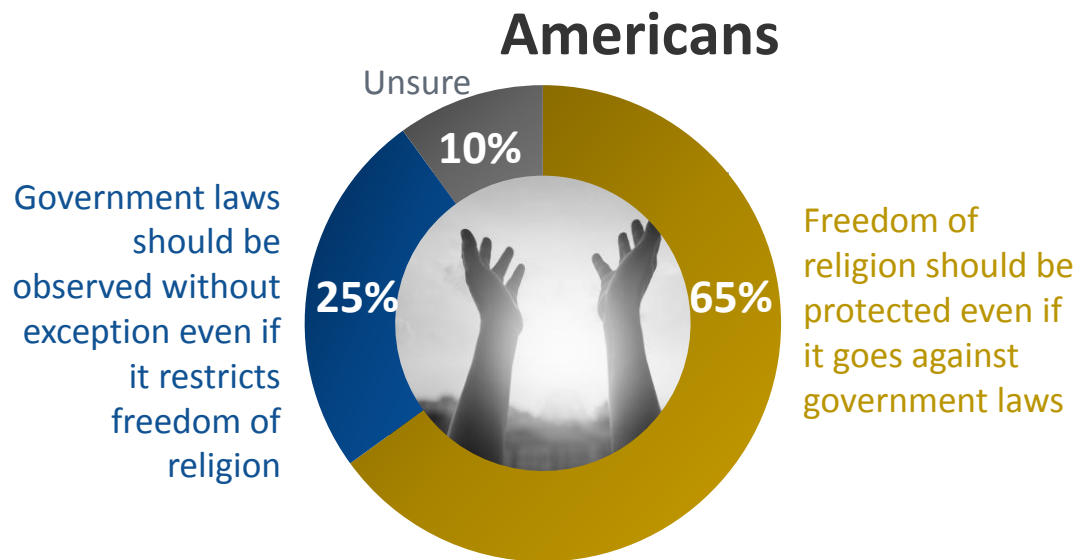


Religious Liberty and the Supreme Court 2017

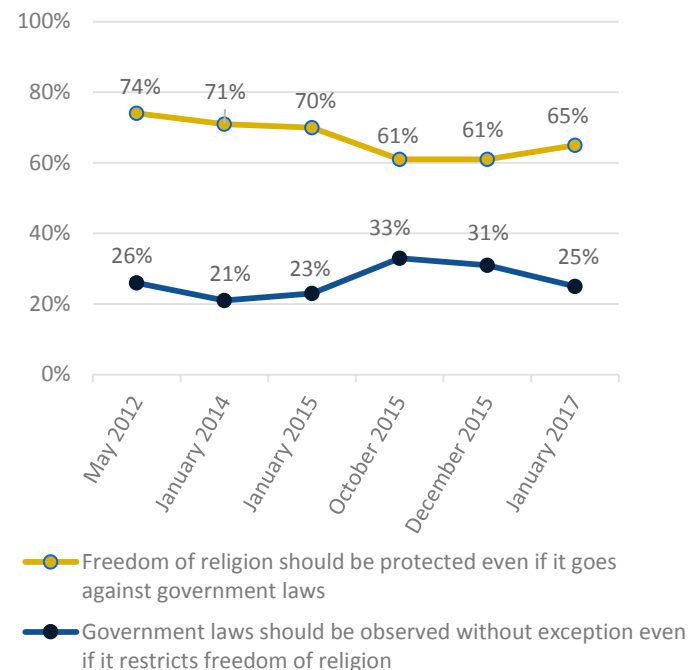
January 2017

More Americans believe religious freedom should be protected even if it conflicts with government laws.

Which statement comes closer to your view:



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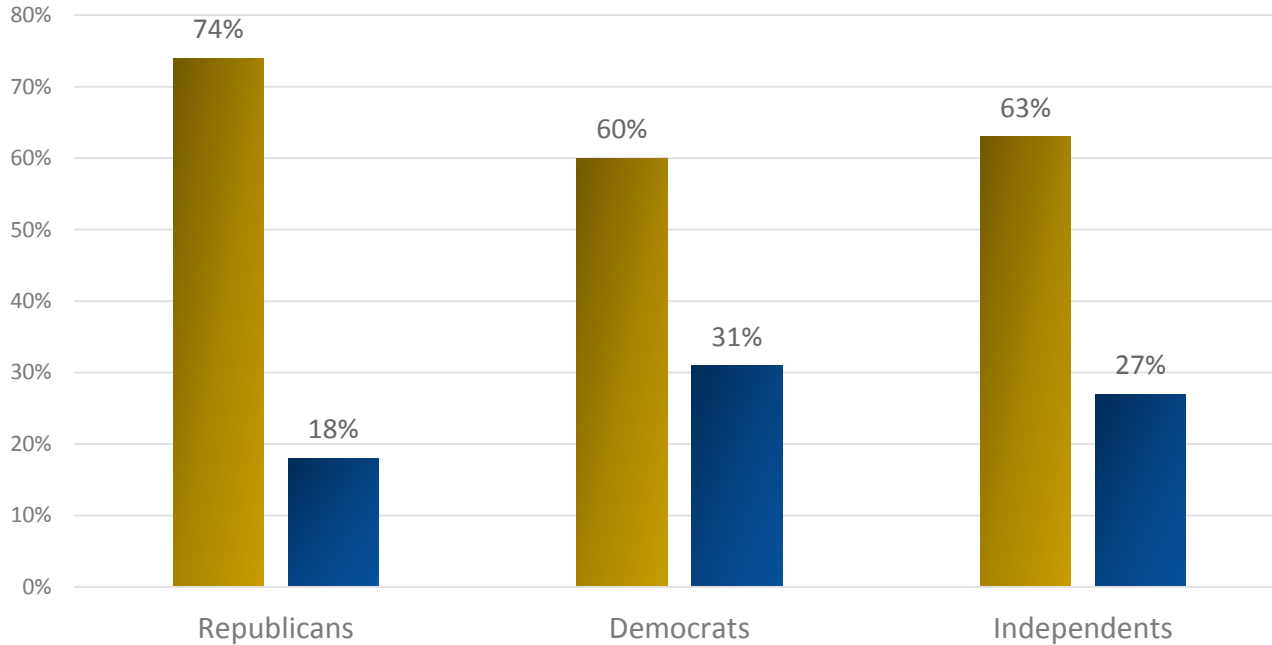


Nearly two-thirds of Catholics say freedom of religion should be protected even if it goes against government laws. More than seven in ten practicing Catholics and a majority of non-practicing Catholics have this view.

	Catholics	Practicing Catholics	Non-Practicing Catholics
Freedom of religion should be protected	65%	71%	57%
Government laws should be observed without exception	25%	21%	30%
Unsure	10%	8%	13%

On the question of religious liberty, there is common ground.

Which statement comes closer to your view:



73%
of **Trump supporters** value religious freedom.

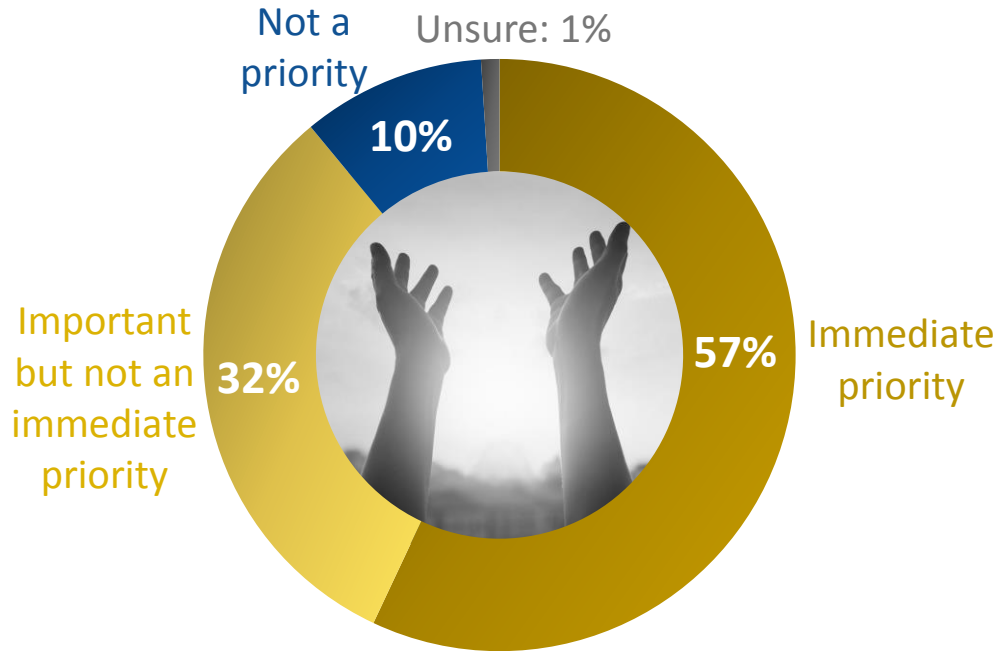
57%
of **Clinton supporters** agree.

- Freedom of religion should be protected even if it goes against government laws
- Government laws should be observed without exception even if it restricts freedom of religion

Religious liberty is an important issue for 89% of Americans. Nearly six in ten call it an immediate priority.

Thinking about specific policy issues, do you think it is an immediate priority, important but not an immediate priority, or not a priority to do each of the following: Protect religious freedom?

Americans



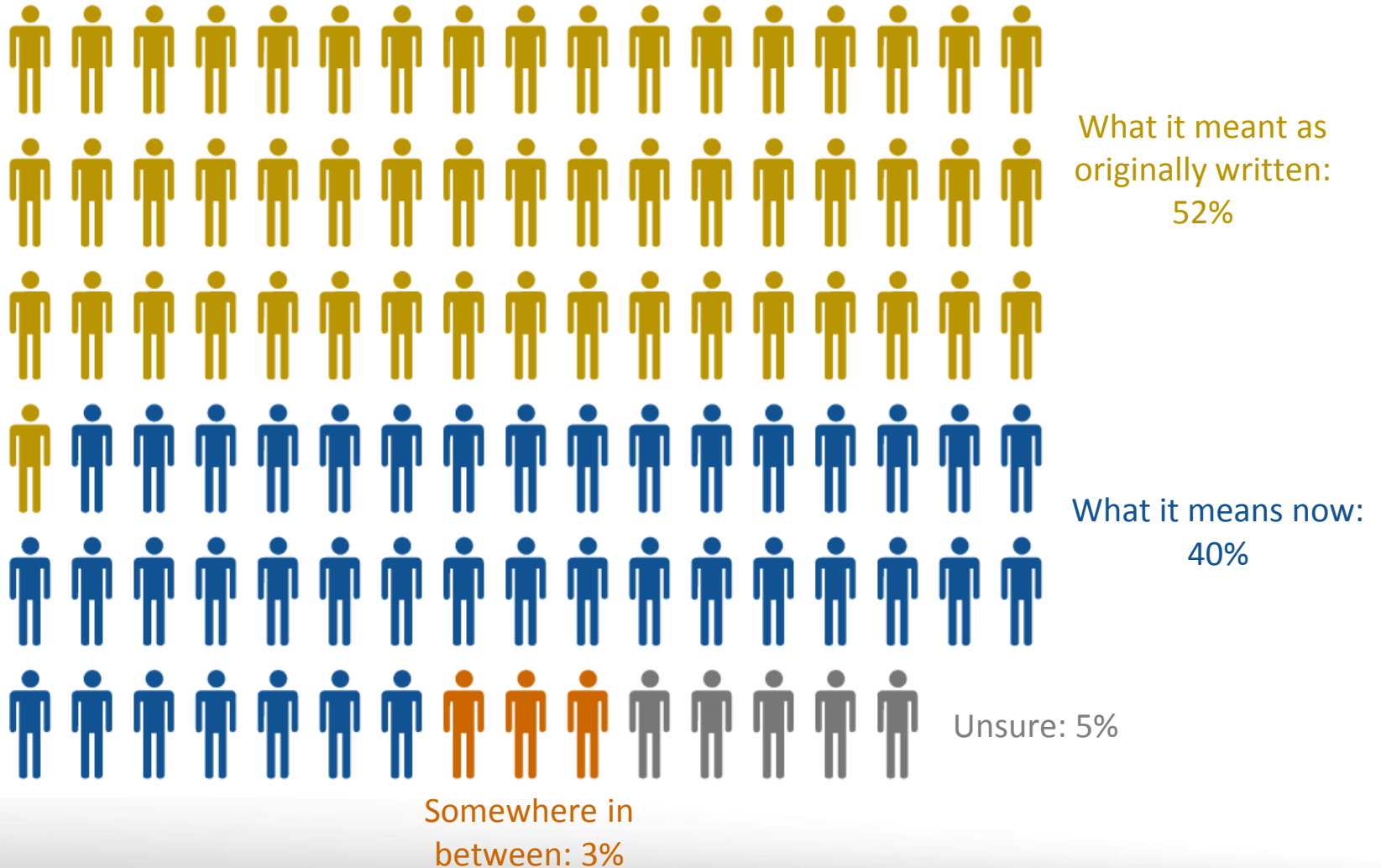
	Immediate priority	Important but not an immediate priority	Not a priority	Unsure
Catholics	56%	34%	9%	1%
Practicing Catholics	60%	32%	7%	1%
Non-Practicing Catholics	52%	37%	10%	<1%
Democrat	55%	32%	12%	1%
Independent	51%	36%	11%	1%
Republican	66%	27%	6%	1%
Trump Supporters	65%	27%	7%	1%
Clinton Supporters	50%	35%	14%	1%

Regardless of demography, at least half of Americans consider protecting freedom of religion to be an immediate priority.

Majority favors strict interpretation of U.S. Constitution.

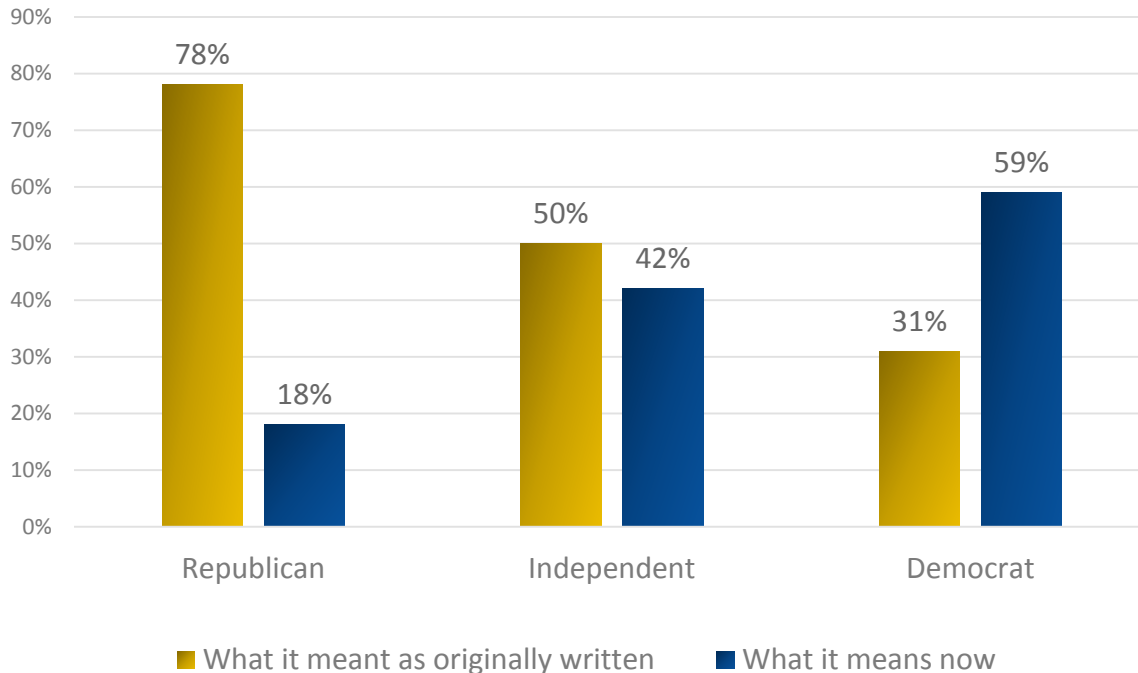
Do you think the U.S. Supreme Court should base its rulings on what the U.S. Constitution meant as it was originally written, or should Justices base their decisions on what they think the U.S. Constitution means now?

Americans



Most Republicans, 50% of independents, and even three in 10 Democrats want Supreme Court Justices to interpret the constitution as it was originally intended.

Do you think the U.S. Supreme Court should base its rulings on what the U.S. Constitution meant as it was originally written, or should Justices base their decisions on what they think the U.S. Constitution means now?



79%

of **Trump supporters** think the U.S. Supreme Court should base its rulings on what the U.S. Constitution meant **as it was originally written**.

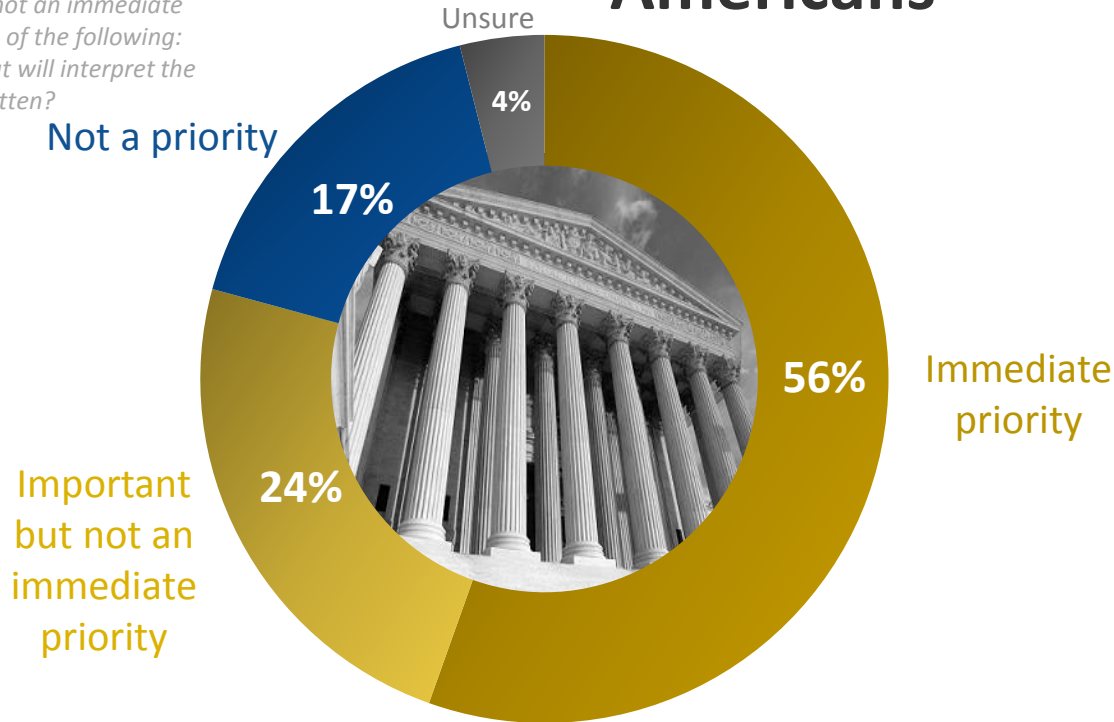
64%

of **Clinton supporters** think it should base its rulings on **what the Constitution means now**.

80% of Americans say it is important to appoint Supreme Court Justices who believe in strict interpretation of the Constitution.

Thinking about specific policy issues, do you think it is an immediate priority, important but not an immediate priority, or not a priority to do each of the following:
 Appoint Supreme Court Justices that will interpret the Constitution as it was originally written?

Americans



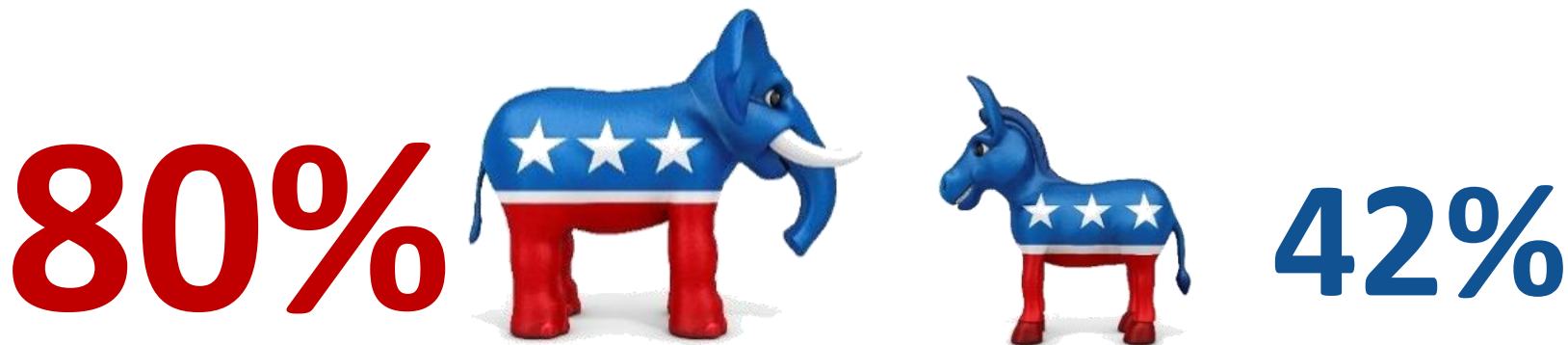
Practicing Catholics are more likely than those who do not practice their faith to consider appointing Justices who will interpret the Constitution as originally written to be of urgent concern. Still, a plurality of non-practicing Catholics agree.

	Catholics	Practicing Catholics	Non-Practicing Catholics
Immediate priority	54%	61%	46%
Important but not a priority	25%	21%	29%
Not a priority	17%	13%	22%
Unsure	4%	5%	3%

Appointing strict constructionist Justices is a **high** priority for most Republicans and more than four in ten Democrats.

Thinking about specific policy issues, do you think it is an immediate priority, important but not an immediate priority, or not a priority to do each of the following: Appoint Supreme Court Justices that will interpret the Constitution as it was originally written?

Most **Republicans** and a notable proportion of **Democrats** think appointing Justices who will **interpret the Constitution as originally written** is an **immediate** priority.



Voters who supported Donald Trump in the election are more than twice as likely as those who supported Hillary Clinton to think appointing Justices who favor strict Constitutional interpretation as an immediate priority.

**Trump
Supporters**
80%

**Clinton
Supporters**
38%

How the Study was Conducted



- This study was undertaken by The Knights of Columbus and conducted by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion located at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York
- This report presents the findings from a random digit dial telephone survey conducted in English or Spanish of 2,729 Americans, including both landline and cell phone sampling frames
- Reports for Americans have a margin of error of +/- 1.9 percentage points
- Data were collected in December 2016
- Analysis of sub-groups is included when noteworthy and/or statistically different
- Please note that some totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

Methodology Statement

- This survey of 2,729 adults was conducted December 12, 2016 through December 19, 2016 by The Marist Poll sponsored and funded in partnership with The Knights of Columbus. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States were interviewed in English or Spanish by telephone using live interviewers.
- Landline telephone numbers were randomly selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation from ASDE Survey Sampler, Inc. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. Respondents in the household were selected by asking for the youngest male. To increase coverage, this landline sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of mobile numbers from Survey Sampling International. After the interviews were completed, the two samples were combined and balanced to reflect the 2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates for age, gender, income, race, and region. The results for this subset are statistically significant ± 1.9 percentage points.
- There are 643 Catholic Americans and 341 Catholic Americans who practice their faith. The results for these subsets are statistically significant within ± 3.9 percentage points and ± 5.3 percentage points, respectively.
- The error margin was not adjusted for sample weights and increases for cross-tabulations.

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The Knights of Columbus is one of the nation's premiere volunteer and charitable organizations. Last year, Knights worldwide donated more than 71.5 million hours, and more than \$173.5 million to charitable causes in communities throughout the Americas, as well in Europe and Asia. From helping children in need, to providing wheelchairs for the disabled, to helping stock food banks, to offering top-rated and affordable life insurance to its members, the Knights has been at the service of the community for more than 130 years, and is the world's largest Catholic service organization.



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Founded in 1978, The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion (MIPO) is a survey research center at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. The Marist Poll has conducted independent research on public priorities, elections, and a wide variety of social issues. The Marist Poll regularly partners with NBC News and *The Wall Street Journal* to conduct scientific public opinion polls in key electoral battleground states. It joins with McClatchy to take the pulse of the country, and with MSNBC and Telemundo to measure public opinion on issues important to the Latino community.