

MOST AMERICANS ARE RELIGIOUS



Bill Donohue comments on data from a new Gallup study of religion that was released today:

Seven in ten Americans are either very religious (40 percent) or moderately religious (29 percent). Consistent with other surveys, Gallup found women to be more religious than men; blacks are more religious than whites; religious identity increases with age; Southerners are the most religious; those in the northeastern and northwestern corners are the least religious; Republicans are more religious than Democrats; and the U.S. is still a largely Christian nation.

With regard to the latter category, 77 percent of Americans are Christian, and an amazing 94 percent of those who have a religious identity are Christian. Thus does the multicultural argument collapse. Indeed, all the talk about the U.S. being so diverse that we have no common religion anymore is pure bunk (and wishful thinking). This needs to be said at Christmastime more than ever: those who attempt to neuter the holiday rely on the false premise of multiculturalism.

Frank Newport's excellent analysis comes up short on the issue of women. "The fact that women are more religious than men is discordant with the fact that large religious groups in the U.S. prohibit women from being clergy," he says. "These groups, including Catholics and Southern Baptists, may find themselves in a gender crisis of sorts, with the increasing chance of losing their most fervent members to religious groups more formally open to women at all levels of service to the church."

If what Newport says were true, we surely would have evidence by now that Catholic and Southern Baptist women are migrating to the mainline Protestant denominations. In point of fact, mainline Protestants are precisely the ones losing the most members. Moreover, it is not the "most fervent members" who are the most likely to bolt—it is the most liberal among them.

More on this at a later date when I obtain a copy of *God Is Alive and Well: The Future of Religion in America*.