

Faithful Citizenship in 2020:

Directions and Dangers in a

Wounded Church and Hurting Nation



Association of US Catholic Priests

June 23, 2020

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Director, Initiative on

Catholic Social Thought and Public Life

Georgetown University

60 Years Ago



Five years ago



Three weeks ago



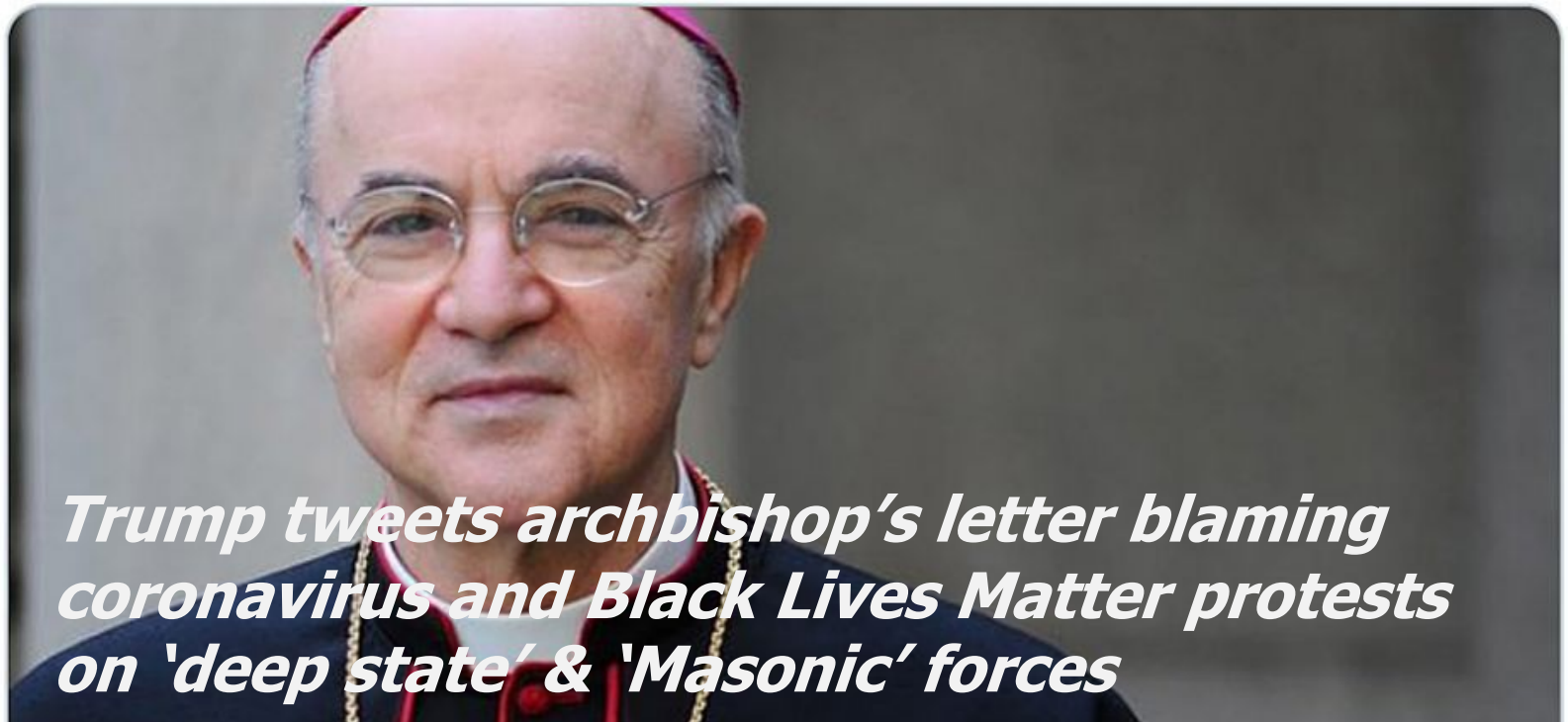
Two weeks ago



Donald J. Trump 
@realDonaldTrump



So honored by Archbishop Viganò's incredible letter to me. I hope everyone, religious or not, reads it! lifesitenews.com/opinion/archbi...



Trump tweets archbishop's letter blaming coronavirus and Black Lives Matter protests on 'deep state' & 'Masonic' forces



AUSCP Outline

I. Mission

II. Context

III. Assets

IV. *Faithful Citizenship*

V. Directions/Dangers



Mission in Public Life

■ **What brings Catholics together**

- **Not politics, ideology**
- **Not “Democratic party at prayer” or “the religious caucus of the Republican party”**
- **part of a community of faith, not a PAC**
- **Advocates of life, dignity, justice, not interest group**
- **Priests, not political leaders, proclaim the gospel, celebrate the sacraments, build up body of Christ**
- **Mission?**



AUSCP Mission

To be an association of U.S. Catholic priests offering mutual support and a collegial voice through dialogue, contemplation and prophetic action on issues affecting Church and society.



Mission

Jesus' Mission

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.
The Lord has anointed me
to bring Good News to the poor,
liberty to captives,
new sight to the blind,
to set the downtrodden free. (Luke 4)*

*I have come to **bring life** and bring it
to the full...* John 10:10



Faithful Citizenship

- **The most counter cultural idea ... politics is a good thing, participation is a moral obligation**
- **Use the resources of our faith and the opportunities of our democracy to**
 - **defend the life, dignity of all God's children,**
 - **protect and care for " the least of these",**
 - **work for peace and solidarity,**
 - **care for God's creation and**
 - **contribute to the common good.**



Faithful Citizenship

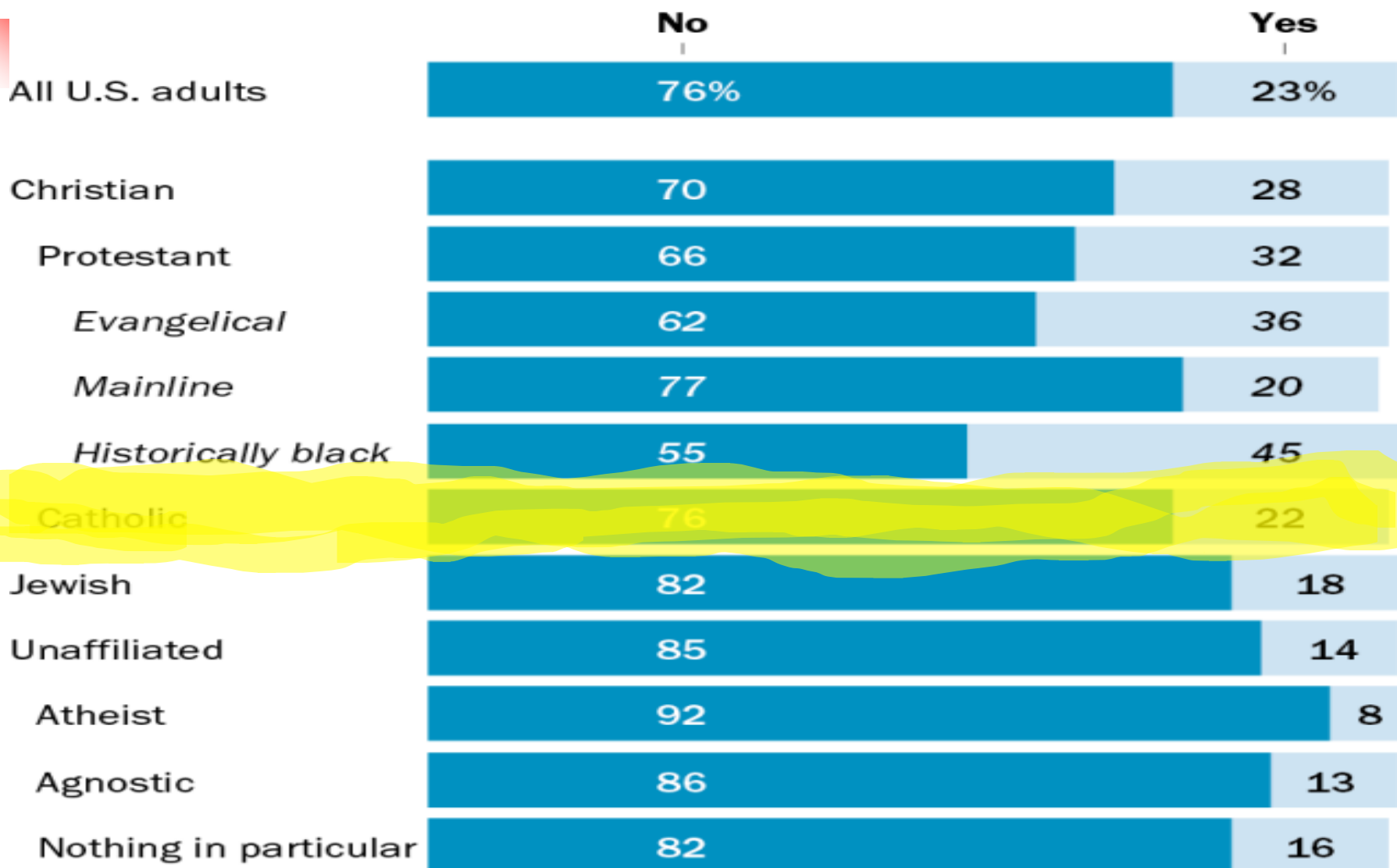


What it is Not:

- **Religious Practices of Politicians**
- **Political Clout of Religious Groups**
- **Pastors Telling Us How to Vote**

Most Americans say clergy should not endorse candidates

During political elections, should churches and other houses of worship come out in favor of one candidate over another?



Benedict: Church and Politics



"It is not the church's responsibility to make this teaching prevail in political life.

Rather, the church wishes to help form consciences in political life

and to stimulate greater insight into the authentic requirements of justice

as well as greater readiness to act accordingly, even when this might involve conflict with situations of personal interest."

Benedict XVI ...God is Love...Deus Caritas Est

Faithful Citizenship



Let us not forget that "responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation." FCFC

None of us can say, 'I have nothing to do with [public life]' No, I am responsible...

I have to do my best by participating in politics according to my ability. Politics, according to the Social Doctrine of the Church, is one of the highest forms of charity, because it serves the common good.

Pope Francis September 16

Religion and Politics



- **This kind of talk...**
 - **Danger to faith and politics...**
- **Believers have same rights: no more, no less...**
 - **Neither favoritism, nor discrimination...**
- **When people bring their deepest convictions, enrich not diminish...**
 - **Otherwise, about power, money, ego...**



Context

- **A Global Pandemic**
- **A Nation in Crisis**
- **A Divided Economy**
- **A Dangerous World**
- **A Culture of Violence**
- **A Demoralized Politics**
- **A Wounded Church**



A Wounded Church



- **Passing on the Faith**
- **Challenges of Diversity, Inclusion, Openness**
- **Polarization and Anger**

Twin Crises:

- **Clergy sexual abuse**
- **Leadership failures**
- **Human, Moral, Spiritual Costs**
- **Institutional, Financial, Credibility Costs**

A Wounded Church

- **Lessons from 50 Years:**
- **Personal,**
- **Professional,**
- **Institutional**



<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2018/09/25/eight-lessons-help-us-move-forward-sex-abuse-crisis>

Survivor, Isolation, lack of accountability, weaponization, abuse of power, Silence. Credibility ...



Catholic Assets

- **Not the Gospel , Sacraments,**
- **Not the Constitution, Democracy**
- **Moral Principles: CST**
- **Presence and Institutions**
- **Everyday Experience**
- **Leaders... Pope Francis**
- **People... Voters**



Moral Framework/Principles

- **CST**

- **Principles** for reflection,
- **criteria** for judgment,
- **guidelines** for action.

- ***Without a vision....."***

- **Different way to look at world**
- **More Complicated than WWJD**

- **Politically Incorrect: Does not fit partisan/ideological framework**

- **Harvard and Georgetown/ search for a moral vocabulary**



Catholic Social Teaching

- *Rerum Novarum*, 1891
- *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931
- *Mater et Magistra*, 1961
- *Pacem in Terris*, 1963
- *Gaudium et Spes*, 1966
- *Populorum Progressio*, 1967
- *Octogesima Adveniens*, 1971
- *Laborem Exercens*, 1981
- *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1988
- *Centesimus Annus*, 1991
- *Evangelium Vitae*, 1995
- *Deus Caritas Est*, 2005
- *Caritas in Veritate*, 2009
- *Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013
- *Laudato Si*, 2015
- *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 2018



Catholic “AND”

- Human Life and Dignity...
- Rights and Responsibilities...
- Family and Community
- Priority for Poor and Vulnerable
- Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers
- Solidarity and Subsidiarity....
- Care for the Planet and People
- Common Good (all about and)

Online Dialogue on COVID-19



What does Catholicism/CST bring to us?

It is the primary moral and intellectual system to oppose autonomy. **It's basically all we got.** It is the ethos of community in this country and the dominant and most developed intellectual tradition of community."

David Brooks



Catholic ASSETS

- **Everyday Experience**
- **Presence, Institutions**
- **Leaders:**
 - **Pastors gathered on-line**
 - **Sr Carol Zinn, Sr Carol Keehan, Archbishop Wester**
 - **Pope Francis**

Pope Francis: What's in a Name?



“During the election, when things were looking dangerous, he said: “Don't forget the poor!”

That is how the name came into my heart: Francis of Assisi. For me, he is the

- man of poverty,***
- the man of peace,***
- the man who loves and protects creation...”***

(Pope Francis, First Press Conference)

Pope Francis



Complicated????

- **Bottom>Up,**
- **Outside>In**
- **Encounter,**
Engagement
- **Protection of Life**
...throwaway culture
- **Religious Freedom**
for All
- **Priority for the**
Poor
- **Joy of the Gospel**
- **Love in the Family**
- **Justice in the**
Economy
- **Welcome for**
Immigrants
- **Peace in the World**
- **Mercy in the Church**
- **Care for Creation**



The most powerful statement...





Catholic ASSETS

- **People:**
Community/Constituency
 - **“Without a people...”**
- **Catholics Voters**
 - **“There is no Catholic Vote.**
 - **It’s really important.”**



Catholics and Politics

- **Catholics are Crucial**
 - A lot of Catholics, quarter of electorate
 - 11/12
- **Catholics are Divided**
 - Not Monolithic,
 - but important 40-40-20

CATHOLICS
for OBAMA

CATHOLICS FOR
ROMNEY

CATHOLICS 4 TRUMP

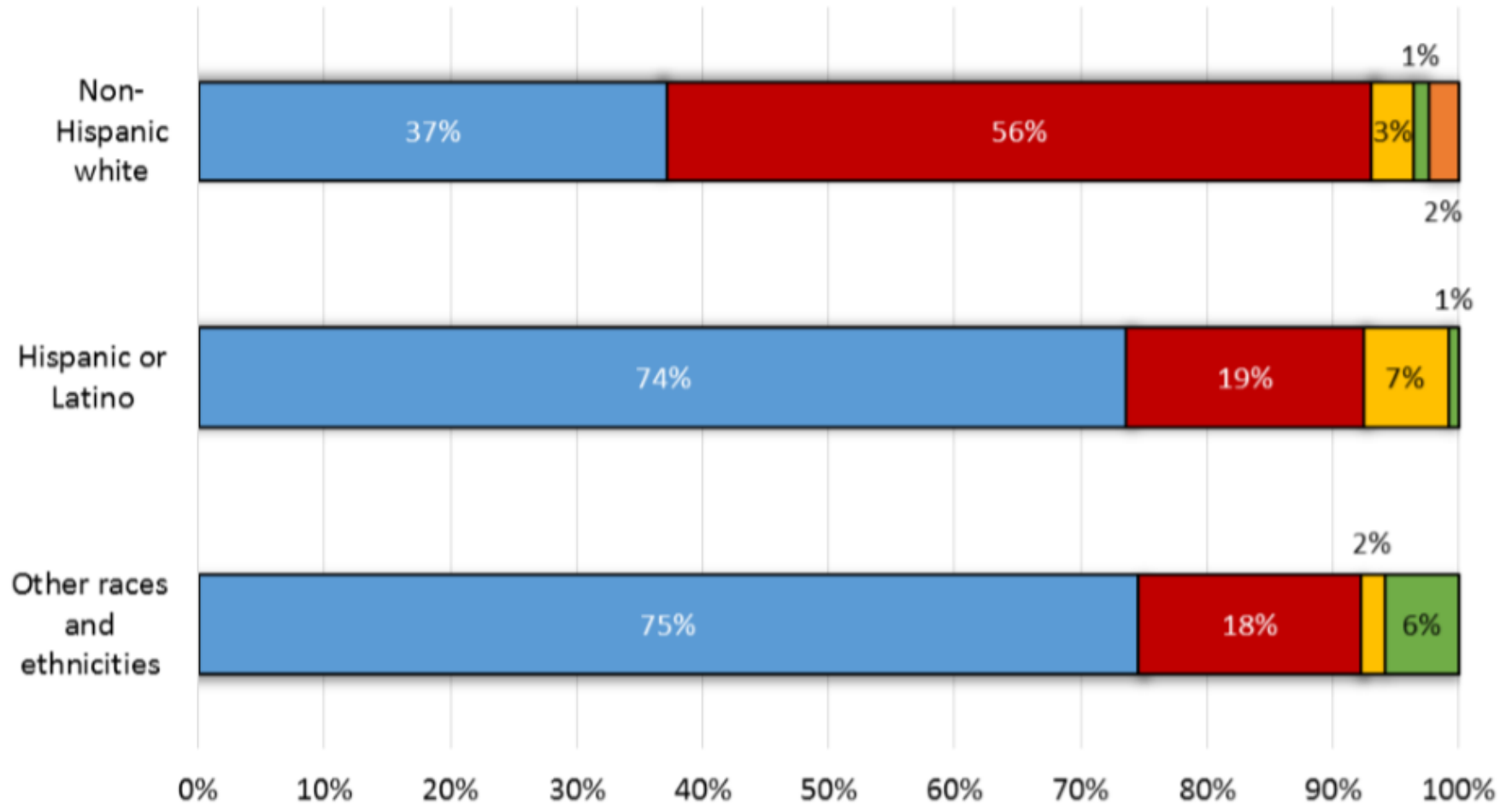
Presidential vote by religious affiliation and race

| | 2000 | | 2004 | | 2008 | | 2012 | | 2016 | | Dem change '12-'16 |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------|
| | Gore % | Bush % | Kerry % | Bush % | Obama % | McCain % | Obama % | Romney % | Clinton % | Trump % | |
| Protestant/other Christian | 42 | 56 | 40 | 59 | 45 | 54 | 42 | 57 | 39 | 58 | -3 |
| Catholic | 50 | 47 | 47 | 52 | 54 | 45 | 50 | 48 | 45 | 52 | -5 |
| White Catholic | 45 | 52 | 43 | 56 | 47 | 52 | 40 | 59 | 37 | 60 | -3 |
| Hispanic Catholic | 65 | 33 | 65 | 33 | 72 | 26 | 75 | 21 | 67 | 26 | -8 |
| Jewish | 79 | 19 | 74 | 25 | 78 | 21 | 69 | 30 | 71 | 24 | +2 |
| Other faiths | 62 | 28 | 74 | 23 | 73 | 22 | 74 | 23 | 62 | 29 | -12 |
| Religiously unaffiliated | 61 | 30 | 67 | 31 | 75 | 23 | 70 | 26 | 68 | 26 | -2 |
| White, born-again/evangelical Christian | n/a | n/a | 21 | 78 | 24 | 74 | 21 | 78 | 16 | 81 | -5 |
| Mormon | n/a | n/a | 19 | 80 | n/a | n/a | 21 | 78 | 25 | 61 | +4 |

Note: "Protestant" refers to people who described themselves as "Protestant," "Mormon" or "other Christian" in exit polls; this categorization

How Catholics Voted for President in 2016 by Race and Ethnicity

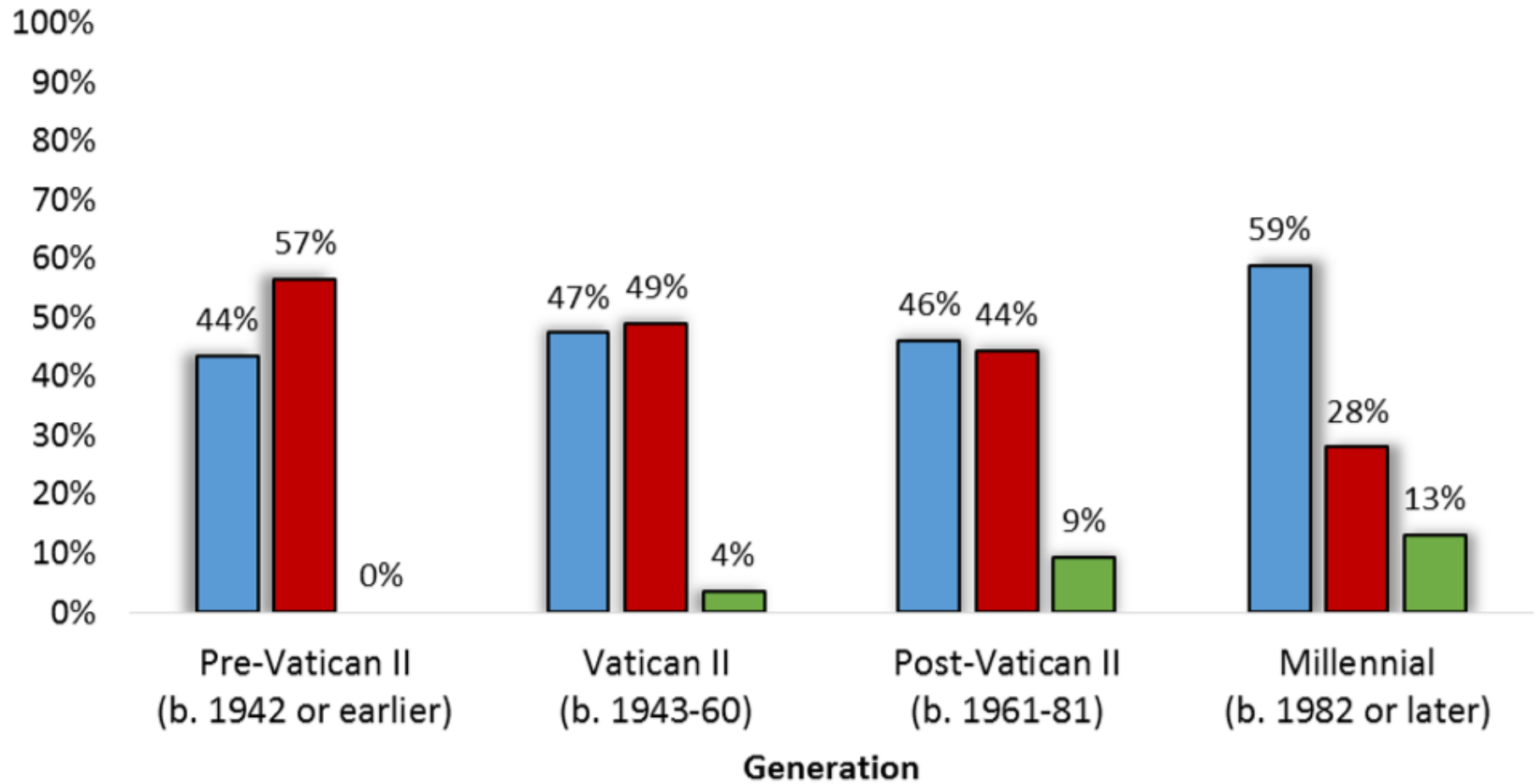
■ Hillary Clinton ■ Donald Trump ■ Gary Johnson ■ Jill Stein ■ Other candidate



Source: American National Election Study 2016 (ANES)

Catholic Presidential Vote in 2016 by Generation

■ Hillary Clinton ■ Donald Trump ■ Other candidates



Source: American National Election Study 2016 (ANES)

Presidential vote by religious attendance

% who say they voted for...

| | Clinton Trump | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <i>Attend worship services...</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>%</i> |
| At least once a week | 40 | 56 |
| Monthly | 46 | 49 |
| Few times a year | 48 | 47 |
| Never | 62 | 31 |

Source: National Election Pool national exit polls, as reported at NBCnews.com.

Comparisons with previous years are not available because the way the religious attendance question is asked changed in 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



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Political Responsibility

- **1976 was first Political Responsibility statement**
- *Political Responsibility*>
- *Faithful Citizenship*>
- *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*
- **February, 1976 3118 words**
- **November, 2019 17,200 words**

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Faithful Citizenship

- Two Foundations:**

- Conscience
- Prudence

- Two Temptations:**

- No Distinctions...
- Nothing Else Matters...



Faithful
Citizenship



Faithful
Citizenship

Faithful Citizenship

- ***As Catholics we are not single-issue voters.***
- ***A candidate's position on a single issue is not sufficient to guarantee a voter's support.***
- ***Yet if a candidate's position on a single issue promotes an intrinsically evil act, such as legal abortion, redefining marriage in a way that denies its essential meaning, or racist behavior, a voter may legitimately disqualify a candidate from receiving support***

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship



Faithful
Citizenship

There may be times when a Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position even on policies promoting an intrinsically evil act

may reasonably decide to vote for that candidate for other morally grave reasons....

not to advance narrow interests or partisan preferences or to ignore a fundamental moral evil.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship



When all candidates hold a position that promotes an intrinsically evil act, the conscientious voter faces a dilemma.

- ***The voter may decide to take the extraordinary step of **not voting** for any candidate or,***
- ***after careful deliberation, may decide to vote for the candidate deemed less likely to advance such a morally flawed position and more likely to pursue other authentic human goods.***
- ***Third party ?***

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship



- ***These decisions should take into account a candidate's***
 - ***commitments,***
 - ***character,***
 - ***integrity,***
 - ***and ability to influence a given issue.***
- ***In the end, this is a decision to be made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching. No. 37***



Key Question

**Does your faith
shape your politics?**

or

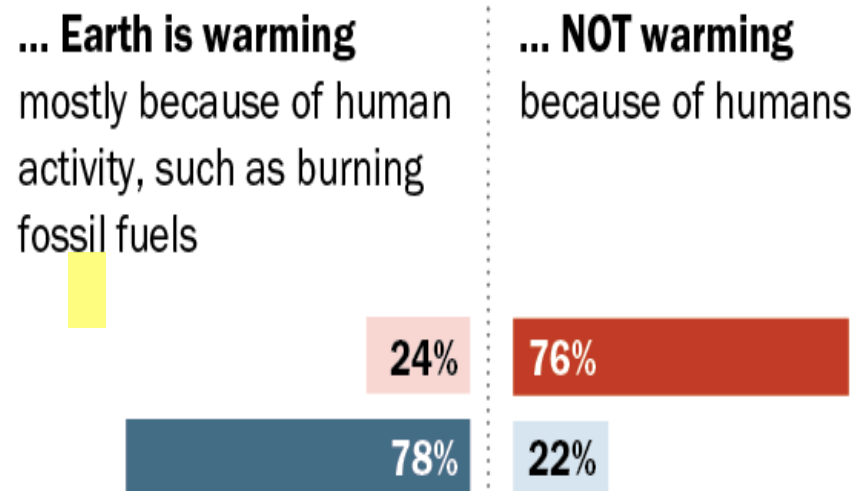
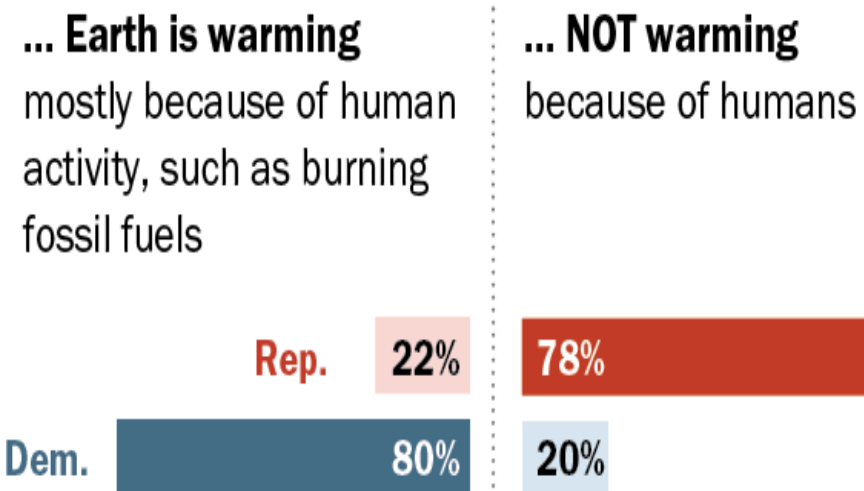
**Do your politics
shape your faith ?**

Catholics split by political party on climate change, abortion

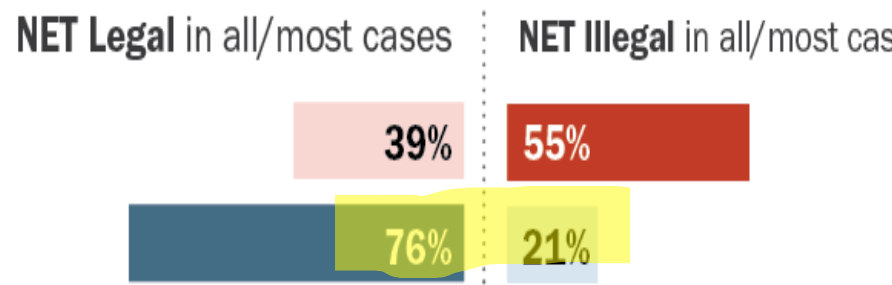
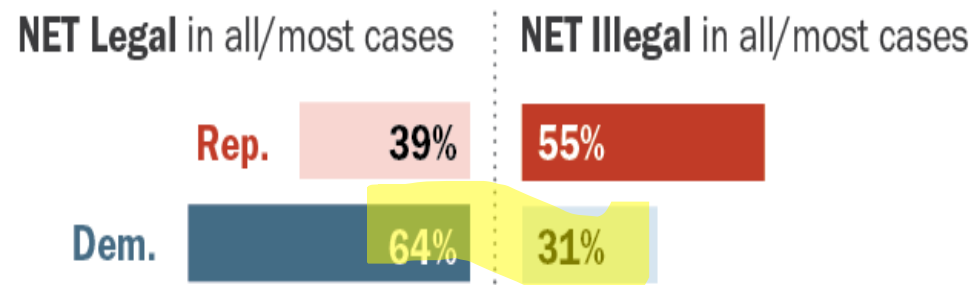
Catholics

All U.S. adults

% who say ...



% who say abortion should be ...



Catholic Democrats, Republicans at odds on government aid to poor, border wall

Catholics

All U.S. adults

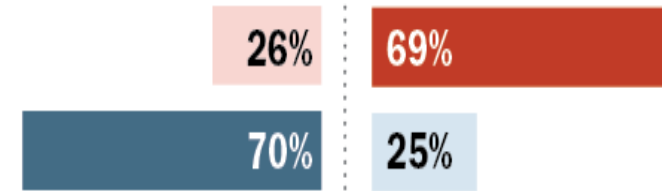
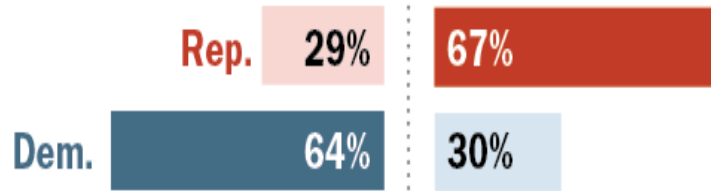
% who say government aid to the poor does ...

... more GOOD than harm,
because people can't get
out of poverty until their
basic needs are met

**... more HARM than
good,** by making people
too dependent on
government assistance

... more GOOD than harm,
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**... more HARM than
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% who ___ substantially expanding the wall along U.S. border with Mexico

Oppose

Favor

Oppose

Favor

Rep. 15%

81%

16%

82%

Dem. 91%

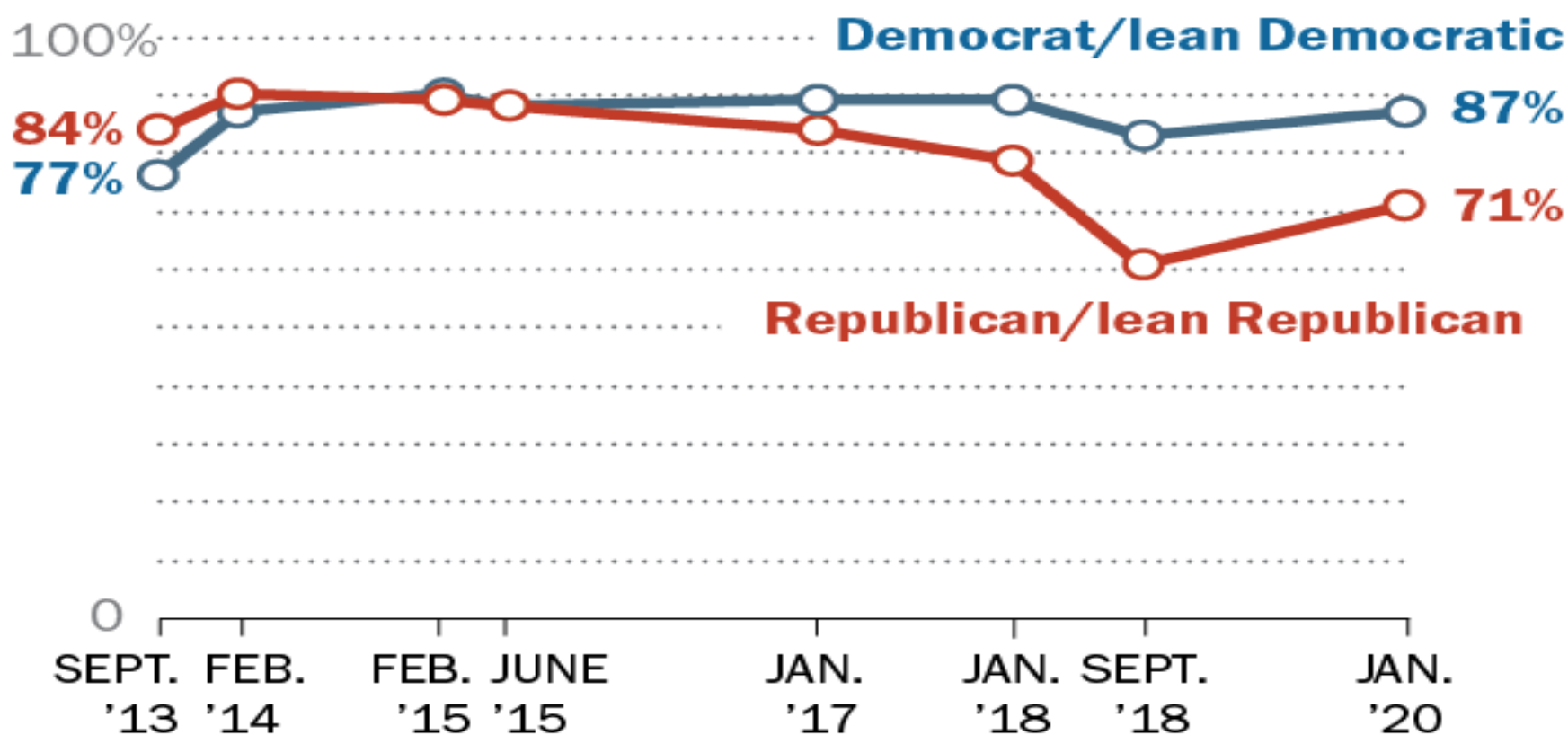
7%

93%

6%

Among Catholics, Democrats more likely than Republicans to rate Pope Francis positively

% of U.S. Catholics who have a favorable opinion of Pope Francis





Directions/ Dangers

Faithful Citizenship

- **“Political, Not Partisan”**
- **“Principled, Not Ideological”**
- **“Civil, Not Soft”**
- **“Engaged, Not Used”**



Directions and Dangers

- 1. Integrate, Don't Isolate**
- 2. Anchor in Prayer, Express in Worship**
- 3. Preaching: Share the "Secret" of CST/It's Good News**
- 4. Leadership**
- 5. Preaching: Preach the Gospel**
- 6. Credibility/Practice What we Preach/Diversity is Obligation/not Option**
- 7. We're in this together**



Preaching

- 1. Affirm our participation and challenge our assumptions, remind us of moral principles and warn us of our prejudices**
- 2. Restraint: tell us what you are doing and not doing; sharing the gospel, not telling you how to vote**
- 3. Remind us of opportunity and obligation, Call to participation , not partisanship**
- 4. Share the secret of CST, Message of FCFC**



Preaching

5. **Good questions are better than easy answers**
6. **Use USCCB and other resources**
7. **Be consistent about the consistent life ethic**
8. **Responsibility extends beyond election**
9. **Reject those who want to use faith, parish, parking lot to advance their own agenda**
10. **It's "good news": Ain't it awful" is not enough/"We can do better..."**

Handbook for Catholic Preachers:

<https://litpress.org/Products/B6316/A-Handbook-for-Catholic-Preaching>

