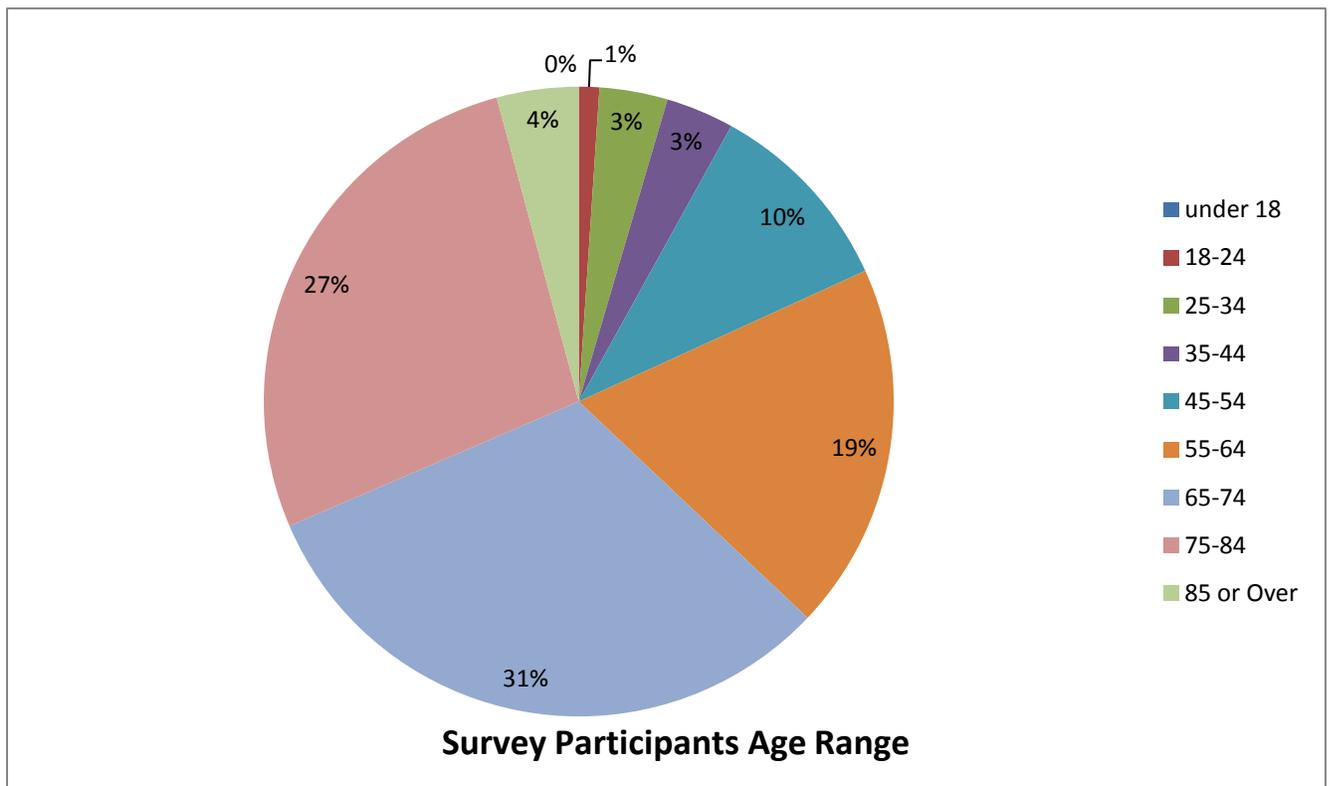
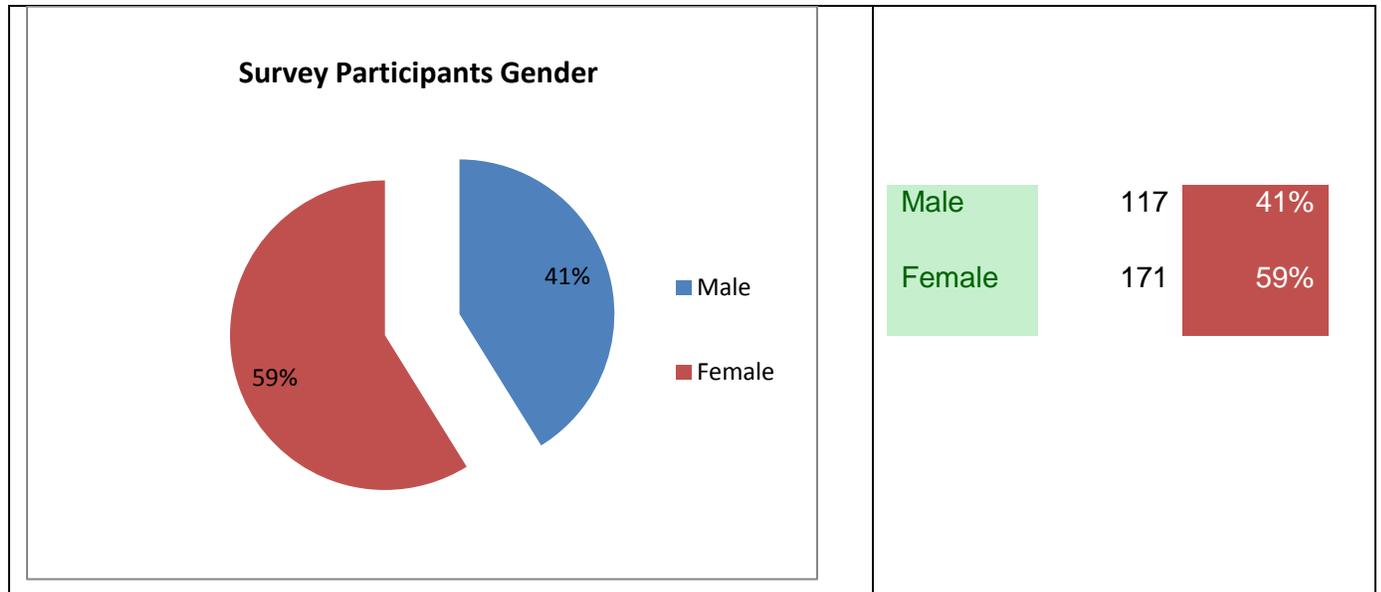


## Bishop Synod Survey Results 12/15/2013

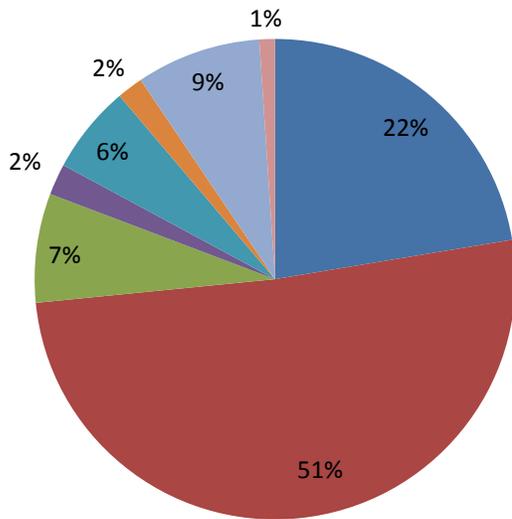
There were 289 participants in our survey. Respondents were not required to answer all questions. Calculations are based on number of respondents to each specific question. One third of respondents identified themselves as being from the Helena Diocese.

59% of Respondents were female, 41% male. 31% (nearly one third) were between 65-74 with the next highest 27% being between 75-84. No one under age 18 participated in the survey.

### Participants Gender and Age Range:



### What is your marital status?



- (A) Single-never married
- (B) Currently married-never divorced
- (C) Currently married after a prior divorce
- (D) Remarried after divorce w/annulment
- (E) Currently Single after divorce
- (F) Widowed/Remarried
- (G) Widowed
- (H) Domestic Partnership

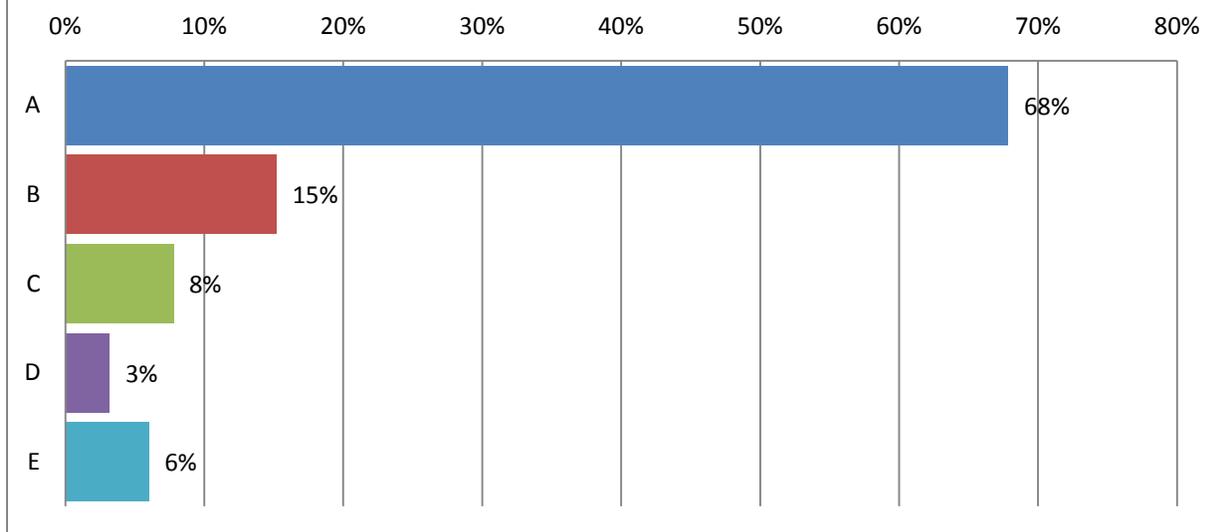
### In what capacity are you responding to this survey?



**Legend:**

- A. Lay Person**
- B. Priest**
- C. Deacon**
- D. Professed Religious**
- E. Catechist**

## What affiliation do you have with your local parish?



### Legend:

(A) I am a practicing Catholic and belong to and participate in the parish.	192	68%
(B) I am a practicing Catholic occasionally participating in the parish.	43	15%
(C) I consider myself Catholic but no longer belong to a parish.	22	8%
(D) I no longer consider myself Catholic but am not affiliated with any other denomination.	9	3%
(E) I no longer consider myself Catholic. I am affiliated with another denomination.	17	6%

### III. Questions

The following series of questions allows the particular Churches to participate actively in the preparation of the Extraordinary Synod, whose purpose is to proclaim the Gospel in the context of the pastoral challenges facing the family today.

Because we felt that in some cases, the questions from the Vatican were difficult to understand/answer we rephrased the question. In some cases, i.e.; statistical % of population in a diocese we excluded the questions.

## 1. The Diffusion of the Teachings on the Family in Sacred Scripture and the Church's Magisterium

### The Vatican Asked:

a) Describe how the Catholic Church's teachings on the value of the family contained in the Bible, Gaudium et spes, Familiaris consortio and other documents of the post-conciliar

Magisterium is understood by people today? What formation is given to our people on the Church's teaching on family life?

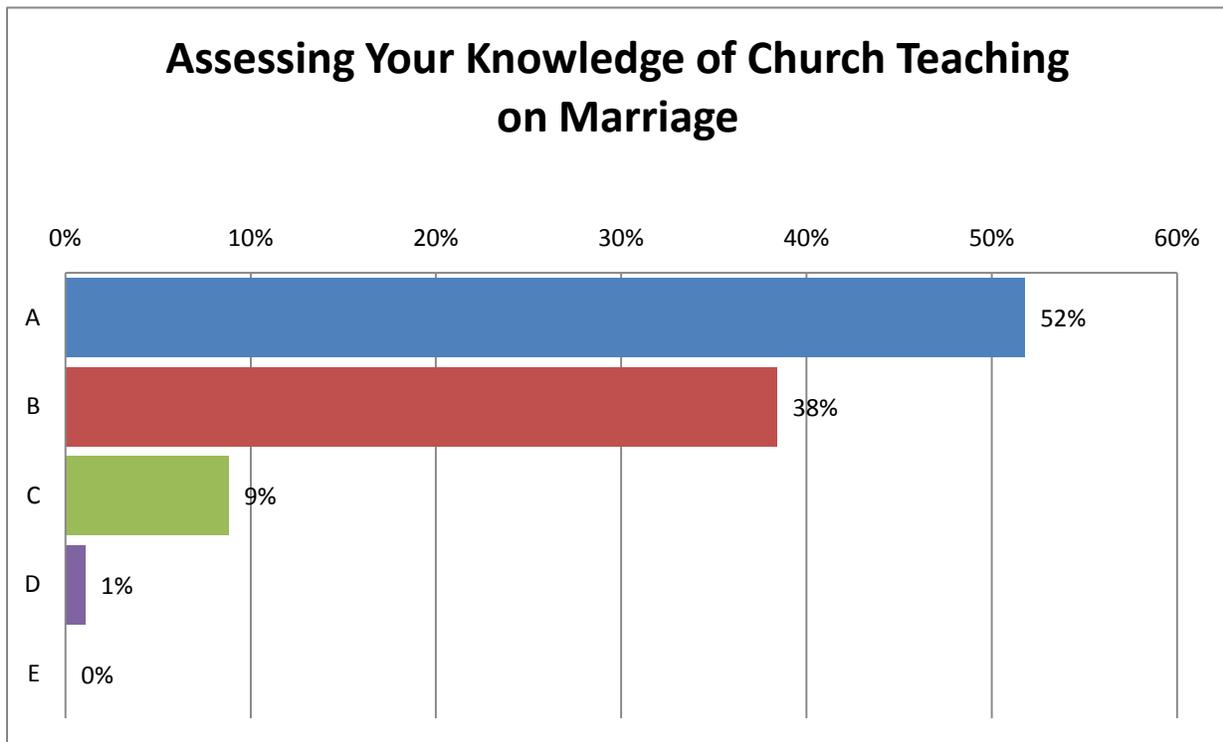
b) In those cases where the Church's teaching is known, is it accepted fully or are there difficulties in putting it into practice? If so, what are they?

c) How widespread is the Church's teaching in pastoral programmes at the national, diocesan and parish levels? What catechesis is done on the family?

d) To what extent — and what aspects in particular — is this teaching actually known, accepted, rejected and/or criticized in areas outside the Church? What are the cultural factors which hinder the full reception of the Church's teaching on the family?

**We Asked:**

1. How would you assess or rate your knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church's teachings on marriage and the family?



**Legend:**

(A) A very good understanding	147	52%
(B) A good understanding	109	38%
(C) A fair understanding	25	9%
(D) A poor understanding	3	1%
(E) Unsure or unable to make that judgment	0	0%

## Comments:

### 1. How would you assess or rate your knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church's teachings on marriage and the family?

The Church is failing in its teaching activities. Mostly I have found that it does not teach at all, except from the pulpit.

I am a retired professional, a PHD psychologist

I am a laicized priest and have kept up with Church teaching.

Some teachings are not realistic at this point in time - - the world is being over populated at an alarming rate. That is the reality.

The church is totally out of touch. The only way I was able to conceive was with infertility treatments, so I am unaccepted by the church. Big loss for the church.

My wife & I were delegates from our parish to Diocese of Boise convention to develop marriage preparation guidelines in 1981.

My past includes 25 years of ministry and significant reading

I have a very good understanding but I do not agree with all of them absolutely.

I am not as familiar as I would like to be but do have the general principles.

One marriage, no divorce. No birth control

I am a professional philosopher with many years of seminary training.

12 years of Catholic school

Teachings are unrealistic in today's world.

I have studied religion and Catholicism in particular for many years.

My wife and I conducted marriage preparation sessions for 25 years

16 years of Catholic education, 2 years in religious life, certification as a Catholic chaplain

I understand the teaching, I disagree with it.

Having graduated from a Catholic college and Seminary I am conversant with what is taught as dogma

Parochial education, married 36 years

I know what I know because I took the trouble to study it on my own. Catechesis has been TERRIBLE for the longest time! How can anyone be expected to hew to the truth if they don't know what the truth IS?

After 40 years as a Lay Ecclesial Minister in three different parishes in Western Washington I feel I have a good understanding of the Churches teaching and the impact it has on our families

My undergraduate degree is in theology. I used to be a parish DRE

I have a masters degree in pastoral ministry.

I believe the church has not yet caught up to God on it's view of marriage. The church should support marriages between committed, adult partners who seek a marriage in the church, regardless of sexual orientation.

As former Associate Director of Diocesan Religious Ed. Office, I have worked and studied and given talks in this area.

I believe in one man and one woman for marriage.

No divorce no birth control no abortions

Teachings are wise when understood.

I believe the emphasis should be on loving families rather than broken families

I have a MA in Theology and an MA in Pastoral Theology from accredited Catholic colleges.

I know the church's teaching though not married.

I certainly understand as a divorced/remarried person that according to current church teaching I'm rejected and considered unworthy to receive the sacrament of Eucharist.

The Catholic Church needs to fully accept people who are gay, divorced, practicing contraception, and women.

The Catholic Church needs to embrace family planning and contraception.

Most priest have a lukewarm understanding of this, they are more interested in ritual and the bling.

seriously outof date especially in area of sexual morality

16 years of Catholic education - mostly at Jesuit schools and this does not count Georgetown Law School

I have a Master's degree in Theology from a Catholic University and taught Christian Morality

I consider it medieval.

I have a JCD and have done extensive graduate research in the theology of marriage, comparative marriage law and socio-cultural aspects of marriage. I worked for ten years in a tribunal!

the church is way out of step with the couples of today

I disagree with concept that marriage can only exist between a man and a woman. Believe that there are all kinds of loving families.

The hierarchy should stay out of the bedroom.

We need to reevaluate the church's teachings on birth control.

16 years of Catholic education, read many Catholic publications

12 years of theological studies in the Seminary. Ordained in 1964.

Continuing education at this time. Member to the International Thomas Merton Society, Pax Christi, and other organizations.

I am a resigned priest

Just because I understand it however, does not mean I agree with it. I also don't agree the reasoning behind the Church's teaching on this subject.

I am aware of it, but am not comfortable with it's teachings concerning divorced/remarried Catholics or our brothers and sisters in the gay and lesbian community.

The bishops are totally out of touch.

I am aware of it, but am not comfortable with it's teachings concerning divorced/remarried Catholics or our brothers and sisters in the gay and lesbian community.

The bishops are totally out of touch.

I understand that the Catholic Church believes marriage is only between a man and a woman who have not been married before, unless they have been granted an annulment.

I understand but do not agree and follow my own conscience after much prayer and discernment.

I have been force-fed since I was a child.

I was bought up Catholic and went to a Catholic parochial school for 8 years.

I find myself unable to grasp the exclusion of Catholics who are legally divorced from receiving Communion unless they get a church annulment. The Catholic church seems to accept civil laws in other areas as binding.

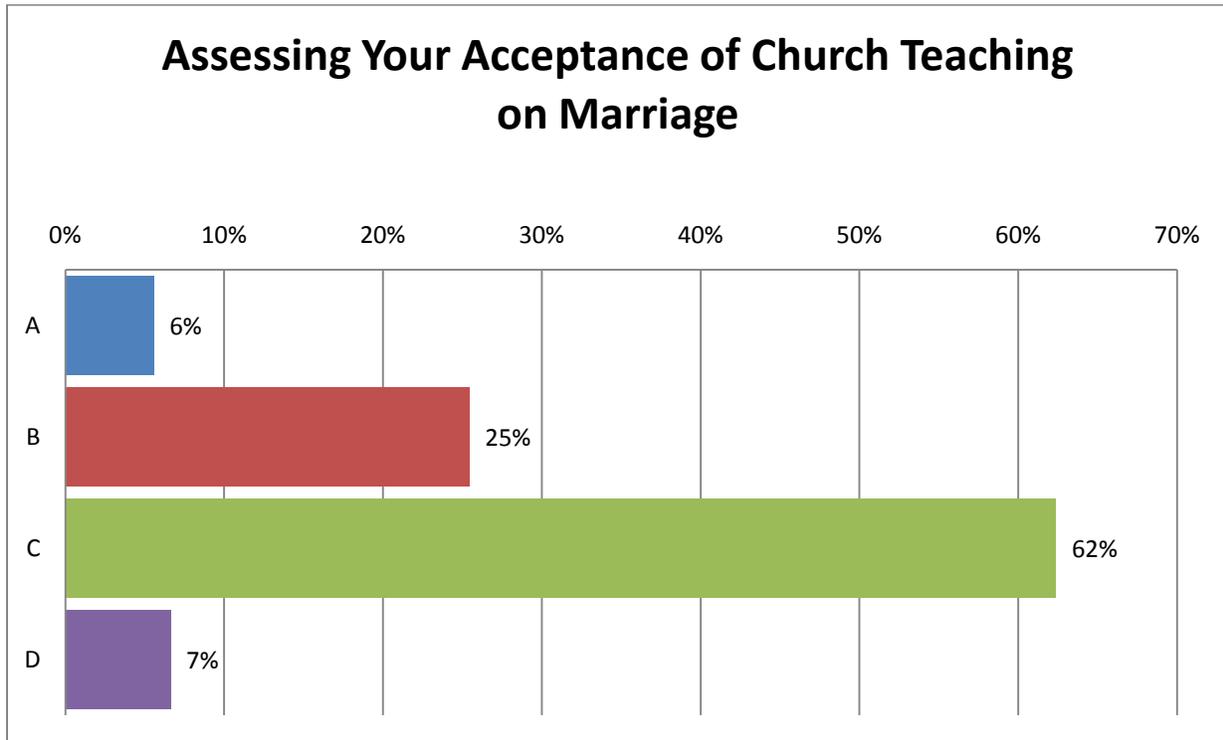
I have an Min Div from a recognized Catholic seminary

I keep up with all the teaching

I believe marriage is forever. However, Also know that some marriages suffer from emotional and physical abuse. Definitely believe such marriages should end. Each case has its own particulars.

The application of Cannon Law is inconsistent. The theological underpinnings are questionable.

**2. How would you evaluate or rate your own acceptance of and agreement with the Catholic Church's teachings on marriage and the family?**



**Legend:**

(A) I accept all of those teachings	16	6%
(B) I accept most of those teachings	73	25%
(C) I accept some of those teachings.	179	62%
(D) Unsure or unable to make that judgment	19	7%

**Comments:**

My goal is to be the best person I can be. I don't know how that "squares" with the teachings.

I have personally had to discern my participation with my church community due to being a divorced Catholic. the American bishops seem to be stuck on the letter of the law rather than the spirit of the law and have made the issues around marriage and family a political issue not a pastoral issue

clergy making arbitrary decisions about who can/cannot marry in the church can be prejudiced.

I think the Hierarchy needs a better understanding of marriage and the family.

I do not accept the teachings.

clergy making arbitrary decisions about who can/cannot marry in the church can be prejudiced.

I think the Hierarchy needs a better understanding of marriage and the family.

I do not accept the teachings.

I do not accept the teachings.

I am in favor of married female or male partners.

See previous comment.

I am hopeful that someday same sex unions will be recognized in some sense.....and be viewed as loving, accepted and valued as a marriage....

Annulment has become a sham process, so distorted by wealthy and influential families that it has lost all meaning.

I have a gay son who was brought up in our faith why is he not accepted and apart of the churches teachings of marriage and family the same way my other two sons are?

I accept the basic moral and theological principles that inform the Church's teachings, but I do not believe that these principles require the rejection of birth control or the rejection of same-sex marriage.

Perhaps if the RC was to return to the pre-political power status ..back to the time when it prophesied to the world by examples of love in action instead of snuggling up to dictators and being a dictatorial power itself, full of pomp and smugness..

The Catholic Church has no right to attempt to impose its teachings on civilian affairs. I believe the right to legally marry people should be removed from all churches. It is a civil affair.

I think I accept all the teachings and my husband and I practice them.

I do NOT accept most of the teachings is a more appropriate answer for me.

The teaching on birth control is misguided. I have never followed it.

I have no problems with committed, monogamous homosexual relationships.

Do not accept teachings on birth control, divorce/remarriage, homosexuals,

The older I get the less I seem to agree with.

Teaching on contraception disregard the best science of today and are still resultant from Augustinian fallacies about human sexuality and the nature of love.

The Church is about 50 years behind

I think the divorced and remarried should be treated with greater respect and understanding. I can't see Jesus saying he wouldn't come to some one because their first marriage failed, or their partner fail them.

Teachings on birth control, and same sex marriage as well as abortion should be consistent with global cultural trends.

Teachings on the following need to be revised:

Use of contraception

Access to sacraments after divorce with no annulment

I accept them in faith and likely out of fear that I may be wrong. The alternative if I should prove incorrect is too grave to risk but I do not believe that celibate men should be telling me what is acceptable in the privacy of my marriage.

Many of the Magisterium's teachings are not relevant to today's families.

My latest experience and studies have not always agreed with some Church Teachings.

Humanae Vitae needs to be officially revoked and contraception recognized as a morally responsible choice.

Specific answers are not reliable unless one knows exactly what is included in "all teachings" and which documents are included. This is not my area of expertise as a former grad school teacher, and my knowledge is limited,

As a church we have been bound by rules that no longer make sense.Sexually or socially. We live to advanced age,we do not need huge families to sustain us -- we don't live on a farm!

as I know them

I have found after 58 years of marriage Church teachings have been sound and helpful.

I do not accept the attitude about divorce

I am disturbed by the fact that loving couples and their intention to live within the teaching of Jesus' most fundamental messages of love and compassion are dismissed due to sexual orientation, contraction and divorce.

I believe in marriage for gay people. I believe the annulment process is dramatically flawed.

I don't agree with their teachings.

Married clergy would have a very different view of home and family life, especially when it comes to practicing birth control.

The Catholic Church needs to embrace family planning and safe sex. Families can be of various compositions - the Catholic Church needs to embrace Catholics who are divorced and/or gay.

I accept Gay marriage.

teaching on birth control and divorce and remarriage aND ECUMENISM NEED RENEWAL

Teachings are based on observations of nature that are scientifically incorrect and ignore or devalue human experience. Teachings are act-centered and do not emphasize human relationships such as love or virtues such as encouraging human flourishing.

Ban on contraception not based on any valid teaching of Jesus.

If a divorced Catholic is found NOT to be at fault, remarriage should be permitted.

On the very things the Church is hung up on, I have seen many counter examples of people in unmarried love, gay relationships, limiting family size who are holy and good people. I know God is in their lives, and wonder how the Church dare condemn them.

I reject the church's authority on such matters.

The church's power relies on a laity that will not challenge their interpretation of relationships...despite the fact that single, celibate men have very limited idea of what they are talking about when they talk about the marital relationship.

I do not accept indissolubility or the tradition "bonus prolix" interpretation of marriage. Nor do I accept the teaching that all sex must be open to procreation...among other things

I do not think it is correct to keep the sacraments from people who are divorced and remarried. I feel that it is acceptable for same sex couples to be married.

Birth control

Same sex marriage

divorce

annulments

marriage outside the parish (destination)

I also believe in the importance of the conscience

I believe contraception should be permitted

I believe that the Orthodox marriage regs about remarriage should be adopted

Wow, not even given the option of saying I accept none of the teachings.

I am not sure that what I hear is what the true teachings are or some one's opinion...I am encouraged by Pope Francis' approach, as I understand it to move from "score keeping" toward a more charitable approach to this dynamic.

I no longer believe contraception is evil. If I had it to do over, I would use contraceptive pills. I believe "natural family planning" was damaging to our marriage.

I do not fully understand why someone who was married by a justice of peace has to go thru the process of annulment by the Catholic church before they can be married in the church. Looks like just another way to get Money!!

While I accept the teachings for myself, how am I to stand in another person's shoes and make a judgment for her/him?

I am not sure that what I hear is what the true teachings are or some one's opinion...I am encouraged by Pope Francis' approach, as I understand it to move from "score keeping" toward a more charitable approach to this dynamic.

It is hard to come to an understanding of the Church's position. There is very little open and free dialogue. To accept a position when it has not been openly discussed....doesn't work for me

Depends on the particular teachings

Life's experiences have taught me the hierarchy knows nothing about real families, real marriages.

I do not agree with the teachings that divorced spouses are penalized when mistakes and abuse occur.

Some are antiquated and medieval.

Problem with treatment of the divorced and remarried and their limited access to Eucharist

Questions on Church's position on contraception

As a single woman, never married, I can accept personally the teachings; it is more difficult to speak and discuss with many married persons the challenges of some of the teachings

I am disappointed that the church I have belonged to for all of my life still has archaic beliefs that penalize good people.

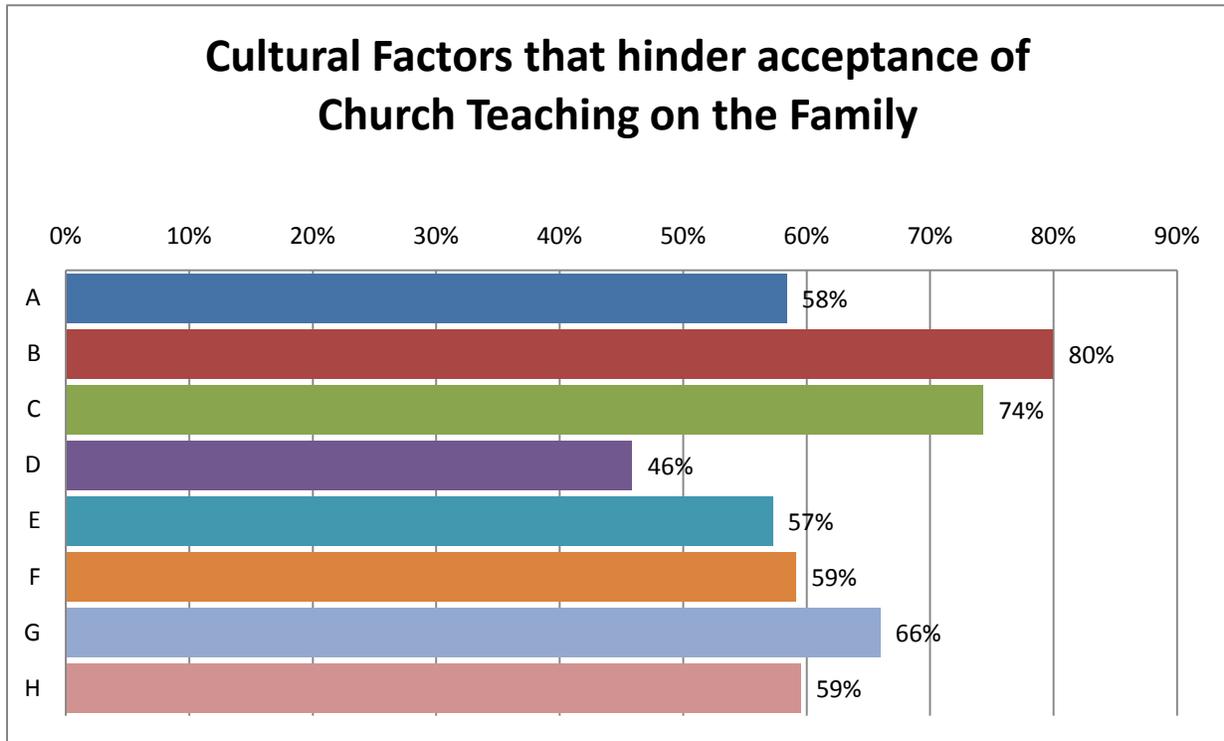
I would like to see priests marry

Some discourage people from being involved in the Church. For example, the laws against divorce and remarriage.

When I didn't follow the teachings it was a concise decision with an understanding of the consequences of violating the teachings.

I believe that the church's requirement for an annulment is just like all of the rules of the Pharisees that Jesus decried. Jesus opened His arms to ALL.

**3.What cultural factors hinder the full reception of the Magisterium's teaching on the family?  
(Select all that apply)**



**Legend:**

(A) Single Parent Family	154	58%
(B) Divorced/Remarried	211	80%
(C) Same gender relationship	196	74%
(D) Both parents work	121	46%
(E) Financial issues	151	57%
(F) Population Explosion	156	59%
(G) Global Poverty	174	66%
(H) Food Shortages / Global Hunger	157	59%

**Comments:**

**3. What cultural factors hinder the full reception of the Magisterium's teaching on the family?**

The Church's teaching on birth-control is incorrect. Most catholic families I know ignore it. It is unsustainable and creates an impossible burden on those who practice it.

I do not believe that the Magisterium is in touch with what is going on in the real world.

The American bishops live in a rarified world of first class travel, housekeepers cooks etc. They are management and view the world from that position.

Experienced too many Bishops & Cardinals who were pomp-ass asses over whelmed by their importance, power & position.

A church so out of touch with the day to day global realities of people's lives cannot expect to survive.

The magisterium's teaching is based on an idealized vision of the traditional nuclear family.

Many reasons for the definition of a family need to be reexamined and redefined to help those in other "categories" feel and be welcomed into the church...this does NOT happen in all parishes.....

This is a huge reform opportunity for the church

I don't understand the question. What hinders my full reception of the teaching is the faulty intellectual basis for the teaching.

Also science, and an undervaluation of the role of the sexual bond in a committed relationship outside reproduction.

I responded to this question as if the question related to my own non-acceptance of some of the church's teachings. If I were responding more globally, they all apply.

A-D do NOT hinder the reception of the teaching on the family.

Church teaching brushes aside scientific facts and plows ahead on its own.

All of the above could be resolved to some effective degree if the teachings of the Magisterium were relevant, uplifting, affirming and the resources of the greater church focused first on the social issues that oppress God's children and pain God.

This is one area which the clerics should cede to the laity.

Really bad catechesis! Also, the idea that all truth is relative and up for grabs. Benedict XVI was spot on!

The Magisterium teaching do not match the experience of most Catholics, are not accepted as authentic teachings.

We should be listened to, not preached at.

They are working off a model that no longer exists. It is not the Church's teaching when most people do not believe, or if most people can't relate to what is being said. In fact many times it is contrary to our experience. Experiences in my own family of 6 kids, 15 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren as well as observation and modern reading has given me a need for more thought.

See 2a, above.

Each item would likely modify any teachings' reception and compliance unless the referred to teachings are totally inclusive and were done with all those issues in mind.

Unsure of the meaning of this question

Welcome to the 21st Century

I am unaware of the Magisterium's teaching.

Birth control is important to contain population growth

We must not judge decisions of conscience made by those who are necessarily influenced by cultural and economic circumstances we know nothing about. Respect for individual conscience is paramount

We have GOT to move beyond the ancient ideas behind the teachings on 'the family'. Today's culture and world demand better, more applicable teachings - if the Catholic Church has any hope to remain relevant in the lives of American Catholics.

In the 21st Century with the over population of the world, the issues of poverty and hunger and food shortages, it no longer makes sense to continue the trend of having large families because contraception is banned by your religious affiliation.

I am a single parent trying to observe the Magisterium's teaching but so many of these teachings are out of date and impossible to accept.

I do not understand this question. What are you asking?

We stress the need for the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, yet ban those in irregular marriages from the Eucharist and leave their children deprived of the example of parents who receive communion regularly.

Bingo, you hit the jackpot with the last question. We are living here on earth and not in some "Catholic ecclesiastical bubble."

The magisterium seems to assume that there are no problems in the world.

Cultural factors play a small role in disregard of Magisterial teaching. Observant Catholics regard the teachings as irrelevant to their own family situation.

And probably the ones I haven't checked, too. Except "both parents work."

I am not sure what you mean by full reception. If you mean acceptance, then the major factor that hinders it is the unrealistic and incomprehensible nature of most of the teachings. The problem is not external as in the choices above but internal.

Some of the teaching is wrong.

There needs to be outreach to all of these people.

I do not accept blindly the Magisterium's teachings on anything. Believe that the church's teachings must always support social justice.

Science has changed and the church must change with it.

I am extremely concerned about the impact of global hunger, water supplies and education. By discouraging the use of birth control, we are simply not being good stewards of the earth and the resources God has blessed us with.

Believe that the dynamic of all these elements calls for a more "open" intellectual and faith based approach (based on the spirit of forgiveness and understanding) that what we've seen historically!

Birth control, divorce, and same gender marriage need to be accepted.

11% of world population is gay. No one chooses to be different and be rejected. Jesus said love trumps all - including man's law. The church - we need to stop rejecting what God has made.

I am extremely concerned about the impact of global hunger, water supplies and education. By discouraging the use of birth control, we are simply not being good stewards of the earth and the resources God has blessed us with.

Believe that the dynamic of all these elements calls for a more "open" intellectual and faith based approach (based on the spirit of forgiveness and understanding) that what we've seen historically!

Judge not lest ye be judged, I guess.

And finally, it's difficult to keep intimacy alive in marriages of some duration. "Natural" family planning methods kill whatever a couple can manage and seldom work.

The hierarchy does not live in the real world, doesn't have to deal with all of these issues on a daily basis.

I believe Jesus taught us to be loving and accepting. I personally feel like we should love and accept same sex relationships.

There are so many different factors that impact the family. The Church needs to be aware of, and responsive to, these needs.

None of the above.

Need more discussion on divorce/remarriage as well on homosexual relationships.

Parents must make decisions which impact family size.

The church's insistence on no birth control angers me.

See above. Social justice is far more important to Catholicism than conservative political views and the quest for hierarchical power.

## 2. Marriage according to the Natural Law

### The Vatican asked:

a) What place does the idea of the natural law have in the cultural areas of society: in institutions, education, academic circles and among the people at large? What anthropological ideas underlie the discussion on the natural basis of the family?

b) Is the idea of the natural law in the union between a man and a woman commonly accepted as such by the baptized in general?

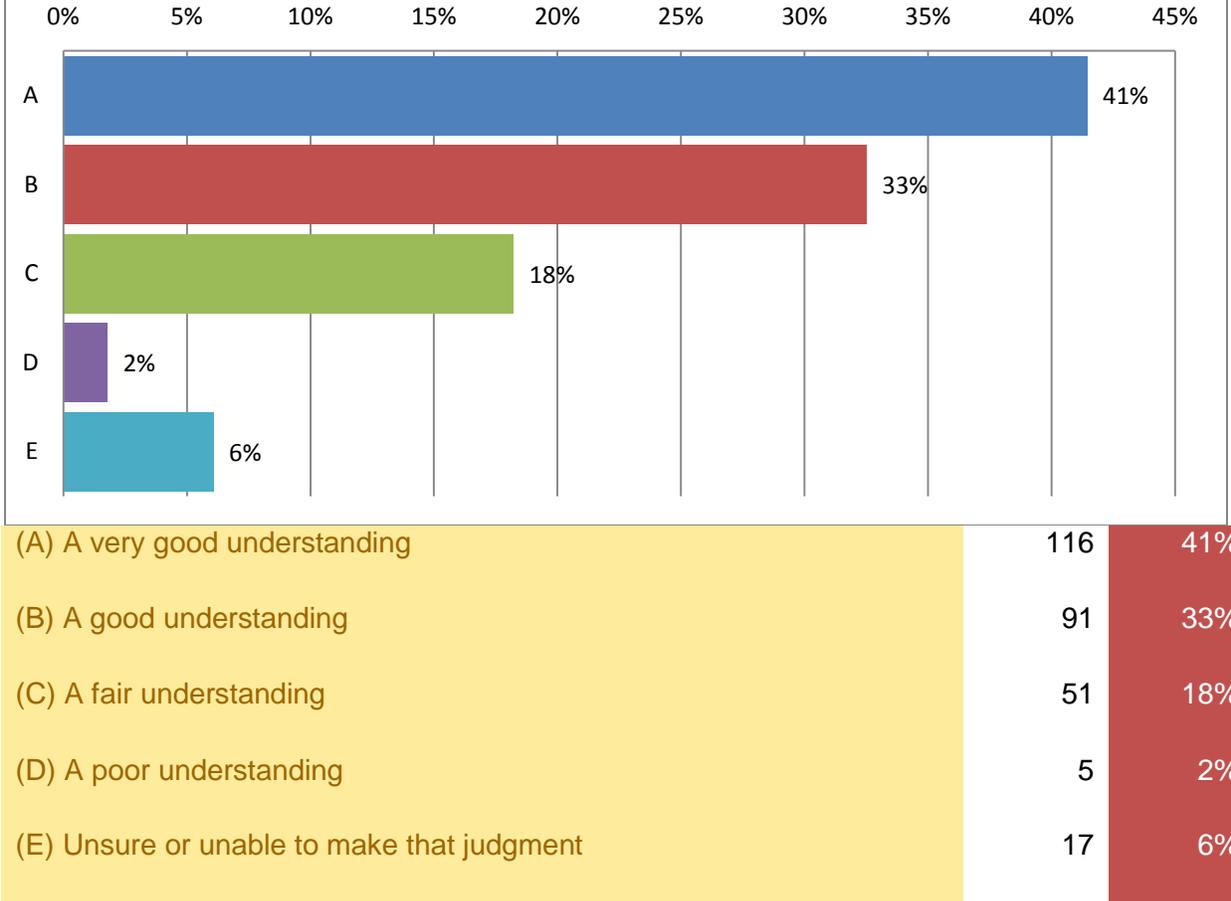
c) How is the theory and practice of natural law in the union between man and woman challenged in light of the formation of a family? How is it proposed and developed in civil and Church institutions?

d) In cases where non-practicing Catholics or declared non-believers request the celebration of marriage, describe how this pastoral challenge is dealt with?

### We Asked:

**4. How would you assess or rate your own understanding of natural law as a basis for making moral decisions related to marriage and the family?**

## Assessing Your Understanding of Natural Law as a basis for Moral Decisions related to Family



### Comments:

#### 4. How would you assess or rate your own understanding of natural law as a basis for making moral decisions related to marriage and the family?

The natural law is constantly unfolding and we children of God are constantly learning and understanding this law. We cannot assume that we understand the natural law completely.

I studied Scholastic Theology and moral theology in the seminary and for many years later, plus graduate study of Religion.

I think the number of people who have an understanding of this is very, very small. And I am not sure that our understanding of natural law can stand unexamined in the 21st century.

I understand the application of natural law, but it is a simplistic and incomplete understanding of human relationships.

Doctoral work in philosophy that focused on the writings of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas.

seven years' higher education including philosophy

Natural law says protect each other and the planet ...

"Natural law" is not necessarily what the Catholic Church espouses.

I wrote a thesis concerning natural law.

Educated Americans adults reject the intellectual premise that Natural Law exists

Not sure what you mean by natural law.

I think that much of the reference to natural law borders on being silly.

I think I have an understanding of what the church teaches, but I don't necessarily agree with it. I have friends and family who are gay. That is natural. That is who they are. They are Catholic and love the church, but were pushed out.

Since homosexuality is not unnatural, It has no bearing on moral decision. Commitment is all that is important. I do have a bit of a problem with transgenderism, however. It does border on unnatural. Natural Law is neither natural or law. Our understanding of our humanness and our relationship to the Godhead changes and grows over time.

I am a forester and naturalist

But I disagree

Counseling families and individuals for many years, I do consider myself as expert as anyone.

I would need the definition of "Natural Law" that you are working from.

I understand it but does not impact my decisions toward marriage and family.

Natural law is not necessarily understood the same way by individuals.

Grace builds on nature I believe.

Using "natural law" to exclude and make people 'wrong' or sinful is not in keeping with Jesus teaching. This type of social control has undermined the Roman Catholic Church throughout history.

The natural law needs to be the basis of all other human laws.

I believe that the philosophy of natural law that prevents the use of artificial birth control by married couples is unrealistic and inhumane.

I understand, the hierarchy does not.

natural law is discovered in one's conscience.

This is a complex concept and there is little agreement on exactly what it means.

My decisions are based on my understanding of the moral law rather than natural law.

"Natural Law" went out with high button shoes and hoop skirts. The entire argument for "natural law" holds water like a sieve.

nATURAL LAW IS TO R.IGID...a more relational approach is needed

Again - Jesuit education from 6th grade through college

I understand what it means, but I do not think what the Church teaches is "natural law" is in any way natural.

Natural law is another myth that should be smashed.

Natural law is the expression of divine providence - theological concept largely elucidated by Thomas Aquinas - ultimately more concerned with the definition and delineation of evil than the power of love

The problem with natural law is that it is not universal nope clearly understood and it surely is not as lock-tight as in traditional Catholic teaching.

Natural law is not a well-defined concept.

Moral decisions have to be conscience based and perfective of the individual and society.

I do not agree with basing moral decisions on natural law.

Again, I understand, simply don't agree.

But the Magisterium has an outdated, biased, and inaccurate knowledge of natural law.

Do not understand what the natural law is....

Natural law is an entirely subjective construct of homophobic, patriarchal, and racially supremacist hierarchies.

Again, I think we need to come to mutual agreement on what constitutes/defines natural law.

I don't think the church hierarchy has any business making decisions for a couple regarding contraceptions and/or the number of children.

It's based on a teleological view of Nature. Aquinas was too willing to believe that God's will for a woman manifested in her ovaries and for a man is his brain. Inadequate for a post-patriarchal theology/biology.

Again, force-fed.

We have a conscience and mind to think and reason about our actions. Animals act on instinct -witness the deer explosion in our backyard. Population control is a human endeavor.

A better than average education on natural law--and not always too clear on how various church officials really understand this.

Laity have virtually no understanding or education in natural law.

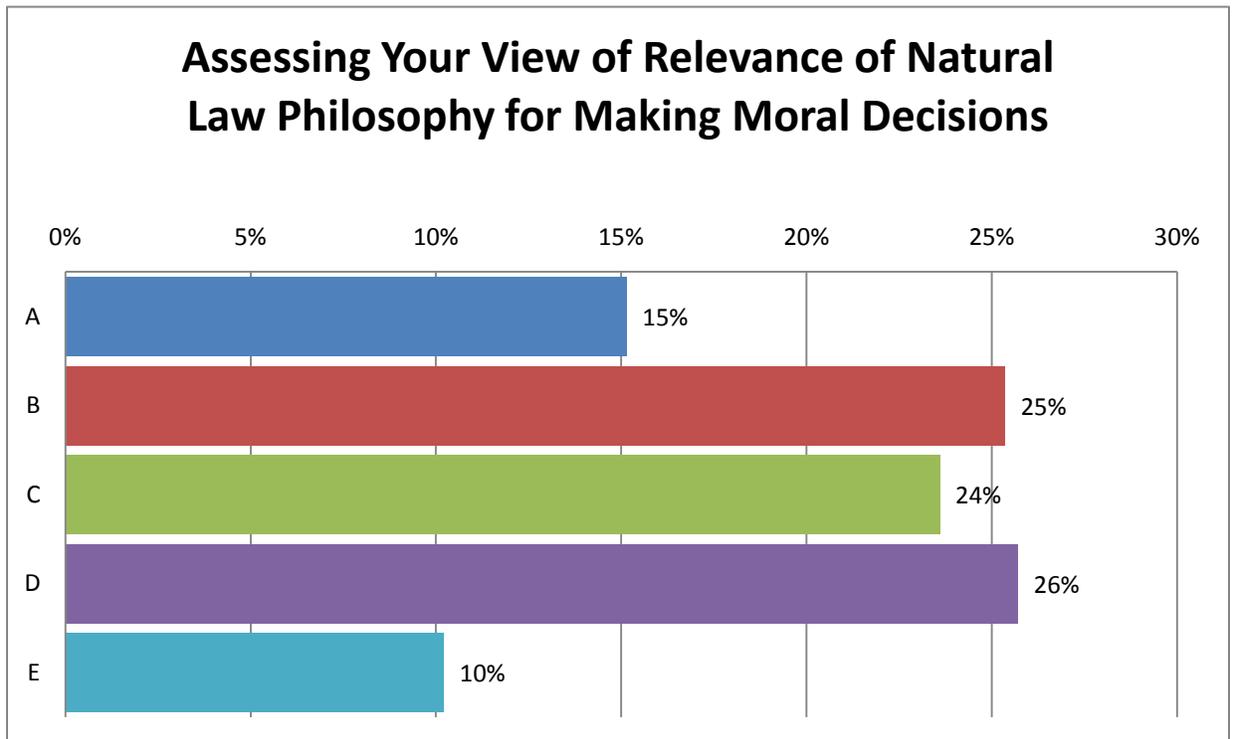
Natural birth control does not always work. After six children by age 40, I started using Contraceptives. Asked the priest in Confession and he said to follow my conscience.

I don't always agree with it. Of course it is the basis of moral decisions, but it is not the only factor.

The word Law could be replaced by the word Love, which is Christ.

He is the one I am obliged to follow through His grace and the Holy Spirit.

**5. What is your opinion or view on the relevance and usefulness of natural law philosophy as a basis for making moral decisions and setting moral standards related to marriage and the family?**



(A) Quite relevant and useful	43	15%
(B) Somewhat relevant and useful	72	25%
(C) Marginally relevant and useful	67	24%
(D) Irrelevant and/or misleading	73	26%
(E) Unsure or unable to make that judgment	29	10%

**Comments:**

5. What is your opinion or view on the relevance and usefulness of natural law philosophy as a basis for making moral decisions and setting moral standards related to marriage and the family?

If we understood God's natural law completely we could then base moral decisions upon it. Since we do not, then basing moral decisions on this law is unjustified.

Natural Law is an interesting theory and very useful as such, when examined in a disciplined way. However, it is neither a complete theoretical approach to modern ethical questions nor certainly not the only theory for moral questions.

A standard is something to strive for by individuals. It is not a means to punish those who cannot achieve that standard for one of many reasons that are valid for that individual.

Depends on how natural law is defined.

Because our understanding of natural law is utterly outdated and out of synch with our current understanding of the universe in which we live.

Depends on how natural law is defined.

For myself and not to impose on others.

I believe that an understanding of human nature is quite relevant and useful but I do not believe that the Church's teaching about sexual matters follows logically from a good understanding of human nature.

If I understand it correctly, natural law philosophy implies that morality changes according to time, generation and geography. We must use the morality standards given to us by God according to where we are placed in His Plan.

As developed by Aristotle and his successors, including Aquinas, it is a useful tool. At times it contradicts the gospels, and does not take into account the development of human knowledge after 1500.

Natural Law is a philosophical, not a theological premise. I reject that premise as, inter alia, it has no foundation in Scripture.

IF it is not simply accepted as a static reality. We are obliged to continue to grow in our understanding of natural law as we are invited to greater understanding of ourselves and of GOD

Natural law is subjective based on the beliefs of the one attempting to assign them...

Natural law can evolve.

Recent scientific discoveries show clearly that what was previously thought to be never found in nature is in fact quite common. e.g. homosexual behavior among the lower animals.

Natural Law is subject to interpretation and certainly subject to change as we encounter new science and technology in the 21st Century.

I answered B, as I have never had courses in natural law philosophy and had never heard a talk, seminar, sermon on it.

We cannot change God's word to fix our wants

Simply - 'natural law' has been a tool of social control for the Catholic Church, and has been misused throughout Church history to abuse and marginalize those people the Church chose to objectify.

We have a tendency to see what we're looking for in nature, when using natural law interpretations. It only goes so far - then our intelligence and compassion kick in.

I would assume that the primacy of conscience rules.

Catholic teaching has emphasized Church teaching and God's law rather than natural law and that is what most Catholics are familiar with.

Outdated, how can one beat this dead horse. I will not even bother.

Natural law as used in Catholic Magisterial teaching is based on false factual foundation and ignores human experience and the role of virtue in guiding human behavior.

Jesus came not to save the just (who apparently are the ones who buy into all these natural law teachings), but sinners to repentance. Though I don't know that I'd call the persons who don't follow Church precepts "sinners."

By natural law philosophy, I am assuming you are referring to theories of evolution, etc., which are based upon scientific knowledge.

What God has created and loves is what I consider natural. So this should not be the argument against same sex relationships.

Believe adherence to natural requires a certain degree of courage...not all have this courage, this calls for the application of charity and forgiveness...as we all journey toward perfection.

Believe adherence to natural requires a certain degree of courage...not all have this courage, this calls for the application of charity and forgiveness...as we all journey toward perfection.

Natural law is an entirely subjective construct of homophobic, patriarchal, and racially supremacist hierarchies.

Who defines "natural"? The hierarchy doesn't know what it's talking about.

More discussion on applicability of the scholastic foundation of natural law positions. Really mostly obsolete positions.

"Natural law philosophy" is an ambiguous term. When you create a survey hoping to acquire a representative sample, it is unwise to use such language as it alienates respondents. It would be beneficial if you were more clear in your question.

With today's breakthroughs in science so many points of natural law are either obsolete or are no longer in line with church thinking.

### **3. The Pastoral Care of the Family in Evangelization**

#### **The Vatican asked:**

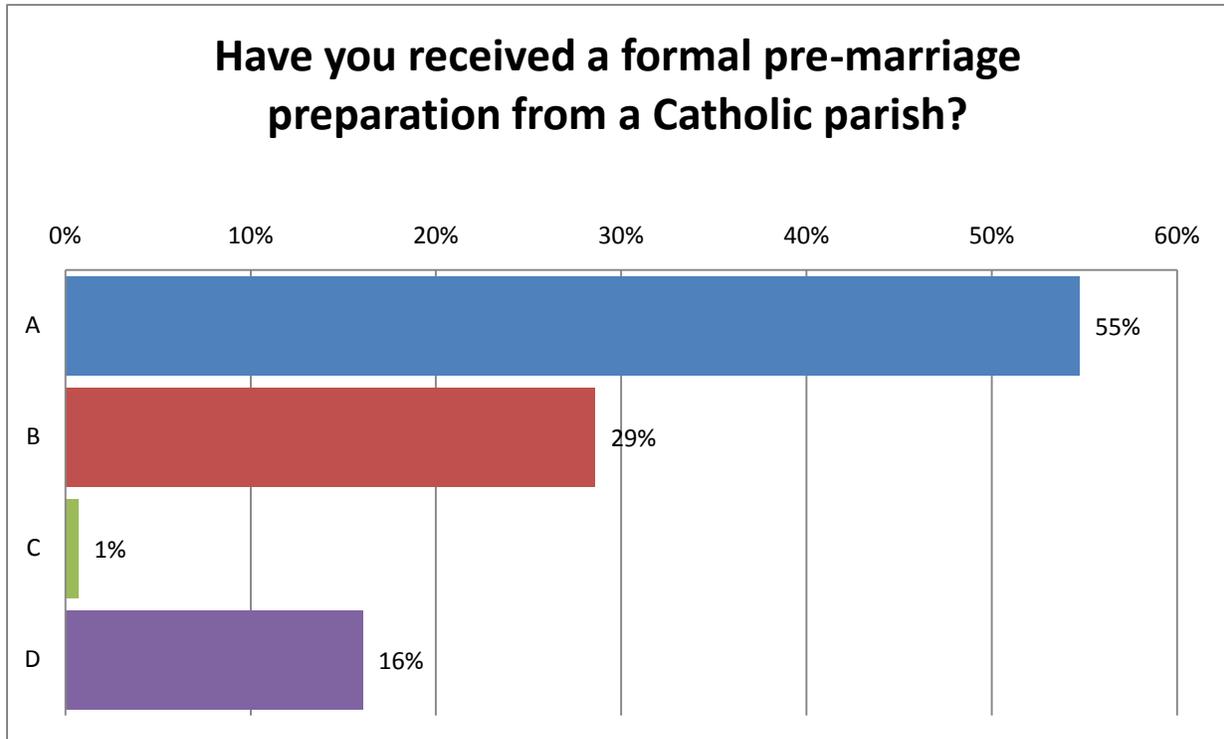
a) What experiences have emerged in recent decades regarding marriage preparation? What efforts are there to stimulate the task of evangelization of the couple and of the family? How can an awareness of the family as the "domestic Church" be promoted?

b) How successful have you been in proposing a manner of praying within the family which can withstand life's complexities and today's culture?

- c) In the current generational crisis, how have Christian families been able to fulfill their vocation of transmitting the faith?
- d) In what way have the local Churches and movements on family spirituality been able to create ways of acting which are exemplary?
- e) What specific contribution can couples and families make to spreading a credible and holistic idea of the couple and the Christian family today?
- f) What pastoral care has the Church provided in supporting couples in formation and couples in crisis situations?

**We Asked:**

**6. Have you received a formal pre-marriage preparation (e.g. workshop, lectures, discussions) from a Catholic parish?**

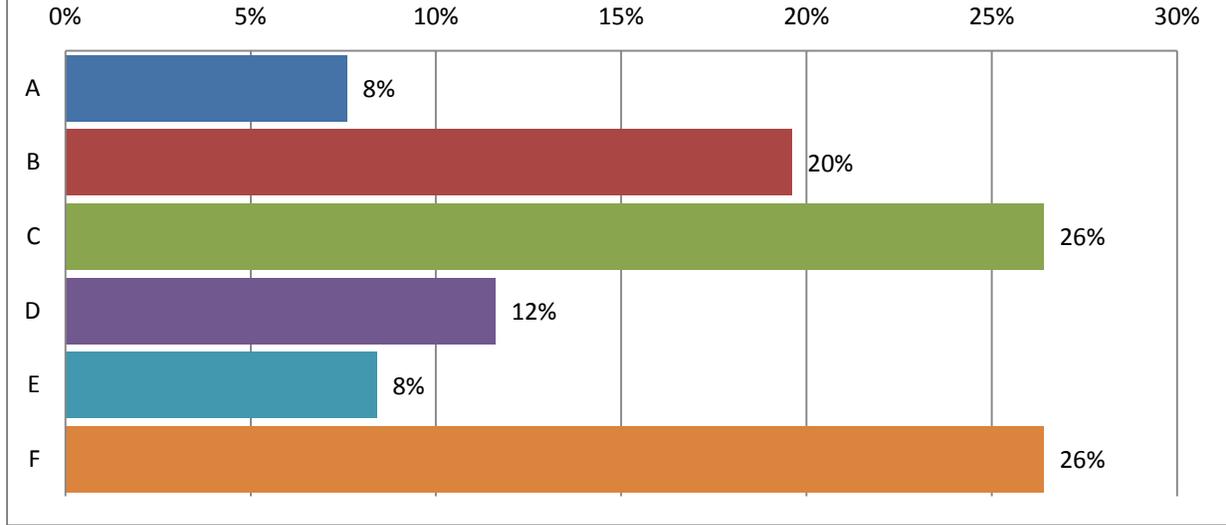


**Legend:**

(A) Yes	157	55%
(B) No	82	29%
(C) Unsure or unable to make that judgment.	2	1%
(D) Not applicable - Never married	46	16%

**7. If you did receive pre-marriage preparation from a Catholic parish, how would you evaluate or rate the relevance and usefulness of this preparation for marriage?**

## How would you evaluate the relevance/usefulness of marriage preparation?



**Legend:**

(A) Quite relevant and useful	19	8%
(B) Somewhat relevant and useful	49	20%
(C) Marginally relevant and useful	66	26%
(D) Irrelevant and/or misleading	29	12%
(E) Unsure or unable to make that judgment	21	8%
(F) Not applicable - Never married	66	26%

**Comments:**

7. If you did receive pre-marriage preparation from a Catholic parish, how would you evaluate or rate the relevance and usefulness of this preparation for marriage?

Again, decisions seem to be made by whoever is presently in charge, as opposed to how dedicated the couple is to each other.

Based on my own experience many decades ago. On the other hand, "Prepare and Enrich" as utilized in Christ the King parish is very relevant and useful.

Attended both Engaged Encounter & Pre-Cana.

Took the PMI inventory about one year after marriage on our own.

this occurred in 1973 and so at that time I believe our parish priest had a great understanding of the needs of married people and the people in his parish. I do not think that is true today.

Again, decisions seem to be made by whoever is presently in charge, as opposed to how dedicated the couple is to each other.

Based on my own experience many decades ago. On the other hand, "Prepare and Enrich" as utilized in Christ the King parish is very relevant and useful.

I received it in the marriage that ended in divorce which lasted nine months and produced no children. I did not receive it for my marriage, which I feel is fully blessed by God and has produced three wonderful sons.

It wasn't done 56 years ago

I have been married 52 years and at that time there was very little prep. Also, family members that have had preparation have since disregarded it.

Again this is important but should NOT be used to prevent a couple from being married in the church if they desire.

Although I never took the classes I am very familiar with them. their efficacy depends on how they are taught and what emphasis is placed on certain issues.

The promotion of natural birth control is unrealistic in this day and age when it takes two incomes to survive and an unwanted pregnancy at the wrong time can create great difficulties (mentally, emotionally and financially) in the marriage.

Mine was more than 50 years ago.

The couples class led by married couples was useful. The counseling from a young priest was completely useless. His ideas were surprising and unrealistic.

A good hearted celibate priest friend who was embarrassed to frankly speak about the intimacy required for a marriage to be rich in God's presence attempted to prepare us.

I was married in 1945 before pre-marriage prep classes were done. It was during WW11

I have been married 50 years but at the time of the preparation there was no discussion of the issues that make a marriage hard - children, money.  
It was a different time 50 years ago.

While the pre-Cana meetings with secular counselors covered a broad range of topics, the priest's big question seemed to be "now you haven't vowed yourselves to perpetual chastity, have you?"

I was married in UK in 1965 and pre-marriage courses were unheard of there,

I was married in a Protestant church due to my spouse's discomfort with the pre-marriage requirements of the Catholic Church.

We had a very untraditional pre-cana class, but it was wonderful. Father Trainor in Wilmington, DE, gave us the class and I will never forget it.

I was married in 1955 and pre marriage information was limited.

The comment was made to never incur any debt. You should not borrow to purchase a car or a house.

Little relevance to the problems of today

My wife and I were married by a Unity minister which is a spiritual community that recognizes and respects the beliefs and values of all inclusive faiths who avoid seeking to marginalize other faiths.

58 years ago a brief interview with the Parish Priest who knew us very well was all we had.

Luckily, we benefitted from a Vatican II era priest who respected our capacity to deepen Jesus teaching in our day to day lives.

The marriage prep we received from lay couples was extremely useful. The marriage prep conversation we had with our parish priest was shockingly unrealistic and naïve (on his part).

We did not receive any counseling

My first wife and I went through pre-marriage prep and were married in the church. All well and good until during our marriage (after two children) we truly needed spiritual guidance and there were no programs within the church to help us then.

Pre-marriage preparation is best conducted by a married couple.

All inclusive

Of very minor, common-sense use.

It posed questions that we might not have considered and gave us the opportunity to discuss those ideas.

I have been involved with establishing and presenting such programs since 1959 in several parishes.

That marriage ended in divorce.

Many years ago the premarriage instruction was brief and centered on what sexual acts were permitted and not permitted.

It was 55 years ago, but I still remember poorly prepared.

It was so long ago. My husband of 33 years, who even then was questioning the Church and has himself left, was very unhappy with it.

I was young - 32 years ago to be exact, and I was an unquestioning Catholic, dedicated to the LAW of this empire and not yet cognizant of what Jesus actually taught. I have spent years growing away from the law and becoming a true Follower of the Way.

I didn't receive but have been part of teams that gave them for decades and in general the only one that were productive were those run by normal, not super-Catholic conservative, lay couples

This was many years ago and in hindsight it did not reflect reality or God's love.

Marriage preparation is helpful to point out to engaged couples areas they need to discuss prior to marriage. Such preparation was neither offered nor required when we were married.

This happened fifty years ago

A college chaplain who was very liberal at the time. I have thought of the discussions we had at the time and been very glad for his views. They helped me make wise decisions as the years went by.

I have been married for 37 years, prior to such preparations being available. I was involved in marriage preparation while in 11 years of active ministry in the priesthood.

Back in 1970, the preparation was different. I know parishes do a better job now.

It was stressful that our priest at the time was so concerned that I chose a song that my dad had sung to me as a little girl - because it was not religiously based. Why was that an issue?

Wow!....received this training nearly 50 years ago in the form of a College religion class!

It was 53 years ago and do not remember it being very relevant..

Totally based on church law with zero value for practical relationship development. The church's teaching on birth control is extremely detrimental to relationship development, and contradicts natural human psychology and physiology.

A sad experience endured by younger members of my family whose child was denied baptism in the grandparents' parish when the military couple was going overseas. The grandfather switched parish and the child was baptized in the new parish.

It was stressful that our priest at the time was so concerned that I chose a song that my dad had sung to me as a little girl - because it was not religiously based. Why was that an issue?

Wow!....received this training nearly 50 years ago in the form of a College religion class!

It was 30 years ago.

I was older when we got married. Many of life's issues I had experienced. So much of the pre-marriage preparation, as I recall, was more in the area of common sense.

I am in a second marriage after having been divorced for 15 years. At the age of 60 I felt that a premarital preparation class was unnecessary.

I thought it was a nice weekend to meet other couples and discuss topics that could come up during marriage and how to troubleshoot certain issues. There were some topics that could have been discussed more thoroughly.

Need more work by married couples on this and less input from celibates

Tried to get married at Chris the King and Fr. Hogan did not allow Fr. Dumais to facilitate the classes .and Fr. Hogan was not able due to other demands. Oct. 1991.

In our case, Engaged Encounter

It's been 17 years but do not remember it being significant either for or against us.

This instruction was over 30 years ago, so I am not quite sure if anything new has been added to the preparations.

been married 50 years and had no preparation

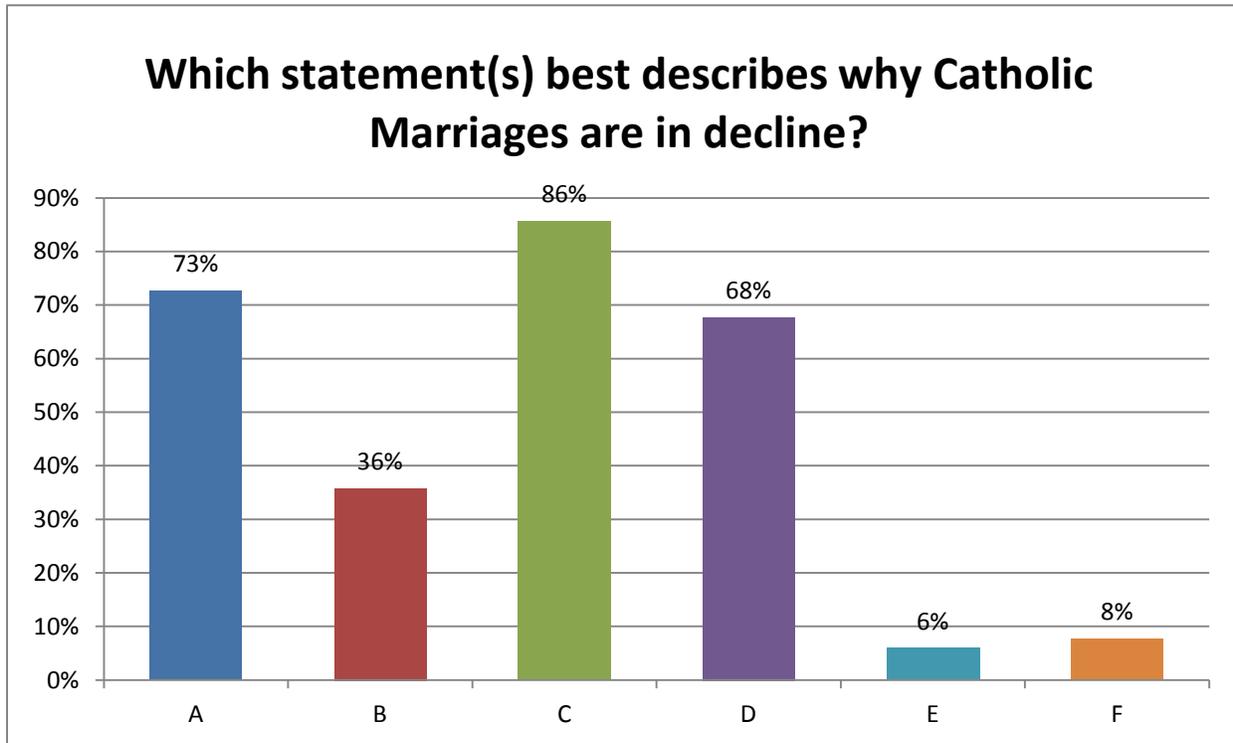
Not married in the church.

My wife is a convert and I went through RCIA with her (I am a cradle Catholic). I have an annulment from my first marriage and my wife first marriage was annulled via the Pauline Privilege. Our marriage was convalidated at Easter Vigil

Marriage preparation did not take place when I was engaged to be married in the late 1950's in my parish at that time.

You must be kidding, a supposedly chaste priest is offering to teach a 23 and 21 year old couple about marriage.

8. In many parts of the country and in many parishes, the number of Catholic or Sacramental marriages is in a decline (as a percentage of all marriages). Which of the statement(s) below best describes why this is happening? (Select all that apply)



**Legend:**

(A) Unable to meet Church requirements and rules for marriage	207	73%
(B) Family preferences or disagreements	102	36%
(C) Couple's disagreement with Catholic teachings on marriage and family	244	86%
(D) One or both spouses divorced and annulment not timely or practical	193	68%
(E) Inability to schedule a Church wedding at a convenient time	17	6%
(F) Inability to locate a priest to conduct the marriage ceremony	22	8%

**Comments:**

8. In many parts of the country and in many parishes, the number of Catholic or Sacramental marriages is in a decline (as a percentage of all marriages). Which of the statement(s) below best describes why this is happening?

The Church's teaching is mostly correct but is inconsistent.

Inability to find a priest that can manage the couple and their personal needs

For all of the reasons mentioned above.

Again, I personally firmly believe that my prayer life and conscience, and Jesus have sanctified my marriage, which is unsanctified by the Church, permit me to receive the sacraments of my Lord and God.

I have preformed a commitment celebration because of (D)

For my children it seemed hypocritical to have a Church wedding knowing that they deeply disagreed with the Church's teaching about marriage and sex.

I never got an annulment of my first marriage. I always felt that I would be hurting my son, who was born of that marriage out of love. I understand more about annulment now, and actually am working on trying to find out more about it.

General non practice, lack of respect for rigidity of teaching, sexual abuse crisis. I see many long time practicing, even involved, Catholics leaving.

2 years of Confirmation classes that are required for those raised in the Church and (I believe) 1.5 years of RCIA classes for non-Catholics is unrealistic.

One or both of the couple are not practicing Catholics.

The couple regards the diocesan approach to marriage preparation as totally disconnected from marriage.

Personally, I find it hard to understand how an older, unmarried man can provide any guidance about marriage at all. It's unrealistic. Even if they are loving and devoted people, they don't get marriage.

See 7a above. Since such a class is required, and the thought of enduring it makes my stomach spasm, I doubt I will ever be married in a church.

Many couples just don't see it as a priority.

Apathy about whether a Catholic wedding vice civil, or one in another church is desirable or relevant.

Too many of our couples are seeking a "destination wedding" and don't understand the importance of a Sacramental marriage

Also, having a pastor who does not allow any deviation from strict Catholic teachings.

Unfriendly and judgmental treatment of engaged couples is widespread.

The annulment process favors those with financial abilities, those who have pull or influence in the church, not those who are poor or whose ex-spouses live in other states, are hostile, or those simple folk who want to do the right thing.

I really have no idea; my answer is just a guess.

We chose not to be married in the church because of the Church's stance on birth control.

I'm divorced and dating a lovely women. We would like to be married in the near future but are reluctant to go through the annulment red-tape required by the church.

I assume any I checked could be factors, but that is based not on facts but general knowledge from what I have heard and read.

Conversion to Catholicism, while one is a practicing Christian impedes Catholic marriages.

Most couples are from different religious backgrounds. The Catholic church will not marry a couple if both are not catholic

Broke my heart not to hear one reference to a living God at the last family wedding.

I teach a Baptismal preparation for Parents and many are not married or not married in the Church. Some are from Mexico where they have a Civil Marriage but never go to the Church for sacramental blessing.

It has been interesting to witness the sharp drop off of Catholic Church weddings in my community, which historically has been a majority Catholic community.

Financial reasons. Some couples say that Church wedding is expensive.

such as promising to be active in parish activities

Again, since I am divorced and it would have required an annulment, I am not married in the church.

Many Catholics are offended that the Church does not welcome gays or forgive the divorced.

I have rarely found that marriage to a non-Catholic who is active in his own faith is a problem. The problem is more often the lack of faith on the part of the Catholic.

I am gay and finally got married. I have been with my partner for over 30 years. We are not sex driven perverts. We contribute to our entire community even the "Catholic community" which supposedly shuns us.

Many people do not regard Church involvement as determinative of unity of marriage.

It isn't just church marriages. We are losing that generation.

Most couples whom I have talked with who reject a church marriage do so because it is either irrelevant to them or represents beliefs they cannot hold

Even some couples who had been divorced and were going through the annulment process found that the length of the process was extreme---especially when someone is called into the military. Saw this on numerous occasions and civil ceremonies ensued!

I don't think setting a date or finding a priest is at issue yet, but with the decline of priests it may be in the future.

Relevance of the Church is an important factor

The church needs to reevaluate their teachings on marriage.

The Church has lost its control on marriages, and many "good" Catholics see no problem in attending civil union or one performed in another denomination

Again, Why the need for a non catholic marriage annulment? I was taught that the Church does not recognize marriage that was performed in another manner except the Catholic marriage. Again a teaching from 70 years ago.

Young couples think that the church is out of touch with the reality of their lives.

The patriarchial and heteronormative tenets of Church doctrine are not only alienating to those to whom they directly apply; they are also alienating to anyone who loves someone who falls into a disenfranchised group... which is a lot of people.

The young people I know, under age 30, disagree with Catholic Church teaching on homosexuals, contraception, married and women priests, divorce and remarriage -- and they have walked away.

This is just an impression. Most of the marriages I have attended in recent years in fact were "Church" marriages.

I would never have sought an annulment of my first marriage. after having 6 children. Our creator knows what is in my heart and I don't feel the need for a religious organization to approve or disapprove.

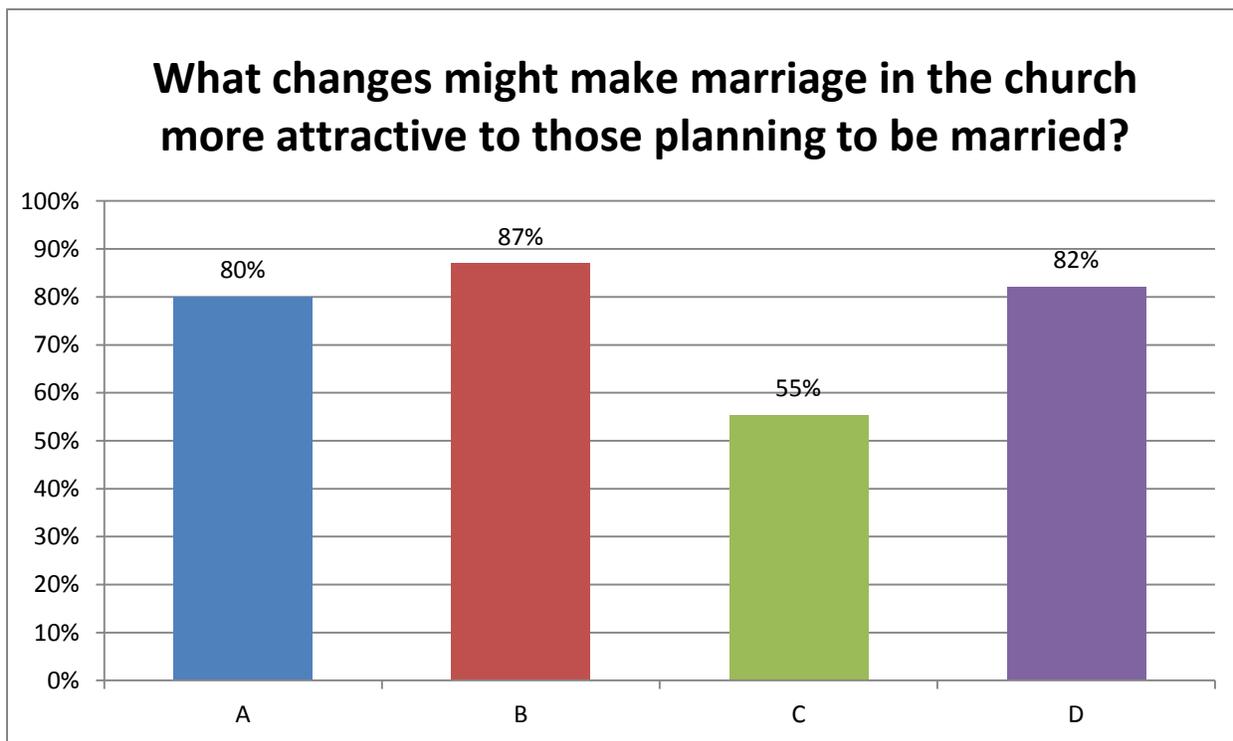
I think it is very common for either the bride or groom, or both, to not fully agree with the Catholic teachings on marriage and that they are therefore reluctant to get married in the Catholic Church.

Church officials are out of touch with the challenges of secular world. Do not communicate the genuine spiritual values to be derived from the sacrament of marriage.

Ambivalence and mixed messages on the part of the priests and bishops that are inconsistent or incoherent with the teaching of the Magisterium.

The legal relation should be left to secular authority. Marriage is a sacrament left to the church.

**9. What changes might make a marriage in the Catholic Church more attractive to those planning to be married?** (Select all that apply)



**Legend:**

(A) Develop and teach a meaningful and modern spirituality of marriage	227	80%
(B) Modify doctrine that bans the use of artificial birth control and contraception	247	87%
(C) Increase local pastoral discretion in regard to marriage	157	55%
(D) Simplify and allow greater flexibility in Church rules on marriage	233	82%

## Comments:

### 9. What changes might make a marriage in the Catholic Church more attractive to those planning to be married?

Please do some of what is stated above.

My daughter was denied a wedding in the catholic church despite her dedication to her fiancee. Eleven years later they will not attend Catholic ceremonies.

My daughter was denied a wedding in the catholic church despite her dedication to her fiancee. Eleven years later they will not attend Catholic ceremonies.

In the current system, pastors have absolute authority over who is able to be married in the church and that authority is rule-based

I don't know what simplification and flexibility would entail in order for me to check.

This seems obvious

Be joyful and accepting not judge mental!

The last thing needed is 'local pastoral discretion' .. one of the big scandals is that one priest will allow something while some old bastard won't just out of sheer perverseness (such as not allowing the mother to accompany the bride to the altar)

The Church position on birth control is a horrible joke.

I think there needs to be more teaching on respect for the other sex in a partnership. How to handle problems and how to stay together in today's age. NFP can be taught but there needs to be teaching on responsible use of non-abortifacient birth control.

Church should get out of the marriage business. Let it be a civil act. Couple could have their vows sanctified in a church, but after the fact.

See above.

Consider Orthodox practices regarding marriage.

Allow same-sex marriage.

A Sacrament is a Sign which effects what it signifies. Church rules have relation neither to the reality of the Sacrament nor to the lives of the couple (gay or straight) who participate.

We were married outside the church as were a number of friends. It was not an option at the time.

Emphasis on joy and welcoming rather than on rules and bans is badly needed

Contraception used by faithful couples to responsibly time and plan for children IS moral and such practice reflects morality. Banning such use will never be accepted by a majority of practicing Catholics.

Please listen.

Less rules and more sensitivity to the realistic situations and realizing as Jesus did so often, when they break rules do it because of compassion.

YES - modify doctrine and allow greater flexibility.

And allow a married priesthood, so that priests can role model what a loving relationship can look like within the church.

Practically the birth control issue, mostly ignored, is still a symbol of an entire teaching that people see as outmoded and unrealistic. The spirituality of marriage as traditionally taught is also foreign to most.

Any teaching has to be sensible and matter to people. At this time the church looks too rigid and unwelcoming.

Base all in the spirit of charity and forgiveness...provide all the opportunity to "grow" i faith, rather than stifle it.

The fellows who make the rules are out of touch.

Base all in the spirit of charity and forgiveness...provide all the opportunity to "grow" i faith, rather than stifle it.

Love is love. I don't see why we're having such a problem with this.

However, before people will want to get married in the church they have to come back to the church. More changes than those noted above will be needed to get that to happen.

It seems to me that today's young couple will use artificial birth control, period. Letter (B) seems outdated.

I am happy to see these suggestions.

I know for a fact that MOST couples will use artificial birth control. The Church MUST modify its teaching on this. To impose the penalty of grave sin on those who do is often enough to turn young couples away from even considering a church marriage.

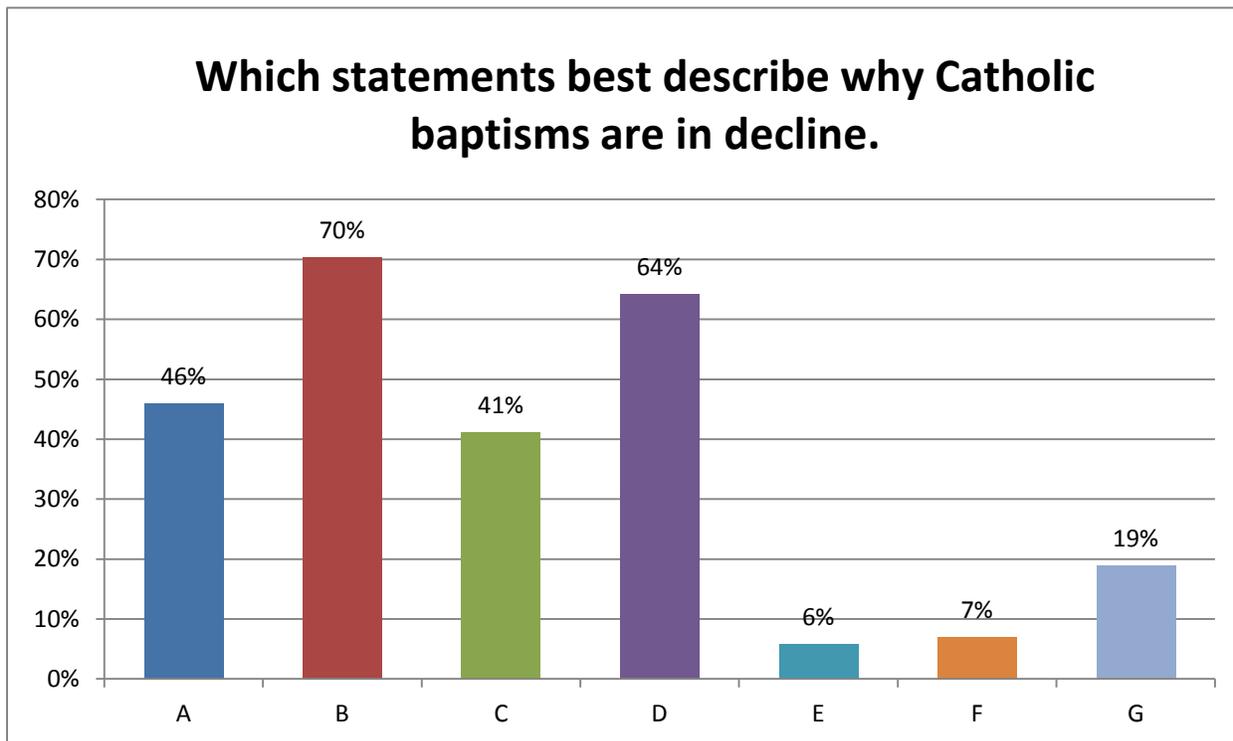
I have been part of many weddings in the Catholic church where flexibility has been offered to some and not to others in regards to classes and Brides expecting.

come on.....the birth control issue is over....take a look at the numbers of children. Enough said.

You might explain what "modern spirituality of marriage" means. If it includes B,C, or D then A doesn't apply for my answer.

Let's get back to trying to follow the teachings of Jesus rather than the focus on all the rules and hierarchy.

**10. In many parts of the country and in many parishes the number of Catholic baptisms in a decline (as a percentage of children born). Which of the statement(s) below best describes why this is happening? (Select all that apply)**



**Legend:**

(A) Church' requirements and rules for child's baptism are too stringent or rigid	126	46%
(B) Parents are not members of a parish	193	70%
(C) Family preferences or disagreements	113	41%
(D) Couple's disagreement with Catholic teachings on birth control	176	64%
(E) Inability to schedule a baptism at a convenient time	16	6%
(F) Inability to locate a priest to conduct the baptism	19	7%
(G) Concern for safety of children as a result of clerical abuse and cover up	52	19%

**Comments:**

10. In many parts of the country and in many parishes the number of Catholic baptisms in a decline (as a percentage of children born). Which of the statement(s) below best describes why this is happening?

This is not well stated as a question that delivers a reliable response. People generally do not really know the reason for the question at hand. The best they can do is an opinion, and one that is not reliable for an informed response

People are leaving the church so have no reason to consider a catholic baptism.

Couple might not be concerned about their child's safety, but the hierarchy's cover-ups and narcissistic response to the very real priest sexual abuse issue keeps many from raising their children Catholic.

Many parents are met with rigidity and scorn if they have not met every tenet of the parish. Innocent babies should not be held hostage.

It has become a meaningless sacrament because it is so often done automatically. All baptisms should be done at a Eucharist with the entire congregation taking responsibility for the new members of the faith

Too much emphasis on early baptism. Children should not be baptized. The church should allow them to grow into adults and make the choice to be baptized.

My new grandson is not baptized, I am so upset with the Church lately I cannot push them to do it. I believe in it so much- which is probably why it hurts me so much.

Again, no one takes the Church seriously anymore. It has become too exclusive and "less than holy" people feel shouted out by political conservatives who try to marry religion and Republican politics.

Again, belonging doesn't carry importance, often due to perception of Catholic rigidity of irrelevance. I think the Church should use sacraments to help prepare parents, if properly conceived and presented.

A reflection of the declining members of active Catholics as a whole.

Decision for Catholic baptism often depends on whether married couple or unwed mother/partner are practicing Catholics.

Parents regard the Catholic Church as an enemy of the safe development of their child.

In my lifetime I have seen so many churches give families trouble when they want a baby baptized or want a particular godparent. Welcome them in! Be loving and accepting!

I think baptisms are on decline because church membership and participation is on decline. If a couple belongs to and participates in a parish, then that couple will probably baptize its children in that parish.

Baptism requirements for godparents suffer the same problems as I have voiced above.

It is likely that babies are not baptized as their parents are not active Catholics.

Don't know

People either don't love their children or they don't believe in hell. You should have simply said "Couple's disagreement with Catholic teaching."

Way too many of our families are being turned away because of the parents marital status. Also, we are in need of follow up and support for these families

Where is spirituality or relationship with the diety in all of this?

G) Drop in number of baptisms may not be because of the local priest, but as a backlash against clerical abuse in general.

I suspect the ones I checked would be the more likely factors in our culture from general knowledge.

In the Bible Christ was baptized at the age of 32 why not just a christening. .

Many do not associate them selves with a Parish Community.

Too many parishes exceed have standards that are higher than Canon Law, or interpret Canon Law too narrowly.

this is just my view- not my practice

decreasing number of committed Catholics--decreased attitude toward the importance of Baptism

Lack of pastoral response to the parents and extreme rigidity and clericalism on the part of the pastor

People are actually letting their children decide what to do when they grow up. People no longer believe in "ancestral sin". People read the sacraments differently today, be it right or wrong. Can you really stop an avalanche.

Many regard the Church and involvement in a faith community as not necessary to family life.

My daughter and son-in-law attend Mass every week after relocating 11 months ago. They have been to more than 20 churches and still have not found one that is life-giving.

Statistics show that millennials are more open minded and accepting of differences than previous generations...maybe it's time for the church to realize that doctrine without love cannot attract the open hearts of the young.

My experience----couples do not want to force membership in the church on their children when they themselves do not believe in most or all church teachings

Jesus did not demand rules, Jesus accepted all with love. Once he touched people they were open to change.

If parents request baptism they should be welcomed and encouraged to be part of the parish. Rather than reject them, welcome them.

Many Catholics do not consider baptism necessary.

Don't believe we "sell" the efficacy of the sacrament as the basis for all that follows in the faith journey Church is irrelevant to real life. Baptism is a social event to please grandparents. A "magic" moment for an infant. Jewish radiation is a child blessing - most appropriate.

I see this as a reflection that the parents reject the church's teachings on sex, birth control, marriage etc and the shamefulness of the church scandals. They do not wish to be associated with this church.

Don't believe we "sell" the efficacy of the sacrament as the basis for all that follows in the faith journey

Our parish has many as communal celebrations, but there would be more if the insistence on long series of "instructions" at inconvenient times for exhausted parents were more sensible.

Younger people are more interested in spirituality rather than religion. They don't believe they need "structured religion" with all its out-dated rules and requirements.

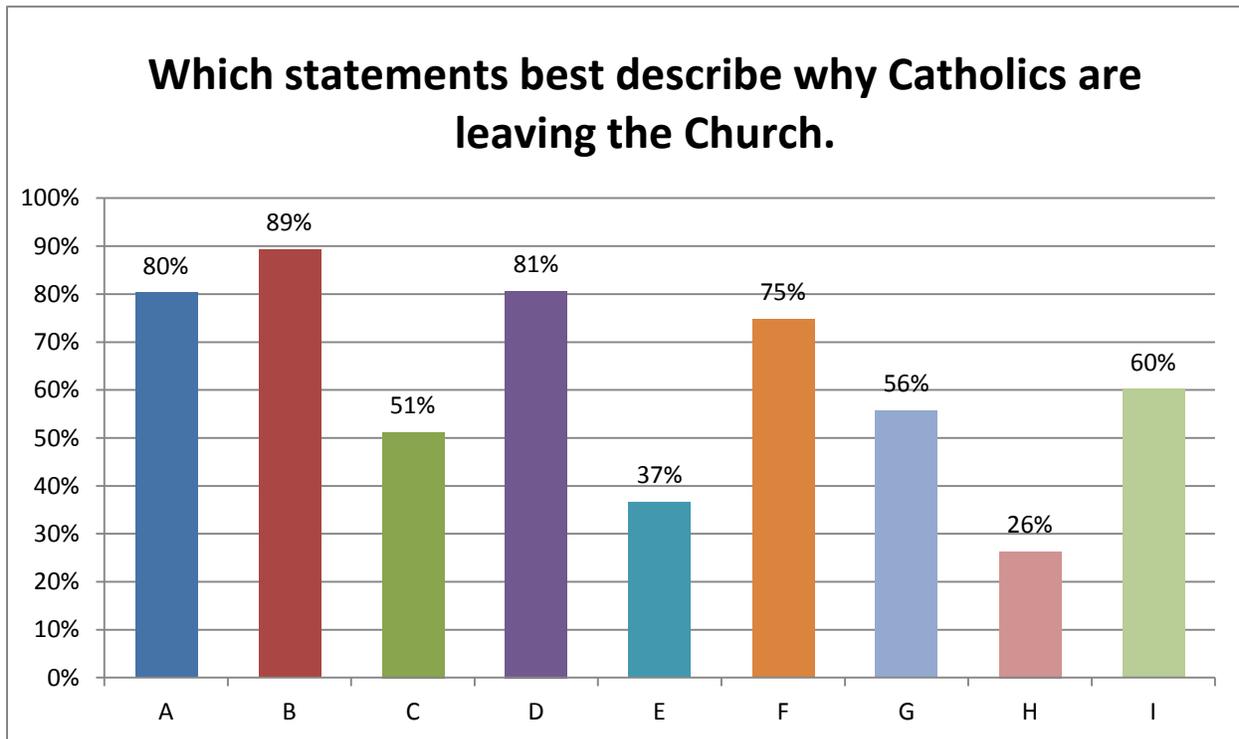
People do not want to baptize their children into a church that teaches exclusion.

Perhaps we should allow the child to grow up and make the decision of baptism on their own.

i don't see baptism connected to clerical abuse.....

I really don't know why this is happening, but I have many friends with "pagan grand-children" as they call them. Most have 1 parent not in Catholic church.

**11. In many parts of the country and in many communities a growing number of the Catholics are leaving the Catholic Church and either joining another Christian denomination or abandoning organized religion all together. Which of the statement(s) below best describes why this is happening? (Select all that apply)**



**Legend:**

(A) Church is not meeting their spiritual needs	232	80%
(B) Disagreement with teachings or doctrines of the Church	258	89%
(C) Language or ritual of the Mass lacks meaning or is difficult to understand	148	51%
(D) The lack of women in leadership roles of the Church	233	81%
(E) Lack of meaningful relationship with the priest pastor	106	37%

(F) Distrust of Catholic leadership because of the clergy sex abuse and cover-up	216	75%
(G) Services in another Christian denomination are more helpful and meaningful	161	56%
(H) Insufficient understanding of Church's teaching, doctrine and practices	76	26%
(I) Loss of interest in institutional religion	174	60%

**Comments:**

11. In many parts of the country and in many communities a growing number of the Catholics are leaving the Catholic Church and either joining another Christian denomination or abandoning organized religion all together. Which of the statement(s) below best describes why this is happening?

The Church does not do a good job of propagating the Kingdom of God here on Earth.

The Church needs more grounding with what people and families are struggling with in today's world.

I believe there is a major "wanting" for spiritual direction (not religious doctrine) that all faith communities need to step up and try to meet.

The abandonment of Catholicism is unprecedented. Much, how much is hard to say, but in my opinion very much of the loss of people is related to the kind of leadership at present in the R C Church. The clerical caste has run its course.

Because of the bishop's vocal involvement with politics they have brought this problem on themselves. The solution is in their back yard....if they look and care enough

Statistics show that overall there is a loss of interest in institutional religion, primarily because the dogmas and doctrines are so outdated they do not speak to us in the 21st Century.

Statistics show that overall there is a loss of interest in institutional religion, primarily because the dogmas and doctrines are so outdated they do not speak to us in the 21st Century.

The church is perceived as being always negative. There is also a belief that celibate clergy do not understand the importance of sex within the marriage bond.

Enough said

I speak for myself here. The American Catholic Church is still ducking and weaving. Several U.S. Bishops should be serving hard time, starting with Cardinal Law. None are. In my own parish, a known pervert was appointed leader.

These are just my thoughts as to why, but I am so proud of being a Catholic. I am a "cradle" Catholic. I was lost and now I am found. I love the faith. Divorce and annulment have been issues for me.

I am very orthodox in my personal life. I belong to a vibrant parish with 9,000 families. I drive by a dozen Catholic churches to get there. Those churches are shells

The dreadful condition of Sunday homilies is the largest efficient cause. My wife had to restrain me from getting up and walking out when the homily was idiotic.

Even in a parish where the liturgy is meaningful and beautiful, this has not been enough to keep people in the Church given many of the issues listed above.

My large family had been Catholic for 1,000 years I am the last active Catholic. Most of my siblings can't understand why I continue.

I once heard an Archbishop quote a statistic that 98% of our families leave because of the parish priest and the negative treatment they received, our clergy must be trained to be more pastoral compassionate and accepting of our people

The "moral majority" approach taken by Catholic leaders has turned me off to all branches of Christianity. I have renounced the Christian faith and taken refuge vows as a Buddhist.

Magisterium, ritual, denomination and doctrine are not meaningful to most persons, except clergy.

Where is genealogy, tradition, personal relationship and prayer?

The church has abandoned so many of its people.

Most of my friends who were Catholic have left. They feel that the church is not meeting their spiritual needs. Some have joined other denominations. Most have just stopped going and consider themselves "spiritual but not religious".

While all could and undoubtedly are factors, from general and direct input, I would I would cite the checked ones to be more realistic reasons.

The rigidity of the Catholic Church in regards to rules, women as priests, etc....runs counter-intuitive to the church being inclusive.

Most priest are from other countries. It is hard to understand the very heavy accents

I have heard said I get more out of their church. My saying is you are putting in more.

Young people have difficulty with the Institutional church.

To clerical, chauvinistic, dogmatic for the most part.

Not spiritual enough but there is hope in the new pope...

Need to include EVERYONE in the church. Everyone should be welcome whether straight, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or divorced and remarried. Catholics alienate people.

We are not relevant to these people.

again- I see this with acquaintances and families who have not had Catholic education (schools)

The shortage of priests is a real obstacle these days. They are not available for home visits of the sick or elderly. They are not available for consultations on family issues. We're lucky if we have a priest available to celebrate the mass on Sunday.

I think, especially for the young people, other churches (Baptist, evangelical) connect to the kids on their level, and in a " fun" way, more so than the Catholic Church.

If the pastor is not feeding his flock spiritually they have little option but to seek that spiritual food elsewhere.

One can write a thesis on this. Why have one third of the Catholics left the church since the 1960s? Volumes can be written. It would be nice if someone who is objective would write this. There is too much of clerical and ultra-conservative spin today.

OTHER CHURCHES REACH OUT AND OFFER A SENSE OF FAMILY AND BELONGING. THEY FILL A SOCIAL AS WELL AS SPIRITUAL NEED ESPECIALLY SINCE PEOPLE DON'T LIVE NEAR FAMILY AS MUCH AS THEY USED TO.

Even an active Catholic like me mistrusts the use of money at the Archdiocesan level and above. I try hard to avoid giving them money to waste. There is no transparency until after the spending.

most Catholic churches are not very welcoming

I know several people who have left the Church because of sexual abuse of children by priest and the manner in which bishops handled the problem. or mishandled.

Intellectual pride in their own ability to discern "right " choices, pride that prevents admitting mistakes in judgement and asking for forgiveness

The New Roman Missal is a wonderful example of how to turn people off.

Catholic church is not a very "FUN" church. Most of the protestant and other forms of religion are more entertaining. TV is also an excuse.

B, D, F, G are all excuses I have heard but bottom line is it is easier to stay in bed on Sunday mornings!

Intellectual pride in their own ability to discern "right " choices, pride that prevents admitting mistakes in judgement and asking for forgiveness

In many ways we are so out of touch with so many segments of the Catholic population. Hopefully our new pope, will work on this with the clergy and leaders in the church. We also need some new leaders, more in touch with people in general.

now involved with a Christian home church - much more relevant and very involved with spiritual groups that inspire and nourish my being.

Catholics need to feel that they belong to a personal faith community and not to an institutional Church ruled by a hierarchy.

Virtually all of the above. Pope Francis is beginning to reconnect with the people--both the people of God and the people of the secular world! Need more of teachings like "Gaudium Evangelii"

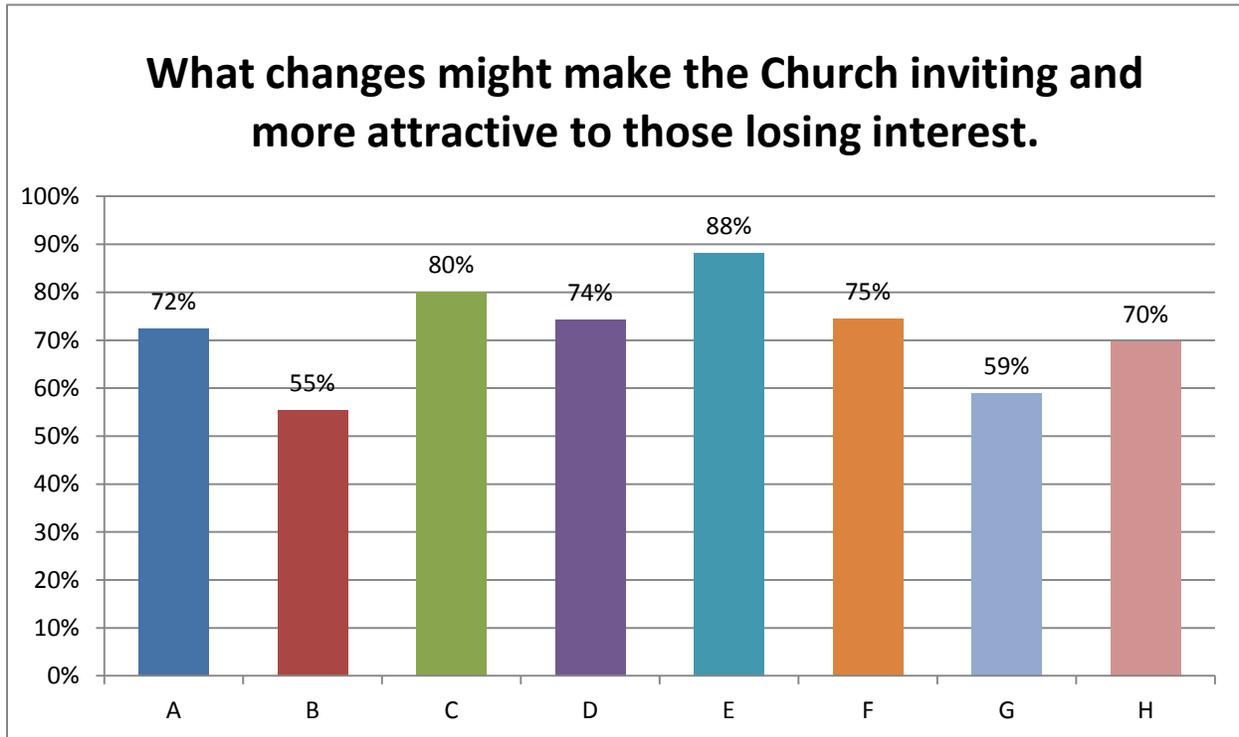
Other denominations/religions that are more accepting are simply more attractive. The Catholic church excludes too many historically subjugated groups.

The language of the liturgy has driven a lot of people away. Also the priests are spread so thin these days there is almost no way to develop a meaningful relationship with the pastor.

I think the often wishy washy approach bishops and priests take toward the fundamental teaching of the Church is a primary reason for people leaving the Church

People leaving the Catholic find more community and love in other denominations. They find more support for family, children, youth. They find a more democratic atmosphere where decisions are shared, not made by the pastor.

**12. What changes might make the Catholic Church more inviting and more attractive to those who are losing interest in the Church or have decided to drop out? (Select all that apply)**



**Legend:**

(A) Place more emphasis on spirituality for lay people	208	72%
(B) Simplify language and vocabulary of the Mass and other rituals	159	55%
(C) Update theology so it is consistent with common and well accepted science	230	80%
(D) Involve more social justice and ecumenism in the parish	213	74%
(E) Expand the role of women in the conduct of Church services and leadership	253	88%
(F) Expand the role of laity in the conduct of Church services and leadership	214	75%
(G) Invite lay people to break open the word at liturgies (Lay homilists)	169	59%
(H) Expand acceptance of people who hold beliefs different from Church doctrine	200	70%

**Comments:**

12. What changes might make the Catholic Church more inviting and more attractive to those who are losing interest in the Church or have decided to drop out?

Aside from the suggestions above teaching of Church doctrine is also needed.

The Holy Spirit alive in the laity is what has sustained the Catholic Church through the times when the bureaucracy of the church was failing. The Church exists for the people. The people do not come to satisfy the ordained.

All of the above choices are critical.

It is not so much difference in Church doctrine as disagreement in the understanding of the teachings. There is an authoritarian style adopted by clerics that shuts down open discussion and disagreement, as though those are simply wrong.

Better sermons

Fostering warmth and communitarianism at Sunday liturgies

Especially social justice issues with younger generation.

Give the laity real power and involvement. Actually consult them and LISTEN to what they say. It is essential if the church is to survive to give women a voice in running the church!

Each of the suggestions above would involve a special paragraph

God chose Woman as the vessel for the Redeemer! Doctrine has changed over time; science has illuminated God's creation! It is the Love of God, and dedication to God that determines one's place in eternity.

"loosing" is incorrect grammar; "losing" is correct.

Quit being a medieval boogeyman!

Parish priests should serve at the pleasure of the local Parish Council. And, they should be accountable to the Council. Only then will child abusers stop being rotated from parish to parish.

Wording in question: line 2 "to those who are LOSING interest...."

More community outreach.

Preach the Gospel of love rather than condemnation. The Church has ostracized many good people including woman, homosexuals, and unmarried mothers.

Many of these MIGHT help but, again, it is more about the "How" than the "What". Attitude and emphasis are really the problems much more than the doctrine itself.

Open participation in the Eucharist to all who "believe what the church believes". This is what actually happens now.

Pope Francis is setting the perfect tone. I have been waiting for him for 45 years. Follow his lead. Serve the poor.

The language is so much a throwback to old masses that were hard to understand. I continue to say aloud the Vatican II language.

Too much top down leadership!

The absolute WORST things that could be done are B, F, and G. These things will only further alienate Catholics like myself. While E would not necessarily be a bad thing, it would also help little if at all.

Treat gays as Children of God who are accepted and welcome in the Catholic church.

CHANGE! The church has become irrelevant to peoples lives.

Frequent forums or other format allowing dialogue and true discussion would do wonders

The latest translation of the Lectionary is an abomination.

And deal with the sex abuse crimes and cover-ups openly, and have more transparency, and treat lay people as equals who might actually have something to contribute spiritually and theologically besides the contents of their wallet.

Growing immigrant populations who are not Christian or Jewish do not find themselves "fitting in"

When I was a 6th grade student in catholic school, we were told that we could accept evolution as long as we understood at some point God gave humans a soul.

Accept gays ,lesbians and transgender individuals as truly made in the image and likeness of God. No negative comments.

Unless and until women are accepted as equal to men there will continue to be an exodus from the Catholic church.

On point C, I would add common sense as some directives in the past do not even meet that criteria.

Teacher your people Gods word. The Church has been run like the Pharaohs in the Old Testament. The was afraid to empower their believer because the leaders of the Church would lose their power.

People who participate seem to be more involved and interested,

All of the above. I checked the most salient options.

It's a big questions. It's a big job. Try to make changes that help people feel they are growing in faith. Let the Holy Spirit do its part.

Married priests would help

HAVE A VERY VERY SIMPLE MESSAGE IN THE HOMILY AT EACH MASS- SHORT AND TO THE POINT- EASY TO REMEMBER

Welcome us, allow us greater roles in our churches, feed our spirits, help us help others. Don't demonize us for being gay or for using birth control.

I am constantly repelled by the clericalism of some priests (the JP II variety) and by their anti-ecumenical attitudes.

As our good and wonderful Bishop of Rome has said, if nothing is done, everything will come down like a house of cards Question 12 can probably be expanded to the letter z and beyond. Wake up guys.

The Church is everyone who says they are - and all should be invited to help and lead

Our lived experience is holy, and very different from those in clerical culture. We think.

LOVE

The new liturgical language that was introduced a couple years ago is absurd. The language should be in English and not a literal translation of the Latin.

IN OTHER WORDS, ACT AND TEACH MORE LIKE JESUS DID, AND LESS LIKE ONE OF THE MEDICI NOBLES!

Address the clergy sex abuse cover up by bishops.

Be more welcoming, more accepting of EVERYONE.

Revise Church processes to encompass and reach out to the masses, instead of focusing on traditional aspects which may have worked centuries ago.

women must be accepted as priests.

birth control must be allowed (90% of catholics use the pill anyway)

Re #F,G : Laity need adequate preparation

Again, all of the above.

oh, wouldn't it be wonderful to have very articulate, spiritual lay men and women preach on the gospel! oftentimes, that is not the skill that our priests have.....they have other skills

We are not a very welcoming church.

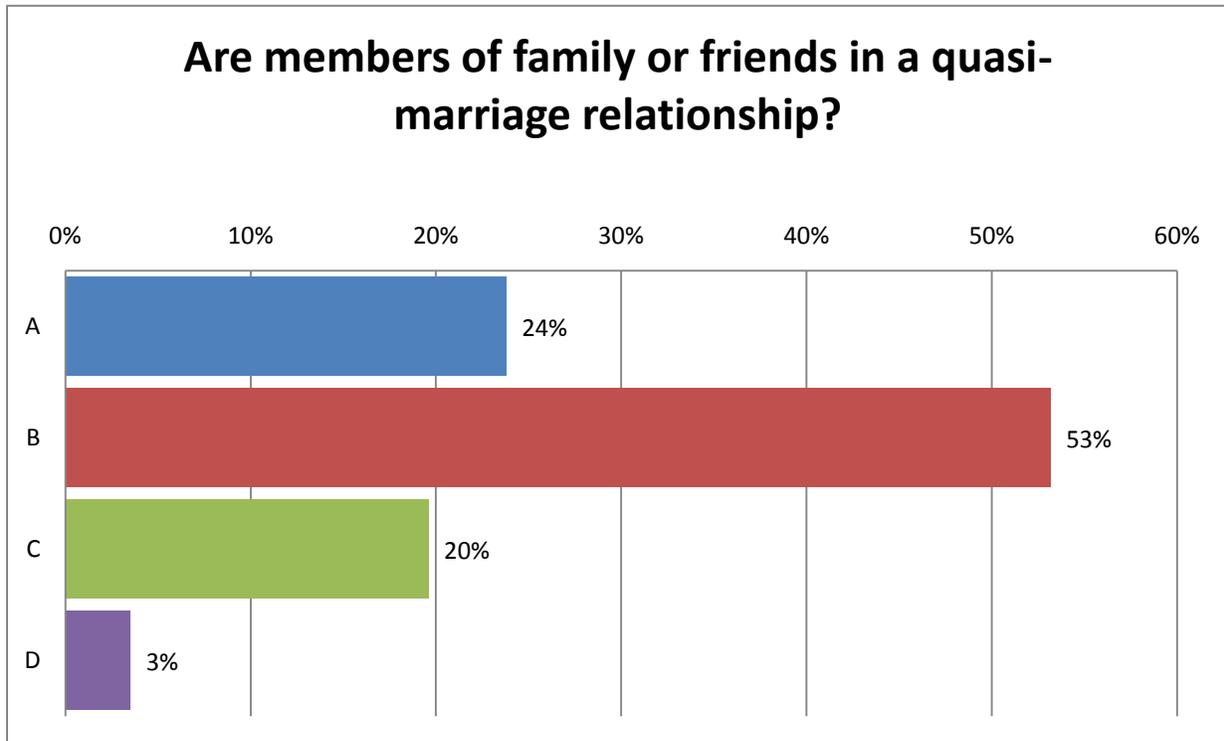
## 4. Pastoral Care in Certain Difficult Marital Situations

### The Vatican asked:

- a) Is cohabitation ad experimentum a pastoral reality in your particular Church? Can you approximate a percentage?
- b) Do unions which are not recognized either religiously or civilly exist? Are reliable statistics available?
- c) Are separated couples and those divorced and remarried a pastoral reality in your particular Church? Can you approximate a percentage? How do you deal with this situation in appropriate pastoral programmes?
- d) In all the above cases, how do the baptized live in this irregular situation? Are aware of it? Are they simply indifferent? Do they feel marginalized or suffer from the impossibility of receiving the sacraments?
- e) What questions do divorced and remarried people pose to the Church concerning the Sacraments of the Eucharist and of Reconciliation? Among those persons who find themselves in these situations, how many ask for these sacraments?
- f) Could a simplification of canonical practice in recognizing a declaration of nullity of the marriage bond provide a positive contribution to solving the problems of the persons involved? If yes, what form would it take?
- g) Does a ministry exist to attend to these cases? Describe this pastoral ministry? Do such programmes exist on the national and diocesan levels? How is God's mercy proclaimed to separated couples and those divorced and remarried and how does the Church put into practice her support for them in their journey of faith?

**We Asked:**

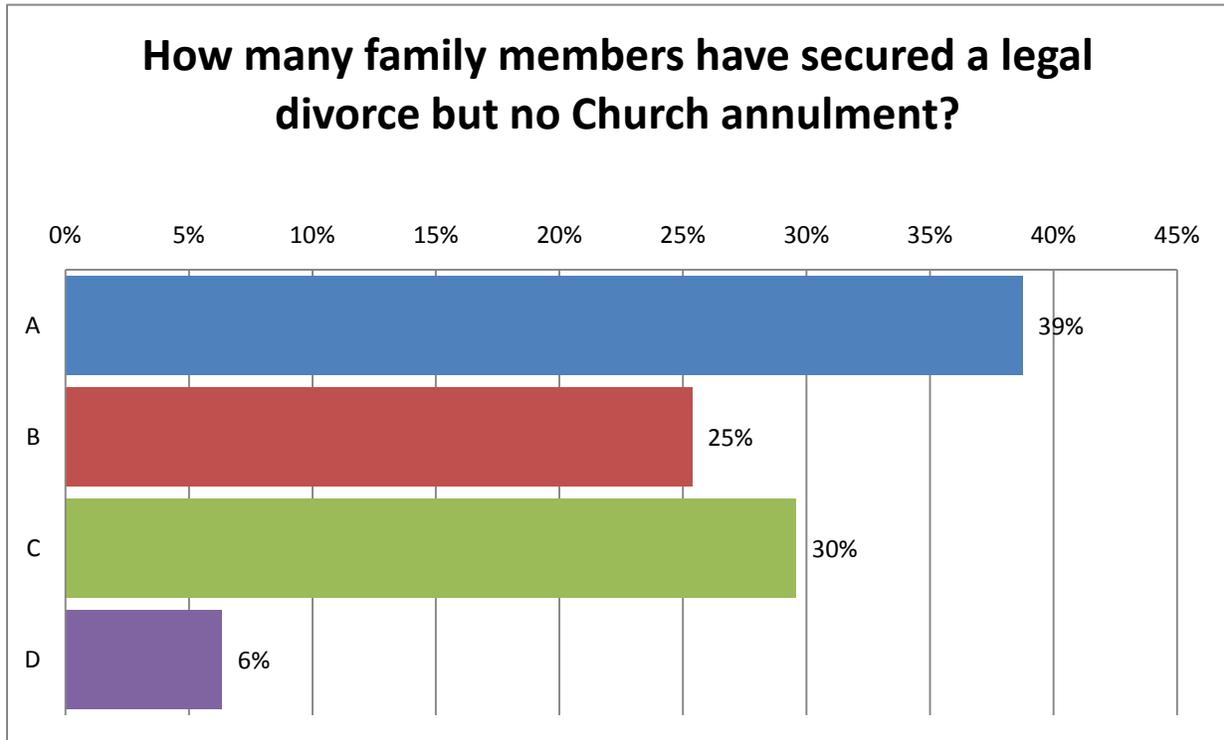
13. Are members of your family or your friends in a quasi-marriage relationship (i.e. cohabitation without a religious or civil marriage)?



**Legend:**

(A) Yes, many	68	24%
(B) Yes, a few	152	53%
(C) No, none	56	20%
(D) Unsure or unable to answer	10	3%

**14. How many members of your immediate family secured a legal divorce and then remarried without obtaining an annulment?**



**Legend:**

(A) None	110	39%
(B) One	72	25%
(C) More than one	84	30%
(D) Unsure or unable to answer	18	6%

**Comments:**

**14. How many members of your immediate family secured a legal divorce and then remarried without obtaining an annulment?**

The individual family member had long since left the Catholic Church and was married in another faith tradition.

I am one of those. I fervently pray the Rosary every day. I accept the Eucharist without guilt.

My husband and I were divorced remarried in a civil court, then sought and were granted annulments and marriage in the Catholic Church after meeting the necessary requirements.

Annulment in our area was a farce. Those with connections got them; those without were faced with the choice of living in sin or living alone.

I did this! Where do I stand? I don't know. But I go to Church and I receive the Eucharist and I love my God and I know he loves me. I try to live my life as best I can. But I struggle with this aspect.

My sister divorced and received an annulment. After a humiliating interview session, the Church decided that she was to blame for the break up of her marriage, even though her husband had been cheating on her for over 10 years.

Several others got by without needing an annulment due to technicalities.

The Church would not grant my aunt an annulment, despite the fact that the reason for her divorce was her ex-husband's adultery--a traditional grounds for annulment. Their refusal to do so was infuriating to me. She has since left the faith.

My four brothers have had 14 marriages; a good many annulled. All received the Eucharist when they attend mass.

A brother and a first cousin; outside that circle, there are other family members.

No one in my family but a number of friends

The annulment process is a joke. We need to be able to end a relationship that is unhealthy and move on.  
I'm the only Catholic in my family.

The divorce forces them out of the church. The guilt is too great a burden for the individual to deal with so it is easier to just drop out of church. The divorced know the teaching of the church so there is little place for them in the church.

as pastor I deal with this all the time. good people do not want to wait and be forced into living situations when tribunals take up to two years to give annulments.

Thus far, the remarriages have been to non-Catholics and they have joined the other person's church and have raised their children in those faiths.

I believe the annulment process is a farce. It is quite well known that anyone with connections or money can obtain an annulment. Talk about hypocrisy! (I speak from experience.)

I do not ask, to me if that is the situation knowing they are loved unconditionally is a more positive step.

We play on words too much. Annulment and divorce they are the same.

1 divorced and never remarried- the other divorced and on death of second spouse has returned to church thru RCIA and is very happy he did so

One obtained an annulment and is a devout Catholic.

50% of the marriages end in divorce, the Catholics are not exempt. St. Paul would say we are in the world but not of it. Well he should be around today. He wouldn't even get to first base. We are in an entirely different culture and time.....

BUT THEY MARRIED IN THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THAT WAS ACCEPTABLE.

Most members of my extended family have simply ignored the annulment process and proceeded to remarry. Some have investigated and found it insulting.

Remarriage is a decision of conscience.

The annulment process has become cumbersome and too much time for the consent. People aren't going to wait 2 years and put their lives on hold, especially if they are over 50.

I have a daughter who is presently divorced and attends Mass every Sunday. At the moment she is not considering remarriage. She has two handicapped children and two very normal ones.

Most of my family is non-catholic

Didn't ever get married in Catholic church

They are not Catholic.

Two. Neither would seek an annulment because they felt that annulling the marriage was bastardizing their children.

The annulment process leaves much to be desired. It can bring more harm than good. So, when this is the case, annulment is not a desired or helpful outcome.

The hierarchy should accept a divorce decree without requiring an annulment.

He and his new wife are very committed to the church but cannot take communion. Ridiculous.

No-one in my immediate family have been divorced.

C for extended family

How blessed we have been--and it is so unusual.

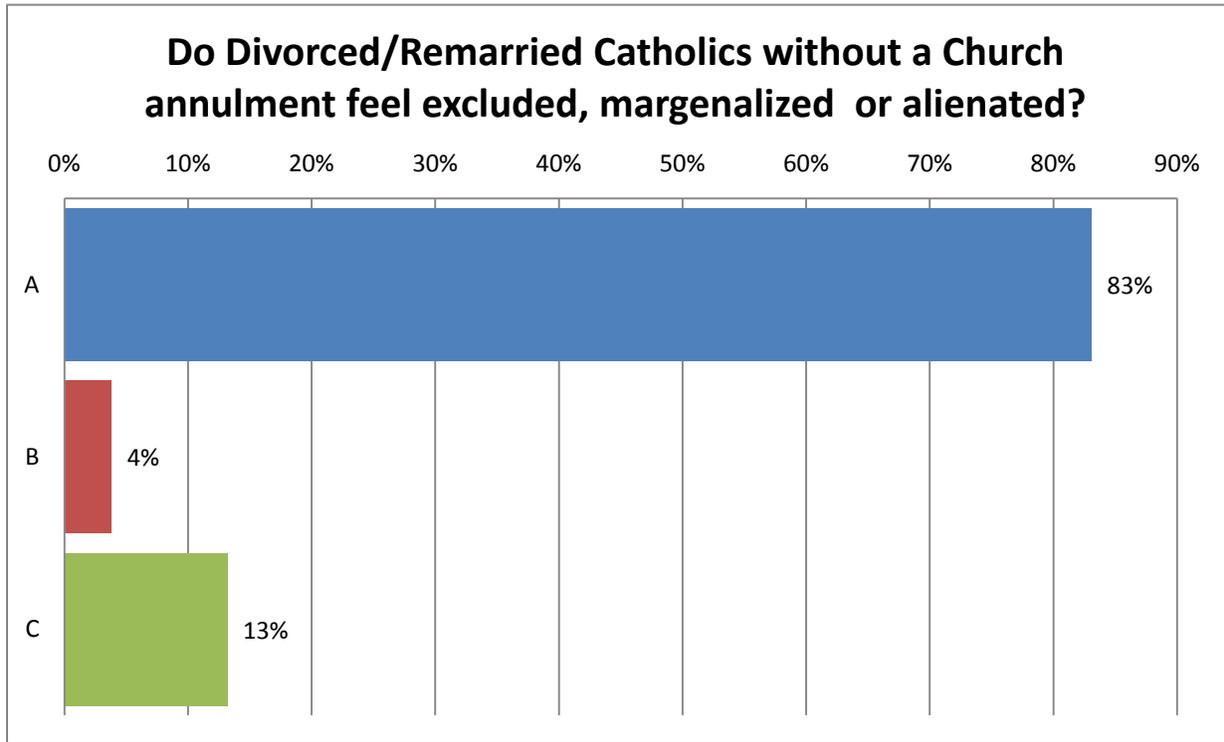
I think that is completely irrelevant.

it is hard for marriages to make it in today's world. let's keep these hurt people in our church.....they need the sacraments....not throw them out

My eldest daughter did divorce and get annulment but remarried before it came thru. It took over 2 years and nobody could tell us when it would come. She is married and raises her daughters Catholic. School, church ect.

Both daughters divorced and remarried in civil ceremony

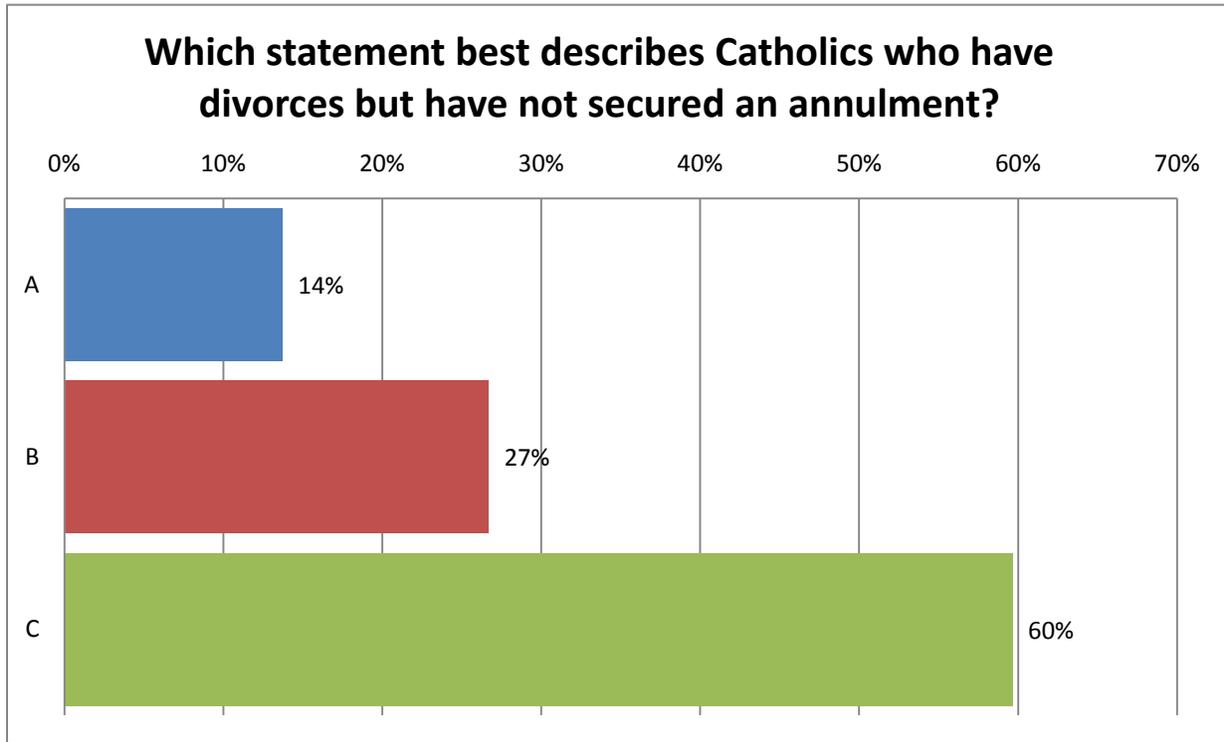
15. Do Catholics who divorce and then remarry without obtaining an annulment feel excluded, marginalized, or alienated from their Church and local parish?



**Legend:**

(A) Yes	240	83%
(B) No	11	4%
(C) Unsure or unable to answer	38	13%

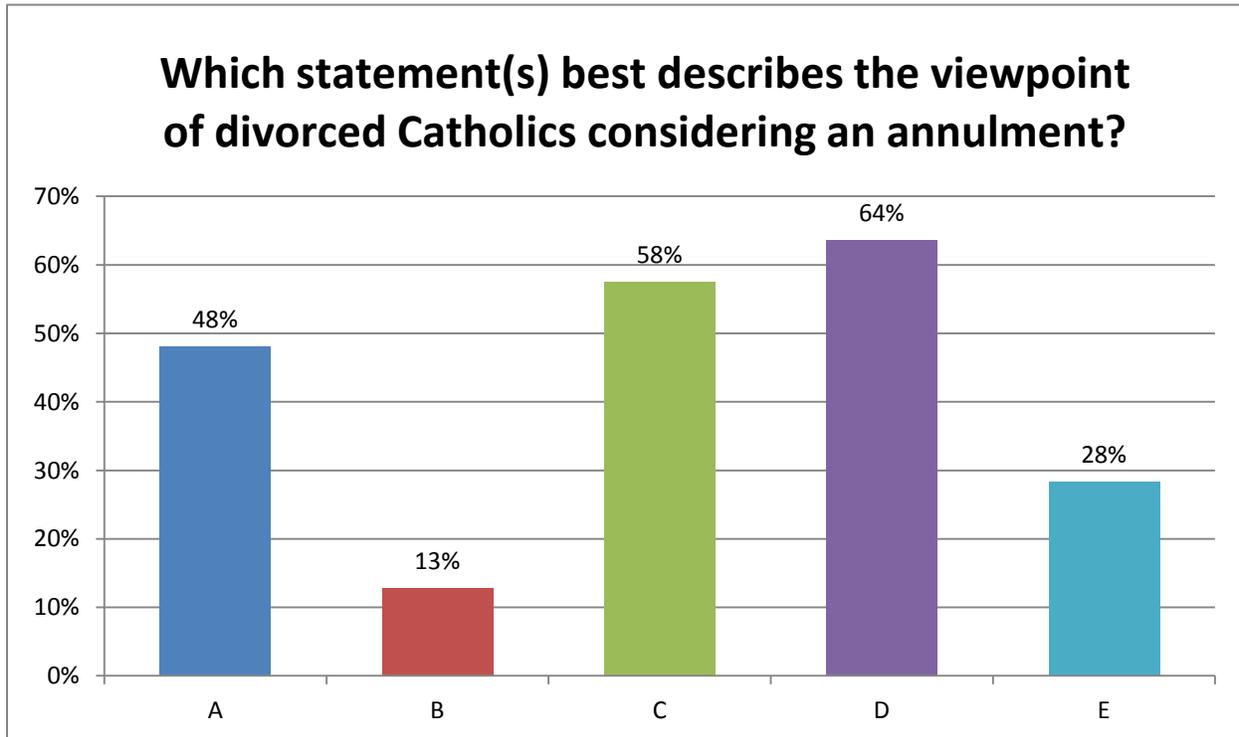
**16. Which statement best describes the behavior of Catholics who have secured a civil divorce but have not secured an annulment and then remarried?**



**Legend:**

(A) They attend Mass but do not receive the Eucharist	37	14%
(B) They attend Mass and receive the Eucharist	72	27%
(C) They drop out of the Catholic Church.	161	60%

**17. Which statement(s) best describes the viewpoint of those Catholics who have divorced and consider the possibility of seeking a Catholic annulment? (Select all that apply)**



**Legend:**

(A) They explore the possibility of annulment but abandon that course of action	127	48%
(B) They find that seeking an annulment is a healing and helpful experience	34	13%
(C) They find that seeking an annulment is too emotionally painful & disruptive	152	58%
(D) They find that seeking an annulment is intellectually dishonest	168	64%
(E) They have concerns that contacting a former spouse might put the person at risk	75	28%

**Comments:**

17. Which statement(s) best describes the viewpoint of those Catholics who have divorced and consider the possibility of seeking a Catholic annulment?

I have worked with a number of couples in this category, and they differ as to annulment; helpful to some, unacceptable even if they qualify for others, too emotionally upsetting, or rejection of annulment as a political and not spiritual process.

Your questioning asks about how Catholics feel. I can only speak for myself so I cannot comment on what other Catholics think.

Many feel that they are asked to lie in order to get an annulment.

The marriage is over- the Catholic church needs to recognize it also. Why would an ex spouse want to cooperate for annulment papers. Why is money needed to be spent on something that was already over? they do not like the church too begin with and see no reason to continue.

They are made to feel like failures in the Church and possible condemned to hell.

Because the church has lost its moral authority, their rules are ignored.

Have known or met people in all the above categories. Many are torn up about not being able to receive communion.

See my comments in 14a

Annulment is also expensive, sometimes prohibitively so.

I don't know.

My only son is divorced he has no plans to seek an annulment, he sees no need to.

In many cases the cost is prohibitive especially to the mother raising the children on her own

Some cannot say that the marriage never existed.

Here in Philadelphia, it seems like the annulment process is a money making venture for the Archdiocese.

I cannot answer this question because I cannot speak for those people.

I have no experience with divorced catholics. All of our circle of friends at church are married for 40 or more years.

I read the annulment papers on my sister's annulment and it was full a lies so it would be granted.

It can be very dangerous for some people. The whole process ridiculous.

Annulment procedure is expensive! Poor couples cannot afford to bring their cases to ecclesiastical courts.

My experience with friends is that if a civil divorce is possible it should be accepted for an annulment with no further investigation in to most personal area.

Many of my friends have left the church because they have divorced and are in a new relationship and feel unwelcome.

I am not divorced and do not have this info.

They see the process as expensive and dishonest.

One is opening a big can of worms with annulments and its intrusiveness. Be like our Orthodox brothers & sisters, allow divorce. They even have a different marriage ceremony for those who are divorced and getting married.

There may be a few who would check [E]

when they divorce they then see the annulment as a joke they feel it is just a way for the church to make money.

The whole process needs to be reworked and be expedient. People need to feel welcomed in their parish. I think the name should be changed to dissolution of the sacrament to stop people thinking is bastardizes children.

Usually they simply don't bother

Have two friends who have followed the annulment process to conclusion...have a hard time believing that this personal "mistake" is so hard to get forgiveness...

For questions 16 and 17 all of the answers apply to some situations.

If it were not a Catholic marriage in the first place, why do they need a Catholic annulment? The Church does not recognize "Other" marriages in the first place. But for a fee are glad to annul that non recognized marriage now.

Have two friends who have followed the annulment process to conclusion...have a hard time believing that this personal "mistake" is so hard to get forgiveness...

As stated before the annulment thing needs to be given a new look

From what I have heard from those who have gone through the annulment process. it is too much invasion of their privacy.

I found it a healing experience, but most divorced persons I know find it intimidating for reasons you mention.

A divorce has already been granted; why the need for an annulment?

A wonderful priest makes the annulment process positive. A priest who is hardened and judgmental makes the experience miserable.

Some fine the process too cumbersome, time consuming and wonder if it is a valid process...however, some find it a healing process

From my experience, the annulment process is intimidating.

It seems a hard process for many people to do ... It takes so long to go through the process. It is a good idea but comes across as harsh.

## 5. On Unions of Persons of the Same Sex

### The Vatican asked:

a) Is there a law in your country recognizing civil unions for people of the same-sex and equating it in some way to marriage?

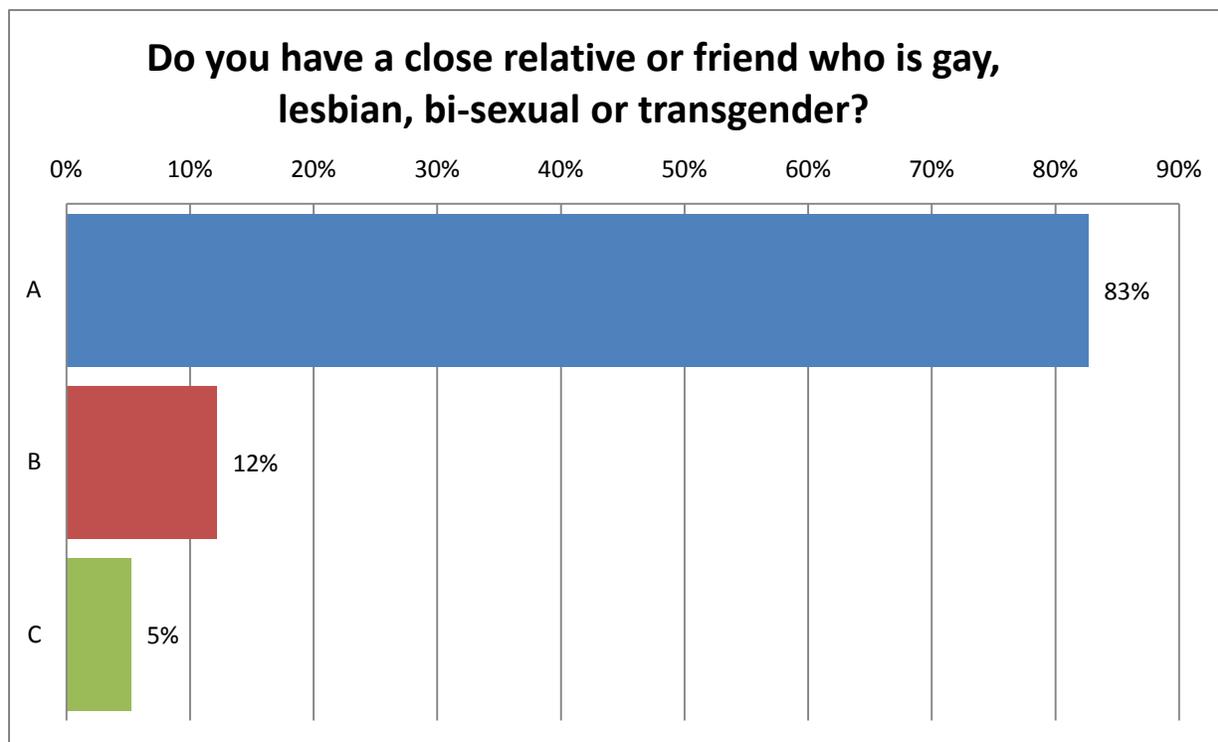
b) What is the attitude of the local and particular Churches towards both the State as the promoter of civil unions between persons of the same sex and the people involved in this type of union?

c) What pastoral attention can be given to people who have chosen to live in these types of union?

d) In the case of unions of persons of the same sex who have adopted children, what can be done pastorally in light of transmitting the faith?

**We Asked:**

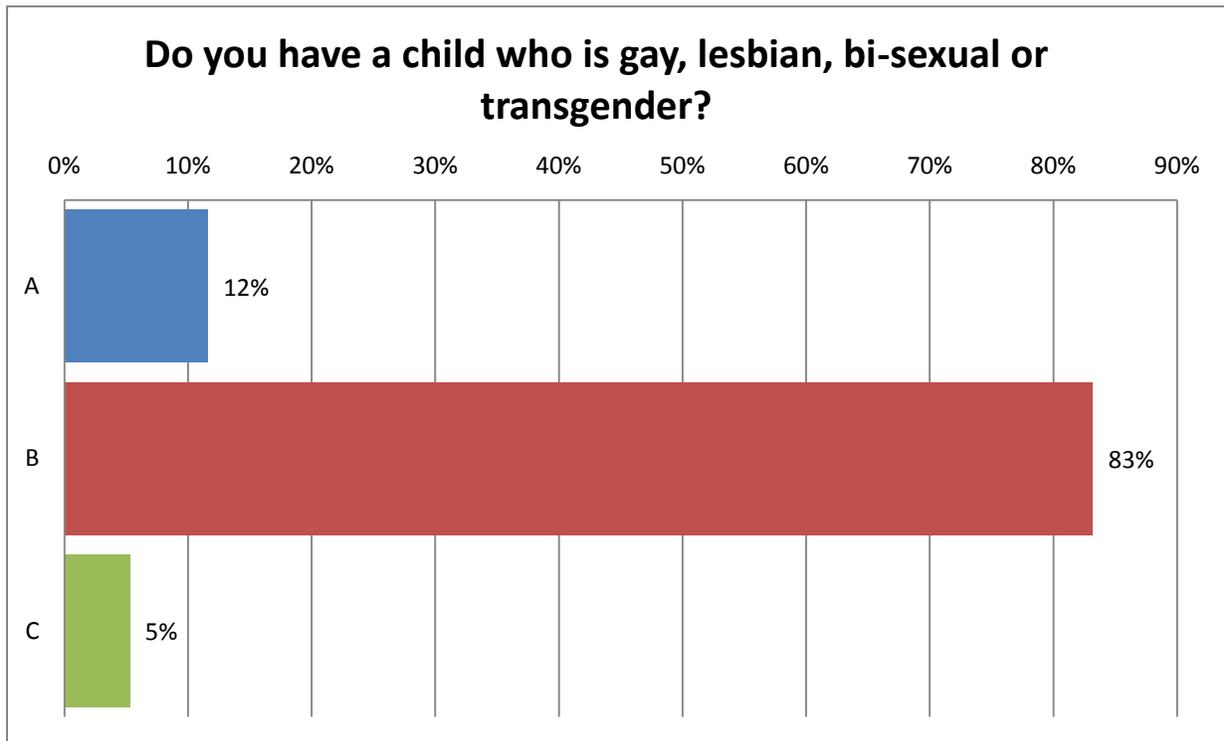
**18. Do you have a close relative or close friend who is gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender?**



**Legend:**

(A) Yes	238
(B) No	35
(C) Unaware of anyone	15

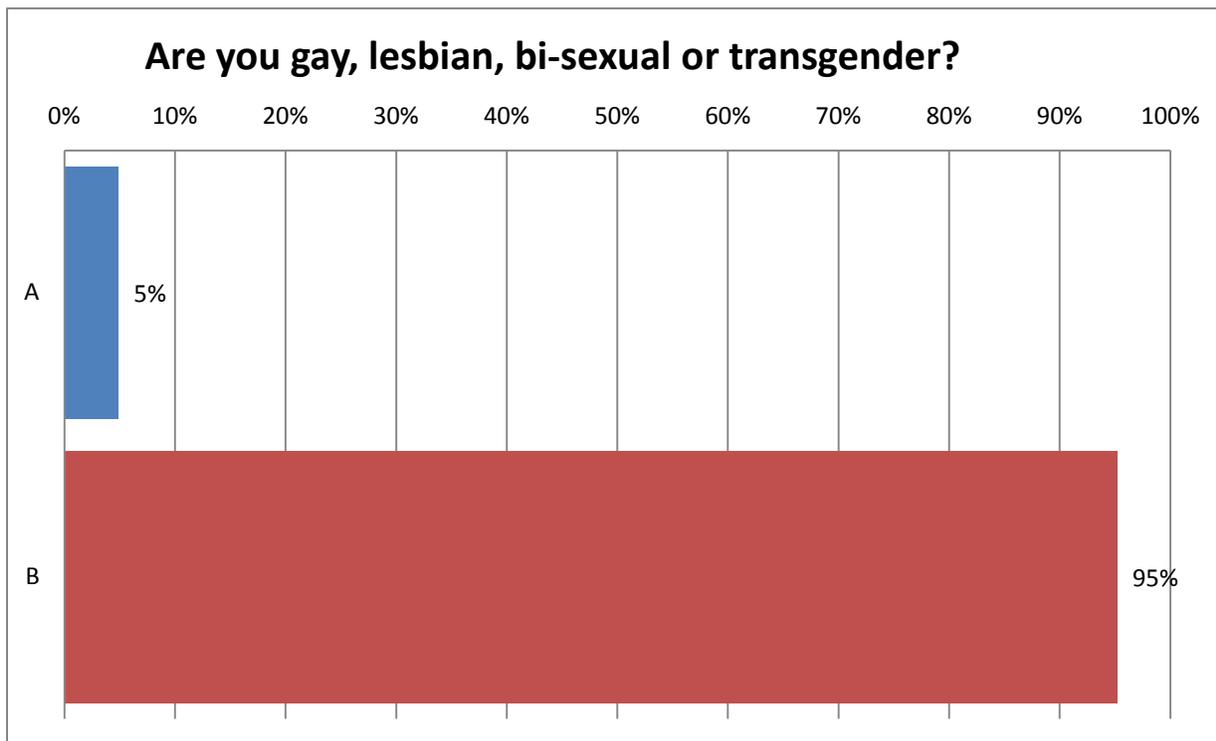
19. Are you a parent of a child who is gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender?



**Legend:**

(A) Yes	33	12%
(B) No	237	83%
(C) Don't know	15	5%

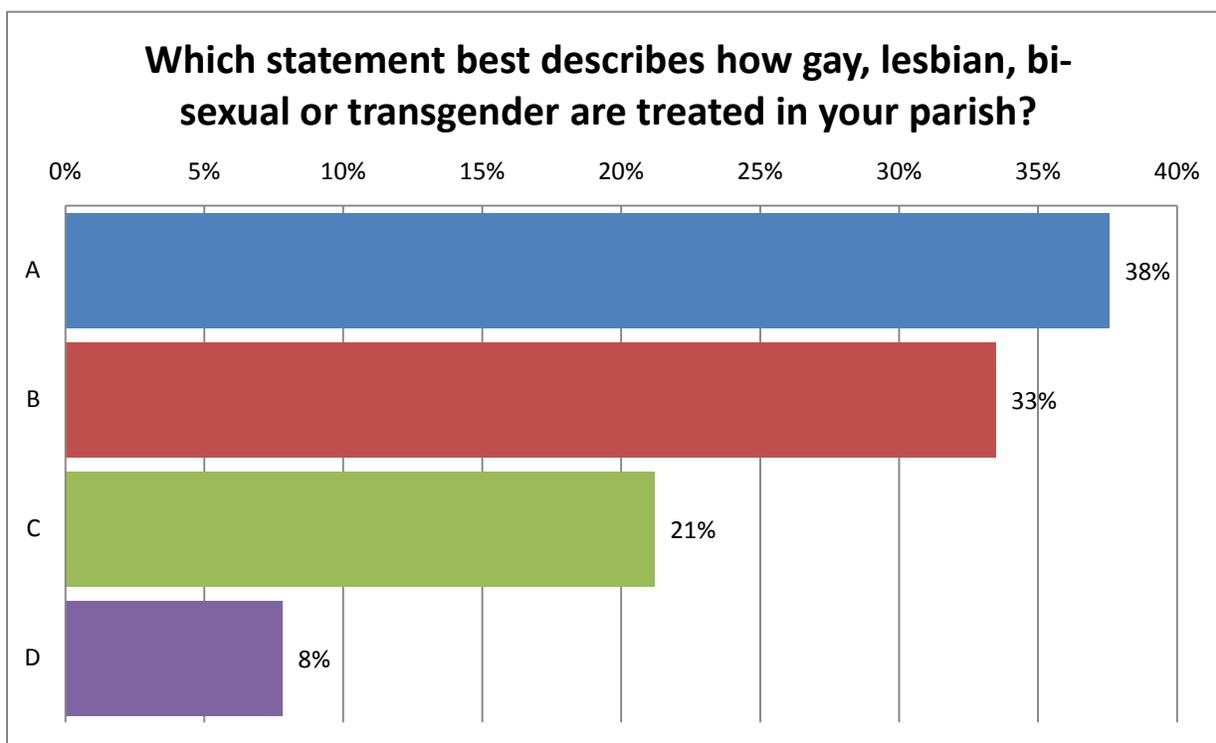
**20. Are you gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender?**



**Legend:**



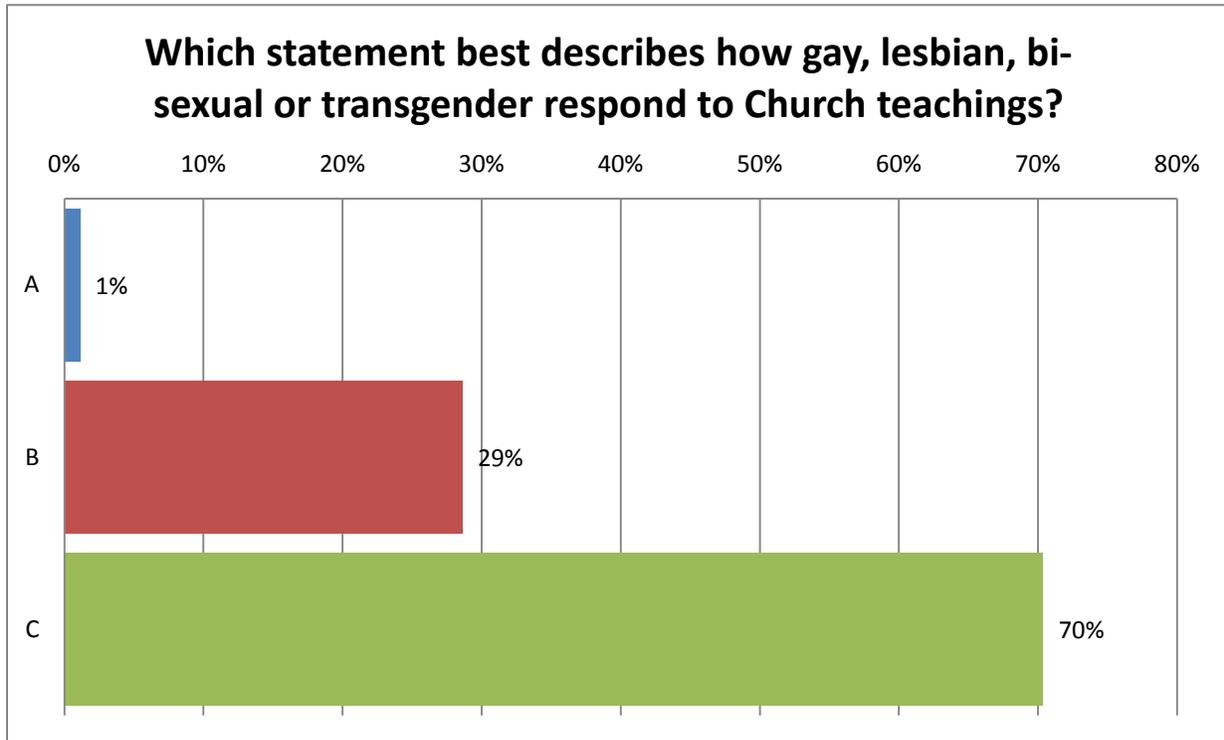
**21. Which statement best describes how persons who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender are treated in your parish?**



**Legend:**

(A) They are accepted and welcomed like everyone else	101	38%
(B) Accepted but with hesitation and reluctance	90	33%
(C) They are avoided and ignored	57	21%
(D) They are shunned and ridiculed	21	8%

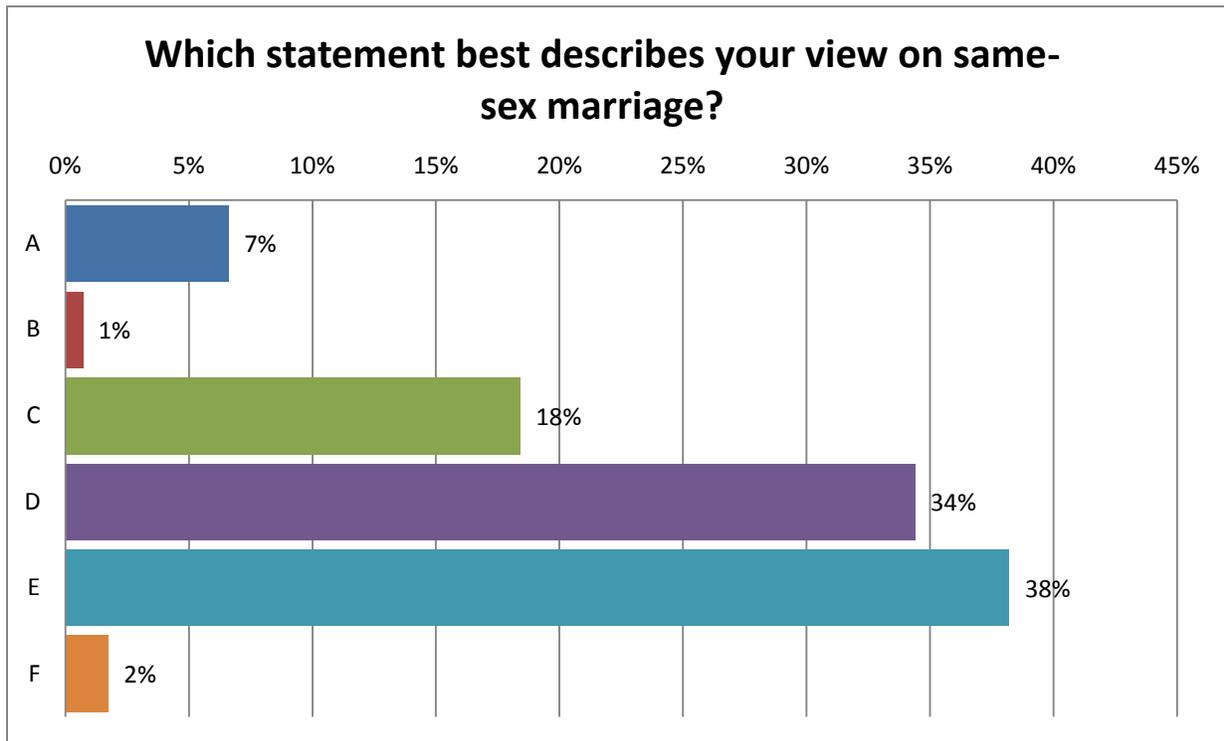
**22. Which statement best describes how persons who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender respond to the Church's teachings on homosexuality and its opposition to same-sex marriage.**



**Legend:**

(A) They agree with the Church's teaching	3	1%
(B) They remain in the Church but disagree with those teachings	78	29%
(C) They drop out of the Catholic Church.	192	70%

**23. Which statement best describes your view on same sex marriages?**



**Legend:**

(A) Intensely opposed to same sex marriage	19	7%
(B) Mildly opposed to same sex marriage	2	1%
(C) Opposed to same sex "marriage" but in favor of "civil unions"	53	18%
(D) Accepting of same sex marriage.	99	34%
(E) Strongly in favor of same-sex marriage	110	38%
(F) Uncertain or ambivalent	5	2%

**Comments:**

22. Which statement best describes how persons who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender respond to the Church's teachings on homosexuality and its opposition to same-sex marriage.

In my opinion, questions 21-23 do not provide reliable data. People do not know "the best statement," and their response is very, very prejudiced by their socialization. Any professional social scientist would agree.

These people need to be treated with the same respect that Jesus would treat them.

Love, respect, support and living Gospel values with a person who is committed in relationship is what is important.

I have a nephew who is gay and has been in a committed relationship for over 20 years. They recently married in a civil ceremony now that they live in a state that allows same sex marriage.

I have a nephew who is gay and has been in a committed relationship for over 20 years. They recently married in a civil ceremony now that they live in a state that allows same sex marriage.

I may be uninformed, but I do not recall Jesus addressing homosexuality. He does, however, exhort us to love, to commit, to honor those we love.

I have gotten married in Canada, but would love to be recognized by my church in some fashion....

Insufficient knowledge to answer #21 and 22.

Church should not decide who is welcome and who is not. God created people in His likeness.....did he say "except gays?"

The Church should endorse and embrace the commitment of two individuals with one another.

Marriage is a civil event in our nation as well as one that can be religious. Civil marriage and its rights and responsibilities should be equally available to all.

I responded that gays are accepted in my parish because I am now in an Episcopalian parish .. and we love and embrace our lesbian couple and bless their union

I have many LGBT friends in committed relationships. Where they live if gay marriage is an option most have opted to be married. It is my hope that the number of states allowing same-sex marriage continues to grow. My attitude has been long in coming, but my not respecting the church is loosing. I do not want it in my face, I want to get along

I have commented on this extensively above.

It's very simple. Love is love. People are not corrupted into homosexuality. The Catholic church's teaching and response to homosexuality is alienating to gay people, straight people, and unkind.

Marriage provides stability for children and legal recognition of committed relationships. We should support all committed, mature marriages.

God made them in the image and likeness of God, they are loved by God. All love is from God and cannot therefore be wrong.

Quit parsing "marriage"! A civil marriage is not a sacramental marriage in the Church's eyes, but the Church does not own the word.

This is by far the "hot topic" in todays Church. We need to welcome GLTG persons into our communities and allow them to be in full communion with the entire Church. Turning them away from the table of Christ is counterproductive.

One would think the Church would recognize the value of encouraging and supporting marriage between consenting, loving adults.

Also, many drop out of the church that rejects them.

Everyone knows what the official teaching is on GLBT. Why would anyone advertise that they are GLBT? At best they are tolerated, never mind accepted. It's ok to be GLBT as long as you don't show any affection....come on!!

We have two grandsons & two nephews who are gay.

Since I am not a member of the Catholic faith anymore specifically but accept the truth of MANY religions and spiritual practices including Catholicism, I cannot speak to having a specific parish in which an attitude one way or the other would be noted as in #21 and not having discussed church doctrine with any of my gay friends, I don't have the ability to speak for them on this issue as in #22.

Jesus taught love and compassion. Those without sin... Love neighbor....

Being the parent of a child born bi-sexual gives me a perspective unavailable to men who do not have children, priests. The love I feel for my child is unconditional, in every sense of that word. She happens to find both sexes attractive, in a world where that is increasingly accepted. I KNOW without a doubt she is loved by Jesus and the power we call 'God'. I could care less what the Church teaches. I want her to be allowed to marry whomever she falls in love with and chooses to share her life with, and bring children into that union - just like me.

I don't believe there are exceptions to "we are made in the image and likeness of God". Gays, lesbians, women are all equally made in the image and likeness of God.

Ask yourself - what would Jesus do? He would welcome love in all its forms. Punish abusive priests, not good Catholics who happen to be gay.

Though our parishioners accept and welcome LGBT individuals, our most recent 2 priests do not. Whatever makes stronger families is good for society. Same sex marriage does make stronger families.

Frankly this is a matter of civil law and not our business unless the party is Catholic.

Marriage really ought to be looked as a sacramental contract between two consenting individuals who have the capacity to make such a contract. If marriage is only for the productions of children, then what about infertile couples, couples past the child bearing age, etc. I can go on with examples. Let us be real and look hard at who loves the Lord.

Mt parish - the Franciscan Renewal Center - is the most open and loving parish in the Diocese; and probably not typical.

I have seen many GLBT couples in long term relationships that exhibit the same or more love, mutual concern and thriving families with children as heterosexual marriages.

When is a committed and exclusive love relationship of 30+ years NOT a marriage? How are homosexuals NOT created that way by a loving God?

True life experience, biology and love (the true natural law) will ultimately trump the dogma of the church

Get real Vatican. How can you expect gays to have any respect for an organization that calls them all "intrinsically disordered." Then there is the hypocrisy of a clerical culture filled with gays who preach the party line but don't follow it.

I think that Jesus Christ is loving and forgiving and accepting of all the people that are in this world, and that there are no exceptions to that rule. Exclusiveness, such as that taught by the Pharisees in the Bible would fit right in with today's Catholic Church. The hypocrisy of the Holy See, the Curia and the Vatican in prior years, at least, makes it impossible to take seriously the "teachings" of this group of men who think they can interpret the mind of God, when too many are homosexual and pedophiles and criminals in their own right. Their example speaks for itself.

If I had a gay child I would want them to find love and a life partner just as straight children. A committed relationship based on love and respect is a good thing. I believe we are all made in the image and likeness of God. Gay people do not choose to be gay they are born gay. Being gay cannot be prayed away.

Our diocese has an organization of priests, religious, and laity that have presentations on these issues (attended by hundreds) leading to an understanding of people dealing with these issues. The elephant in the living room issues are now being addressed, forming adult consciences.

God created me this way. God is love. Why would God who is all good create humans who would not be allowed to love and be loved? God wouldn't....

I have been made in the image and likeness of God.

I have friends that have been together for longer than my husband and I have. They are in a loving committed relationship, living the life that I believe God has blessed them with.

Let's be consistent with definitions, esp. if we believe in Natural Law...

Christian marriage is a relationship rooted in Christ, not the gender of those involved.

Why the need for calling the union a "Marriage"? A civil union that gives the couple all the legal rights seems like it should be enough.

I have two couple/friends who are gay (male) who have been in very long term and faithful relationships. They are productive people in their respective communities. We regularly enjoy social interactions with one of the couples, and find them and their mixed guests (homo-and heteral- sexual) delightful to be around. As a senior manager and a world class university I had gay men on my administrative staff. These are god's people as well as anyone, and I fully disagree with both B16 and JP II - these folks are different, but they are not "intrinsically evil", nor is their relationship or their sexual activities done in the privacy of their lives sinful in the eyes of God, IMHO.

Those that I have known about were forced out of the church because of the pastor's treatment of the children when they tried to register for school. Outrageous in my opinion.

I have friends that have been together for longer than my husband and I have. They are in a loving committed relationship, living the life that I believe God has blessed them with.

Let's be consistent with definitions, esp. if we believe in Natural Law...

Christian marriage is a relationship rooted in Christ, not the gender of those involved.

Love is love. Why in the world would we shun loving relationships in favor of hateful and non-inclusive rhetoric. That seems counter-intuitive to me.

#21 We used to welcome them and had several gay/lesbian couples in our parish. Since the super-conservative priest arrived in 2007, they have left our parish. Not aware of any in our parish now.

Gay people in our Church may be "accepted" but they are shunned when it comes to teaching in the parish, or encouraged to accept leadership roles. I find the "person in the pew" does not have a problem with gay persons or couples...but the leadership does.

It is difficult to comment on exactly what they do in regard to the Church without doing a survey. I do not understand why the church hierarchy are so concerned with the sexuality of this. Christ never spoke against homosexuality.

How can we condemn those whom God has given homosexual desire to living with lonely flesh? Some do marry and have families. Some do not and can be promiscuous--not different from heterosexuals. If the Church does not wish to witness their commitments, then at least let them have civil marriage without interference, and support them in their commitments and family living and loving. LGBT persons are called and gifted and should be honored as loved by God and many in the communities.

Human beings should not be shunned and excluded because their biology has made them different. The Church needs to change its ways regarding this or they will lose more and more young people who are much more accepting of same sex relationships. Our kids all have friends who are gay and do not consider them any different than themselves.

I understand the sexual anomaly associated with gay unions, but I also know that there are sexual aberrations in hetero-sexual unions as well.

It's a difficult area but I mostly know that when I encounter gay people, I see kindhearted individuals who are caring and functional just like anyone else. Love your neighbor.

Church is too hung up on the world "marriage" but do understand how we need to promote more understanding of the "sacrament of marriage"

Marriage is between a man and a woman. However, I believe in civil unions with all the benefits of married status...

I am still grappling with the whole issue.

Should this really even be a question anymore? People should be allowed to love one another. If God is love, and two people love one another, how can we claim that their relationship is wrong in God's eyes?

These children of God deserve the same rights and respect as all children of God.

it is the word MARRIAGE that i object to because it has always had a certain meaning....a man and a woman.....so that is a hard hurdle to jump over.

How can someone who answers no to 18 through 20 reasonably answer questions 21 & 22. I assume some of the people who are active in various organizations or ministries in my parish are LGBT, but I never asked and don't care.

Same sex marriage is an oxymoron.

My concept of marriage is a sacred union of a male and female. But the world is quickly changing in the acceptance of this concept and feel it is a personal decision.

The relationship should not be a cause for not being welcome in a Catholic Church.

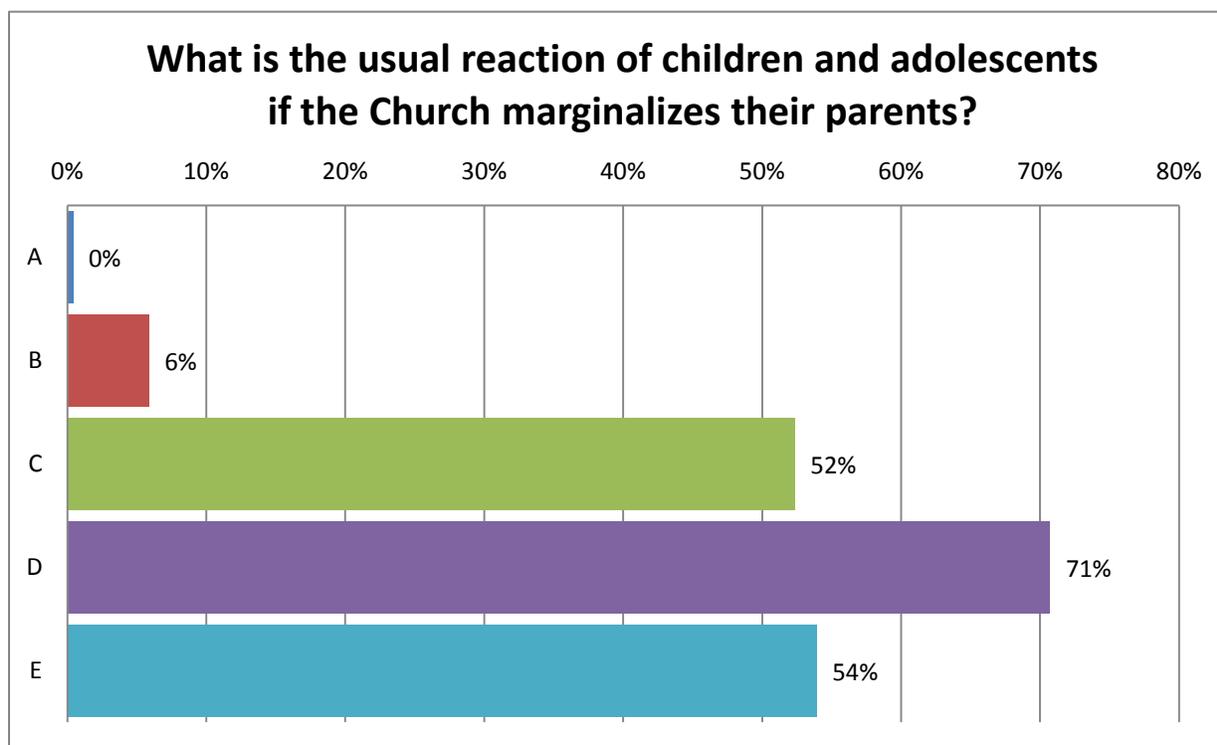
## 6. The Education of Children in Irregular Marriages

### The Vatican asked:

- a) What is the estimated proportion of children and adolescents in these cases, as regards children who are born and raised in regularly constituted families?
- b) How do parents in these situations approach the Church? What do they ask? Do they request the sacraments only or do they also want catechesis and the general teaching of religion?
- c) How do the particular Churches attempt to meet the needs of the parents of these children to provide them with a Christian education?
- d) What is the sacramental practice in these cases: preparation, administration of the sacrament and the accompaniment?

### We Asked:

**24. What is the usual reaction of children and adolescents if the Catholic Church marginalizes their parents because the parents are in an irregular marriage? (Select all that apply)**



### Legend:

(A) They embrace the Catholic Church and its teachings	1	0%
(B) They support and encourage their parents to participate in the Church	15	6%
(C) They ignore the Catholic Church and its teachings	134	52%
(D) They drop out of the Catholic Church and search for an accepting denomination	181	71%
(E) They develop hostility toward the Catholic Church	138	54%

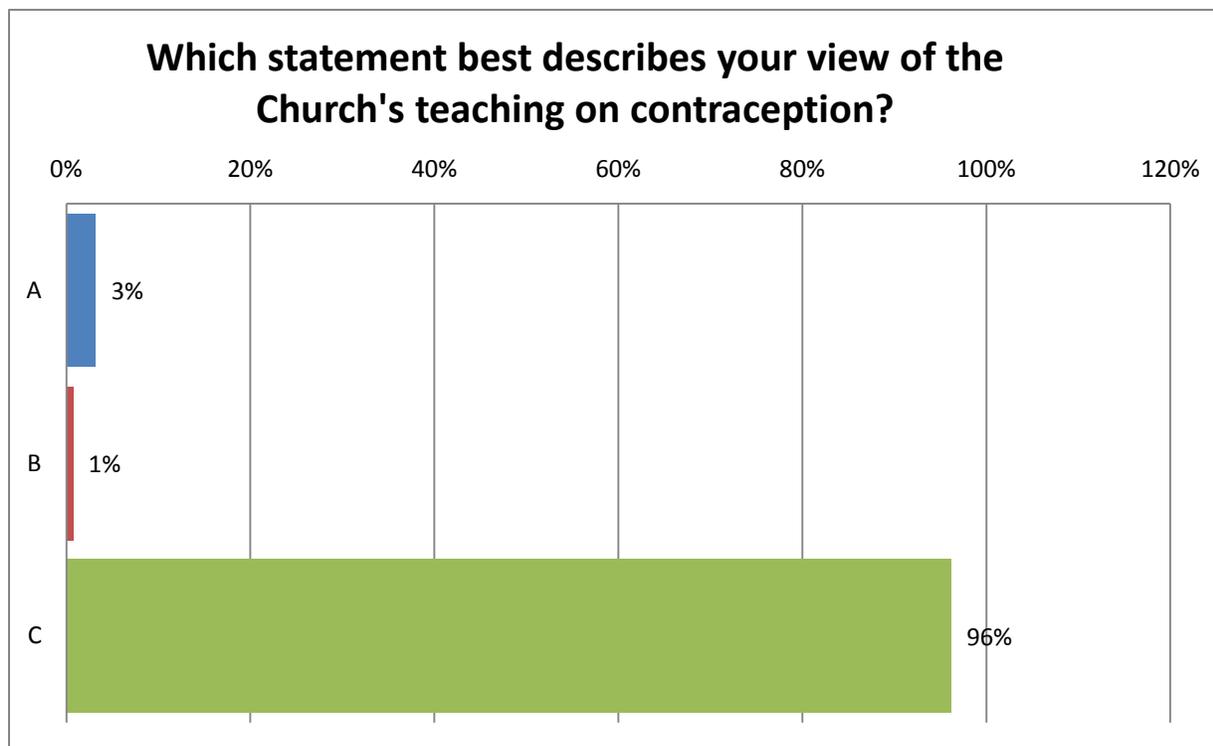
## 7. The Openness of the Married Couple to Life

### The Vatican asked:

- a) What knowledge do Christians have today of the teachings of Humanae vitae on responsible parenthood? Are they aware of how morally to evaluate the different methods of family planning? Could any insights be suggested in this regard pastorally?
- b) Is this moral teaching accepted? What aspects pose the most difficulties in a large majority of couple's accepting this teaching?
- c) What natural methods are promoted by the particular Churches to help spouses put into practice the teachings of Humanae vitae?
- d) What is your experience on this subject in the practice of the Sacrament of Penance and participation at the Eucharist?
- e) What differences are seen in this regard between the Church's teaching and civic education?
- f) How can a more open attitude towards having children be fostered? How can an increase in births be promoted?

### We Asked:

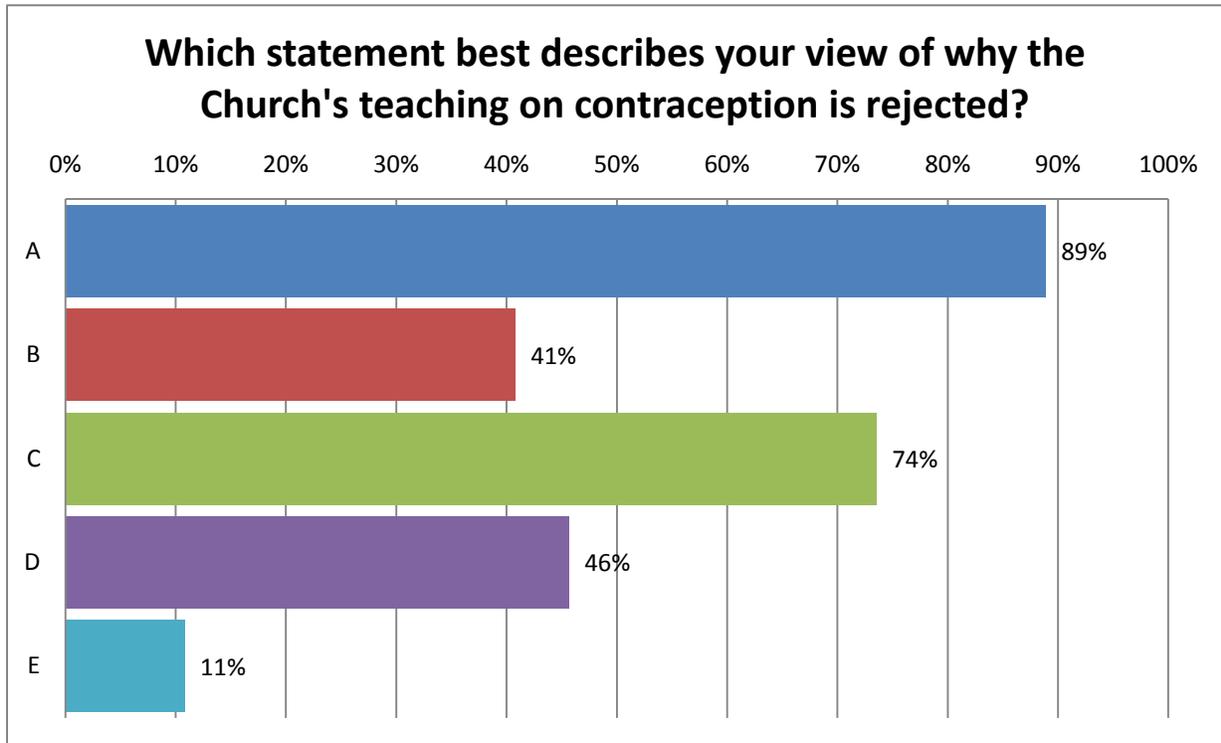
**25. The Catholic Church teaches that except for natural family planning (periodic abstinence from sexual intercourse) all forms of artificial birth control and contraception are sinful and morally unacceptable. Which statement best describes your view of this teaching?**



### Legend:

(A) I agree with this teaching	9	3%
(B) I am not aware of this teaching	2	1%
(C) I am aware of and understand this teaching but disagree with it	274	96%

26. Several surveys indicate that a majority of practicing Catholics reject the Churches' teaching about the use of artificial birth control and contraception. Which of these statements best describes your view on why this teaching is rejected? (Select all that apply)



**Legend:**

(A) The teaching is impractical and unrealistic in married life	255	89%
(B) The use of natural methods causes tension and disagreements in a marriage	117	41%
(C) The teaching is based on faulty assumptions about marriage and sexuality	211	74%
(D) Natural Family Planning methods are too difficult and unreliable	131	46%
(E) The teaching is not understood	31	11%

**Comments:**

26. Several surveys indicate that a majority of practicing Catholics reject the Churches' teaching about the use of artificial birth control and contraception. Which of these statements best describes your view on why this teaching is rejected?

Most do not take this teaching seriously...just ignore it and discern for themselves what they need to do.

"The majority?" Over 90% is more than a majority

The sexual union of married couple is also about imparting Grace in their marriage, not just about procreation! NFP methods are usually not understood.

Look at the facts since the publication of Humanae Vitae

I know from my Catholic ancestors that this teaching has been obsolete for generations.

Too bad people cannot openly say they practice birth control, because if they did I would say 98% either do or have practiced birth control.

We intervene with the body's natural functions in many ways that the Church endorses. The intervention to stop conception should also be allowed. The acceptance of "natural" family planning shows that limiting the number of children is acceptable.

The teaching undervalues the sexual relationship in marriage; it is not solely or even principally for reproduction.

I was not aware of this when I got married the first time. My feelings on contraception and birth control have changed over the years. I used birth control. But looking back, I'm sorry I did and didn't follow church guidelines

This was not addressed by Christ and is not a concern to me.

I have read Humanae Generis and it was not convincing in 1969 and is less now

re B - abstinence from sexual relationships for birth control purposes may damage the marital bond by separating spouses at times when they are most in need of the loving affirmation that intimate relationship provides.

NFP leads to overpopulation. Period.

I understand the teaching from celibate males. They can practice it themselves. It had no place in our marriage.

Not using contraception when you don't want a family is stupid.

...Again this hierarchical conviction that "if these ignorant peasants just understood what we're condescending to order them to do...."

This may have been acceptable 100 to 200 years ago when medical science was not able to save ailing children. Many did not survive beyond the age of 5.

I believe I have commented on this question many times within this survey. Doctrine has not kept up with facts supported by science. You can't ask people to believe what they know is not true. Faith is different than belief.

It's NONE of your business!!!!

It is completely irresponsible not to embrace safe sex and family planning.

How is "natural family planning" truly different from contraception. They are both means of birth control.

Celibate theologians are not qualified to speak on the topic. All the baptized are members of the Church and the *sensus fidelium* is a far better source of the Church's teaching.

Married priests would understand the answer to this question and it would not have to be asked. Also, bringing multitudes of children into a family is not being a good steward of the planet, the family, etc.

The teaching is more than impractical and unrealistic. It is unsubstantiated and dishonest.

The decision is private...people should use informed consciences.

Spent a lot of time thinking about this answer...time evolve!

Not every sexual act must be open to procreation.

Vatican: Get out of the people's bedrooms, and get your priests and bishops to keep their zippers shut, if you get my meaning!

Seriously, most Catholics I know practice birth control. The Catholic Church is fooling itself if it thinks couples do not use birth control. Does the Catholic Church really want families to have kids they cannot take care of?

Spent a lot of time thinking about this answer...time evolve!

Not every sexual act must be open to procreation.

We live in a world wherein more than half of the population is living in poverty or starving. It is irresponsible to risk having more children than you can handle. It's selfish.

Church teaching on contraception is wrong. Sex in marriage is unitive as well as procreative and the church should recognize that. The results of the church ban on contraception in the 3rd world borders on evil.

This thinking must change in the church - artificial birth control is just fine - better than having thousands, if not, millions of unwanted kids running around with no family or financial support living in poverty - that is absolutely unacceptable

This was the form of contraception we used in our marriage. It was definitely inconvenient and calculated. The times we ignored it were when our children were conceived. Sexuality is a strong emotion in marriage and in life!

The teaching is based on faulty philosophy (Aristotelian/Thomistic) and not on any truly grounds in revelation. Need rethinking.

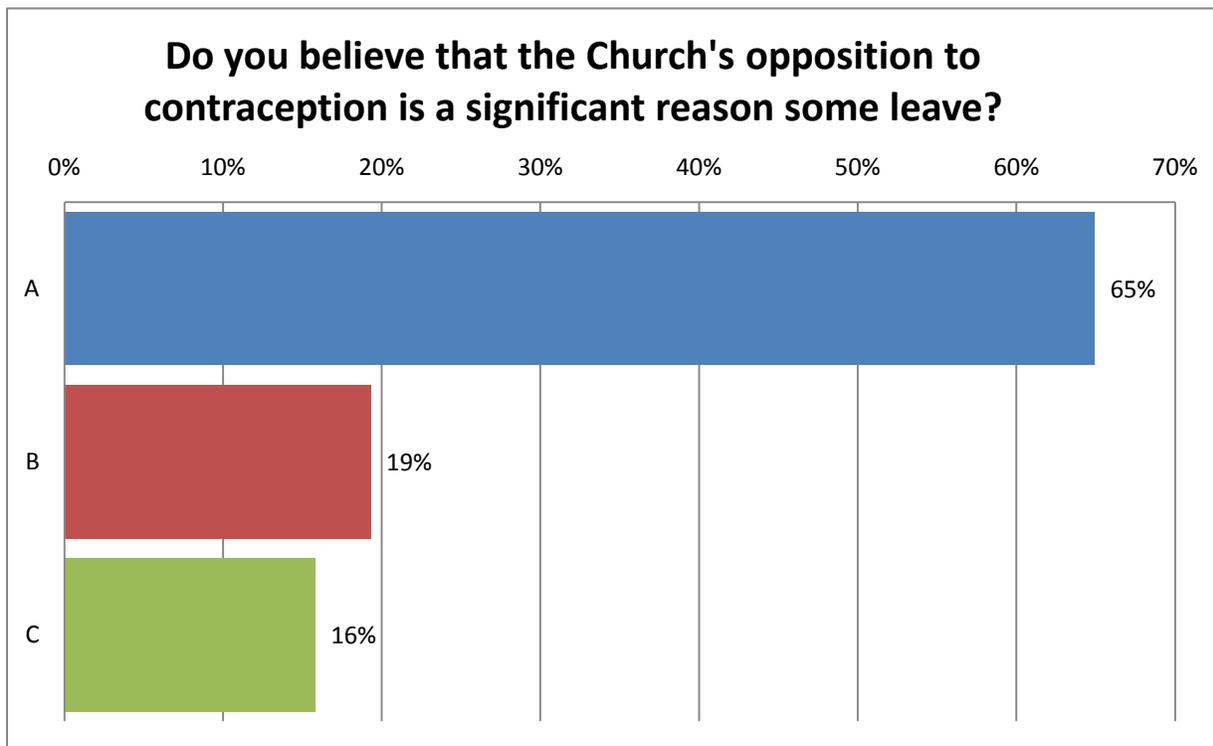
A bunch of celibate [hopefully] men made this decision. Need I say more.

People reject it because it is inconvenient. I did, but I recognized it and took responsibility for my action.

The recommendations of the group appointed to study contraception were ignored and the pope went ahead with *Humani Vitae* -- the teaching was never accepted.

The Church's view or doctrine is a pretended doctrine in reality. It is a manifestation of the 19th century anti-science view of religion. It is also impractical and irrelevant.

**27. Do you believe that the Church's opposition to artificial birth control and contraception is a significant reason why many choose to drop out of the Catholic Church?**



**Legend:**

(A) Yes	185	65%
(B) No	55	19%
(C) Unable to offer an opinion	45	16%

**Comments:**

27. Do you believe that the Church's opposition to artificial birth control and contraception is a significant reason why many choose to drop out of the Catholic Church?

Most just ignore the teaching.

A major split after Humanae Vitae.

Most of the practicing Catholic couples I know are comfortable with their decision to use artificial birth control, and don't see it as a stumbling block in attending Mass or receiving communion.

And the maintenance of litigation opposing the employer mandate concerning employees at schools, hospitals and other quasi-public entities run by the Church only underscores how badly out of touch Church leadership is on this issue.

The churches position is irrelevant at this time

More than any other single thing this teaching has caused the Church to lose its authority. Many find the teaching unbelievable.

My mother struggled desperately with this, after four children--the fourth being seriously handicapped--because she and my father had a normal healthy sexual relationship. It was a horrible choice: mortal sin or the risk of another pregnancy.

I know many that stay in the Church and just ignore the teaching but others leave

I think many remain and ignore the opposition to birth control. They feel in good conscience they are doing the right thing.

I don't think it's good, but I do believe that's what's happening

see above statement. I have a loving relationship with my wife, married 28 years, children went to catholic school never cheated on my wife and we always have sex.

No one with any sense pays any attention to it anyway.

Among other reasons (see above)

I think that most people probably ignore this teaching. Look at the size of families in parishes.

Yes, because it's so archaic. But mostly, I think people just ignore it and keep their medical decisions private. I do suspect that many simply ignore the teaching and continue to practice their faith for its deeper intrinsic value.

I believe most couples just ignore this ridiculous teaching.

Marriage is so much more than breeding offspring. I am the product of a huge Catholic family, my parents loved us kids; however we were encouraged to have small families when we married.

I'm gay, remember? Beats the hell out of me.

Priests sexually abuse children, some priests practice a gay life, and the church worries about a married couples birth control. Sorry but can't accept anything the church teaches about birth control.

I suspect most just ignore the teaching as irrelevant to them.

I believe this teaching is completely ignored.

The Church appears as a joke in modern society. Therefore, persons who wish to belong to the Church just ignore this part of inclusion.

I absolutely believe this!

It seems that many choose to ignore the Church's position.

It was one of the biggest factors in our choice not to be married in the church. That and the church's treatment of women as second class citizens.

It is part of the reason thinking people come to view the church as irrelevant.

I tend to assume so.

It seems that so many people just ignore this rule.

They don't drop out just continue using artificial birth control as is best for them.

No, I think most couples view the teaching as irrelevant and ignore it.

People have left for many reasons, I'm sure this is among them.

Yes, but that was only the tip of the iceberg.

Along with marginalization of women, financial corruption, the sex abuse scandal.....

Young people are not willing to put up with all the restrictions that make no sense in this world with information at their fingertips! And with more loving options available around the corner.

they just ignore the church

In today's age, many just disregard the teaching. I doubt they drop out for this reason. In my early days, they would have dropped out!

The Church has shown its lack of sensitivity to the struggle couples are forced to make. And women are the most affected.

People just conclude that the male Church doesn't understand and don't care

People have already made up their mind that there is nothing wrong to practice birth control and being a member of the Church--if they wish

I think many couples prayerfully make a decision to disregard this teaching.

I think that educated people, who make a decision based on finances and social awareness are offended by the church's judgement.

The Church ignores hardship and impact of population explosion that is not economically sustainable individually or on a world-wide basis.

The teaching is simply ignored by persons who have prayerfully and carefully formed consciences on this issue.

Or they ignore.

I don't think that they drop out of the Church. They just ignore that teaching because the position is not realistic in this day.

I think that educated people, who make a decision based on finances and social awareness are offended by the church's judgement.

In the USA, the vast majority of practicing Catholics ignore this teaching because they think it is wrong.

Most Catholics I know do or have practiced birth control. They made up their own mind as to what would best work for them.

--and that is because we know most practicing Catholic couples do practice contraception (sensus fidei), but we don't know enough about how strong the belief is in others that they must obey or leave.

Also, many do not find "spiritual nourishment" and programs that are offered are not always were attended...life is "too busy"...

but it is such an old issue....lay people are doing what they want. the church needs to get out of the bedroom  
It is a convient excuse.

I think most people just ignore the Church's opposition and choose to follow their own consciences.

I feel that most Catholics use birth control other than NFP ... I think it is good for the church to state preferences but also talk about the individual making decisions with informed conscience

## 8. The Relationship Between the Family and the Person

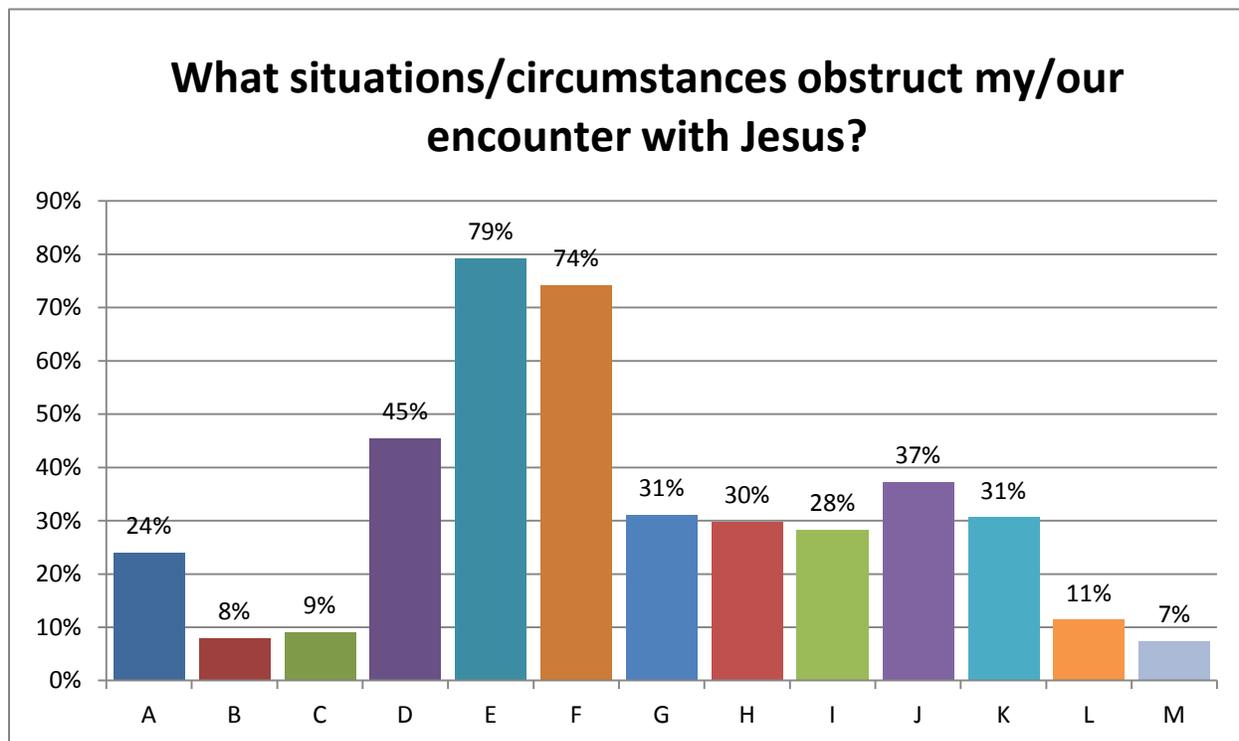
### The Vatican Asked:

a) Jesus Christ reveals the mystery and vocation of the human person. How can the family be a privileged place for this to happen?

b) What critical situations in the family today can obstruct a person's encounter with Christ? c) To what extent do the many crisis of faith which people can experience affect family life?

### We asked:

**28. What situations and/or circumstances in my life experiences or my family's life experiences obstruct my/our encounter with Jesus, the Christ?** (Select all that apply)



### Legend:

(A) Lack of a near-by and welcoming faith community	61	24%
(B) Lack of a parish priest	20	8%
(C) Lack of access to the Eucharist and the other sacraments	23	9%

(D) Lack of models that encourage and support spiritual growth	116	45%
(E) Antiquated or incomprehensible theology and doctrines	202	79%
(F) Clerical abuse of power	189	74%
(G) Poverty and injustice	79	31%
(H) Wealth and social privilege	76	30%
(I) Social rejection and discrimination	72	28%
(J) Power, prestige and status	95	37%
(K) Child abuse and neglect	78	31%
(L) Substance abuse and mental illness	29	11%
(M) Illiteracy and lack of education	19	7%

#### Comments:

#### 28. What situations and/or circumstances in my life experiences or my family's life experiences obstruct my/our encounter with Jesus, the Christ?

The support for my own spiritual growth has never come from my church.

Perhaps the Church should accept that the laity have gifts, in many cases are educated, and feel that they are not respected.

For me the items marked have had a negative effect on me and my life experiences--though they may be totally different for other people.

St. Patrick's Church in Seattle is all inclusive! We have a Larsh community, Deaf Community with amazing signing - Many parish members sign right along, great choir and an amazing participation by the parish members!

The Church and it's conservative members have been very quiet on every aspect of life except abortion, contraception and gay marriage. It's way past time to address the rest of the population and give help, nurturing and love to ALL HUMAN LIFE.

We are lacking good role models at the diocese an level. Thank Godforsaken Pope Francis and Our parish priests. Our bishop and his pets prefer to minister to the privileged and preach the Republican talking points rather than following Christ's example.

I learned 50 years ago to ignore priests and bishops who had nothing to say. I venerate the ones who have led me to Christ.

None of the above are applicable to my situation.

Wealth and Social prestige refer to the life style of the largely foreign born clergy in the parishes. Ditto illiteracy and lack of education.

In my practice as a chaplain, I have seen all of these obstruct relationship with a faith or with God.

Coercing people to vote based on two or three certain issues will only anger them away from the church. I believe Leon Rosselson said it best: "We will not worship the God they serve, the God of greed who feeds the rich while poor men starve."

J - the presence and use of power by the hierarchy, and their concern to maintain their status

My own sin.

This question ought more properly, I think, to ask about situations and circumstances that obstruct involvement with the Church, which is very different (unfortunately) from experiences of and encounters with Jesus.

The church should be about building from the ground up (grassroots) instead of hierarchical.

I do not feel equipped to respond any further here.

Lack of equality of women is a major problem.

Among my family members, I think it is just spiritual laziness.

We need more saints who were lay people not Religious (Popes or heads of religious orders) Saints who were lay people can point the way (at least for me) on how to be a better Christian. Becoming a saint has become a political game

I am grateful for the religious women who have provided many years of spiritual growth, nurturing during my many years as an adult.

My own children lived their lives with 2 parents working full time for the Church--Parish, Diocesan and Mission. They all have Faith, and 3 are involved in a Catholic Parish, 1 part time involved and 2 are still looking for a community!

This is not how I feel,,but I'm 86 and been on thie journey a long time and I try to love &forgive .

None Of the above as I have no problem described by any of the above.

Deep spirituality is available to all people. Care for others and generosity are the foundation of a deepening connection to Jesus teaching. I don't need a priest to knock at the door for me.

Matbe not a lack of education but a very poor education for the vocation of a pastoral person in the 21st century

I face no obstructions.

I do not have that problem

I thank you, Holy Father, for being so non-threatening, detail oriented, and done with love and interest.

Empower women within the Church; embrace all loving Catholics.

Lack of a pastoral parish priest: many parish priests are cold, rigid and self-righteous clerics

There is a need for Catholics to see Jesus Christ in their brothers and sisters in the community they live in. Many priests do not see Jesus Christ in lay people. They are only interested in "their cash cows".

Circumstances in today's world are legion.

Nothing obstructs my encounter with Jesus. I don't need the church to find Him.

Gay marriage is the only issue

My parish is open and welcoming - stressing the love of Christ, and spending little or no time on Magisterium pronouncements

Add lack of lay involvement in real governance and hierarchical hypocrisy in covering up crimes against children for centuries.

It may be too late to effect the needed changes. and change will never come from the top. the hierarchy's moral credibility is gone. the church will only change if reforming lay leadership has a key role in the change. i don't see this happening.

I do not lack access to Eucharist, despite having left the institutional church. I have joined a group of disaffected catholics and we have a lay liturgy twice a month.

Catholic schooling helped me to want to be a strong catholic.

The hierarchy have still not honestly dealt with the sex abuse crisis. Priests are still being protected rather than prosecuted. They don't seem to "get it."

most women of my acquaintance are seriously alienated by Roman patriarchy, homophobia, rigidity, clericalism; prevalent anti-woman culture; and rejection of feminist spirituality

I long for a community of faith that is nonjudgemental, welcoming and joyful in their celebration of Christ's abundant blessings!

Too strong of an up bringing, perents, 16 years of Catholic School, to select any of these, believe in my own personal strength in my faith.

Encounter with Jesus is spirituality. Not a priority of the unwed fathers.

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Too strong of an up bringing, perents, 16 years of Catholic School, to select any of these, believe in my own personal strength in my faith.

Although we have a parish priest, he is largely unavailable during the week due to the tremendous work load serving 1500+ families in 2 communities (English speaking and Spanish speaking).

To my knowledge my family and I have not experienced this, but I am aware that all of the above have influenced others' relationships.

I transcend the Church in my prayer life and meeting with Jesus.

Need more interpersonal Christian communities (such as base communities) where participants can express their personal experience of the Gospel and its impact on their lives.

Fortunately my family was very engaged in church. Choices for marriage partners and differences in faiths have complicated lives for many of my nieces and nephews. Some are just indifferent..."the church does not meet my needs"...excuses for non interest

My relationship with Jesus is nurtured by my religious community not by the parish in which I worship.

## 9. Other Challenges and Proposals

### The Vatican Asked:

What other challenges or proposals related to the topics in the above questions do you consider urgent and useful to treat?

### We asked:

**29. Do you have any additional comments or observations that you would like to share?**

### Comments:

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time for realignment of the church and a return to the ideas and practices of Vatican II. Bishops need to get out and work along side the people of the church. Get out of their rarified air

When will the Church Hierarchy acknowledge EQUALITY of women?

The church needs to change or become totally irrelevant, especially in the area of birth control. Over population is killing the earth, our real mother....

After completing both ACC and this survey,  
I feel both are well done.

Both do have their inherent bias and emphasis.

They give us pause for much thought and discussion.

Thank you!

The church needs to change or become totally irrelevant, especially in the area of birth control. Over population is killing the earth, our real mother....

Please include lay men and women in discussion regarding marriage and family.

I have worked for several years at the parish and Diocesan levels. The growing trend of using more and more priests to whom English is a second language, is denying their birth country services they need, and creating confusion here.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to express my views on these matters and also for providing the opportunity to others.

I love the direct connection of the Catholic Church to Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. However, I firmly believe that sexism and elitism have long corrupted the Love that Our Lord bears for us and that they have corrupted his Word and Law.

I love my church. I feel beat down by the hierarchy! They are totally out of touch with the world!! The issue of women's role in the church is flat out disgusting ! They should be priests if ready and capable!

Come on let's be real!!

I pray that the Church may be guided to listen to the concerns of ALL the faithful, not just those few who remain in the narrow confines of what the Church has become in the last 40 years. If it does, it may grow again.

Pray for Pope Francis in this effort. It's about time the lay Catholics can participate.

In my local parish the average age from what I can see is over 50 years of age, even though we have a grammar school, I do not see many young couples attending, just the same tired old parishioners who are clinging to the old values.

I pray that Pope Francis' example spreads throughout the church. I pray that we regain our moral authority by fully including all of God's children in the church and make amends for past sins.

Good survey, but some of the 3 answer questions, select only one, were hard to answer, partly because I didn't have enough information.

Hypocrites. First take the log out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

My reactions are based on my experiences as a Catholic.

Please, please, please listen to us. Please, please, please let the English speaking world use the 1998 revision of the Roman missal. The current revision is horrible.

I'm glad these questions are being asked. We are long over due for reform in the Church. We need Vatican III!  
Thank you for offering this survey.  
Thank you for the opportunity to be regarded enough to at least express my opinion  
Go Pope Francis !

My parish priest is a helluva a guy who understands his community and has their faith, trust and loyalty. St. Anthony's parish in Missoula.

You people had better be very careful that you know what you're doing. No matter how mad you are at the Church, you better be careful for your souls' sake.

Thank you for doing this.

thanks for making this survey available for people outside Montana. I did not have time to offer any comments to the questions.

Change the garments. Francis has given us a beginning model for this simplicity.

God bless the new Pope.

I would love to come back to the Catholic Church once it has grown and made the progress it needs to.

I am writing my book "Adventures in Ministry" aka "We worked for the Church". The story of 38 years of a Family involved in Church and how our Faith has "Evolved" over the years" Real Family experience!

Thank God I have lived to see this evolution is being taken seriously by Pope Francis and a good portion of our christian/catholic community.

Thank you for the opportunity and ease of answering the questions.

I have great hope in Pope Francis.

Pope Francis is an inspiration... I am watchfully waiting to see if the Church will follow him or cleave to it's legacy of social control. It is interesting.

The community at my parish is the only thing that ties me to it at this time. I have attended my parish for over 2 decades and I love the people there. Otherwise, I would seek a spiritual home in another Christian denomination.

I am happy at this age with things as they are

There is no reason whatsoever that the Catholic Church should be anything but inclusive.

As a divorced/remarried person I feel rejected by my church and now I only attend for special occasions, weddings and funerals. I miss the liturgy particularly the Eucharist and feel a real longing to return. Too many priests are unfamiliar with the teaching of Vatican II. They see themselves as ontologically superior to lay Christians.

The message of the Church should be - Love everyone - and not a series of prohibitions based on dubious and unacceptable theology.

thanks

Get the dissenters involved before it's too late. don't just pick and choose among the laity you find congenial or acceptable. good luck!

True spirituality involves all things invisible: feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes, not superstitious religious ideas and dogma. Materialistic religious rules distract from the essence of our being and potential.

I go to church every week and I am a Eucharistic minister since 2003 but I feel that thing that is needed in every Catholic church is a welcoming attitude.

Thank you, Pope Francis for asking for the public's comments. It is nice to be included in something about the church for a change.

Go Frances! Open windows. Listen and respect the views of people and open dialogue in the Church and with other churches.

No

I would like a church that is open to all. Jesus was inclusive but the bishops often say let them be excommunicated! The clerical abuse was handled so poorly, it's a wonder people even go to a Roman Catholic church!

Keep listening to the people of God and those who can clearly present their views and experiences.

How long do we have to wait for change? Will a change in pontiffs put us back at the starting line? Why did the American bishops at first decide not to seek the input of American Catholics?

I would like a church that is open to all. Jesus was inclusive but the bishops often say let them be excommunicated! The clerical abuse was handled so poorly, it's a wonder people even go to a Roman Catholic church!

God bless Pope Francis for the chance to do this, even if nobody ever reads it. It's a good exercise for the spirit.

I have answered these questions based on my knowledge and experience and family and limited number of friends and parish relationships.

I love the Catholic Church but times have changed and like everything we must look to see what we have to tweek to make Church a warm welcoming safe place to RESPITE !

I think we need to find ways to include youths in discussion of church issues.

The church's aim should be to promote personal relationships with God. It should not aim to dictate the lives of its members. Isn't that supposed to be God's job, anyway?

I just hope everyone's voice is heard.

AND i wish that ALL the dioceses would let their people voice their concerns. IF you want truth, ask for it.