



CATHOLICS IN POLITICAL LIFE:

Challenges to Faith in Democracy

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Catholics Support Stem Cell Research

*New poll from Catholics for a Free Choice demonstrates that
Catholic voters overwhelmingly support stem cell research*

WASHINGTON, DC—With the recent death of former president Ronald Reagan from Alzheimer's and the upcoming California ballot initiative on stem cell research, it is likely that this controversial subject will continue to be an issue during this election year.

A large majority of Catholic voters (72%) support “allowing scientists to use stem cells obtained from very early human embryos to find cures for serious diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes and Parkinson's.” Strong support for this research (34%) outnumbers strong opposition (12%) by nearly three to one.

Majorities of Catholics across demographic groups support stem cell research, including Bush supporters and conservative Catholics. Those most likely to express strong support include liberals (48%) and those who do not attend mass (46%).

Even Catholics who attend mass weekly are likely to support stem cell research (56%).

The complete poll will be released **Tuesday, July 13**. It is the largest and most statistically significant poll available of Catholic opinions on 2004 election issues and recent actions of the US bishops. From June 2-10, 2004, prominent DC polling firm Belden Russonello and Stewart surveyed 2,239 Catholics, including 366 Hispanic Catholics. The survey has a ± 2.1 percentage-point margin of error.

Catholics in Political Life: Challenges to Faith in Democracy is a project of Catholics for a Free Choice designed to reveal insights into the motivations of Catholic voters as they consider the choices in the presidential campaign and to analyze how Catholics respond to the role of the Catholic hierarchy in the elections. Visit <http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/lowbandwidth/whatsnew.htm>. To obtain a copy of the results, please contact Michelle Ringuette at (202) 986-6093.

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Catholics for a Free Choice shapes and advances sexual and reproductive ethics that are based on justice, reflect a commitment to women's well-being, and respect and affirm the moral capacity of women and men to make sound decisions about their lives. Through discourse, education and advocacy, CFFC works in the United States and internationally to infuse these values into public policy, community life, feminist analysis, and Catholic social thinking and teaching.