

Lyman A. Kellstedt¹
Wheaton College
United States of America

Original scientific paper
<https://doi.org/10.54561/prj1702227k>

Date received: June 15, 2023
Date accepted: June 29, 2023

Brian Newman²
Pepperdine University
United States of America

CATHOLICS AND IMMIGRATION: CHURCH LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES AND THE VIEWS OF A DIVERSE LAITY

Abstract

This article examines the viewpoints and policy perspectives of leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States concerning immigration. We find that over time they tend to hold moderate to liberal views and recommend policies that tend to mimic those of the Democratic Party rather than those of the Republican Party. We contrast these views with those of Catholic laity and find that there is a disconnect. In particular, White Catholics tend to hold more conservative views than church leaders and differ widely in their views from the perspectives of Latino, Asian, and African-American Catholics. Perhaps partly because of the disparate cues emanating from Catholic leadership (e.g., liberal on immigration, conservative on abortion) it appears that the Catholic laity turn to political cues to develop their views on immigration. Political forces like partisanship, ideology, attitudes toward Donald Trump, and viewing Fox News are the strongest predictors of Catholics' immigration attitudes.

Keywords: Catholics, immigration, ethnicity, race, partisanship, USCCB

Introduction

Most Roman Catholics in the United States are immigrants, children of immigrants, or grandchildren of immigrants. Immigration has been a central part of the Catholic Church's story in the U.S. since the 19th century. New arrivals of German, Irish, Italian, and Polish immigrants (among others) expanded the ranks of Catholics in the U.S. during the middle and late 19th and early 20th centuries.³ Estimates suggest Catholics made up about 1 percent of the U.S. population in 1790⁴, but about

¹ Lyman A. Kellstedt is a Professor of Political Science (Emeritus) at Wheaton College. He is the author or co-author of numerous books, articles, and book chapters in the area of religion and politics. Contact E-mail: lyman.kellstedt@gmail.com

² Brian Newman is Professor of Political Science at Pepperdine University. He has written and co-authored studies of public opinion, religion and politics, political representation, and immigration politics. He is co-author of *Minority Report: Evaluating Political Equality in America* (University of Chicago Press). Contact E-mail: brian.newman@pepperdine.edu

³ Ruth Melkonian-Hoover and Lyman A. Kellstedt, *Evangelicals and Immigration: Fault Lines Among the Faithful*, Palgrave, New York, 2019, pp. 15-20.

⁴ A.J. Gray, "Catholic education in America: Struggle and success," Archdiocese of San Francisco, February 3, 2022. Available at: <https://>

17 percent by the end of the 19th century.⁵ More recently, immigration from Central and South America and other regions contributed to the size and look of the Catholic community as immigrants reshape the racial and ethnic composition and specific religious practices of the Church.⁶ The 1960 survey of the American National Election Study (ANES) reports that Catholics made up 20 percent of the sample, 95 percent of whom were white. By the 21st century, about 60 percent of Catholics are white, about 35 percent Latino, 3 percent Black, 3 percent Asian, depending on the data source.⁷

In fact, Calfano and Ponder argue that the idea of a unified “Catholic vote” may have originated in non-Catholics’ perceptions of Catholic immigrants during the mass immigration starting in the 1840s.⁸ Systematic studies have argued against the existence of a “Catholic vote” time and again, finding considerable variation across the Catholic community in terms of partisanship and vote choice.⁹ Explanations of the evolution of Catholics from being a reliable part of the Democrats’ New Deal coalition to being a closely divided “swing vote” often point in large part to the significant increase in racial and ethnic diversity among Catholics stemming largely from immigration.

We explore Catholics’ views of immigration as a political issue. Doing so is important because immigration issues are central to current political debates in the U.S., deeply shaping party politics and the choices of voters.¹⁰ In addition, studying Catholics’ views in particular is an important way to understand Catholics’ political behavior in the U.S. more generally. As noted above, it is well established that the idea of a “Catholic vote” is problematic. This may be because Catholic social thought “does not easily map onto the ideological cleavages in America’s two-party system.”¹¹ The Church has staked out some issue positions that line up with typical Republican stances (e.g., opposition to abortion, euthanasia, cloning, embryonic stem cell research) and others that align with typical Democrats’ positions (e.g., opposition to the death penalty, support for social welfare programs to assist those in poverty, advocacy for programs to provide health care and housing). Catholics can justify a vote for either Republicans or Democrats based on this collection of teachings. As E.J. Dionne put it, “on so many of the issues in American politics, being a Catholic liberal or a Catholic conservative inevitably means having a bad conscience

www.sfarach.org/catholic-education-in-america-struggle-and-success/ (accessed June 12, 2023).

⁵ Brian Robert Calfano and Daniel E. Ponder, The Variable “Catholic” Influence on US Presidential and Abortion Politics, *Religions*, Vol. 14, No. 280, p. 4.

⁶ Russell Jeung and Jonathan Calvillo, Race, Immigration, Ethnicity, and Religion in America, *Oxford Research Encyclopedias: Religion*, 2017, pp. 3–4.

⁷ David Masci and Gregory A. Smith, “7 Facts about American Catholics,” Pew Research Center, October 10, 2018. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2018/10/10/7-facts-about-american-catholics/> (accessed June 12, 2023).

⁸ Brian Robert Calfano and Daniel E. Ponder, The Variable “Catholic” Influence. . . pp. 3–4.

⁹ Corwin E. Smidt, Catholics and the 2020 Presidential Election, *Politics and Religion Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2021.

¹⁰ Marissa Abrajano and Zoltan L. Hajnal, *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2015; John Sides, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck, *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2018.

¹¹ Brian Robert Calfano and Daniel E. Ponder, The Variable “Catholic” Influence. . . p. 4; see also Laura S. Antowiak, Levi G. Allen, and Geoffrey C. Layman, Coping with Cross-Pressures: The Seamless Garment in Catholic Political Behavior, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 42, No. S1, 2021, pp. 195–240.

about something.”¹² But, might there be more consensus among Catholics on specific political issues about which the Church speaks with a clear, consistent voice? Immigration is just such an issue. Catholic leaders – Pope Francis, the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and leaders of various Catholic organizations that relate to immigration in some way – are virtually united in support of pro-immigrant, inclusive immigration policies. However, plenty of research shows that many Catholics hold political views that differ from the hierarchy’s positions on other issues.¹³

In what follows, we summarize Catholic leaders’ teaching about immigration and engagement in the politics of immigration policy, focusing on the 21st century. We then examine the immigration attitudes of Catholics in the mass public. Despite unity among the Catholic hierarchy, we find much variation in the views of the rank-and-file. We find racial/ethnic and political forces account for much of this variation, especially ideology, views of Donald Trump, and consumption of Fox News.

Catholic Teaching and Engagement on Immigration in the 21st Century

The Catholic Church has a long and rich history of teaching and engagement on immigration.¹⁴ Much of that teaching and the application of that teaching by Catholic leaders and organizations has promoted pro-migrant positions, such that, according to Leal and Patterson, “it may be no exaggeration to state that the Roman Catholic Church has become the strongest and most powerful institutional voice for immigrants in the US.”¹⁵ Starting in 1914, the Church has celebrated the World Day of Migrants and Refugees each year. According to the *Vatican News*, it does so “as an occasion to express support and concern for people who are forced to flee their homes, to encourage Catholics worldwide to remember and pray for those displaced by conflict and persecution, and increase awareness about the opportunities that migration offers.”¹⁶ The Pope often prepares a message for the day, articulating the church’s view of immigration, migrants, immigration policy, and Christians’ responsibilities to migrants.¹⁷

In general, Catholic teaching highlights the central role of migrants and migra-

¹² E.J. Dionne, Jr. “There is No Catholics Vote – And It’s Important”, in: *American Catholics and Civic Engagement*, Margaret O’Brien Steinfelds (ed.), Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2004, p. 251.

¹³ Kenneth D. Wald, Religious elites and public opinion: The impact of the bishops’ peace pastoral, *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 1, 1992, pp. 112–143; Michael R. Welch, David C. Leege, Kenneth D. Wald, and Lyman A. Kellstedt, “Are the sheep hearing the shepherds? Cue perceptions, congregational responses, and political communication processes”, in: *Rediscovering the religious factor in American Politics*, David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.), Routledge, 1993, pp. 235–254; Gregory Allen Smith, *Politics in the Parish: The Political Influence of Catholic Priests*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, DC, 2008.

¹⁴ David Hollenbach, Welcoming Refugees and Migrants: Catholic Narratives and the Challenge of Inclusion, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 690, Issue 1, 2020, pp. 155-156.

¹⁵ David L. Leal and Jerod Patterson, House Divided? Evangelical Catholics, Mainstream Catholics, and Attitudes Toward Immigration and Life Policies, *The Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2014, p. 572.

¹⁶ Lisa Zengarini, “World Day of Migrants and Refugees to focus on right to stay,” *Vatican News*, March 21, 2023. Available at: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-03/world-day-of-migrants-and-refugees-to-focus-on-right-to-stay.html> (accessed June 15, 2023).

¹⁷ See Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc’s resource, “Papal Messages for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees”, available at: <https://www.clinidlegal.org/resources/catholic-social-teaching/papal-messages-world-day-migrants-and-refugees> (accessed June 15, 2023).

tion in the Bible's narrative (e.g., the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and their 40 years of homeless wandering in the desert; Mary and Joseph's escape to Egypt with Jesus) and emphasizes the Bible's commands to welcome, love, and care for the stranger, commands stemming from the dignity of all persons as children of God who bear the image of God.¹⁸ Various Catholic organizations (e.g., the Catholic Charities network, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., Migration and Refugee Services), attempt to carry out this vision by offering a wide array of services and support, including educational aid, legal services, job training and placement, mental health services, financial assistance (especially to retain housing and utility services), translation support, and a host of COVID-19 related services (e.g., testing, contact tracing, education, support during quarantine/isolation, food delivery to infected persons).¹⁹ In addition to providing practical support, according to the USCCB, Catholic teaching articulates three principles that pertain to immigration policy: first, "people have the right to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families," second, "a country has the right to regulate its borders and to control immigration," and third "a country must regulate its borders with justice and mercy."²⁰

Despite affirmations that nations have the right to maintain borders and regulate immigration for the common good, Catholic leaders have more often emphasized the inclusionary elements of Catholic teaching. From the early days of his pontificate, Pope Francis has been "a leading advocate for refugees and migrants."²¹ He visited Mediterranean islands where displaced people tried to access Europe, challenging Europeans to rise above "globalized indifference," and calling on Europe "to build bridges" instead of "putting up walls."²² In the U.S., Pope Francis appeared before Congress in 2015, urging not to "be taken aback by [migrants'] numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation" and calling to mind the Golden Rule of doing unto others what we would have them do to us.²³

Within the U.S., the USCCB's political engagement on immigration issues has most often supported moderate to liberal policies (though it does not explicitly advocate for an open borders' position of unrestricted immigration). According to David Hollenbach, Catholic "Church leadership in the United States continues to call

¹⁸ Fr. Thomas Betz, "Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration and the Movement of Peoples," USCCB.org, n.d. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/catholic-teaching-on-immigration-and-the-movement-of-peoples> (accessed June 15, 2023); Donald M. Kerwin, "Catholic Church and Immigration," in: *Debates on U.S. Immigration*, Judith Gans, Elaine M. Replogle, and Daniel J. Tichenor (eds.), Sage, Thousand Oaks, 2012, 429-443; David Hollenbach, *Welcoming Refugees and Migrants*. . . pp. 156-158.

¹⁹ Donald Kerwin and Daniela Aluleman, *The CRISIS Survey: The Catholic Church's Work with Immigrants in a Period of Crisis*, *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 2021, p. 271; For a broader historical summary of the ways Catholics have supported refugees and migrants, see David Hollenbach, *Welcoming Refugees and Migrants*. . . pp. 156-158.

²⁰ Fr. Thomas Betz, "Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration and the Movement of Peoples," USCCB.org, n.d. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/catholic-teaching-on-immigration-and-the-movement-of-peoples> (accessed June 15, 2023).

²¹ David Hollenbach, *Welcoming Refugees and Migrants*. . . p. 156. For a discussion of Pope John Paul II's writing on immigration, see David L. Leal and Jerod Patterson, *House Divided?*... pp. 572-73.

²² David Hollenbach, *Welcoming Refugees and Migrants*. . . p. 156.

²³ Peter Baker and Jim Yardley, "Pope Francis, In Congress, Pleads Unity on World's Woes," *New York Times*, September 24, 2015. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/25/us/pope-francis-congress-speech.html> (accessed June 15, 2023).

both Church members and the country at large to welcome those who are seeking new homes in the United States.”²⁴ The USCCB’s website states that it “opposes ‘enforcement only’ immigration policies and supports comprehensive immigration reform.”²⁵

An overview of UCSSB actions and statements in the 21st century highlights the moderate to liberal cast of its engagement, beginning with its pastoral statement, *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: United in Diversity* (2000).²⁶ Written as part of what Pope John Paul II called the Great Jubilee,²⁷ the statement offered a vision of welcoming economically, socially, linguistically diverse migrants into the unity of God’s family, emphasizing a call to conversion, communion, and solidarity. The bishops called for “a profound conversion so that we can become truly a sacrament of unity,” rejecting “the anti-immigrant stance that has become popular in different parts of our country.”²⁸ They argue “the call to communion” encourages church members “to prepare themselves to receive the newcomers with a genuine spirit of welcome.”²⁹ The call to solidarity includes specific reference to immigration policy, as the bishops reaffirmed commitments “to continue the work of advocacy for laws that respect the human rights of immigrants and preserve the unity of the immigrant family,” including “reform of the 1996 immigration laws that have undermined some basic human rights for immigrants.”³⁰

In the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which heightened various safety concerns, immigration policy shifted to prioritize security.³¹ In this context, the USCCB collaborated with Mexican bishops to write the pastoral letter, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope* in 2003. The letter built on *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us* and outlined specific policy recommendations. It reiterated the U.S.’s right to control its borders, but argued the U.S.’s enforcement-focused approach was ineffective and often harmful.³² It called for comprehensive immigration reform that would provide a path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S., strengthen family-based immigration policies, and enhance due process rights for people in the immigration system, among other policies.³³

From 2005 to 2007, the House of Representatives and Senate worked on several significant immigration bills. Various efforts to pair increased enforcement and

²⁴ David Hollenbach, *Welcoming Refugees and Migrants*. . . p. 153.

²⁵ Migration and Refugee Services/Office of Migration Policy and Public Affairs, The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Catholic Church’s Position on Immigration Reform,” August, 2013. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/churchteachingonimmigrationreform> (accessed June 15, 2023).

²⁶ NCCB/USCC, “Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: United in Diversity,” November 15, 2000. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/committees/pastoral-care-migrants-refugees-travelers/welcoming-stranger-among-us-unity-diversity> (accessed June 15, 2023).

²⁷ John M. Samaha, “Holy Year 2000: Biblical Origins of Jubilee,” *Catholic Culture*, January 1999. Available at: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=985> (accessed June 15, 2023).

²⁸ NCCB/USCC, “Welcoming the Stranger. . .,” paragraph 4.

²⁹ NCCB/USCC, “Welcoming the Stranger. . .,” paragraph 5.

³⁰ NCCB/USCC, “Welcoming the Stranger. . .,” paragraph 5.

³¹ Ruth Melkonian-Hoover and Lyman A. Kellstedt, *Evangelicals and Immigration*. . . pp. 43-44.

³² United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope,” 2003, paragraphs 78-87. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope> (accessed June 15, 2023).

³³ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano, “Strangers No Longer.,” paragraphs 63-77.

border security with a path to citizenship for unauthorized people in the U.S (with a set of requirements) and guest worker programs were introduced, debated, and ultimately failed to become law.³⁴ The Republican-led House of Representatives passed a bill (H.R. 4437, often called the “Sensenbrenner Bill”) that focused entirely on enforcement and security, but the effort failed when the Senate did not pass the bill. The bill would have criminalized some forms of assistance to undocumented immigrants, putting many Catholic organizations, employees, and volunteers at potential legal risk.

During this period, Catholic leaders fully engaged the national immigration debate, as a host of Catholic organizations participated in what it called the Justice for Immigrants Campaign, which remains in place today.³⁵ Perhaps most visible and outspoken was Cardinal Roger Mahoney of the Los Angeles Archdiocese. As Donald Kerwin put it, “Cardinal Roger Mahony electrified the US immigration reform debate” on March 1, 2006 (Ash Wednesday), when he announced that if H.R. 4437 passed, he would instruct priests and Catholic lay people under his leadership to violate the bill’s provisions that would criminalize assisting unauthorized immigrants.³⁶ Mahoney asked Catholics to devote 40 days to prayer and fasting for humane immigration laws and penned an op-ed in the *New York Times*, entitled “Called by God to Help,” clarifying and supporting his opposition to H.R. 4437 and his commitment to immigration reform.³⁷ The Justice for Immigrants Campaign initiated, encouraged, and supported a variety of actions, including the many large protests across the country in which hundreds of thousands of people participated.³⁸

During the Obama presidency, when deportations increased significantly and critics called Obama “deporter-in-chief,”³⁹ various bishops and other leaders were critical of the administration’s actions.⁴⁰ However, in 2012, Obama signed the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order protecting so-called Dreamers. The USCCB has voiced its support for DACA protections many times.⁴¹ During Obama’s presidency, the state of Arizona passed S.B. 1070, a state law that

³⁴ Ruth Melkonian-Hoover and Lyman A. Kellstedt, *Evangelicals and Immigration*. . . p. 44.

³⁵ Gaston Espinosa, “Campaigning for Justice: Religious and Legal Activism in Challenging Illegal Immigration as a Social Problem in the U.S.,” in: *Religion and Social Problems*, Titus Hjelm (ed.), Routledge, New York, 2011, pp. 122-141. Also see: <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/>

³⁶ Donald Kerwin, “Immigration Reform and the Catholic Church.” *Migration Information Source*, Migration Policy Institute, May 1, 2006, p. 1. Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/immigration-reform-and-catholic-church> (accessed May 31, 2023).

³⁷ Roger Mahoney, “Called by God to Help,” *New York Times*, March 22, 2006. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/22/opinion/called-by-god-to-help.html> (accessed June 15, 2023).

³⁸ Maria Newman, “Immigrants Stage Protests Across U.S.,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2006. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/us/01cnd-immig.html> (accessed June 13, 2023). Gaston Espinosa, “Campaigning for Justice. . .”; Donald Kerwin, “Immigration Reform and the Catholic Church”. . .

³⁹ Reid J. Epstein, “NCLR Head: Obama ‘deporter-in-chief,’” *Politico*, March 4, 2014. Available at: <https://www.politico.com/story/2014/03/national-council-of-la-raza-janet-murguia-barack-obama-deporter-in-chief-immigration-104217> (accessed June 15, 2023).

⁴⁰ Kevin Clarke, “US Catholic bishops urge end to Obama administration’s surge of deportations.” *America*, January 12, 2016. Available at: <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/us-catholic-bishops-urge-end-surge-deportation-actions> (accessed June 9, 2023).

⁴¹ E.g., United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Bishops Welcome President’s Deferred Action on Dream Eligible Youth, Urge Congressional Action on Dream Act,” June 15, 2012. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/news/2012/bishops-welcome-presidents-deferred-action-dream-eligible-youth-urge-congressional-action> (accessed June 9, 2023); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “USCCB Migration Chairman Expresses Support for Bipartisan DREAMER Efforts after White House Immigration Meeting,” January 10, 2018. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/news/2018/usccb-migration-chairman-expresses-support-bipartisan-dreamer-efforts-after-white-house> (accessed June 9, 2023).

was “the nation’s toughest bill on illegal immigration.”⁴² The bishops opposed the law⁴³, which required immigrants to carry immigration documents and gave law enforcement the authority to detain people suspected of being in the country illegally, and joined the legal fight against it.⁴⁴

The Trump presidency kept immigration issues front and center. Catholic leaders opposed the administration’s actions at virtually every turn, as did leaders from other religious traditions.⁴⁵ Three examples illustrate the Church’s continued opposition to restrictive immigration policies. In the early days of Trump’s presidency, his executive order restricting travel (often called the “Muslim ban”) was met with immediate and widespread criticism from across the religious landscape.⁴⁶ The chair of the Committee on Migration of the USCCB announced his strong opposition to the order, as did leaders from several Catholic organizations that help resettle refugees in the U.S.⁴⁷ Second, when Trump announced his administration’s effort to rescind DACA protections, the USCCB’s president, vice president, and committee chairmen published a statement declaring “cancellation of the DACA program is reprehensible.”⁴⁸ And third, in April 2018, the Trump administration announced a “zero tolerance” policy at the border, which resulted in the separation of thousands of children from their parents. The family separation policy drew widespread opposition, including from Catholic bishops.⁴⁹

In summary, the Catholic Church’s leadership in the U.S. has consistently staked out pro-immigrant policy positions that tend to align much more with Democrats’ policy proposals than those of Republicans. From writing lengthy pastoral letters steeped in references to the Bible that outline broad principles to issuing shorter, more time-sensitive and specific responses to policy decisions, to supporting protests, to providing various services to immigrant communities, the Catholic Church has consistently adopted inclusionary or permissive positions on immigration policy and rejected restrictionist policies. Given this clear and consistent perspective articulated by the Church’s leadership, does the Catholic laity hold supportive immigration attitudes? We turn to this question in the next section.

⁴² Randal C. Archibold, “Arizona Enacts Stringent Law on Immigration.” *The New York Times*, April 23, 2010. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/us/politics/24immig.html> (accessed June 9, 2023).

⁴³ Catholic News Agency, “US bishops oppose ‘draconian’ Arizona immigration law”, April 28, 2010. Available at: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/19468/us-bishops-oppose-draconian-arizona-immigration-law> (accessed June 9, 2023).

⁴⁴ Center for Migration Studies, “US Catholic Bishops Argue against Arizona’s SB 1070 on Religious Liberty Grounds.” March 29, 2012. Available at: <https://cmsny.org/us-catholic-bishops-argue-against-arizonas-sb-1070-on-religious-liberty-grounds/> (accessed June 9, 2023).

⁴⁵ Lyman A. Kellstedt and Brian Newman, “Religion and Immigration: Viewpoints of Religious Elites, Clergy, and the Mass Public”, in: *The Routledge Handbook of Politics and Religion in Contemporary America*, Jeffrey Haynes (ed.), Routledge, forthcoming.

⁴⁶ Brian Newman, “Who Supports Syrians? The Relative Importance of Religion, Partisanship, and Partisan News, *PS: Political Science & Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 4, 2018, pp. 775-781.

⁴⁷ Sarah Pulliam Bailey, “Some of the U.S.’s most important Catholic leaders are condemning Trump’s travel ban”, *The Washington Post*, January 30, 2017. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/01/30/some-of-the-u-s-s-most-important-catholic-leaders-are-condemning-trumps-travel-ban/> (accessed June 9, 2023).

⁴⁸ Emily McFarlan Miller, “Religious leaders overwhelmingly condemn Trump ending DACA,” *Religion News Service*, September 5, 2017. Available at: <https://religionnews.com/2017/09/05/religious-leaders-overwhelmingly-condemn-trump-ending-daca/> (accessed June 9, 2023).

⁴⁹ CBS News, “Catholic bishops issue scathing statement on Trump’s family separation policy”, *cbsnews.com*, June 14, 2018. Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/catholic-bishops-statement-on-trump-immigration-policies-family-separation-border/> (accessed June 9, 2023).

Catholics in the Mass Public

Given the size and importance of the Catholic community in the 21st century, it is little wonder various scholars have studied Catholics' partisanship and voting behavior.⁵⁰ Most of these studies note big changes over time in Catholics' support for the Democrats and their presidential candidates, as the share of Catholics voting for Democratic presidential candidates ranged from a high of around 80 percent voting for Kennedy in 1960 to around 40 percent voting for McGovern in 1972 and Mondale in 1984, and an almost even partisan split recently, with the exact percentages depending on data sources.⁵¹ Explanations of Catholics' evolution from being part of the New Deal coalition to a more closely divided set of voters tend to emphasize white Catholics' increasing educational attainment and improving economic status over time, the increasingly diverse racial and ethnic composition of the Catholic community, and the increasing role of partisanship in voting behavior across the U.S.⁵²

Along the same lines, studies of Catholics' issue attitudes⁵³, including a small number of studies of Catholics' views on immigration⁵⁴, also find that race/ethnicity, religious differences among Catholics, and partisanship account for Catholics' heterogeneous views. We add to extant studies of Catholics' immigration attitudes by exploring these relationships at the end of Donald Trump's presidency. It is especially important to examine immigration attitudes in this context since Trump made restrictionist rhetoric and policy a cornerstone of his campaign and tenure in office. During the Trump era, some people changed their attitudes on immigration⁵⁵, immigration attitudes became more politically salient, impacting attitudes and votes

⁵⁰ William B. Prendergast, *The Catholic Voter in American Politics: The Passing of a Democratic Monolith*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 1999; J. Matthew Wilson, "The Changing Catholic Voter: Comparing Responses to John Kennedy in 1960 and John Kerry in 2004," in: *A Matter of Faith: Religion in the 2004 Presidential Election*, David E. Campbell (ed.), Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 2007, pp. 163-179; Stephen T. Mockabee, "The Political Behavior of American Catholics: Change and Continuity," in: *From Pews to Polling Places: Faith and Politics in the American Religious Mosaic*, Matthew Wilson (ed.), Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2007, pp. 81-104; David Legee and Stephen T. Mockabee, "Catholics and the 2008 Election," in: *Religion, Race, and Barack Obama's New Democratic Pluralism*, Gaston Espinosa (ed.), Routledge, New York, 2013, pp. 79-107; Lyman A. Kellstedt and James L. Guth, Catholic Partisanship and the Presidential Vote in 2012: Testing Alternative Theories, *The Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2014, pp. 623-640; Mark J. Rozell, "Introduction: The Catholic Vote in the USA," in: *Catholics an US Politics after the 2016 Elections: Understanding the "Swing Vote"*, Marie Gayte, Blandine Chelini-Pont, and Mark J. Rozell (eds.), Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2018, pp. 1-19; Corwin E. Smidt, Catholics and the 2020 Presidential Election, *Politics and Religion Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2021, pp. 283-312.

⁵¹ Stephen T. Mockabee, "The Political Behavior of American Catholics" . . . p. 84; Brian Robert Galfano and Daniel E. Ponder, The Variable "Catholic" influence. . . p. 6.

⁵² Lyman A. Kellstedt and James L. Guth, Catholic Partisanship and the Presidential Vote . . . ; Thomas V. Feingold and James L. Guth, Catholic Partisanship in the 2020 Presidential Election . . .

⁵³ Mark M. Gray and Mary E. Bednya, "Between Church, Party, and Conscience: Protecting Life and Promoting Social Justice among U.S. Catholics," in: *Catholics and politics: The Dynamic Tension Between Faith and Power*, Kristin E. Heyer, Mark J. Rozell, and Michael A. Genovese (eds.), Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2008, pp. 75-92; Laura S. Antowiak, Levi G. Allen, and Geoffrey C. Layman, Coping with Cross-Pressures. . .

⁵⁴ Ruth Melkonian-Hoover, The Politics of Religion and Immigration, *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2008, pp. 25-31; David L. Leal and Jerod Patterson, House Divided? Evangelical Catholics, Mainstream Catholics, and Attitudes toward Immigration and Life Policies, *The Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2014, 561-587; PRRI, "Are Immigrants a Threat? Most Americans Don't Think So, but Those Receptive to the 'Threat' Narrative Are Predictably More Anti-Immigrant." January 17, 2023. Available at: <https://www.prii.org/research/are-immigrants-a-threat-most-americans-dont-think-so-but-those-receptive-to-the-threat-narrative-are-predictably-more-anti-immigrant/> (accessed June 14, 2023).

⁵⁵ Eric Kaufmann, "Americans Are Divided by Their Views on Race, Not Race Itself," *New York Times*, March 18, 2019. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/opinion/race-america-trump.html> (accessed June 14, 2023).

more than in the past, and may have encouraged people to express their negative attitudes toward immigrants more freely.⁵⁶ Thus, we need to see if the findings of earlier research still hold in this unique context.

Given consistent findings of racial/ethnic differences in Catholics' political behavior and policy views, we begin by comparing the four largest racial/ethnic groups among Catholics (see Appendix A for details). As noted previously, whites are by far the largest of the four groups with close to two-thirds of all Catholics, although this proportion will almost certainly continue to decrease in the years ahead. The Catholic contribution to the overall sample size also declined over the past sixty years from close to one-fifth of the population in 1960 to approximately one-sixth in 2020 (as per ANES 1960 and CES 2020).

When we compare the social/demographic, religious, and political characteristics of the four Catholic groups we find major differences. White Catholics are older and somewhat better educated than the other three groups. Residency patterns for white Catholics show a movement away from large cities to the suburbs and rural areas and to the South, a change from the period after World War II (data not shown). In terms of religious variables, a higher percentage of Black Catholics identify as born again and say religion is important to their lives. More Asian and Black Catholics report attending mass regularly than do whites, with fewer Latino Catholics reporting regular attendance. Politically, we find dramatic differences between white Catholics and their minority co-religionists. The former are much more Republican in both party identification and presidential voting and somewhat more likely to identify as conservatives than the other Catholic groups. Finally, in terms of watching Fox News, group differences are not as pronounced as with partisanship and voting behavior. Fox viewership is at least at moderate levels among all four groups of Catholics. We expect that the differences we have found between the four Catholic groups (in Appendix A) will carry over in terms of immigration perspectives as well.

Catholics' Views on Immigration

The 2020 Cooperative Election Study (CES) survey asked 8 immigration questions which form the basis of the analysis that follows. These items can be found in Appendix B where they are ordered from top to bottom based on the frequency of conservative responses. One column has responses for the entire sample, while another column focuses on Catholics only. Some of the items focus on border security, others on the amount of legal immigration, and others on the treatment of immigrants in the U.S. Since Catholic teaching affirms both the nation's rights to patrol its borders and the importance of welcoming strangers, it may be that Catholics' attitudes follow Catholic teaching by favoring both increased border security and

⁵⁶ Benjamin Newman, et al., The Trump Effect: An Experimental Investigation of the Emboldening Effect of Racially Inflammatory Elite Communication, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2021, pp. 1138-1159; Mustafa Sagir and Stephen T. Mockabee, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration: Was There a Trump Effect? *American Politics Research*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2023, pp. 381-396.

pro-immigrant policies. However, a principal component analysis produced just one factor for both Catholics and the total sample with loadings a bit higher for the latter. The overall sample tends to respond in a liberal to moderate pattern, while the Catholic groups are slightly more conservative. Factor loadings for the total sample are utilized in the remainder of the chapter. Zero on the scale is the sample mean; positive scores indicate more favorable (liberal) attitudes toward immigration and negative scores are more restrictive (conservative).

We compare the findings for the four Catholic groups with other major religious groups in Table 1. The results are revealing. First of all, they show major differences between White Catholics and their minority group brethren, with whites holding moderately conservative positions and with Latinos and Blacks in the liberal camp. Asian Catholics fall close to the overall sample mean. White Catholics hold views resembling those of White Mainline Protestants (their historic political opponents) and the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). In contrast, Black and Latino Catholics are more favorable toward immigration, similar to Black Protestants, Jews, and the large “Nothing in Particular” group. Latino Evangelical Protestants fall near the middle of the scale, more conservative than Latino Catholics, and resembling Asian Catholics. There are “extremes” on both ends of the measure—White Evangelicals by far the most conservative group and with Agnostics and Atheists anchoring the liberal end of the scale.⁵⁷ In sum, we find that the four Catholic groups hold somewhat moderate immigration perspectives with Whites on the conservative side and the three minority groups either in the middle or on the liberal end of the spectrum.

Table 1. Catholic Immigration Mean Scores in the Context of Other Religious Groups

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>% of Sample</i>	<i>Row N</i>
White Catholic	-.30	11.1	5676
Latino Catholic	+.26	4.1	2077
Asian Catholic	+.04	0.6	329
Black Catholic	+.34	0.9	482
White Evangelical	-.57	19.4	9923
White Mainline	-.22	8.0	4074
Black Protestant	+.32	7.0	3593
Latino Evangelical	+.05	1.7	885
Mormon	-.26	1.3	654
Jewish	+.26	1.6	812
Nothing in Particular	+.17	17.5	8999
Agnostic	+.59	5.6	2857
Atheist	+.72	6.4	3295
Total Sample	.0002	85.2	51282

Source: 2020 CES. Negative immigration mean scores are more conservative or restrictive than average while positive scores lean more liberal or inclusive than average.

⁵⁷ For the historical pattern for this finding, see Ruth Melkonian-Hoover and Lyman A. Kellstedt, *Evangelicals and Immigration* . . . pp. 105-108.

In Table 2 we examine the connections between religious variables and immigration attitudes for the four Catholic groups. We also include results for all Catholic respondents and for the total sample for purposes of comparison. Although Appendix A showed that born-again identifications are not normative for Catholics, we expect that respondents that choose this identity will be more conservative in their immigration perspectives than those who do not make this choice.⁵⁸ And that is what we find for all four groups. Note that born-again White Catholics resemble the White Evangelical religious tradition in their viewpoints (see Table 1). The CES asks how important religion is to one’s life and the difference in immigration attitudes among those who say religion is highly important and those who say religion is not as important is even larger. For all four groups, respondents who consider their religion as “very important” hold more conservative views than individuals who regard their religion as less important. Finally, regular attendance at mass is associated with conservative perspectives but the measure appears to have less impact than born-again identification or religious importance. In sum, religious variables correlate with immigration attitudes.

Table 2. Immigration Mean Scores for Catholic Groups by Religion Variables

	All	Born Again	Not Born Again	High Importance	Low Importance	High Attending	Low Attending
White Catholic	-0.30	-0.53	-0.25	-0.47	+0.11	-0.36	-0.26
Latino Catholic	+0.26	+0.08	+0.31	+0.12	+0.45	+0.16	+0.30
Asian Catholic	+0.04	-0.08	+0.07	-0.15	-0.06	-0.04	+0.13
Black Catholic	+0.34	+0.19	+0.42	+0.26	+0.61	+0.22	+0.49
All Catholics	-0.11	-0.31	-0.07	-0.27	+0.21	-0.21	-0.05
Total Sample	0	-0.38	+0.20	-0.31	+0.37	-0.25	+0.11

Source: 2020 CES. Negative immigration mean scores are more conservative or restrictive than average while positive scores lean more liberal or inclusive than average.

We turn to social/demographic links to views on immigration in Table 3. The youngest respondents in all four Catholic groups hold views that are more liberal than older respondents’ views. In addition, higher educational attainment is associated with more liberal perspectives for each of the groups, as respondents with less than a college degree hold more restrictionist views on average. We also find that females are more liberal than males in each of the Catholic racial/ethnic categories. Catholics residing in rural areas or the South have more conservative views than those who live elsewhere. Finally, comparing lower and higher income earners, white Catholics exhibit little difference, high earning Latino Catholics are more conservative, and high earning Asian and Black Catholics are more liberal. The results

⁵⁸ David L. Leal and Jerod Patterson, *House Divided* . . . pp. 576-579.

in Table 3 show a modest relationship between social/demographic variables and immigration perspectives. It remains to be seen if these results will hold up with multivariate controls.

Table 3. Immigration Mean Scores for Catholic Groups by Demographic Variables

	All	Age <30	Age >50	<College Grad	College Grad	Grad School	Male	Female
White	-.30	+.07	-.42	-.41	-.29	+.03	-.47	-.15
Latino	+.26	+.46	+.19	+.25	+.20	+.50	+.08	+.41
Asian	+.04	+.33	-.10	-.04	+.04	+.41	+.23	-.09
Black	+.34	+.24	+.45	+.27	+.53	+.53	+.25	+.43
All Catholics	-.11	+.22	-.27	-.16	-.10	+.11	-.27	+.02
Total Sample	0	+.36	-.22	-.09	+.13	+.31	-.13	+.12
	All	Rural	Suburb	City	Income <40K	Income >100K	South	Non South
White	-.30	-.51	-.29	-.17	-.25	-.28	-.41	-.26
Latino	+.26	+.14	+.21	+.29	+.31	+.02	+.16	+.32
Asian	+.04	-.63	+.11	-.01	+.07	+.14	-.17	+.10
Black	+.34	-.03	+.29	+.42	+.29	+.73	+.38	+.29
All Catholics	-.11	-.39	-.13	+.04	-.01	-.17	-.17	-.09
Total Sample	0	-.30	+.04	+.19	+.02	+.06	-.09	+.06

Source: 2020 CES. Negative immigration mean scores are more conservative or restrictive than average while positive scores lean more liberal or inclusive than average.

In Table 4, we turn to the relationships between political variables and immigration attitudes. As expected, the findings are striking. Democratic identifiers hold views far more liberal than average, regardless of racial/ethnic status, while Republicans trend strongly in the opposing direction. The findings for ideology and the presidential vote follow the same pattern. The results are particularly strong for presidential vote. Biden and Trump offered significantly differing visions for immigration and Catholics voted according to their own immigration preferences. Finally, we examined whether respondents reported watching Fox News. We did so assuming that Fox viewers would be sympathetic to the “hard line” immigration perspectives of the network. And that is what we find. Those who watch Fox News hold much more conservative views regardless of racial/ethnic status.⁵⁹ In sum, differences in immigration by political variables are dramatic, much larger than differences by religion and demographic variables documented earlier.

⁵⁹ This finding is consistent with Brian Newman, *Who Supports Syrians...* pp. 777-779.

Table 4. Immigration Mean Scores for Catholic Groups by Political Variables

	Partisanship			Ideology		Presidential Vote		Watch Fox News	
	All	Dem ID	Rep ID	Liberal	Conservative	Biden	Trump	No Fox	Fox
White	-30	+59	-87	+65	-94	+64	-94	+44	-84
Latino	+26	+61	-58	+68	-35	+66	-77	+67	-39
Asian	+04	+53	-62	+80	-68	+62	-97	+55	-57
Black	+34	+50	-57	+77	-21	+56	-69	+57	+12
All Catholics	-11	+58	-82	+67	-81	+64	-87	+50	-71
Total Sample	0	+71	-81	+83	-83	+75	-92	+55	-70

Source: 2020 CES. Negative immigration mean scores are more conservative or restrictive than average while positive scores lean more liberal or inclusive than average.

We attempt to see which of the religious, social, and political variables have the greatest predictive power on immigration attitudes in a multivariate context by estimating OLS models (see Table 5). The first column shows the bivariate correlation for each of our independent variables with the immigration scale. Note the very high correlations of the political variables at the bottom of the table. In Model 1, we examine the impact of religious variables only. White Catholics tend toward the conservative side but race/ethnicity have only a modest relationship with immigration perspectives when controlling for the other religious variables. Latino and Black Catholics lean in a liberal direction, but not by that much, with coefficients of only .03 and .05, respectively (given the very large sample size, small differences can achieve statistical significance). However, born-again identification and the perceived importance of religion have a stronger relationship and in a conservative direction. Note that when controlling for race/ethnicity and other religion variables, attendance at Mass is associated with slightly more liberal immigration views, a finding that matches some previous research.⁶⁰ Model 1 has only a modest R Squared of .15. Clearly, religious variables are not accounting for a large portion of the variation in immigration perspectives.

In Model 2 we add the social/demographic variables to the mix. Older Catholics tend to hold more conservative views, as do the less educated, men, rural residents and those who personally own a gun. In fact, gun ownership has the strongest relationship with immigration views of any of the social variables in Model 2, with the same beta weight as the leading religious indicator—the importance of religion. Again, the R Squared for Model 2 is modest at .24.

Adding the political variables in Model 3 make a big difference in the variance explained increasing the R Squared to a healthy .73. All four political variables in the Model are significant predictors of immigration attitudes with the presidential vote variable leading the way. When the political variables are in the model, the religion and demographic variables are no longer statistically significant or the coefficients

⁶⁰ Benjamin R. Knoll, "And Who is My Neighbor?" Religion and Immigration Policy Attitudes, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 2009, p. 327; Brian Newman, Who Supports Syrians... p. 779).

move toward zero. Apparently immigration perspectives are so closely tied to the vote for presidential candidates that other possible impact variables have lesser importance. Note that partisanship barely reaches statistical significance in Model 3, while ideology and Fox News viewership have more predictive power. In sum, political variables are the driving force in the explanation of immigration views with religious and social variables having a secondary role.⁶¹ For Catholics, their racial and ethnic affiliations and other religious factors matter in bivariate relationships with immigration attitudes but are clearly secondary to the pull of political factors.

Table 5. Multivariate Analysis Predicting Catholic Immigration Attitudes

	R	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta
Religious Items:				
White Catholic	-.11	-.10***	-.10***	-.01
Latino Catholic	.06	.03***	.03***	.01
Asian Catholic	-.01	-.01	-.02**	-.01
Black Catholic	.05	.05***	.04***	-.002
Born Again	-.30	-.20***	-.16***	-.02**
Importance of Religion	-.33	-.24***	-.22***	-.05***
Church Attendance	-.18	.05***	.03***	.03***
Social Characteristics:				
Age	-.12		-.05***	-.03***
Education	.15		.11***	.03***
Income	.01		-.03***	.02**
Gender	.13		.12***	.05***
Urban-Rural Resident	-.16		-.07***	.02**
Region—South	-.07		.002	-.004
Gun owner	-.31		-.22***	-.04***
Political Variables:				
Ideology	-.72			-.19***
Partisanship	-.74			-.04***
Presidential Vote	-.82			-.53***
Fox News Viewer	-.64			-.15***
B/SE		1.1/.03***	-1.6/.05***	.67/.04***
R Squared		.15	.24	.73

Source: 2020 CES. OLS coefficients in bold denote instances in which the betas are reversed in signs or direction from the bivariate correlations.

***Statistically significant at the .001 level. **Significant at the .01 level

⁶¹ Along similar lines, Laura S. Antowiak, Levi G. Allen, and Geoffrey C. Layman, Coping with Cross-Pressures... find that partisanship tends to have a very powerful relationship with political attitudes, often more powerful than religious variables.

Conclusion

Immigration has been, currently is, and almost certainly will continue to be a vital part of the Catholic Church in the U.S. We have shown that the Church has been actively engaged on immigration in the 21st century. The Catholic hierarchy, from the highest level, has urged welcome and care for immigrants worldwide. In the U.S., the USCCB has articulated principles to guide thinking and action, along with commentary on specific policies, generally advocating against restrictionist and for inclusionary policies. The unity among leadership contrasts with diversity of opinions among Catholics in the mass public. Some Catholics, especially white conservatives who voted for Donald Trump, tend to hold restrictionist views. Other Catholics, especially liberals who did not vote for Trump, hold more permissive views. Our analyses suggest that race/ethnicity and political forces like partisanship, ideology, views of Trump, and viewing Fox News tend to be the best predictors of Catholics' immigration attitudes.

Why do Catholic leaders and many rank-and-file Catholics take diverging positions on immigration? Under what conditions might the positions leaders espouse have more impact on attitudes of the laity? Extant and future research have and should continue to explore these questions. Several studies find many Catholics adopt issue positions at odds with the leadership on various hot-button issues.⁶² This may be in part because few Catholics say they seek guidance from the Church hierarchy on political issues, prioritizing their own efforts and conscience.⁶³ For example, less than 40% even "somewhat" agreed that they "seriously consider" Church statements on "social, political, and moral issues."⁶⁴ Ignorance of specific Church positions on issues may also contribute to the disconnect, especially as a smaller percentage of Catholics attend Mass weekly, potentially meaning fewer Catholics encounter Church teachings.⁶⁵ In addition, many Catholics express distrust of Church leadership, especially after the massive sexual abuse scandals, potentially limiting the impact of Church pronouncements.⁶⁶ For instance, among Catholics who report attending Mass a few times a year or more, only 16% said they have "a lot" of confidence in their local clergy to provide useful guidance to inform their views on immigration.⁶⁷ Presumably in a period in which partisanship is so powerful and when cable news and social media offer so much content, political forces can

⁶² Ted G. Jelen, Religious Belief and Attitude Constraint, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 1990; pp. 118-125; Mark M. Gray and Mary E. Bendyna, "Between Church, Party, and Conscience . . ."; Laura S. Antowiak, Levi G. Allen, and Geoffrey C. Layman, *Coping with Cross-Pressures* . . .

⁶³ Mark M. Gray and Mary E. Bendyna, "Between Church, Party, and Conscience . . ."; William V. D'Antonio, Michele Dillon, and Mary L. Gautier, *Catholics in Transition*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2013.

⁶⁴ Mark M. Gray and Mary E. Bendyna, "Between Church, Party, and Conscience . . .", p. 78.

⁶⁵ William V. D'Antonio, Michele Dillon, and Mary L. Gautier, *Catholics in Transition* . . .

⁶⁶ Tatishe M. Nteta and Kevin J. Wallsten, Preaching to the Choir? Religious Leaders and American Opinion on Immigration Reform, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 93, No. 4, 2012, pp. 891-910.

⁶⁷ Pew Research Center, "Americans Have Positive Views About Religion's Role in Society, but Want it Out of Politics." [full survey report] November 15, 2019, p. 35. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2019/11/15/americans-have-positive-views-about-religions-role-in-society-but-want-it-out-of-politics/> (accessed June 15, 2023).

swamp the Church's teachings.⁶⁸

Yet, there may be conditions under which Catholic leadership can shape the laity's attitudes. If Catholic leaders had not been so clearly, consistently, and actively supportive of migrant rights and opposed to restrictionist policies, would more Catholics in the U.S. hold restrictionist views? It is difficult to say. If more Catholics were to encounter messages conveying the Church's position, would they be receptive? Under what conditions? Some research finds that explicitly religious messages can encourage Evangelical Republicans to adopt more moderate positions on immigration and other issues.⁶⁹ Perhaps some Catholics would be receptive to messages framing immigration in terms of Christian values. Catholics may also be more receptive to Christian messages that do not explicitly cite Church leaders, whose lack of trust may decrease a message's impact. Future research should explore these and other possibilities.

As we close, we note a few additional potential connections between Catholics and immigration that we have not discussed. Religion can imbue immigration attitudes with moral conviction, which can mobilize people to political activity.⁷⁰ Our analysis only examined immigration attitudes, not the degree to which those attitudes are moralized. Future research should continue to examine the connections between religion and moralization of attitudes, including immigration attitudes. We examined the immigration views of Catholic leaders and laity but have not explored the actions and rhetoric of Catholic priests, Catholic members of Congress, state legislators, and other decision makers who shape immigration debates and policy. Some studies have examined legislators' religion, finding that at least at times, religion can have an important impact.⁷¹ In addition, religion influences immigrants' experience in the U.S. shaping immigrants' engagement with society and politics, along with their ethnic and gender-based identities.⁷² Thus, Catholic migrants may adapt to their new surroundings in unique ways, which may ultimately shape their political engagement. The continued immigration of Catholics from various parts of the globe and the ways they adapt to the U.S. will presumably continue to shape the dynamic relationship between Catholics and immigration politics.

⁶⁸ Laura S. Antowiak, Levi G. Allen, and Geoffrey C. Layman, *Coping with Cross-Pressures*. . .

⁶⁹ Stephanie L. DeMora, Jennifer L. Merolla, Brian Newman, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, "Jesus was a Refugee: Religious Values Framing can Increase Support for Refugees Among White Evangelical Republicans," *Political Behavior*, forthcoming. Stephanie L. DeMora, Jennifer L. Merolla, Brian Newman, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Reducing mask resistance among White evangelical Christians with value-consistent messages, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 118, No. 21, 2021, pp. 1-3.

⁷⁰ Maura McDonald and Timothy J. Ryan, Moral Conviction and Immigration Attitudes in America, *The Forum*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2019, pp. 69-95.

⁷¹ Joel S. Fetzer, Why did House Members Vote for H.R. 4437?, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3, 2006, pp. 698-706; Barry C. Burden, *The Personal Roots of Representation*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2007; Brian Newman, et al., Religion and environmental politics in the US House of Representatives, *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2015, pp. 289-314.

⁷² Wendy Gadge and Elaine Howard Ecklund, Immigration and Religion," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 33, 2007, pp. 359-379.

References

- Abrajano Marissa and Zoltan L. Hajnal, *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2015.
- Antowiak Laura S., Levi G. Allen, and Geoffrey C. Layman, Coping with Cross-Pressures: The Seamless Garment in Catholic Political Behavior, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 42, No. 51, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12796>
- Archibold Randal C., Arizona Enacts Stringent Law on Immigration. *The New York Times*, April 23, 2010. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/us/politics/24immig.html> (accessed June 9, 2023).
- Bailey Sarah Pulliam, Some of the U.S.'s most important Catholic leaders are condemning Trump's travel ban, *The Washington Post*, January 30, 2017. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/01/30/some-of-the-u-s-s-most-important-catholic-leaders-are-condemning-trumps-travel-ban/> (accessed June 9, 2023).
- Baker Peter and Jim Yardley, Pope Francis, In Congress, Pleads Unity on World's Woes, *New York Times*, September 24, 2015. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/25/us/pope-francis-congress-speech.html> (accessed June 15, 2023).
- Burden Barry C., *The Personal Roots of Representation*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007.
- Cadge Wendy and Elaine Howard Ecklund, Immigration and Religion, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 33, 2007. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131707>
- Catholic News Agency, US bishops oppose 'draconian' Arizona immigration law, April 28, 2010. Available at: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/19468/us-bishops-oppose-draconian-arizona-immigration-law> (accessed June 9, 2023).
- CBS News, Catholic bishops issue scathing statement on Trump's family separation policy, June 14, 2018. Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/catholic-bishops-statement-on-trump-immigration-policies-family-separation-border/> (accessed June 9, 2023).
- Center for Migration Studies, US Catholic Bishops Argue against Arizona's SB 1070 on Religious Liberty Grounds. March 29, 2012. Available at: <https://cmsny.org/us-catholic-bishops-argue-against-arizonas-sb-1070-on-religious-liberty-grounds/> (accessed June 9, 2023).
- Clarke Kevin, US Catholic bishops urge end to Obama administration's surge of deportations. *America*, January 12, 2016. Available at: <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/us-catholic-bishops-urge-end-surge-deportation-actions> (accessed June 9, 2023).
- CLINIC, Papal Messages for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, April 11, 2023. Available at: <https://www.cliniclegal.org/resources/catholic-social-teaching/papal-messages-world-day-migrants-and-refugees> (accessed June 10, 2023).
- D'Antonio William V., Michele Dillon, and Mary L. Gautier, *Catholics in Transition*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2013.
- DeMora Stephanie L., Jennifer L. Merolla, Brian Newman, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Reducing mask resistance among White evangelical Christians with value-consistent messages, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 118, No. 21, 2021. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2101723118>
- DeMora Stephanie L., Jennifer L. Merolla, Brian Newman, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Jesus was a Refugee: Religious Values Framing can Increase Support for Refugees Among White Evangelical Republicans, *Political Behavior*.
- Dionne E.J., Jr., There is No Catholics Vote – And It's Important, in: *American Catholics and Civic Engagement*, Margaret O'Brien Steinfels (ed.), Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2004.

Epstein Reid J., NCLR Head: Obama 'deporter-in-chief', *Politico*, March 4, 2014. Available at: <https://www.politico.com/story/2014/03/national-council-of-la-raza-janet-murguia-barack-obama-deporter-in-chief-immigration-104217> (accessed June 15, 2023).

Espinosa Gaston, Campaigning for Justice: Religious and Legal Activism in Challenging Illegal Immigration as a Social Problem in the U.S., in: *Religion and Social Problems*, Titus Hjelm (ed.), Routledge, New York, 2011.

Fetzer Joel S., Why did House Members Vote for H.R. 4437?, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3, 2006. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2006.00041.x>

Gray Mark M. and Mary E. Bednya, Between Church, Party, and Conscience: Protecting Life and Promoting Social Justice among U.S. Catholics, in: *Catholics and politics: The Dynamic Tension Between Faith and Power*, Kristin E. Heyer, Mark J. Rozell, and Michael A. Genovese (eds.), Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2008.

Hollenbach David, Welcoming Refugees and Migrants: Catholic Narratives and the Challenge of Inclusion, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 690, Issue 1, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716220936608>

Jeung Russell and Jonathan Calvillo, Race, Immigration, Ethnicity, and Religion in America, *Oxford Research Encyclopedias: Religion*, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.487>

Kaufmann Eric, Americans Are Divided by Their Views on Race, Not Race Itself, *New York Times*, March 18, 2019. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/opinion/race-america-trump.html> (accessed June 14, 2013).

Kellstedt Lyman A. and James L. Guth, Catholic Partisanship and the Presidential Vote in 2012: Testing Alternative Theories, *The Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1515/for-2014-0006>

Kellstedt Lyman A. and Brian Newman, Religion and Immigration: Viewpoints of Religious Elites, Clergy, and the Mass Public, in: *The Routledge Handbook of Politics and Religion in Contemporary America*, Jeffrey Haynes (ed.), Routledge, forthcoming.

Kerwin Donald, Immigration Reform and the Catholic Church, *Migration Information Source*, *Migration Policy Institute*, May 1, 2006. Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/immigration-reform-and-catholic-church> (accessed May 31, 2023).

Kerwin Donald M., Catholic Church and Immigration, in: *Debates on U.S. Immigration*, Judith Gans, Elaine M. Replogle, and Daniel J. Tichenor (eds.), Sage, Thousand Oaks, 2012.

Kerwin Donald and Daniela Aluleman, The CRISIS Survey: The Catholic Church's Work with Immigrants in a Period of Crisis, *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 2021.

Knoll Benjamin R., "And Who is My Neighbor?" Religion and Immigration Policy Attitudes, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2009.01449.x>

Leal David L. and Jerod Patterson, House Divided? Evangelical Catholics, Mainstream Catholics, and Attitudes Toward Immigration and Life Policies, *The Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1515/for-2014-0009>

Leege David and Stephen T. Mockabee, Catholics and the 2008 Election, in: *Religion, Race, and Barack Obama's New Democratic Pluralism*, Gaston Espinosa (ed.), Routledge, New York, 2013.

Mahoney, Roger, Called by God to Help, *New York Times*, March 22, 2006. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/22/opinion/called-by-god-to-help.html> (accessed June 15, 2023).

Masci David and Gregory A. Smith, 7 Facts about American Catholics, Pew Research Center, October 10, 2018. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short->

reads/2018/10/10/7-facts-about-american-catholics/ (accessed June 12, 2023).

McDonald Maura and Timothy J. Ryan, Moral Conviction and Immigration Attitudes in America, *The Forum*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1515/for-2019-0006>

Melkonian-Hoover Ruth, The Politics of Religion and Immigration, *The Review of Faith and International Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2008. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2008.9523350>

Melkonian-Hoover Ruth and Lyman A. Kellstedt, *Evangelicals and Immigration: Fault Lines Among the Faithful*, Palgrave, New York, 2019.

Migration and Refugee Services/Office of Migration Policy and Public Affairs, The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Church's Position on Immigration Reform, August, 2013. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/churchteachingonimmigrationreform> (accessed June 5, 2023).

Miller Emily McFarlan, Religious leaders overwhelmingly condemn Trump ending DACA, *Religion News Service*, September 5, 2017. Available at: <https://religionnews.com/2017/09/05/religious-leaders-overwhelmingly-condemn-trump-ending-daca/> (accessed June 9, 2023).

Mockabee Stephen T., The Political Behavior of American Catholics: Change and Continuity, in: *From Pews to Polling Places: Faith and Politics in the American Religious Mosaic*, Matthew Wilson (ed.), Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2007.

NCCB/USCC, Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: United in Diversity, November 15, 2000. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/committees/pastoral-care-migrants-refugees-travelers/welcoming-stranger-among-us-unity-diversity> (accessed June 15, 2023).

Newman Benjamin, Jennifer L. Merolla, Sono Shah, Danielle C. Lemi, Loren Collingwood, and S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, The Trump Effect: An Experimental Investigation of the Emboldening Effect of Racially Inflammatory Elite Communication, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123419000590>

Newman Brian, Who Supports Syrians? The Relative Importance of Religion, Partisanship, and Partisan News, *PS: Political Science & Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 4, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096518000562>

Newman Brian, James L. Guth, William Cole, Chris Doran, and Edward J. Larson, Religion and environmental politics in the US House of Representatives, *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2015.1099184>

Newman Maria, Immigrants Stage Protests Across U.S., *New York Times*, May 1, 2006. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/us/01cnd-immig.html> (accessed June 13, 2023).

Nteta Tatishe M. and Kevin J. Wallsten, Preaching to the Choir? Religious Leaders and American Opinion on Immigration Reform, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 93, No. 4, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6237.2012.00865.x>

Pew Research Center, Americans Have Positive Views About Religion's Role in Society, but Want it Out of Politics. November 15, 2019. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2019/11/15/americans-have-positive-views-about-religions-role-in-society-but-want-it-out-of-politics/> (accessed June 15, 2023).

Prendergast William B., *The Catholic Voter in American Politics: The Passing of a Democratic Monolith*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 1999.

PRRI, Are Immigrants a Threat? Most Americans Don't Think So, but Those Receptive to the 'Threat' Narrative Are Predictably More Anti-Immigrant. January 17, 2023. Available at: <https://www.prii.org/research/are-immigrants-a-threat-most-americans-dont-think-so-but-those-receptive-to-the-threat-narrative-are-predictably-more-anti-immigrant/> (accessed June 14, 2023).

Rozell Mark J., Introduction: The 'Catholic Vote' in the USA, in: *Catholics and US Pol-*

itics after the 2016 Elections. Understanding the "Swing Vote", Marie Gayte, Blandine Chelini-Pont, and Mark J. Rozell (eds.), Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2018.

Sagir Mustafa and Stephen T. Mockabee, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration: Was There a Trump Effect?, *American Politics Research*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X221139762>

Samaha John M., Holy Year 2000: Biblical Origins of Jubilee, *Catholic Culture*, January 1999. Available at: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=985> (accessed June 15, 2023).

Schaffner Brian, Stephen Ansolabehere, and Sam Luks, "Cooperative Election Study Common Content", 2020. Available at: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/E9N6PH> (accessed May 31, 2023).

Sides John, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck, *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2019.

Smidt Corwin E., Catholics and the 2020 Presidential Election, *Politics and Religion Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.54561/prj1502283s>

Smith Gregory Allen, *Politics in the Parish: The Political Influence of Catholic Priests*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2008.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishops Welcome President's Deferred Action on Dream Eligible Youth, Urge Congressional Action on Dream Act, June 15, 2012. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/news/2012/bishops-welcome-presidents-deferred-action-dream-eligible-youth-urge-congressional-action> (accessed June 9, 2023).

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, USCCB Migration Chairman Expresses Support for Bipartisan DREAMER Efforts after White House Immigration Meeting, January 10, 2018. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/news/2018/usccb-migration-chairman-expresses-support-bipartisan-dreamer-efforts-after-white-house> (accessed June 9, 2023).

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Espiscopado Mexicano, Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, 2003. Available at: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope> (accessed June 15, 2023).

Wald Kenneth D., Religious elites and public opinion: The impact of the bishops' peace pastoral, *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 1, 1992. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670500017204>

Welch Michael R., David C. Leege, Kenneth D. Wald, and Lyman A. Kellstedt, Are the sheep hearing the shepherds? Cue perceptions, congregational responses, and political communication processes, in: *Rediscovering the religious factor in American Politics*, David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.), Routledge, 1993.

Wilson J. Matthew, The Changing Catholic Voter: Comparing Responses to John Kennedy in 1960 and John Kerry in 2004, in: *A Matter of Faith: Religion in the 2004 Presidential Election*, David E. Campbell (ed.), Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 2007.

Zengarini Lisa, World Day of Migrants and Refugees to focus on right to stay, *Vatican News*, March 21, 2023. Available at: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-03/world-day-of-migrants-and-refugees-to-focus-on-right-to-stay.html> (accessed June 15, 2023).

**Appendix A: Demographic, Religious,
and Political Diversity Among Catholics**

	White	Latino	Asian	Black	All Catholics	Total Sample
% of Sample	11.1	4.1	0.6	0.9	17.3	100
% of Catholic Sample	64.5	24.3	3.4	5.0	100	
Demographics:						
Age: <30/>50	14/64	24/44	21/44	31/36	18/30	21/49
Education: College Graduates Plus	38	18	49	27	32	31
Income over 100K	27	14	27	19	23	20
Percent Female	53	54	62	55	54	52
Reside City/Rural	24/17	44/11	35/6	42/10	30/15	28/20
Reside in South	27	30	20	35	28	23
Gun owner	32	23	17	18	29	32
Religion:						
Born Again	18	20	19	36	20	34
Salience of Religion; High/Low	44/14	42/13	44/11	59/7	44/13	39/36
Attendance: 1-2 Times a Month or More	42	30	58	58	40	32
Political:						
Party ID: Dem/Rep	32/53	56/23	42/35	76/13	41/42	42/38
Ideology: Lib/Con	18/44	25/23	21/35	33/19	20/37	27/33
2020 Vote: Biden/Trump	33/61	68/30	60/39	82/16	47/52	52/46
Watches Fox News	57	47	57	32	54	46

Source: 2020 CES. The small group of mixed-race Catholics are excluded from the table. They make up 2.7% of the Catholic sample.

**Appendix B. Principal Components Analysis of Immigration Items
in the 2020 Cooperative Election Survey**

	All CES Conservative / Liberal Percents	All CES Factor Loading	Catholic Conservative / Liberal Percents	Catholic Factor Loadings
Favor increased border patrols	62/37	.71	68/32	.68
No federal dollars for local police who don't cooperate on immigration enforcement	48/52	.73	52/48	.70
Increase border spending by \$25 Billion	45/55	.84	50/50	.83
Favor reducing legal immigration by 50 percent	42/58	.72	46/54	.71
Oppose program to allow immigrants to remain in US	42/58	.63	47/53	.59
Declare national emergency to permit building a border wall	39/61	.81	44/56	.80
Oppose legal status for immigrants with jobs	32/68	.65	33/67	.62
Oppose permanent status for Dreamers	26/74	.64	28/72	.60

Percent of Variance Explained: 51.9 for the national sample and 48.3 for the Catholic sample.

Лиман А. Келстедт, Брајан Њуман

КАТОЛИЦИ И ИМИГРАЦИЈА: ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ КАТОЛИЧКИХ ЛИДЕРА И ПОГЛЕДИ РАЗЛИЧИТИХ ВЕРНИКА

Сажетак

Овај чланак испитује погледе и политике лидера Католичке цркве у САД по питању имиграције. Током времена међу овом групом постојала је тенденција умерених до либералних погледа, и често су заговарали политике које су биле сличније Демократској партији, а не Републиканској. Ми упоређујемо ове погледе са погледима католика у САД и налазимо разилажење. Ово се посебно односи на белце католике који имају конзервативније ставове по питању имиграције од црквених лидера, а нарочито у односу на католике латиносе, азијате и црне католике. Вероватно ово разилажење произилази из различитих ставова католичких лидера (рецимо, либерални по питању имиграције, али конзервативни по питању абортуса), па се верници окрећу према политичким смерницама када су у питању њихови погледи на имиграцију. Политичке силе као што су партијска идентификација, идеологија, ставови према Доналду Трампу, и гледање Фокс канала су најјачи предиктори католичких ставова према имиграцији.

Кључне речи: католици, имиграција, етницитет, раса, поделе, USCCB