

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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10 facts about U.S. Catholics

Catholics are one of the largest religious groups in the United States, outnumbering any single Protestant denomination. The U.S. has more Catholics than all but three other countries – Brazil, Mexico and the Philippines – according to the Vatican's 2021 Statistical Yearbook of the Church.

Here are 10 key facts about the U.S. Catholic population, drawn from Pew Research Center surveys.

1. Today, 20% of U.S. adults describe themselves as Catholics. This percentage has been generally stable since 2014. But it is slightly lower than in 2007, when 24% of U.S. adults identified as Catholic. Overall, there were about 267 million U.S. adults in 2024, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This suggests that there are roughly 53 million Catholic adults nationwide.
2. The share of U.S. Catholics who are Hispanic is rising. Currently, the Catholic population is 54% White, 36% Hispanic, 4% Asian and 2% Black. An additional 2% identify with another race. Since 2007, the share who are White has dropped by 10 percentage points, while the share who are Hispanic has grown by 7 points. This change has implications for the profile of Catholic Americans overall because Catholics from different racial and ethnic backgrounds have distinctive social and political traits.

CLICK LINK FOR THE REST OF THE ARTICLE [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org)

Top News

- 10 facts about U.S. Catholics
- Religious upbringing and childhood education
- On Capitol Hill, faith leaders mark Ash Wednesday with criticism of Trump and GOP
- Why Trump Remains African Churches' Favorite Political Leader



Ash Wednesday at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Houston. (Raquel Natalicchio/Houston Chronicle via Getty Images)

Religious upbringing and childhood education



The vast majority of Americans were raised in a religion. Fully 86% say that as children, they identified with Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, Islam or another religion. Just 13% of U.S. adults say that as children, they did not identify with any religion.

The Religious Landscape Study (RLS) shows, furthermore, that 68% of U.S. adults say they grew up attending religious services at least once or twice a month, including 56% who say they went at least once a week.

Seven-in-ten U.S. adults say they received at least some formal religious education as children, attending either a private religious school or other religious education programs such as Sunday school or CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine). This includes 35% of Americans who received a lot of formal religious education (seven or more years attending either type).

In addition, 45% of Americans say religion was very important to their family when they were children.

The survey shows a clear relationship between people's religious upbringing and how religious they are now. People raised in highly religious families are more likely to be religious themselves as adults. [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org)

On Capitol Hill, faith leaders mark Ash Wednesday with criticism of Trump and GOP

In overlapping demonstrations and events on Capitol Hill, faith leaders and Democratic lawmakers gathered on Wednesday (March 5) for a day of advocacy for the poor and the vulnerable, marking Ash Wednesday with prayer and protest against President Donald Trump's salvo of executive orders and the Republican-led budget proposal making its way through Congress.

Outside the U.S. Supreme Court, the Rev. William Barber, co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, was surrounded by a large crowd of Jewish, mainline Christian and Black Protestant clergy in full vestments carrying an open letter calling for repentance and activism. Barber railed against what he said were the administration's efforts to undermine the 14th Amendment.

"We write today because we are clear that the only way that wannabe kings can be kings is if we bow," he told the crowd at the rally, which was organized by Repairers of the Breach. "But bowing is not in our DNA. It is not in our souls, it is not in our spirits, and we will not bow."

[religionnews.com](https://www.religionnews.com)



The Rev. William Barber speaks during an Ash Wednesday demonstration against the Trump administration on Capitol Hill, March 5, 2025, in Washington. (RNS photo/Jack Jenkins)



A crowd listens to the Rev. William Barber during an Ash Wednesday demonstration against the Trump administration on Capitol Hill, March 5, 2025, in Washington. (RNS photo/Jack Jenkins)

Why Trump Remains African Churches' Favorite Political Leader



President Trump and Elon Musk

The 45th (and now 47th) President of the United States, Donald Trump, soon after his inauguration nearly two months ago, signed an executive order which suspended foreign aid. This affected all the USAID projects across the world.

Africa, a major beneficiary of USAID in health, agriculture and other sectors has been hit hard by the [ban](#) as essential life saving programs stop and thousands are rendered jobless. Uncertainties to [PEPFAR](#), a U.S. State Department program, projects supporting thousands affected by HIV/AIDS has taken an emotional toll to the majority of countries.

Amid all these concerns, churches across Africa still hail Trump as a God-fearing world leader.

During his first term, Trump, speaking at 2017 U.S.-Africa Summit in Washington D.C. pronounced Namibia as Nambia, made headlines for not being too concerned to know the continent's history. In other instances, Trump made pejorative remarks about Africa. At the start of Trump's second term, Africa seems to have forgiven him. Many think Trump remained a better choice than former Vice President Kamala Harris.

In fact, Trump's [popularity has remained high](#) in countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and Zimbabwe, due to his connection to Christianity.

Although Harris was seen as more African-friendly, many churches across the continent felt uneasy about her left-wing political positions and advocacy of LGBTQ rights and abortion. Trump's political positions are aligned with the underlying Pentecostal and evangelical beliefs of many Africans.

Religion expert Shingai Mapiye said Trump's perceived perception that he supports White supremacy is of concern, but his other policy positions fit well to the African church.

"The concern of churches on the continent has been on issues of morality and it is those things the U.S. President has hit head on. US-Africa relations are not only economic and political but also social which turn to influence communities of the former through NGOs,"

Mapiye said, "So, by President Trump giving clarity on gender and abortion issues, he gained love from the church despite challenges in aid freeze."

While the president takes a beating on social media for his USAID cuts, African pastors are silencing those blaming Trump for it.

"President Trump is doing what must be done for the good of his country," said Tinashe Hungwe, a cleric in Zimbabwe. "It is high time to make our governments accountable and provide for their people not to blame the U.S."

Abortion remains a major concern

With the majority of churches in Africa upholding an anti-abortion position in connection with Christian doctrine, they have supported the Trump administration on the issue. Over time, churches have blamed Western-backed Civic Society Organizations for their influence on local communities when it comes to abortion.

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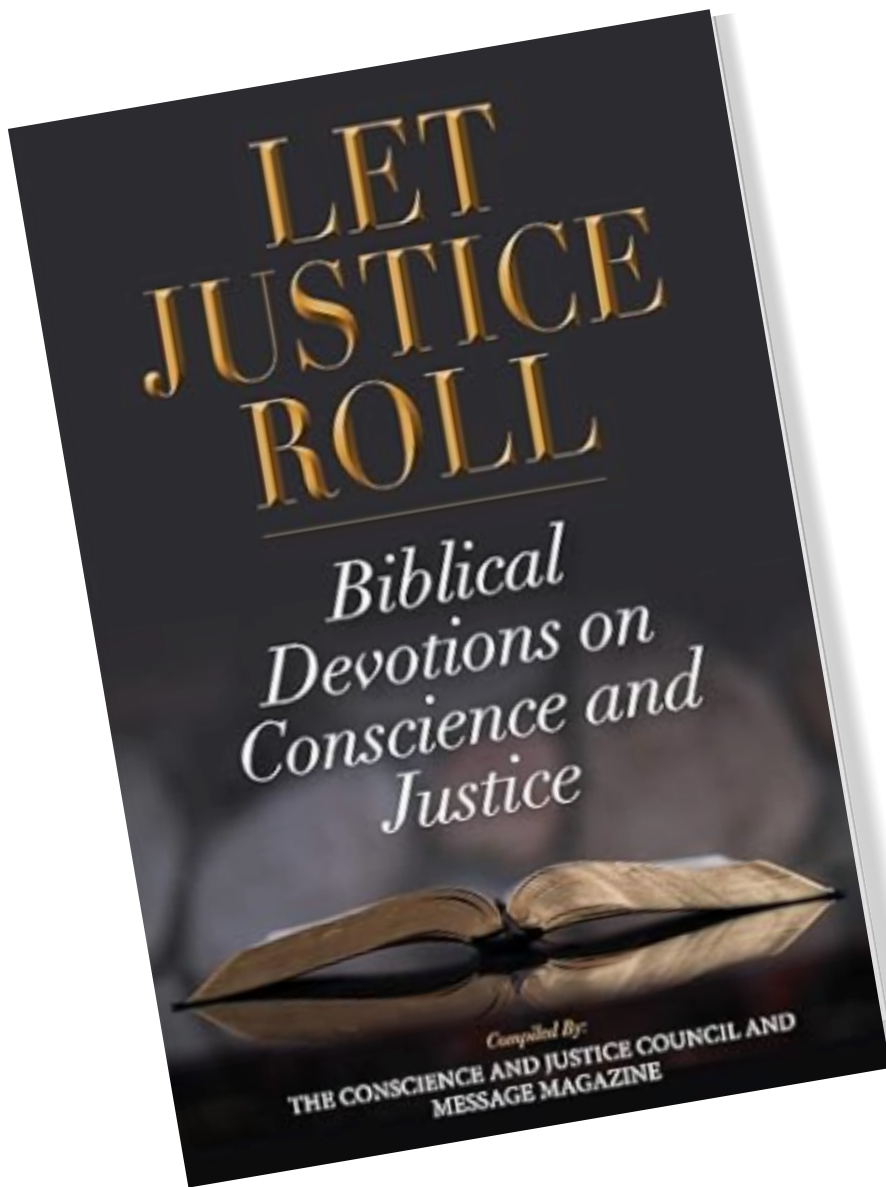


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"Let Justice Roll" is a compelling devotional that walks the reader through 365 days of biblical insights in freedom of conscience, and social justice. This compilation of articles represents the work of a nationwide network of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) advocates and other connected community activists.

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OUR PURPOSE

This newsletter aims to highlight news articles relating to religious liberty, civil rights, and social justice. The Conscience & Justice Council desires to be attuned with society so that we may change the nation by impacting one community at a time. Articles linked above are meant to provoke thought and discussion on important topics, and do not always express options or views endorsed by the CJC.

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