

# AEI STUDIES IN PUBLIC OPINION

## PUBLIC OPINION ON POPE JOHN PAUL II

(Updated April 6, 2005)

### General Attitudes

- Do you approve or disapprove of the way Pope John Paul II is handling his role as leader of the Catholic Church?

		Approve	Disapprove
Sept. 1979	NBC/WSJ	56	7

- Do you have a generally favorable or unfavorable impression of Pope John Paul II, or don't you know enough about Pope John Paul to have an opinion?

		-----National-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Fav.	Unfav.	Fav.	Unfav.
Aug. 1987	ABC News/Wash Post	51	8	76	4
Aug. 1993	ABC News/Wash Post	68	12	--	--
Sept. 1995	ABC News/Wash Post	64	20	83	10
Jan. 1998	ABC News/Wash Post	71	10	--	--
Oct. 2003	ABC News/Wash Post	65	24	84	11
Mar. 2005	ABC News/Wash Post	67	16	87	8

NOTE: "Don't know enough to have an opinion" ranged from 11 percent to 41 percent in the surveys.

- Is your opinion of Pope John Paul the Second favorable, not favorable, or don't you know enough about him to have an opinion?

		-----National-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Fav.	Unfav.	Fav.	Unfav.
Nov. 1985	CBS News/N.Y. Times	40	5	63	2
Aug. 1987	CBS News/N.Y. Times	34	8	59	5
Apr. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	34	6	62	5
Sept. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	40	8	---	---
Apr. 2002	CBS News/N.Y. Times	37	15	69	8
Apr. 2002	CBS News/N.Y. Times	25	18	53	11

NOTE: "Don't know enough to have an opinion" exceeded 50 percent in most surveys.

- What is your overall impression of Pope John Paul II, favorable or unfavorable?

		-----All Americans-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Favorable	Unfavorable	Favorable	Unfavorable
Aug. 1993	Gallup	64	15	---	---
Dec. 1998	Gallup	86	8	---	---
Jan. 1999	Gallup	69	9	---	---
Apr. 2002	Gallup	61	26	78	17
Oct. 2003	Gallup	73	17	88	9
Feb. 2005	Gallup	78	11	93	4

- In general, what is your impression of Pope John Paul II as a person? As of today, is it very favorable, or somewhat favorable, or somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable – or haven't you heard enough about him yet to say?

Aug. 1987	L.A. Times
Very Favorable	30
Somewhat Favorable	31
Somewhat Unfavorable	6
Very Unfavorable	2
Haven't Heard Enough	23

- I'm going to read you the names of some political leaders and organizations. Please tell me whether you have generally favorable or generally unfavorable impressions of each, or whether you are not familiar enough to say one way or the other....Pope John Paul the Second?

		-----National-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Fav.	Unfav.	Fav.	Unfav.
Aug. 1993	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	60	13	80	7
Dec. 1994	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	62	14	82	6
Sept. 1995	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	61	11	85	7
Jan. 1998	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	70	11	---	---

- Do you approve or disapprove of the way Pope John Paul II is handling his role as leader of the Catholic Church?

		-----All Americans-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Dec. 1994	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	49	18	74	15
Jan. 1999	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	--	--	84	10

- Is your opinion of Pope John Paul the Second very favorable, favorable, unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Asked: Those who are a member of a church or synagogue

		Very Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable
Apr. 2002	Quinnipiac	16	42	10	4

- What is your overall opinion of the Pope?

Asked: Catholics Only

		Favorable	Unfavorable
Apr. 2003	Le Moyne/Zogby	81	10
Apr. 2005	Le Moyne/Zogby	98	1

- Do you approve or disapprove of the way Pope John Paul II has handled his job as Pope?

		-----All Americans-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Oct. 2003	ABC News/Wash Post	58	26	79	16

- Do you approve or disapprove of the way Pope John Paul II is doing leading the Catholic Church?

		-----All Americans-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Sept. 1995	ABC News/Wash Post	59	21	82	15

- Do you approve or disapprove of the way Pope John Paul II is handling his role as leader of the Catholic Church?

Asked: Catholics

		Approve	Disapprove
Jan. 1999	Gallup	85	10
Oct. 2003	Gallup	63	33

## The Pope's Leadership

- Do you think the Pope's leadership has helped the Catholic Church, hurt it, or has it been a mixed blessing?

Asked: Catholics Only

		Helped	Hurt	Mixed Blessing
Sept. 1995	CBS News/ NYT	55	2	40
Apr. 2002	CBS News/NYT	33	7	51
May 2002	CBS News/ NYT	46	5	42

- The Pope has done a good job leading the worldwide Church?

Asked: Catholics Only

Apr. 2003	Le Moyne/Zogby	Agree 88	Disagree 9
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- The Pope has done a good job leading the American Catholic Church?

Asked: Catholics Only

Apr. 2003	Le Moyne/Zogby	Agree 75	Disagree 23
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### Admiration for the Pope

- Most Admired Men

Dec. 2004	Gallup	23	George W. Bush
		6	Bill Clinton
		5	Colin Powell
		4	Jimmy Carter
		3	Rev. Billy Graham
		<b>3</b>	<b>Pope John Paul II</b>
		2	John Kerry
		2	Nelson Mandela
		2	Tony Blair
		1	Bill Gates

NOTE: Pope John Paul II has appeared on Gallup's "Most Admired Men" list 27 times. Only Ronald Reagan (31) and Billy Graham (48) have appeared more times.

- Thinking about some of the prominent world leaders during your lifetime, how do you think Pope John Paul II rates – as one of the greatest, great but not one of the greatest, good, average, or below average?

		One of the Greatest	Great but not one of the Greatest	Good	Average	Below Average
Feb. 2005	Gallup (National)	22	20	31	18	4
Feb. 2005	Gallup (Catholics)	38	26	22	10	3

- How do you think Pope John Paul II will go down in history as one of the greatest popes, great but not one of the greatest, good, average, or below average?

		One of the Greatest	Great but not one of the Greatest	Good	Average	Below Average
Apr. 2005	Gallup (Catholics)	67	21	7	2	1

- How do you think Pope John Paul II will go down in history? Would you say he will be remembered as..?

		One of the Greatest	Above Average	Average	Below Average	One of the worst
Apr. 2005	AP/Ipsos (National)	51	25	17	1	1

- Out of all the people from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, is Pope John Paul II the person you admire most; admire, but not the most; somewhat admire; or do not admire?

Dec. 1999	Gallup		25	Most Admire
			34	Admire, but not most
			23	Somewhat admire
			13	Do not admire

- Do you think Pope John Paul II will be made a saint by the Catholic Church someday?

Asked: Catholics

		Yes	No
Dec. 1994	Time/ CNN/ Yankelovich Partners	29	42
Oct. 2003	Gallup	51	39
Apr. 2005	Gallup	71	18

- Do you think Pope John Paul II will or will not be made a saint by the Catholic Church?

Asked: Catholics

		Yes	No
Apr. 2005	Le Moyne/Zogby	67	12

## The Political and Social Positions of the Pope

- Do you think the Pope is too conservative, too liberal, or about right in his positions on issues?

Asked: Catholics

		Too Conservative	Too Liberal	About Right
Jul. 1987	Gallup	27	8	48
Oct. 2003	Gallup	38	9	49
Feb. 2005	Gallup	33	2	62

- In your opinion, was Pope John Paul II in his positions on issues too conservative, too liberal, or about right?

Asked: Catholics

		Too Conservative	Too Liberal	About Right
Apr. 2005	Le Moyne/Zogby	19	1	76

- When it comes to issues of personality morality, would you say that Pope John Paul is more liberal than you, or more conservative than you, or are his opinions pretty much like yours?

Asked: Catholics

		More Conservative	More Liberal	Much Like Yours
Apr. 2002	CBS News/NYT	57	6	30

- Do you believe the Pope is infallible on teaching matters of faith, such as the divinity of Christ?

Asked: Catholics

		Yes	No
Oct. 2003	Gallup	45	50

- Do you believe the Pope is infallible on teaching matters of morals, such as birth control and abortion?

Asked: Catholics

		Yes	No
Oct. 2003	Gallup	39	57

- Does this description describe Pope John Paul II?... Someone who is out of touch with the modern world.

Asked: Catholics

		Describes	Does not describe
Jan. 1999	Time/CNN/Yankelovich	41	54
Oct. 2003	Gallup	53	45

- Does this description describe Pope John Paul II?... Someone who is out of touch with Catholics in the United States?

		Describes	Does not describe
Dec. 1994:	Time/CNN/Yankelovich Partners	39	35

- Who represents your viewpoints better when it comes to moral and religious issues, the Pope or your local church official?

Asked: Catholics Only

		Pope	Local Officials
Aug. 1987:	ABC News/Wash Post	40	50
Aug. 1993:	ABC News/Wash Post	35	51
Oct. 1995:	ABC News/Wash Post	25	62
Oct. 2003:	ABC News/Wash Post	27	60

## Influence of the Pope

- Do you think the Pope is – or is not – an important leader in the world scene?

Asked: Catholics

		-----Pope Important Leader in World Scene-----	
		Yes	No
Oct. 2003	Gallup	83	15

- On difficult moral questions, which are you more likely to follow – the teachings of the Pope or your own conscience?

Asked: Catholics

		Pope	Own Conscience
Oct. 2003	Gallup	14	83

- Do you think the Pope exerts too much control over the Catholic Church in the United States, too little control, or the right amount of control?

Asked: Catholics

		Too Much	Too Little	Right Amount
Sept. 1995	CBS News/NYT	21	12	60
Apr. 2002	CBS News/NYT	18	24	53

- Pope John Paul II will be visiting the United States in a few weeks. He has frequently warned about the moral dangers of consumerism, materialism, and a life too centered on temporal pleasures. Do you think Americans in particular should pay attention to the Pope's views?

Asked: Catholics

		Yes	No	Not Sure
Sept. 1995:	Time/CNN/Yankelovich Partners	78	14	8

- If you knew the Pope took a position on a political or social issue would that make you more likely or less likely to support that position?

Sept. 1995:	CBS News/New York Times	More Likely	Less Likely	No Difference
		8	7	81

- Has Pope John Paul II had an influence on you personally in terms of (item) or not?

Oct. 2003 ABC News/Washington Post

		Yes	No
a. Your religious beliefs	All	16	82
	Catholics	42	58
b. Your moral views	All	18	80
	Catholics	39	60
c. Your political opinions	All	10	88
	Catholics	21	78
d. Your personal behavior	All	13	85
	Catholics	33	66

- Has Pope John Paul II had an influence on you personally in terms of (item) or not?

Mar. 2005 ABC News/Washington Post

		Yes	No
a. Your moral views	All	18	81
	Catholics	51	48

## Attitudes Regarding the Sexual Abuse Scandals

- Do you think the Pope and the Vatican have done a good job or a poor job handling the recent charges of sexual abuse of children and teenagers by priests?'

		-----National-----		-----Catholics-----	
		Good Job	Bad Job	Good Job	Bad Job
May 2002	CBS News/NYT	26	52	40	45
Jun. 2002	CBS News	21	68	26	64

- Do you think the Pope has done enough to address the problem of sexual abuse of children and teenagers by priests, or should he have done more?

		Done enough	Should have done more
Oct. 2003: ABC News/ Wash Post	All	11	82
	Catholics	22	74

- Do you think the Pope knew all along about the problem of sexual abuse of children and teenagers, or do you think he probably only just found out?

			Knew all along	Just found out
May 2002:	CBS News/NYT	All	57	31
		Catholics	48	40

- With regards to the problem of sexual abuse by priests, do you think the Pope has moved the policy towards dealing with the problem in a clear direction, or do you think the Pope has left the situation ambiguous?

			Clear direction	Ambiguous
Apr. 2002:	Newsweek		26	56

- Since April 2002, the Pope has condemned the sexual abuse of minors. He said there's no place in the church for those who engage in this behavior, and he has approved a revised set of policies for the American bishops to address this problem.. Considering his actions, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that the Pope has done a good job in providing leadership to the American church on this crisis?

Asked: Catholics Only

			Agree	Disagree
Apr. 2003	Le Moyne/Zogby		67	30

## Effectiveness of the Pope

- How would you rate the job Pope John Paul II has done in (item) -- good or not so good?

Oct. 1995: ABC News/Wash Post

		Good	Not So Good
a. Preserving the church's traditions	All	65	21
	Catholic	88	10
b. Making Catholicism appealing to people today	All	44	39
	Catholic	62	32
c. Responding towards concerns of women in the church	All	34	46
	Catholics	53	43
d. Responding to the concerns of young Catholics	All	41	39
	Catholics	60	35
e. Making it attractive for people to serve as priests	All	38	45
	Catholics	53	41
f. Improving the Catholic Church's relations with other religions	All	55	29
	Catholics	75	19
g. Encouraging democracy around the world	All	67	22
	Catholics	86	11
h. Encouraging human rights	All	72	17
	Catholics	89	9
i. Improving respect for the Catholic Church	All	48	41
	Catholics	66	31
j. Setting a personal moral example	All	73	17
	Catholics	90	8

- The Pope has been an effective leader...

Asked: Catholics Only

Apr. 2003: Le Moyne/Zogby

	Agree	Disagree
a. Through his example of spirituality and personal holiness	94	4
b. For improving the status of women in the Church	54	38
c. For improving the status and well-being of women in the world	64	26
d. On economic and justice issues and the poor	80	12
e. On issues of war and peace	76	21
f. In opposing abortion	87	8
g. In opposing capital punishment	76	13
h. In opposing euthanasia	77	9
i. In the political and economic transformation of Eastern Europe	67	15
j. In the Middle East conflict by supporting the establishment of a viable Palestinian state and a secure Israel	66	20

- Please tell me if you, as an American Catholic, strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements...

Asked: Catholics Only

Apr. 2005: Le Moyne/Zogby

	Agree	Disagree
a. Pope John Paul II did a good job leading the worldwide church.	98	1
b. Pope John Paul II did a good job leading the American Catholic Church.	94	5
c. The pope was an effective leader on economic justice issues and the poor.	93	3
d. The pope was an effective leader on issues of war and peace.	93	5
e. The pope was an effective leader in opposing abortion.	93	3
f. The pope understood the distinctive challenges facing the American Catholic Church.	90	8
g. The pope was an effective leader in opposing capital punishment.	83	6
h. The pope was an effective leader for improving the status of women in the church	70	22

### The Role of the Pope

- Do you view the Pope only as the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, or as the moral spokesman for all people?

		-----National-----		-----Catholic-----	
		Leader of Church	Moral Spokesman	Leader of Church	Moral Spokesman
Sept. 1985	CBS News/NYT	59	31	--	--
May 2002	CBS News/NYT	52	31	41	46

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