



**Fordham Institute:
Catholic Education Survey**

**Conducted by:
The Glover Park Group**

April 7, 2008

The Glover Park Group conducted a nationwide telephone survey of 800 adults between March 6, 2008 and March 16, 2008. The margin of error on a sample size of 800 is +/- 3.5%. The margin of error of subgroups is higher, due to the lower sample size. Oversamples of 250 Catholics, 100 African-Americans and 100 Hispanics were also conducted. The total number of Catholics interviewed was 509, with a margin of error of +/- 4.3%.

This report examines in detail attitudes toward urban Catholic education, including how education interacts with views toward the Catholic Church and whether people are supportive of using public money to help keep inner-city Catholic schools operational.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- There is room for improvement in terms of how Americans view the Catholic Church. Generally, Americans have a favorable impression of the Catholic Church (58%), but the Church's ratings are lower than we see for other institutions and organizations.
 - American Catholics have a more favorable impression of the Church (89% favorable). Older Catholics (age 50 and older) are more likely to have a "very favorable" view of the Church (57% very favorable) than are younger Catholics (46% very favorable).
 - Whites (62% favorable) and Hispanics (60% favorable) are more likely to view the Church favorably than are African-Americans (44% favorable).
 - Pope Benedict XVI gets lower ratings than the Church overall (70% favorable among Catholics, 42% among Americans generally), though these lower ratings are primarily due to a large segment of people who do not feel they know enough about him to offer an evaluation.
- There are many substantive things the Church can do to improve its image. Many of the good deeds the Church is already doing are seen as important both by Americans generally and by American Catholics. Actions seen as part of a larger Catholic commitment to social justice tend to resonate with people, and especially with people under the age of 50.
 - Enhanced efforts in the areas of disaster relief, helping the poor and disadvantaged, and inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools all have the potential to lead to more favorable views of the Church both among Americans generally and Catholics specifically.
 - Social justice messages resonate. This is part of the Church's identity—people associate doing good deeds with the Church. Americans look to the Church to be active in these sorts of actions and even support government funds to aid the Church in its community efforts in helping the poor and providing health care and education.
- Catholic schools are viewed positively (66% favorable overall, 88% favorable among Catholics), and more positively than the Church itself. Catholic schools get particularly strong ratings from people age 50 and older. Catholic schools have a clear, but narrow brand identity—credited for instilling discipline and moral values. However, Catholic schools are less likely to be associated with a commitment to working with disadvantaged and inner-city students and providing students with the tools for success.
 - A quality education/Catholic schools are not top of mind positive characteristics associated with the Catholic Church.
 - While African-Americans tend to view the *Church* less favorably than do Whites and Hispanics, African-Americans have largely positive views of *Catholic schools* (65% favorable) on par with the views of Whites (66% favorable) and Hispanics (67% favorable).

- Younger Catholics have less intensely positive views of Catholic schools.
- Catholic schools tend to get the highest ratings from more downscale Americans (lower income and less educated), older Americans, people who live in urban areas, and from more observant Catholics.
- A majority of Americans associate Catholic schools with “developing moral values and discipline” and “providing a safe and nurturing environment.” While not part of the primary brand identity, a majority also associate “realizing academic achievement,” and “developing life-long skills” with Catholic schools.
 - Not surprisingly, Catholics are more likely to associate each of these characteristics with Catholic schools. Catholics are also more likely to associate Catholic schools with “providing an education to inner-city and poor students” and “providing an alternative to public schools for those who can’t afford private school.”
 - Catholic schools “own” the moral values space, however they are not associated with serving inner-city constituencies (even among Catholics). This provides an important opportunity for re-branding Catholic schools in a way that will resonate with people and benefit both the schools and the image of the Church.
- Americans generally would prefer to see the Church find the necessary resources to allow inner-city Catholic schools to stay open. Catholics are even more strongly committed to keeping inner-city Catholic schools open.
- Information about the closing of inner-city Catholic schools over the last five years leads to slightly less favorable views of the Church. While it is unclear how aware people are about the school closings, it has the potential to erode the image of the Church.
- There is broad support for government funding for many Church-led charitable efforts, including Catholic charities that help the poor and homeless, hospitals affiliated with the Church, and Catholic elementary and high schools.
 - Support for government funding of inner-city Catholic schools is higher among minority groups and people living in urban areas.
 - However, there is strong opposition to converting inner-city Catholic schools into charter schools, with the strongest opposition coming from Catholics.

DETAILED FINDINGS

PART ONE: FAVORABILITY OF FIGURES AND INSTITUTIONS

There is room for improvement in terms of how Americans view the Catholic Church. Generally, Americans have a favorable impression of the Catholic Church (58% favorable), though ratings are lower than for the Salvation Army (91% favorable) and the American Red Cross (89% favorable). Catholics have a significantly more favorable view of the Church (89% favorable) than do Americans more generally (see Table 1).

Pope Benedict XVI is viewed favorably by American Catholics (70% favorable). The Pope gets lower ratings from Americans generally (42% favorable), though this is largely because many Americans do not feel they know enough about him to offer an evaluation (46% offer no opinion). Just 12% of Americans and 6% of American Catholics hold a negative view of the Pope. The Pope’s visit to the United States should lead to more robust ratings as more Americans become familiar with him.

	All Adults	Catholics
	%	%
Salvation Army	91	92
American Red Cross	89	90
Catholic schools	66	88
Catholic Church	58	89
Pope Benedict XVI	42	70
Local parish priest	NA	80

Q1-6: Now I’m going to read you a list of public figures and groups, and I’d like you to tell me whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of each one.

While a majority of Americans (58% favorable) view the **Catholic Church** favorably, (including 21% very favorable), support for the Church is higher among certain audiences, notably residents of suburban areas (67%), those who earn more than 75K (64%), Conservatives (63%), Republicans (62%), Whites (62%), and older Men (62%) (see Table 2).

Additionally, more religious Americans have a more favorable view of the Church. Seventy-six percent of self-identified Evangelicals view the Church favorably. Respondents who attend a religious service weekly are also more favorable of the Catholic Church (61% total favorable, 27% very favorable).

Whites and Hispanics have similarly favorable views of the Church (62% favorable and 60% favorable respectively), though Hispanics are more likely to have a very favorable view of the Church (31%, 21% among Whites). However, African-Americans have a significantly less positive view of the Catholic Church (44% favorable and just 10% very favorable).

Among Catholics, very favorable ratings are highest among those who attend Church services at least once a week (69% very favorable), Catholics without a college degree (58% very favorable), urban Catholics (58% very favorable), and Catholics age 50 and older (57% very favorable)—in comparison, just 46% of Catholics under age 50 have a very favorable impression.

Table 2: Favorability of Catholic Church		
	Total Favorable %	Very Favorable %
AMONG ADULTS		
Total	58	21
Evangelicals	76	12
Suburban	67	25
75K+	64	21
Conservatives	63	26
Republicans	62	23
Men 50+	62	28
By Race		
White	62	21
Hispanic	60	31
African-Americans	44	10
AMONG CATHOLICS		
Total	89	52
Weekly Church Service	95	69
Urban	93	58
Non-college	91	58
Under age 50	90	46
50 yrs old+	87	57
Q1-6: Now I'm going to read you a list of public figures and groups, and I'd like you to tell me whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of each one.		

Catholic schools are generally viewed favorably—and more favorably than the Church itself. Two-thirds of Americans (66%) view Catholic schools favorably, including a quarter (26%) that holds very favorable views.

The base of support for Catholic schools is similar to that of the Catholic Church (see Table 3): more affluent, more educated, and more religious individuals. Support is also higher in suburban areas than in urban areas, with 75% of suburbanites holding a favorable view, compared to 68% in urban areas.

Age tends to drive views of Catholic schools, with older Americans (especially those age 65 and older) viewing Catholic schools more favorably than younger people. This is true overall, but also in terms of intensity, with older Americans significantly more likely to have a “very favorable” view of Catholic schools. This may well reflect familiarity and recent trends. With the number of Catholic schools declining, younger Americans are less likely to have had a positive interaction (let alone any interaction) with Catholic schools.

Table 3: Favorability of Catholic Schools		
	Total Favorable %	Very Favorable %
AMONG ADULTS		
Total	66	26
Suburban	75	30
75K+	73	29
College Grads	72	26
Evangelicals	71	21
Weekly Religious service	69	30
By Race		
Hispanic	67	32
White	66	26
African-Americans	65	27
By Age		
Under 40	59	21
40-54	72	27
55-64	70	27
65+	66	35
AMONG CATHOLICS		
Total	88	52
Weekly Church service	91	65
Urban	89	56
50 yrs old+	88	56
Q1-6: Now I'm going to read you a list of public figures and groups, and I'd like you to tell me whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of each one.		

While race tends to be a significant driver of views of the Church, with African-Americans holding significantly less favorable views, race is less a driver of views of Catholic schools. Whites (66% favorable), Hispanics (67% favorable), and African-Americans (65% favorable) all have similarly positive views of Catholic schools.

African-Americans have significantly less positive views of the Church, but positive views of Catholic schools. More directly linking the Church and Catholic schools by increasing investment in inner-city Catholic schools has the potential to enhance the image of the Church among African-Americans.

As with the Church overall, Catholics view Catholic schools more favorably than do Americans overall. Nearly nine in ten (88%) view Catholic schools at least somewhat favorably, and over half (52%) very favorably. Catholic schools are viewed more favorably by Catholics who attend Church at least once a week (65% very favorable), Catholics age 50 and older (56% very favorable), and urban Catholics (56% very

favorable). As with Americans generally, younger Catholics have less intensely positive views of Catholic schools perhaps because of the closing of schools over the past several decades.

PART TWO: PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCHOOLS

When asked to grade a variety of school types, Americans give private schools the highest ratings (69% A/B grades). Catholic schools (58% A/B) and public schools are viewed similarly (55% A/B) (see Table 4). Virtually every demographic group, with the exception of Catholics, give private schools better marks than any other type of school—Catholics give Catholic schools better grades than any other type of school, including private schools.

Not surprisingly, Catholics give Catholic schools significantly

higher marks than do Americans generally. Additionally, **Catholic schools** tend to get better grades from older Americans, college graduates, Republicans, suburbanites, and people who live in the Midwest.

In particular, age is a primary driver of how people view Catholic schools. Seniors age 65 and older are significantly more likely to give Catholic schools an ‘A’ grade (31%), compared to just 17% of people under 40 years of age (see Table 5). This age pattern also holds true for Catholics, with 45% of Catholics

Younger Catholics have less intensely positive views of Catholic schools. At least in part, this reflects the reality of the past several decades, with many Catholic schools already closing. Younger Catholics are simply less familiar with Catholic schools than are older Catholics.

age 50 and older giving Catholic schools an ‘A’, compared to just 33% among younger Catholics.

Catholic schools also get better grades from College graduates (63% A or B grade, compared to 48% of people with a high school degree or less). In contrast, those with a high school degree or less give public schools better ratings than do college

graduates (60% A or B grade among those with a high school degree or less, compared to 53% among college graduates).

Suburbanites, both Catholic and non-Catholic, tend to give Catholic schools better marks. While 55% of people living in rural areas, and 59% of people living in cities, give Catholic schools an ‘A’ or ‘B’ 63% of people living in the suburbs give Catholic schools such positive marks. This pattern continues among Catholics, with 81% of suburban Catholics giving Catholic schools an ‘A’ or ‘B’ compared to 75% of urban Catholics.

More observant Catholics—those who attend services on a weekly basis—also give Catholic schools better grades (84% A or B grade).

<i>Type of School</i>	A/B %	C %	D/F %	DK %
AMONG ADULTS				
Private	69	12	3	15
Catholic/Parochial	58	15	8	18
Public	55	28	13	3
Home	45	20	15	19
Charter	37	14	6	39
AMONG CATHOLICS				
Catholic/Parochial	76	11	4	9
Private	67	12	3	18
Public	57	28	12	3
Home	36	22	17	23
Charter	35	11	5	43

Q7-11: Next, I'm going to ask you some questions about education and different types of schools that students may go to. For each one, I'd like you to tell me what grade you would give them – an A, B, C, D, or F.

Table 5: Grades of Catholic Schools

	A %	A/B %	D/F %
AMONG ADULTS			
Total	22	58	8
By Age			
65+	31	59	6
Under 40	17	53	9
By Income			
Under 25K	28	56	9
75K+	22	61	9
College Graduates	20	63	7
By Region			
Suburban	23	63	7
Urban	22	59	9
AMONG CATHOLICS			
Total	39	76	4
By Age			
50+	45	80	4
50-	33	73	3
By Education			
Non-College	42	76	3
College Grads	34	77	4
By Church Attendance			
Weekly Church service	50	84	3
By Region			
Urban Catholics	42	75	5
Suburban Catholics	38	81	3

Q7-11: Next, I'm going to ask you some questions about education and different types of schools that students may go to. For each one, I'd like you to tell me what grade you would give them – an A, B, C, D, or F.

PART THREE: CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Public, Private, and Catholic schools have vastly different images. People tend to see *Catholic schools* as offering a disciplined learning environment and instilling moral values. *Public schools* are seen as working with economically disadvantaged students and giving inner-city students the tools for success. *Private schools* are more generally associated with giving students (more broadly) the tools for success, though less focused on inner-city students.

People tend to see Catholic schools as offering a disciplined learning environment and instilling moral values.

Similarly, Catholics see Catholic schools as offering a disciplined learning environment and instilling moral values. They associated public schools with working with economically disadvantaged students and giving inner-city students the tools for success.

When asked which attributes best describe a particular school type, Americans generally and Catholics especially associate “Offering a discipline learning environment” and “Instilling moral values” with Catholic or parochial schools (see Table 6). However, when asked about which schools are best associated with “Working with economically disadvantaged students” and “Giving students in inner-cities the tools for success,” people overwhelmingly select public schools.

Table 6: Attributes and School Types

<i>Trait</i>	Public %	Catholic %	Charter %	Private %	Home %
AMONG ADULTS					
Working with economically disadvantaged students	57	8	12	7	5
*Giving students in inner-cities the tools for success	42	11	14	16	2
*Giving students the tools for success	35	12	8	30	4
Providing a nurturing environment to grow	20	19	6	18	25
Offering a discipline learning environment	15	40	3	25	8
Instilling moral values	10	50	2	14	15
AMONG CATHOLICS					
Working with economically disadvantaged students	59	13	9	6	2
*Giving students in inner-cities the tools for success	42	19	14	13	1
*Giving students the tools for success	30	29	7	24	1
Providing a nurturing environment to grow	19	39	4	12	15
Offering a discipline learning environment	13	55	2	17	5
Instilling moral values	8	70	1	8	7
Q12-17: I’m going to read some phrases some people have used to describe these types of schools. After each, please tell me which type of school the phrase describes best....					
*Asked of half of the sample					

Lower income Americans overwhelmingly associate public schools (47%) with “**working with economically disadvantaged students**”—just 9% select Catholic or Parochial schools. In fact, the plurality of all subgroups see public schools as most likely to work with economically disadvantaged students. Some groups are more likely to associate working with economically disadvantaged students with Catholic schools, including older Catholics (19%) and weekly Catholic Church attendees (20%).

Similarly, people who live in cities are more likely to associate “**giving students in inner-cities the tools for success**” with public schools (47%)—just 12% select Catholic schools. This pattern also holds true with urban Catholics, with 49% associating working with inner-city students with public schools, compared to 21% who select Catholic or Parochial schools.

Catholic schools “own” the moral values space, however they are not as strongly associated with serving inner-city constituencies (even among Catholics). This provides an important opportunity for re-branding Catholic schools in a way that will resonate with people and has the potential to benefit both the schools and the image of the church.

The Image of Catholic Schools

As part of the survey, people were also asked how well certain traits apply to Catholic schools specifically (not in comparison to other types of schools). A majority of Americans associate Catholic schools with “*developing moral values and discipline*” (79% associate this with Catholic schools), “*providing a safe and nurturing environment*” (76%), “*realizing academic achievement*” (74%), and “*developing life-long skills*” (71%) (see Table 7).

Table 7: Characteristics Associated with Catholic Schools

	All Adults	Catholics
Developing moral values and discipline	79% (67% strongly)	91% (81% strongly)
Providing a safe and nurturing environment	76% (60% strongly)	89% (76% strongly)
Realizing academic achievement	74% (58% strongly)	89% (74% strongly)
Developing life-long skills	71% (53% strongly)	85% (70% strongly)
Providing an education to inner-city and poor students	67% (46% strongly)	81% (56% strongly)
Providing an alternative to public schools for those who can’t afford private school	66% (47% strongly)	72% (52% strongly)

Q37-42: Next, I’m going to read you a list of characteristics some people associate with Catholic schools. For each, please tell me if you associate this characteristic with Catholic schools...

Not surprisingly, Catholics are more likely to associate each of these characteristics with Catholic schools and are also more likely to associate a host of other attributes with Catholic schools. For example, an overwhelming majority of Catholics associate “*providing an education to inner-city and poor students*” with Catholic schools (81%), 14% higher than Americans generally. Catholic are also 6-points more likely to consider Catholic schools “*providing an alternative to public schools for those who can’t afford private school*” (72%, compared to 66% for all Americans).

Looking at intensity, Catholics are also more likely to “strongly” associate each of these traits with Catholic schools. In particular, Catholics are 10-points more likely to strongly associate working with inner-city and poor students (56%), and 5-points more likely to strongly associate providing an alternative to public schools (52%), with Catholic schools.

Generally, Americans age 65 and over and older Catholics are more likely to strongly link Catholic schools with positive traits, including providing an education to inner-city and poor students and providing an alternative to public schools. While 46% of Americans overall strongly associate Catholic schools with providing an education to inner-city and poor students, 54% of seniors and 61% of older Catholics link this trait to Catholic schools. Similarly, while 47% of Americans strongly associate Catholic schools with providing an alternative to public schools, 51% of seniors and 57% of older Catholics link this trait to Catholic schools.

Older people, African-Americans, less educated, and those less affluent are more likely to associate Catholic schools with providing an education to inner-city and poor students and providing an alternative to public schools.

More downscale Americans (less educated, less affluent) are also more likely to strongly link Catholic schools to working with inner-city and poor students and providing an alternative to public schools. As an example, 62% of Catholics without a college degree strongly associate Catholic schools with providing an education to inner-city and poor students, compared to 47% of Catholics with a college degree.

African-Americans are also more likely to strongly link Catholic schools with providing an education to inner-city and poor students and providing an alternative to public schools. As an example, 54% of African-Americans strongly associate Catholic schools with working with inner-city and poor students, compared to 44% of Whites and 48% of Hispanics. And 57% of African-Americans strongly link Catholic schools with offering an alternative to public schools, compared to 44% of Whites and 51% of Hispanics.

While there is little difference on these traits across community types, Catholics who live in urban areas (61% strongly) are more likely to see Catholic schools working with inner-city and poor students (compared to 48% of suburban Catholics). This pattern does *not* hold true when it comes to providing an alternative to public schools (with 52% of suburban Catholics and 51% of urban Catholics strongly associating this trait with Catholic schools).

PART FOUR: PERCEPTIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

As with Catholic schools, Americans tend to associate certain attributes with the Catholic Church. When asked to volunteer specific positive characteristics of the Catholic Church (in an open-ended format), Americans cite its *long tradition* (29%), *emphasis on strong morals and discipline* (24%) and *community focus/do-good initiatives* (14%) (see Table 8). Catholics rank these attributes in the same order, but are significantly more likely to mention the long tradition and community focus. Nearly a third of Americans (29%) are unable to come up with a positive association with the Church.

A quality education is not a top of mind positive characteristic associated with the Catholic Church.

Focus on a *quality education* is less of a top of mind association. Just 5% of Americans (and 6% of American Catholics) volunteer a quality education as something positive that comes to mind when thinking about the Church. There are differences, albeit slight, among age

groups. For example, 8% of Americans age 65 and older cite quality education as a positive attribute of the Catholic Church, whereas the number drops to 3% among people age 40 and younger.

Nine percent of urban Catholics cite quality education, which is nearly double the average (5%) and higher than suburban Catholics (6%).

The two top negative attributes (perhaps media-driven) associated with the Catholic Church include past priest scandals (cited by 26% of Americans) and rigid/anti-modern practices and behaviors (20%).

As with Americans generally, top of mind negatives for Catholics include past priest scandals (27%) and a sense of rigidity/anti-modern practices and behaviors (20%).

Table 8: Top of Mind Views toward the Catholic Church

	All Adults %	Catholics %
POSITIVES		
Long tradition	29	43
Nothing comes to mind + Don't Know	29	15
Strong morals/discipline	24	28
Healthy environment/community-focus/do good initiatives	14	22
Quality education	5	6
NEGATIVES		
Priest/child molestation scandals	26	27
Too rigid/controlling/exclusive/anti-modern in practices and beliefs	20	20
Structured sermon/ Non-biblical teachings and theology/ Praying to idols and saints	11	4
Q18/19: When you think about the Catholic Church, what positives/negatives come to mind? (OPEN END)		

The Importance of Catholic Religious Education

An overwhelming majority of Catholics think it is important children *learn the basic teachings of the Catholic Church* (92% important, including 66% very important), *learn the moral values*

Table 9: Importance of Church Practices for Children	
	Importance
Learn the basic teachings of the Catholic Church	92% (66% very important)
Learn the moral values that come through a Catholic education	92% (65% very important)
To become practice Catholics	83% (49% very important)
Q43-45: If you have children, or if you were ever to have children, how important is it to you for your children to learn the basic teachings of the Catholic Church... learn the moral values that come through a Catholic education... for your children to become practicing Catholics?	

that come through a Catholic education (92% important, including 65% very important), and become practicing Catholics (83% important, including 49% very important) (see Table 9).

PART FIVE: IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT/FUTURE CHURCH INITIATIVES

Current Initiatives

Many of the good deeds the Church is already doing are seen as important both by Americans generally and by Catholics. Actions seen as part of a larger Catholic commitment to social justice tend to resonate with people, and especially with people under the age of 50.

Adults tend to see many of the good deeds the Church does as being “very important.” In particular, adults feel the Church’s work in providing care for the sick and elderly (79% very important), efforts to help the poor (75% very important), and counseling for young people (65% very important) are particularly important (see Table 10).

Close to a majority of adults see the Church’s work in operating inner-city schools as being “very important” (46%), and a large majority see this activity as at least somewhat important (81% overall importance).

<i>Current Initiatives</i>	All Adults	Catholics
Funding efforts to help the poor and homeless	94% (somewhat important) (75% very important)	98% (somewhat important) (81% very important)
Providing care for the sick and elderly in their communities	94% (79% very important)	98% (84% very important)
*Providing counseling for young people and teenagers	88% (65% very important)	96% (78% very important)
*Providing counseling to married couples and people about to get married	87% (54% very important)	91% (66% very important)
Operating Catholic elementary and high schools in the inner-city	81% (46% very important)	93% (62% very important)
Operating Catholic hospitals	81% (48% very important)	87% (48% very important)
Operating Catholic colleges and universities	74% (33% very important)	87% (47% very important)
Q20-26: Next, I’m going to read you a list of things the Catholic Church does today. For each one, please tell me how important it is for the Catholic Church to be doing this work.		
*Asked of half of the sample		

As with adults generally, Catholics see the Church’s work in providing care for the sick and elderly (84% very important) and efforts to help the poor (81%) as being very important.

Catholics are also more likely to see *operating inner-city schools* as being very important (62%), and an overwhelming majority see this activity as at least somewhat important (93% overall importance). Other groups who put a higher premium on the Church’s efforts in operating inner-city schools include more observant Catholics (73% very important), older Catholics (69% very important), African-Americans

(55% very important), and suburbanites (53% very important; though there is no difference between Catholics who live in cities and those who live in suburbs—64% very important for each).

Future Efforts

Participants were read descriptions of five areas where the Church is currently active and could increase its commitment moving forward (see Table 11 for exact question wording). Generally, action in each area would lead people to view the Church significantly more favorably. Specifically, increasing its commitment now and in the future to disaster relief, poverty relief, and affordable, high quality health care has the most potential to improve ratings of the Church.

While an increased commitment to inner-city, K-12 education would increase Church favorability, this initiative ranked behind Church efforts to address poverty, disaster relief, and health care.

Each of these efforts is more powerful among Catholics. Enhanced efforts in the areas of disaster relief, helping the poor and disadvantaged, and inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools all have the potential to lead to more intensely favorable views of the Church among Catholics.

Table 11: Importance of Future Church Initiatives

<i>Future Initiatives</i>	All Adults	Catholics
DISASTER RELIEF: Responding quickly to help victims of natural disasters get to safety and get their lives back to normal as quickly as possible.	83% (somewhat favorable) (50% much more favorable)	86% (55% much more favorable)
POVERTY: Spending more time and money helping the poor and disadvantaged.	82% (46% much more favorable)	87% (51% much more favorable)
*HEALTH CARE: Providing affordable quality health care to those who cannot afford it.	78% (48% much more favorable)	77% (48% much more favorable)
*HEALTH CARE: Supporting Catholic hospitals that provide high quality healthcare to people around the country.	71% (38% much more favorable)	79% (42% much more favorable)
K-12 EDUCATION: Increasing funding and commitment to inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools.	64% (28% much more favorable)	78% (43% much more favorable)
IMMIGRATION: Supporting initiatives that help bring recent immigrants into the mainstream of their communities.	49% (16% much more favorable)	58% (21% much more favorable)
<p>Q27-32: Next, I'm going to read you a list of things the Catholic Church is currently working on. For each of these initiatives, the Church could increase its commitment now and in the future. For each, please tell me what impact increasing the Church's commitment would have on your view of the Catholic Church...</p> <p>*Asked of half of the sample</p>		

Importantly, Catholics are more likely to view the Church more favorably if the Church *increases its commitment to inner-city, K-12 education* (78%). While this is a second tier initiative (trailing disaster

and poverty-relief efforts), Catholics respond more to efforts targeting inner-city schools than do adults more generally.

Support for this initiative is widespread. There is little racial difference, with Hispanics (68% more favorable), African-Americans (67% more favorable), and Whites (63% more favorable) all likely to see the Church more favorably based on an increased commitment to K-12 inner-city education.

Increasing commitment to inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools has the potential to improve people's views toward the Church.

Perhaps surprisingly, suburbanites respond more to a Church commitment to inner-city education than urban residents. Close to three-quarters of people who live in suburban areas would view the Church more favorably based on this effort (74% more favorable), compared to 67% among people who live in cities. College graduates also respond more to a Church commitment to inner-city education—69% would have a more favorable view of the Church, compared to 58% among those with a high-school degree or less.

After hearing about each of the initiatives, people were asked to pick which *one* would do the most to improve their impression of the Church. For both Americans generally and Catholics, efforts to fight poverty would have the most significant positive effect on the Church's reputation (see Table 12). Inner-city elementary and high school education is part of a second tier, along with the Church's health care efforts (19% and 20% respectively).

For Catholics, poverty-relief tops the agenda, but a focus on inner-city education is second most likely to improve impressions of the Church. Inner-city elementary and high school education particularly resonates among older Catholics (30%), suburban Catholics (30%), and Catholic men (29%).

Table 12: Issue That Would Most Improve Impression of Catholic Church

	All Adults	Catholics
	%	%
Fighting Poverty	32	33
Improving Health care	20	18
Improving Inner-city elementary and high school education	19	25
Providing Disaster Relief	11	10
Immigration	5	5

Q33: And which of these issues do you think would most improve your impression of the Catholic Church?

PART SIX: INNER-CITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Information about the closing of inner-city Catholic schools over the last five years leads to slightly less favorable views of the Church, though the margin is larger for adults generally (10-points more likely to view the church less favorably) than for Catholics (4-points less favorably) (see Table 13). While it is unclear how aware people are about the school closings, this has the potential to erode the image of the Church.

Table 13: Effect of School Closings on Perceptions of Church

	All Adults %	Catholics %
Total more favorable	27	30
Total less favorable	37	34
More Favorable – Less Favorable Difference	-10	-4

Q46: As you may know, due to escalating operating costs, the Catholic Church has closed approximately 339 inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools in the last 5 years. Does this information make you... toward the Catholic Church?

Information about the closing of Catholic schools over the past five years causes the most damaging impact among people who live in the suburbs (22-points “less favorable”), college graduates (19-points “less favorable”), people with incomes over \$75K (17-points “less favorable”), and non-parents (16-points “less favorable”). Among Catholics, the impact is significantly more negative for people who live in the suburbs (18-points “less favorable”) than Catholics who live in urban areas (2-points “less favorable”) and for college graduates (13-points “less favorable”) more so than non-college graduates (2-points “more favorable”).

Information about the closing of inner-city Catholic schools over the last five years leads to slightly less favorable views of the Church. While it is unclear how aware people are about the school closings, it has the potential to erode the image of the Church.

Arguments For/Against Closing Schools

Given arguments for and against closing inner-city Catholic schools, the majority of people prefer *not* closing these schools. Among adults generally, a social justice argument for keeping the schools open (+37) is slightly more effective than a message focused on seeking public and private funding to keep the schools open (+28) (see Table 14). Among Catholics, both messages resonate similarly.

Social justice messaging resonates more with women, people age 40 and younger, minorities, and people who live in urban areas.

Table 14: Arguments for and against Closing Schools

	All Adults %	Catholics %
Social Justice		
Statement 1: Some people say that is important for the Catholic Church to continue to support K-12 education in urban areas because it is a stabilizing force for struggling families looking to provide moral guidance and an affordable quality education in some of the toughest areas in the country.	62	63
Statement 2: Other people say that because Catholics are increasingly moving out of cities, urban Catholic schools no longer serve Catholic students. The Church should dedicate its efforts to the suburban schools where more Catholics who can afford full tuition live.	25	30
Margin	+37	+32
Public Funding		
Statement 1: Some people say that it is important for the Catholic Church to make it a priority to actively seek public and private funding in order to keep inner-city Catholic schools open since they help equalize opportunity through an affordable, quality education in some of the toughest areas in the country.	56	63
Statement 2: Other people say that because Catholics are increasingly moving out of cities, urban Catholic schools no longer serve Catholic students. The Church should dedicate its efforts to the suburban schools where more Catholics who can afford full tuition live.	28	27
Margin	+28	+36
Q47& 48: Which statement do you agree with more?		

PART SEVEN: ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC FUNDING INITIATIVES

A majority of Americans support *public funding* of various Church-affiliated charitable initiatives. Support is highest for public funding of Catholic charities that help the poor and homeless (77% favor) followed by support for public funding of hospitals affiliated with the Church (72% favor). Not surprisingly, Catholics are more supportive of public funding of Catholic-affiliated charitable efforts (see Table 15).

Support for public funding of “inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools” also garners broad support, though it is a second tier priority. Support for public funding of inner-city Catholic schools (64% favor) is slightly higher than broad-based funding of all Catholic schools (59% favor). However, Catholics are more likely to support public funding for all Catholic schools (76%) than solely inner-city Catholic schools (73%).

Table 15: Attitudes toward Public Funding Initiatives

<i>Public Funding Initiatives</i>	All Adults	Catholics
Catholic charities that help the poor and homeless	77% (51% strongly favor)	83% (61% strongly favor)
Hospitals affiliated with the Catholic Church	72% (36% strongly favor)	79% (43% strongly favor)
*Inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools	64% (35% strongly favor)	73% (45% strongly favor)
*Catholic elementary and high schools	59% (31% strongly favor)	76% (47% strongly favor)
Catholic colleges or universities	57% (26% strongly favor)	68% (36% strongly favor)
Charitable organizations that have a religious affiliation	56% (24% strongly favor)	65% (26% strongly favor)
Q50-55: Next, I’m going to read the names of some specific religious groups that provide social services that may apply for government funding to support their efforts. For each one that I name, please tell me whether you would favor or oppose government funding to the organization?		
*Asked of half of the sample		

Support for both public funding of Catholic schools generally and inner-city Catholic schools is higher among minorities than Whites. Among Whites, 55% favor public funding of Catholic schools and 61% support funding of inner-city Catholic schools. In contrast, 69% of minorities favor public funding of Catholic schools and 75% favor public funding of inner-city Catholic schools.

People who live in cities are more likely to favor public funding of inner-city Catholic schools (74%, compared to 62% of suburbanites and 58% of people who live in rural areas). However, people who live in rural areas are more likely to support public funding for Catholic schools more broadly (65%, compared to 57% among urbanites and 56% among people who live in the suburbs).

Support for government funding of inner-city Catholic schools is higher among minority groups and people living in urban areas.

Arguments for Public Funding of Inner-City Catholic Schools

Majorities support public funding of inner-city Catholic schools when presented the potential cost to taxpayers of closing them. After hearing about a potential \$2 billion price tag if inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools close, the majority of adults (55%) support a proposal to subsidize programs such as support for young teachers who choose to work in inner-city Catholic schools and financial support for technology and transportation in these schools (see Table 16). Catholics are even more supportive of such a proposal, with 69% favoring efforts to subsidize inner-city Catholic schools.

Table 16: Public Funding as Way to Save Money

Some people have said that when inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools close, it could cost tax payers \$2 billion a year to serve those students. One proposal to reduce operating costs is for the government to subsidize programs that will help keep these schools open, including support for young teachers who choose to work in inner-cities and financial support for technology, transportation, and special education in inner-city Catholic schools.

	All Adults	Catholics
	%	%
Favor	55	69
Oppose	40	27
Difference	+15	+42

Q56: Do you favor or oppose this proposal to use government money to support programs such as these to keep inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools open across the country?

Attitudes toward Converting Catholic Schools into Charter Schools

However, there is little support for converting Catholic schools into public charter schools. A majority of Americans oppose such a proposal. Opposition is even higher among Catholics, with 62% opposing converting Catholic schools into charter schools (see Table 17). Given the strong support for Catholic schools and the clear brand identity differentiating Catholic schools from public schools, this may suggest a concern over losing what it is Americans like about Catholic schools if they are converted into public charter schools. This may be even more true among Catholics.

**Table 17: Support for Converting to Charter Schools
Among All Adults and Catholics**

Some people are considering converting Catholic schools into public charter schools. Charter schools are public schools that are given more freedom to be innovative in exchange for being held accountable by public authorities for improved student achievement. As public charter schools, the Catholic schools would be required to stop all religious practices and teachings.

	All Adults	Catholics
	%	%
Favor	39	31
Oppose	52	62
Difference	-13	-32

Q57: Do you favor or oppose converting Catholic schools into public Charter schools?

APPENDIX A: QUESTION WORDING

Favorability of Figures and Institutions

Q1-6

- Now I'm going to read you a list of public figures and groups, and I'd like you to tell me whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of each one. If you have never heard of the person or group, or don't know enough to have an impression, please just say so.

Perceptions of Different School Types

Q7-11

- Next, I'm going to ask you some questions about education and different types of schools that students may go to. For each one, I'd like you to tell me what grade you would give them—an A, B, C, D, or F. If you have never heard of the type of school, or don't know enough to have an impression, please just say so.

Characteristics Associated with Catholic Schools

Q12-17

- I'm going to read some phrases some people have used to describe these types of schools. After each, please tell me which type of school the phrase describes best.

Q37-42

- Next, I'm going to read you a list of characteristics some people associate with Catholic schools. For each, please tell me if you associate this characteristic with Catholic schools strongly, not so strongly, a little, or not at all?

Top of Mind Views Toward the Catholic Church

Q18-19

- When you think about the Catholic Church, what **positives** come to mind? (OPEN END)
- When you think about the Catholic Church, what **negatives** come to mind? (OPEN END)

Importance of Church Practices for Children

Q43-45

- If you have children, or if you ever were to have children, how important is it to you for your children to learn the basic teachings of the Catholic Church—very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?
- If you have children, or if you ever were to have children, how important is it to you for your children to learn the moral values that come through a Catholic education—very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

- If you have children, or if you ever were to have children, how important is it to you for your children to become practicing Catholics—very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

Importance of Current Church Initiatives

Q20-26

- Next, I'm going to read you a list of things the Catholic Church does today. For each one, please tell me how important it is for the Catholic Church to be doing this work—very important, somewhat important, not very important, not at all important.

Importance of Future Church Initiatives

Q27-32

- Next, I'm going to read you a list of things the Catholic Church is currently working on. For each of these initiatives, the Church could increase its commitment now and in the future. For each, please tell me what impact increasing the Church's commitment would have on your view of the Catholic Church—would it make you feel much more favorable toward the Church, somewhat more favorable, somewhat less favorable, or much less favorable toward the Catholic Church? Or does it not make a difference?

Q33

- And which of these issues do you think would most improve your impression of the Catholic Church?

Effect of School Closings on Perceptions of Church

Q46

- As you may know, due to escalating operating costs, the Catholic Church has closed approximately 339 inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools in the last 5 years. Does this information make you feel more or less favorably toward the Catholic Church?

Arguments for and against Closing Schools

Q47

SSA:

- Next I'm going to read you two statements that people have made about the Catholic Church closing inner-city schools.
- STATEMENT 1: Some people say that it is important for the Catholic Church to continue to support K through 12 education in urban areas because it is a stabilizing force for struggling families looking to provide moral guidance and an affordable quality education in some of the toughest areas in the country.
- STATEMENT 2: Other people say that because Catholics are increasingly moving out of cities, urban Catholic schools no longer serve Catholic students. The Church should dedicate its efforts to the suburban schools where more Catholics who can afford full tuition live.

- Which statement do you agree with more?

SSB:

- Next I'm going to read you two statements that people have made about the Catholic Church closing inner-city schools.
- STATEMENT 1: Some people say that it is important for the Catholic Church to make it a priority to actively seek public and private funding in order to keep inner-city Catholic schools open since they help equalize opportunity through an affordable, quality education in some of the toughest areas in the country.
- STATEMENT 2: Other people say that because Catholics are increasingly moving out of cities, urban Catholic schools no longer serve Catholic students. The Church should dedicate its efforts to the suburban schools where more Catholics who can afford full tuition live.
- Which statement do you agree with more?

Attitudes toward Public Funding Initiatives

Q50-55

- Next, I'm going to read the names of some specific religious groups that provide social services that may apply for government funding to support their efforts. For each one that I name, please tell me whether you would favor or oppose government funding to the organization?
- Thinking again about inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools. Some people have said that when inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools close, it could cost tax payers \$2 billion a year to serve those students. One proposal to reduce operating costs is for the government to subsidize programs that will help keep these schools open, including support for young teachers who choose to work in inner-cities and financial support for technology, transportation, and special education in inner-city Catholic schools.

Public Funding as Way to Save Money

Q56

- Do you favor or oppose this proposal to use government money to support programs such as these too keep inner-city Catholic elementary and high schools open across the country?

Support for Converting to Charter Schools

Q57

- Some people are considering converting Catholic schools into public charter schools. Charter schools are public schools that are given more freedom to be innovative in exchange for being held accountable by public authorities for improved student achievement. As public charter schools, the Catholic schools would be required to stop all religious practices and teachings.
- Do you favor or oppose converting Catholic schools into public charter schools?