

# QUINNIPIAC POLLSTERS MISLED THE PUBLIC

In a survey of American Catholic opinion, the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute intentionally misled the public by claiming that Catholics led “American voters toward support for same-sex marriage.” But Catholic League president Dr. William Donohue showed that a closer examination of the survey showed differently, forcing Assistant Director Peter Brown to admit his claims were incorrect.

Brown claimed Catholics supported same-sex marriage by a margin of 54-38 percent (the national figures are 47-43 percent). Dr. Donohue noted that the sample size of Catholics was only 497, with a margin of error of plus or minus four percent, hardly an adequate number to be seen as completely representative.

Catholics were asked 14 questions, with responses broken down on the basis of church attendance. But Dr. Donohue noted that the poll didn’t disaggregate data regarding same-sex marriage on the basis of church attendance.

Quinnipiac’s widely discussed “finding” was based on misleading data, with Dr. Donohue pointing out that four out of ten Catholics sampled don’t practice their religion (28% go to church a “few times a year”; 11% said they “never” attend). That nominal Catholics would support gay marriage is certain, but the poll failed to highlight this.

In truth, 55% of regular church-going Catholics oppose gay marriage. Only 38% percent favor it. Brown’s claim is sheer nonsense.

When the Catholic League issued a press release addressing this, Catholic News Agency contacted Brown, who claimed, “we only have so much space, and can only do so many things up

front.” Still, he found enough space to record the difference between practicing and nominal Catholics on whether the next pope should be American or not, along with other issues

Even after admitting it misled the public, Quinnipiac hasn’t set the record straight on its website. Its credibility as a serious survey house, therefore, has thus been compromised.