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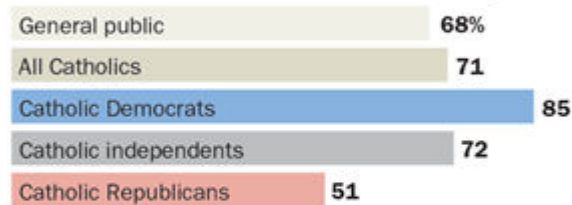
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Catholics Divided Over Global Warming

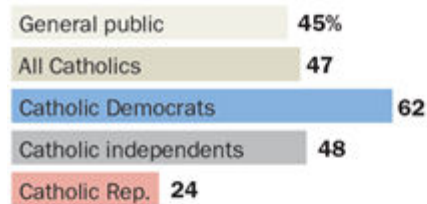
Partisan Differences Mirror Those Among General Public

Deep Partisan Divisions in Catholics' Views on Global Warming

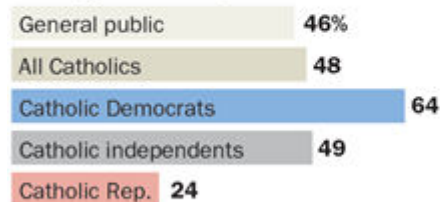
% who believe that Earth is warming



% who believe that warming is caused by human activity



% who believe that warming is a very serious problem



Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-00/) On the eve of a forthcoming encyclical by Pope Francis on the environment and climate change, a new Pew Research Center survey finds that U.S. Catholics' views on global warming are broadly reflective of American public opinion writ large; a solid majority believe that Earth is warming, but there is much more division over the cause and seriousness of climate change. Moreover, the poll shows that climate change is a highly politicized issue that sharply divides American Catholics, like the U.S. public as a whole, mainly along political party lines.

About seven-in-ten U.S. Catholics (71%) believe the planet is getting warmer. Nearly half of Catholic adults (47%) attribute global warming to human causes, and a similar share (48%) view it as a very serious problem.

But more than eight-in-ten Catholic Democrats say there is solid evidence that Earth is warming, compared with just half of Catholic Republicans.¹ And while six-in-ten Catholic Democrats say global warming is a man-made phenomenon and that it poses a very serious problem, only about a quarter of Catholic Republicans agree.

Among the U.S. public as a whole (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/06/16/ideological-divide-over-global-warming-as-wide-as-ever/>), belief that global warming is occurring is nearly twice as common among Democrats as Republicans (86% vs. 45%). The view that global warming is caused by human activity is roughly three times as common among Democrats as among members of the GOP (64% vs. 22%), as is the view that it represents a very serious problem (67% vs. 21%).

The survey also finds large differences in views on global warming between Hispanic Catholics and white, non-Hispanic Catholics. Hispanic Catholics are much more inclined than white Catholics to say that global warming is occurring, is mostly a consequence of human activity and is a very serious problem. Here again, these patterns mirror differences by race and ethnicity seen among the general public.

Generally speaking, Catholics express higher levels of belief in global warming and concern about its effects than do Protestants, but lower levels than people who are religiously unaffiliated (atheists, agnostics and those whose religion is "nothing in particular"). However, analysis of the survey findings shows that political party identification and race/ethnicity are much better predictors of environmental attitudes than are religious identity or observance.

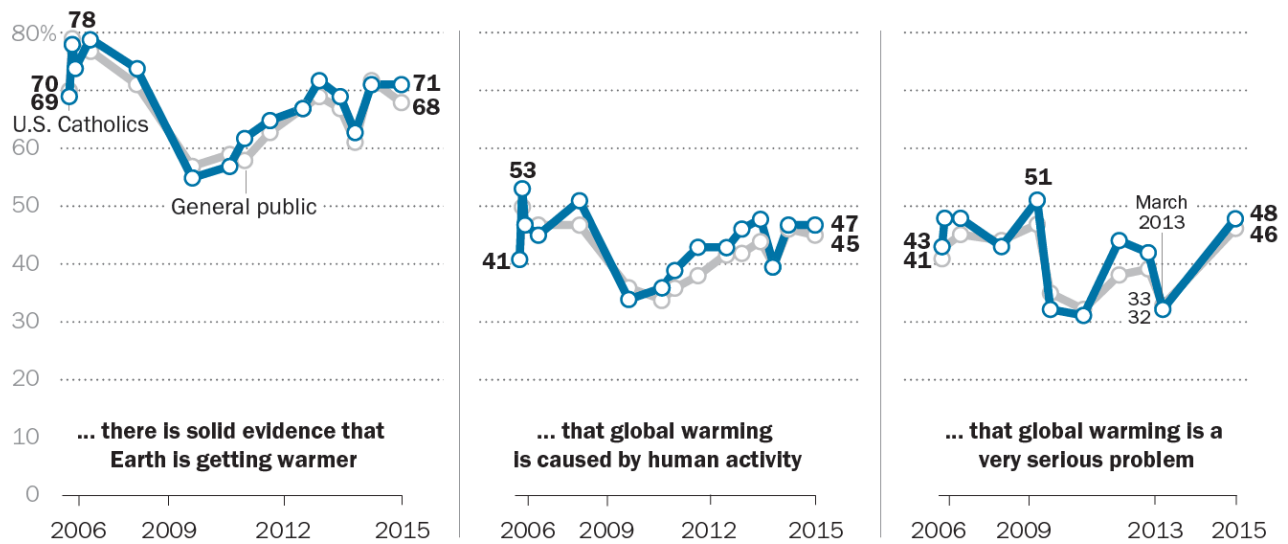
These are among the key findings of a new Pew Research Center survey, conducted May 5-June 7, 2015, on landlines and cellphones among a national sample of 5,122 adults, including 1,016 self-identified Catholics.

The survey also shows that, aside from a brief dip in early 2014, the share of Americans who believe there is solid evidence that the planet is getting warmer and that warming is mainly caused by human activity has remained relatively steady between 2013 and today.

However, more people now view global warming as a very serious problem than in 2013, when the question was last asked in a nationwide Pew Research Center telephone survey. Nearly half of U.S. adults (46%) now hold this view, up from a third in 2013 (but on par with the share who expressed such concern in 2007 and 2008).

Trends in U.S. Views on Global Warming

% of U.S. adults who say ...



Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015

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This shift has occurred among most major religious groups in the U.S., including Catholics. Among the public as a whole, the view that global warming represents a very serious problem has grown much more among Democrats (from 48% to 67%) than among the GOP (from 14% to 21%) between 2013 and 2015.

U.S. Catholics' Views of Pope Francis

	Among U.S. Catholics
<i>View of Pope Francis</i>	%
Favorable	86
Unfavorable	4
Can't rate/refused	<u>10</u>
	100
 <i>Pope Francis represents...</i>	
Major change in direction	74
For the better	69
For the worse	3
Neither/don't know	2
Not a major change	17
Don't know	<u>9</u>
	100
 <i>% saying __ describes Pope Francis</i>	
Compassionate	94
Humble	91
Open-minded	89
Too liberal	19
Naïve	15
Out of touch	11

Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-02/) The new poll finds that roughly two years into his papacy, Pope Francis remains very popular among U.S. Catholics. Fully 86% of Catholics say they view Francis favorably, and nearly seven-in-ten (69%) say he represents a major change for the better for the Catholic Church – the same share who said this a year after his election.

In addition, the survey sought to explore what Catholics like – or don't like – about the pope by asking whether Francis exhibits three positive and three negative qualities. Roughly nine-in-ten or more say they think Francis is "compassionate," "humble" and "open-minded." About one-in-five Catholics (19%) describe him as "too liberal," while one-in-seven (15%) consider him "naïve" and one-in-ten (11%) think he is "out of touch."

Pope Francis Rated Most Positively for Addressing Concerns of Poor, Spreading Faith

<i>Catholics' rating of pope's job of ...</i>	Excellent	Good	NET excellent /good
... addressing needs/concerns of poor	42%	37%	79%
... spreading Catholic faith	41	43	84
... addressing needs/concerns of families	35	44	79
... promoting good relations between religions	34	44	78
... standing up for traditional values	33	47	80
... reforming Vatican bureaucracy	25	38	63
... addressing needs/concerns of women	22	43	65
... addressing sex abuse scandal	19	36	55
... addressing environmental issues	18	35	53

Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-03/) Pope Francis also gets high marks for his handling of specific tasks, with most Catholics giving him either “excellent” or “good” ratings on a wide range of responsibilities, from promoting good relations between major religions to addressing the sex abuse scandal. He earns the highest praise for spreading the Catholic faith and for addressing the needs and concerns of the poor, with about four-in-ten giving him an “excellent” rating in each of these areas (41% and 42%, respectively).

Somewhat fewer Catholics give Francis an excellent rating for addressing the needs and concerns of families. A few months before the pope’s scheduled trip to the U.S. in September to participate in the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, 35% of Catholics give Francis an “excellent” rating for his work so far on behalf of families, while 44% say he has done a “good” job in this area.

While just over half of U.S. Catholics say Francis is doing an excellent or good job addressing the sex abuse scandal (55%), about one-in-ten (12%) say he is doing a poor job dealing with this matter, 22% say he has done only a fair job and 11% express no opinion.

In advance of the encyclical on climate change, just 53% of Catholics give the pope a favorable rating for his work addressing environmental issues. The survey, conducted in May and early June before the publication of the encyclical, finds that 18% of Catholics think Francis has done an “excellent” job on environmental issues so far. An additional 35% of Catholics say Francis has done a “good” job in this area, while the remainder rate his performance “only fair” (25%) or “poor” (4%), or express no opinion (18%). Catholic Democrats give Francis slightly more positive marks on this issue than Catholic Republicans; 21% of Catholic Democrats say Francis has done an excellent job addressing environmental issues, compared with 13% of Catholic Republicans.

Many Catholics See Global Warming as a Serious Problem

Catholics' Views on Global Warming Track General Public

	U.S. general public	U.S. Catholics
Solid evidence that Earth is warming?	%	%
Yes	68	71
Mostly due to human activity	45	47
Natural patterns	18	20
Don't know	5	4
No solid evidence	25	22
Don't know enough yet	11	12
Just not happening	12	10
Don't know	2	1
Mixed evidence (vol.)/don't know	7	7
	100	100
Global warming is ...		
Very serious problem	46	48
Somewhat serious	23	26
Not too serious	13	12
Not a problem	16	12
Don't know	2	2
	100	100

Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-04/) Overall, about seven-in-ten Catholics (71%) believe there is solid evidence that the average temperature on Earth has been getting warmer over the past few decades, and nearly half (47%) believe this change is due to human activity, such as burning fossil fuels. Roughly one-fifth of Catholics (22%) say there is no solid evidence that the Earth is getting warmer. This latter group is divided between those who assert that we just do not know enough yet to be sure that the planet is getting warmer (12%) and those who say Earth is not warming (10%).

Roughly three-quarters of Catholics say that global warming is a problem, with about half saying it is a “very” serious problem (48%) and a quarter saying it is “somewhat” serious (26%).

Overall, Catholics' views on global warming line up very closely with the views of the general public. And among both the general public and Catholics, views on whether global warming is occurring and whether it is caused by human activity have remained relatively steady in recent years. Among Catholics, the same shares now say global warming is occurring (71%) and that it is caused mainly by human activity (47%) as said this in an August 2014 Pew Research survey. But the share of Americans, including Catholics, who say global warming is a very serious problem has grown since that question was last asked in 2013.

Growing Share of Americans Say Global Warming Is a Very Serious Problem

% who say global warming is a very serious problem

	2013	2015	Change
	%	%	%
Total	33	46	+13
Republican	14	21	+7
Democrat	48	67	+19
Independent	31	45	+14
Catholic	32	48	+16
Protestant	29	39	+10
White evangelical	17	24	+7
White mainline	32	41	+9
Black Protestant	35	55	+20
Unaffiliated	42	56	+14
<i>Among Catholics</i>			
Republican	14	24	+10
Democrat	44	64	+20
Independent	n/a	49	-

Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015. Bold figures in the "change" column indicate statistically significant change between 2013 and 2015. Catholic independents in 2013 are not shown due to insufficient sample size.

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-05/) In 2013, one-third of Americans said global warming was a very serious problem, compared with 46% who now hold this view. Catholics' views on this question have moved in the same direction, rising from 32% who said global warming was a very serious problem in 2013 to 48% who hold that view today.

Americans who identify as Democrats or political independents are more likely than Republicans to say global warming is a very serious problem (67% of Democrats and 45% of independents, compared with 21% of Republicans). While growing shares of all three groups express this view, recent change has been more pronounced among Democrats and independents than among Republicans.

The share saying that global warming is a very serious problem has grown by 20 percentage points among Catholic Democrats (from 44% in 2013 to 64% today) and 10 points among Catholic Republicans (from 14% to 24%).

Large Partisan, Racial/Ethnic Divisions in Views of Global Warming

	% of all U.S. adults who say global warming is ...			% of Catholics who say global warming is ...		
	Occur- ing	Caused by humans	Very serious problem	Occur- ing	Caused by humans	Very serious problem
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	68	45	46	71	47	48
Protestant	62	37	39	-	-	-
White evangelical	50	25	24	-	-	-
White mainline	63	42	41	-	-	-
Black Protestant	78	43	55	-	-	-
Unaffiliated	77	57	56	-	-	-
Men	64	43	42	69	46	43
Women	73	48	50	73	48	52
White	63	41	39	64	39	39
Black	78	44	54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hispanic	83	62	65	82	60	63
Ages 18-29	74	54	51	73	54	52
30-49	68	47	47	74	54	54
50-64	66	43	44	71	46	46
65+	65	36	41	66	34	40
<i>Attend religious services...</i>						
Weekly or more	63	38	39	71	45	45
Monthly/yearly	71	47	48	74	51	53
Seldom/never	73	52	53	64	44	43
Republican	45	22	21	51	24	24
Democrat	86	64	67	85	62	64
Independent	70	46	45	72	48	49
Conservative	51	28	29	56	31	35
Moderate	74	48	47	75	53	49
Liberal	88	69	70	88	64	67

Source: Pew Research Centersurvey, May 5-June 7, 2015

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-06/) Catholics are somewhat more concerned about global warming than are Protestants, and somewhat less concerned than the religiously unaffiliated. In general, Catholics' views on global warming tend to resemble the views of the public as a whole, both in their overall level of concern and in the sharp differences of opinion between political and demographic subgroups.

Catholic Democrats are far more likely than Catholic Republicans to believe global warming is occurring (85% vs. 51%), to say it is caused by human activity (62% vs. 24%) and to view it as a serious problem (64% vs. 24%). Similar gaps are seen between Democrats and Republicans in the population as a whole.

Similarly, Hispanic Catholics are significantly more likely than white Catholics to say they believe Earth is getting warmer (82% of Hispanic Catholics vs. 64% of white Catholics), to say it is mostly due to human activity (60% vs. 39%) and to say global warming is a very serious problem (63% vs. 39%). These differences closely match those found between whites and Hispanics in the overall population.

Analysis of the survey findings shows that political party identification and race and ethnicity are far more closely linked with views on global warming than religious affiliation. Statistical modeling, called regression analysis, that simultaneously examines correlations between a variety of demographic factors and views of global warming shows that Catholics are more likely than evangelical Protestants to say global warming is occurring, even taking into account the partisan and racial/ethnic differences between Catholics and evangelical Protestants. And Catholics are slightly less likely than the religiously unaffiliated to say global warming is caused by human activity. But the modeling confirms that the differences between Republicans and Democrats and between whites and Hispanics are far more important for understanding views of global warming than are the differences between Catholics and people of other religious faiths.

Pope Francis Viewed Positively by the U.S. Public and Catholics

U.S. General Public Continues to View Pope Francis Favorably

% of U.S. general public with a ... view of Francis

	March 2013	Sept. 2013	Feb. 2014	Feb. 2015	June 2015
	%	%	%	%	%
Favorable	57	58	66	70	64
Unfavorable	14	12	11	15	10
Can't rate	29	30	23	15	27
	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

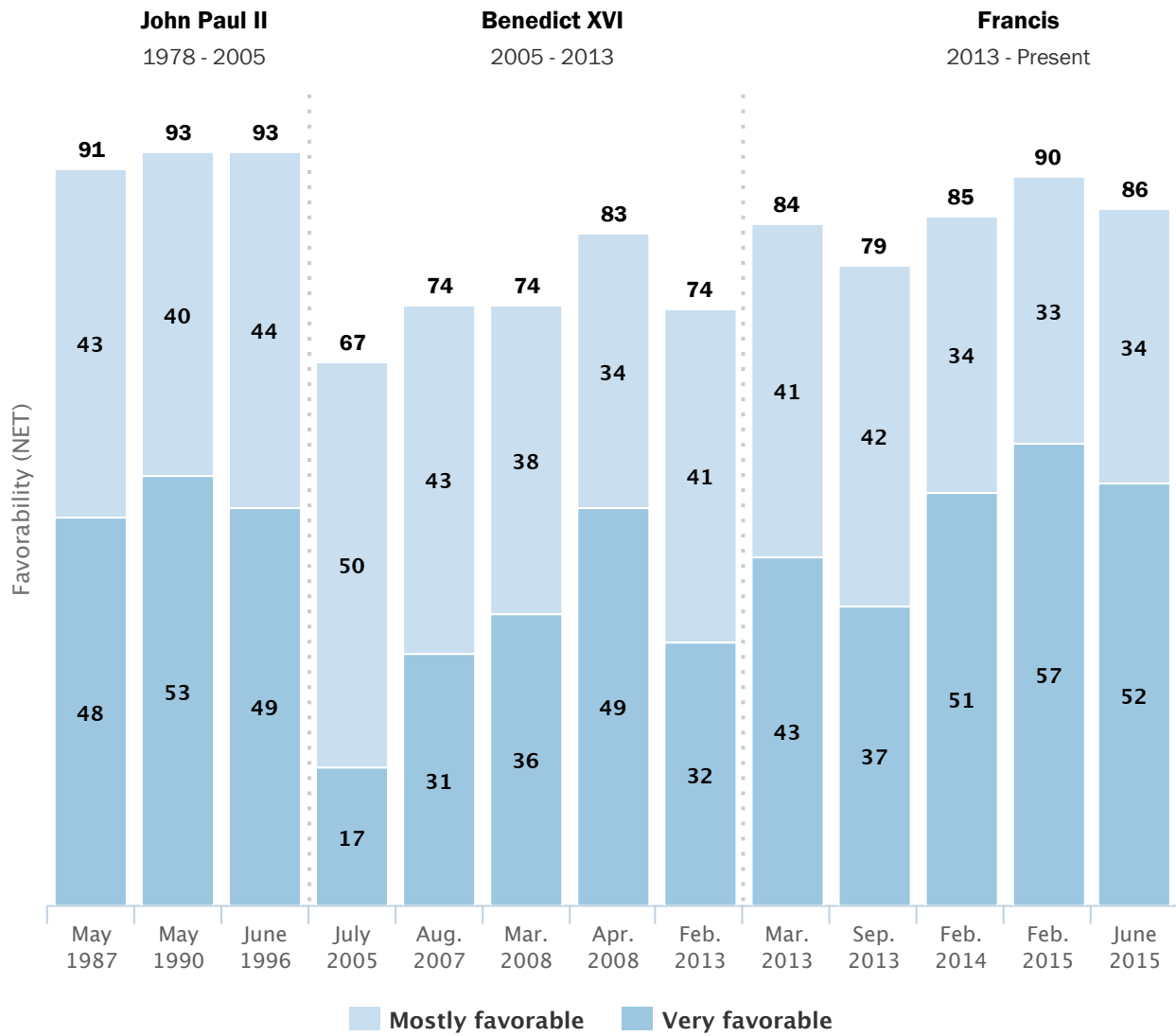
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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-07/) Among U.S. adults overall, more than six-in-ten (64%) express a favorable view of Pope Francis. While this is lower than the high of 70% who gave Francis a favorable rating in February of this year, the share of Americans expressing an unfavorable view of Francis also has ticked down (10% now, compared with 15% in February). Making up for these differences: The share of people who say they cannot rate the pope has increased from 15% earlier this year to 27% now.

A large majority of U.S. Catholics (86%) say they have a favorable view of Pope Francis, comparable to the 90% registered in a Pew Research Center poll earlier this year. Throughout his two-year papacy, Francis' favorability ratings among Catholics have tended to be higher than those of his immediate predecessor Pope Benedict XVI, and they have approached the very high ratings given to Pope John Paul II in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Trends in Papal Favorability Among U.S. Catholics





Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7 2015. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. Wikimedia Commons (images).

While Catholics in general express highly favorable views of Pope Francis, some subgroups are even more enthusiastic than others. For example, more Catholic women than men say they view the pontiff very favorably (57% vs. 46%). And Catholics who report attending Mass at least once a week are more likely than those who attend less regularly to hold a very favorable view.

Francis Widely Popular Among Catholics

% of Catholics with a ... view of Francis

	NET Favorable	Very	Mostly	NET Unfavorable	Can't rate/ref
All U.S. Catholics	86	52	34	4	10=100
Men	82	46	36	6	13=100
Women	90	57	33	3	7=100
White	89	55	34	4	7=100
Hispanic	81	50	31	3	15=100
Ages 18-29	75	43	33	4	21=100
30-49	90	50	40	3	7=100
50-64	87	56	31	4	9=100
65+	87	56	31	6	7=100
<i>Attend religious services...</i>					
Weekly or more	92	63	29	3	6=100
Monthly or yearly	85	49	36	6	9=100
Seldom or never	77	35	42	3	19=100
Republican	90	55	35	4	6=100
Democrat	89	57	32	2	9=100
Independent	85	48	38	6	9=100
Conservative	87	51	36	3	10=100
Moderate	92	56	36	2	6=100
Liberal	83	49	34	7	10=100

Source: Pew Research Center survey, May 5-June 7, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/pr-2015-06-16_popeenvironment-09/) Catholic Republicans and Democrats are about equally likely to express positive views of the pope, as are both conservative and liberal Catholics.

Non-Catholic Americans also give Pope Francis largely positive ratings. Seven-in-ten white mainline Protestants have a favorable view of Francis (69%), as do majorities of black Protestants (59%) and those with no religious affiliation (58%). White evangelical Protestants express a somewhat less positive view, with roughly half (51%) saying they have a favorable view of the pope, down from 60% in February of this year. But the share of white evangelicals who express an *unfavorable* view of Francis also has dropped by eight percentage points since February, while the share of evangelicals who offer no opinion of the pontiff has grown by 16 points.