

**CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING**

**The Opinions of Canadians on  
the Pope's Visit to Canada**

**Report**



## 1.0 Study Highlights

- Half of Canadians are aware of the Pope's visit to Canada.

Question: *Have you heard, seen or read anything about Pope John Paul II visiting Toronto in late July of this year?*

n=1503	Yes	No
Canada	50%	49%

- Less than four Canadians out of ten will be interested in what will be happening during the Pope's visit.

Question: *Will you be VERY INTERESTED, SOMEWHAT INTERESTED, NOT VERY INTERESTED or NOT INTERESTED AT ALL in what will be happening during the Pope's visit?*

n=1503	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
Canada	10%	27%	21%	40%

- Canadian Catholics think the Pope should retire.

Question: *Please tell me if you STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE or STRONGLY DISAGREE with each of the following statements:*

... *The Pope is too old to occupy his position and should retire?*

n=1503	Strongly or somewhat agree	Strongly or somewhat disagree	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	60%	22%	18%
Roman Catholic	60%	33%	6%
Others	51%	28%	21%
Atheist (no religion)	49%	26%	25%
Canada	55%	29%	16%

... *The Pope is a very important figure on the international scene?*

n=1503	Strongly or somewhat agree	Strongly or somewhat disagree	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	71%	21%	8%
Roman Catholic	86%	12%	1%
Others	69%	24%	7%
Atheist (no religion)	60%	32%	8%
Canada	75%	19%	6%

... *The doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding such things as abortion, contraception or priesthood and marriage are dated and out of sync with the times?*

n=1503	Strongly or somewhat agree	Strongly or somewhat disagree	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	71%	15%	13%
Roman Catholic	74%	21%	6%
Others	70%	18%	12%
Atheist (no religion)	76%	12%	11%
Canada	72%	17%	11%

- The celibacy of Catholic priests is apparently the cause of the recently revealed cases of sexual abuse.

Question: *In the past few months, there have been several stories tied to sexual abuse from Catholic priests. Some say this is mainly due to POOR RECRUITING on the part of the Church, while others believe it mainly stems from the OATH OF CELIBACY priests have to take and that allowing them to marry would solve the problem. Which of these two opinions best describes how you feel about the issue?*

n=1503	Poor recruiting	Oath of celibacy	Other	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	21%	52%	10%	18%

## 2. Detailed Results

### 2.1 Half of Canadians are Aware of the Pope's Visit to Canada

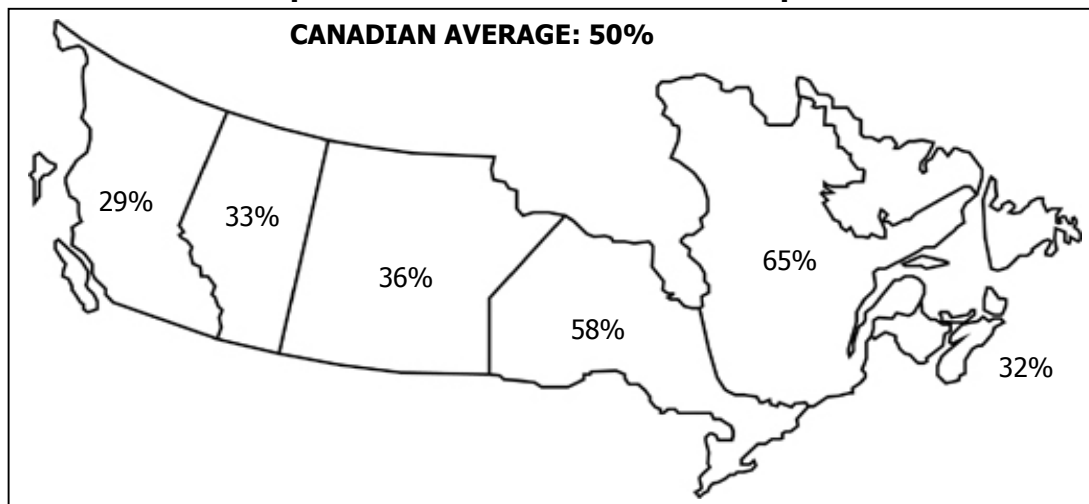
50% of Canadians have read or heard about John Paul II's visit to Toronto scheduled for the end of July this year.

Among those more aware of his visit we find 60% of Catholics, 47% of Protestants and Lutherans, 48% of those of other religious denominations and 34% of atheists. There are also 69% of those 55 and over, 63% of Francophones, 65% of Quebeckers and 71% of retirees who know about his visit.

Question : *Have you heard, seen or read anything about Pope John Paul II visiting Toronto in late July of this year?*

n=1503	Yes	No
Atlantic provinces	32%	68%
Quebec	65%	35%
Ontario	58%	41%
Prairies	36%	64%
Alberta	33%	66%
British Columbia	29%	69%
Canada	50%	49%

**Proportion of Canadians aware of Pope's visit**



## 2.2 Less than Four Canadians out of Ten Will be Interested in What Will be Happening During the Pope's Visit

37% of Canadians will be interested in what will be happening during the Pope's visit to Toronto in July this year, while 61% will not be very interested or not interested at all in these events.

Among those more interested in the events surrounding his visit, we find 47% of Catholics, 49% of Allophones and 43% of retirees.

Among Canadians not interested, we find 81% of atheists and 78% of those 18 to 24 years of age.

Question : Will you be *VERY INTERESTED*, *SOMEWHAT INTERESTED*, *NOT VERY INTERESTED* or *NOT INTERESTED AT ALL* in what will be happening during the Pope's visit?

n=1503	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
Protestant/Lutheran	6%	27%	23%	42%
Roman Catholic	16%	30%	24%	29%
Other	10%	24%	19%	45%
Atheist (no religion)	3%	16%	16%	65%
Canada	10%	27%	21%	40%

100% can be reached by adding respondents who did not know or did not answer.

## 2.3 Canadian Catholics Feel the Pope Should Retire

55% of Canadians believe the Pope is too old to occupy his position and should retire.

Catholics are more likely to agree with the Pope retiring in a proportion of 61%. This is also the view of 62% of those 65 and over, 68% of Francophones and 66% of Quebeckers.

Question: *Please tell me if you STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE or STRONGLY DISAGREE with each of the following statements:  
... Pope John-Paul II is too old and should retire?*

n=1503	Strongly or somewhat agree	Somewhat or strongly disagree	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	60%	22%	18%
Roman Catholic	60%	33%	6%
Other	51%	28%	21%
Atheist (no religion)	49%	26%	25%
Canada	55%	29%	16%

In addition, 72% of Canadians agree that the doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding things such as abortion, contraception and the marriage of priests is dated and out of sync with the times.

Surprisingly, out of Canadians who have a religious affiliation, Catholics, in a proportion of 74%, are most in agreement with the idea that the doctrines of the Catholic Church pertaining to the above-mentioned aspects are archaic.

*... The doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding such things as abortion, contraception or priesthood and marriage are dated and out of sync with the times.*

n=1503	Strongly or somewhat agree	Somewhat or strongly disagree	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	71%	15%	13%
Roman Catholic	74%	21%	6%
Other	70%	18%	12%
Atheist (no religion)	76%	12%	11%
Canada	72%	17%	11%

Lastly, according to 75% of Canadians, the Pope is an important figure on the international scene.

This is particularly the opinion of 86% of Catholics, 71% of Protestants and Lutherans, 69% of those of other denominations and 60% of atheists.

... The Pope is a very important figure on the international scene?

n=1503	Strongly or somewhat agree	Somewhat or strongly disagree	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	71%	21%	8%
Roman Catholic	86%	12%	1%
Other	69%	24%	7%
Atheist (no religion)	60%	32%	8%
Canada	75%	19%	6%

## 2.4 The Celibacy of Priests is Apparently the Cause of the Recently Revealed Cases of Sexual Abuse

According to 52% of Canadians, the celibacy oath taken by Catholic priests is apparently the cause of sexual abuse cases by priests and that allowing them to marry would solve the problem. However, 21% indicated that poor recruiting by the Church is the cause, while 10% feel that there is another reason and 18% did not say what they thought the cause was.

Priesthood celibacy is blamed by 55% of Catholics, 58% of Protestants and Lutherans, 50% of those of other denominations and 45% of atheists. This view is also shared by 61% of Francophones and 60% of Quebeckers.

Question: *In the past few months, there have been several stories tied to sexual abuse from Catholic priests. Some say this is mainly due to POOR RECRUITING on the part of the Church, while others believe it mainly stems from the OATH OF CELIBACY priests have to take and that allowing them to marry would solve the problem. Which of these two opinions best describes how you feel about the issue?*

n=1503	Poor recruiting	Celibacy oath	Other	Don't know / Refusal
Protestant/Lutheran	17%	58%	7%	18%
Roman Catholic	22%	55%	11%	11%
Other	21%	50%	11%	18%
Atheist (no religion)	23%	45%	10%	21%
Canada	21%	52%	10%	18%

### **3.0 Methodology**

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This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1503 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between May 22 to 26, 2002. Up to ten call-backs were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to geographic location, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1503 respondents is of  $\pm 2.6\%$ , 19 times out of 20.