

# Polls on Catholics and Abortion

It's often said that statistics don't lie, but they can paint a misleading picture if presented the right way—or, rather, the wrong way. For instance, a June 1 Associated Press article on faith and politics reported that Catholic voters “support legalized abortion in all or most circumstances by 53 percent to 43 percent, according to 2004 exit polling.”

Such polls typically make no effort to distinguish truly practicing Catholics from those who haven't been to Mass in ages. When that distinction is made, the numbers are much more revealing. A 2006 poll by Purdue University professor James Davidson, supported by the Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame, found that 72 percent of weekly Mass attendees are against abortion. As for Catholics who seldom or never go to Mass, only 29 percent oppose it.