

Chapter 1 : The Roman Catholic Church

*From the sexual abuse scandal that shook the foundations of the Catholic Church to the 9/11 terrorist attacks that cast a cloud over a troubled nation, Eric Plumer's *The Catholic Church and American Culture: Why the Claims of the DaVinci Code Struck a Chord* investigates the contemporary events, ideas, and movements that fostered Dan Brown's unprecedented dominance of best-seller lists and dinner-table conversation.*

Email Anger, shock, and dismay over the latest sex-abuse scandals in their church are plaguing Catholics worldwide as they await a definitive statement from Pope Francis regarding allegations that the Vatican has helped cover up for abusive prelates. Meanwhile many blame the tradition of priestly celibacy for causing the sexual abuse of minors. Supposedly, if priests were allowed to marry, they would not have to resort to statutory rape and child molestation. While it is true that children who live with both biological parents are at the lowest risk of abuse, those who live with a single parent who has a live-in partner are 20 times more likely to become victims. The risk is also elevated for foster children and kids with single parents or a parent and step-parent. Clearly, marriage alone is not the solution for ending sexual exploitation of minors. Furthermore, most sexual abuse by Catholic priests has been against boys and young men, as reported by *The New American*. Church leaders agree there is an obvious and even well-known undercurrent of homosexuality driving most of these abuse cases. Traditional marriage as defined by the Catholic Church "between a man and a woman" is not the remedy that springs to mind. He believes that the problem of child sexual assault in evangelical circles rivals that in the Catholic Church. In fact, he told a Religion Newswriters Association conference, "I think we are worse. As for pedophilia specifically, ending mandatory priestly celibacy in the Catholic Church would do nothing to stop predator priests. In the general population, "the majority of the men who molest boys are also married, divorced, widowed, or living with an adult partner," as documented in *The Stop Child Molestation Book* by Gene Abel, M. This is because pedophilia is not just about satisfying lustful desires; the American Psychiatric Association defines pedophilia as a psychiatric disorder involving sexual attraction to prepubescent children. Obviously, marriage is not a "cure" for perversion. A further interesting defense of clerical celibacy comes out of pioneer days in the American West and is chronicled in a book entitled *The Life of Father De Smet*, S. It tells the story of native American tribes such as the Sioux, the Blackfeet, and the Flathead, who preferred Catholic "Black Robes" as they called priests, specifically because they were unmarried and could therefore devote all their time and energy to sacred work. They even went so far as to appeal to the President of the United States, asking that the married ministers might be recalled and Catholic priests sent in their place. Such elevated, upright souls could, moreover, appreciate the chastity of the Catholic priesthood. With rare discernment, the Indian understood that, belonging as he does to all men, a priest cannot give himself to one person, and not for an instant did they hesitate to choose the Black Robe, who had consecrated his life to them, rather than the minister in lay dress, installed in a comfortable home with wife and children, devoted to the interests of his family, giving only the time that remained to distributing Bibles. We value our readers and encourage their participation, but in order to ensure a positive experience for our readership, we have a few guidelines for commenting on articles. If your post does not follow our policy, it will be deleted. No profanity, racial slurs, direct threats, or threatening language. Please post comments in English. Please keep your comments on topic with the article. If you wish to comment on another subject, you may search for a relevant article and join or start a discussion there.

Chapter 2 : What is it that makes us uniquely Catholic? What defines a Catholic culture?

The culture that the church faces today cannot be understood as that of the previous three centuries, though some elements of the earlier American heritage still survive. Catholic Strategies Today.

The only thing that has brought me around to belief is rational argumentation. Edward Hamilton January 27, at Luther and Calvin and especially Zwingli were fervently devoted to making it impossible to be an outwardly observant but inwardly uncommitted practitioner of Christianity. No one could have swung to the Protestant camp during the aftermath of the Reformation, in an era of terrible strife and religious violence, without clearly understanding that scriptural authority was being deployed as the sole weapon against centuries of entrenched ecclesiastical power structure. This has left Protestantism, or at least radical or evangelical Protestantism, permanently bound to biblical dogma in a way that other branches of Christianity are not. Evangelicalism is fragile, and its cultural matrix depends on integration with the Bible. Evangelicals practically understand their culture as an extension of Jewish culture itself, as presented in the Bible or at least, the Bible as filtered through Sunday school lessons full of tunic-wearing and sandal-shod idealizations of various Old Testament heroes. This has left Protestantism permanently brittle and constantly in fear of erosion by the pickaxe of criticism. If that authority falls, everything goes with it. Catholics have the luxury of believing their faith out of a love of tradition, or the beauty of the liturgy, or the authority of the pope, or the witness of the saints, even after the Bible itself is reduced to a sheaf of dusty Mesopotamian mythology. I say all this as an evangelical, trying to be self-critical of my own tradition for the sake of irenicism. Catholics and Orthodox, and Episcopalians, and Conservative Jews are already familiar with the way in which all that praxis-based redundancy can serve as a liability instead, creating acculturated believers who have casually abandoned nearly all the original content of their faith, and attend out of force of habit. Evangelical Protestants never have that problem. They lapse straight to hardline atheism by a precipitous route of descent! So evangelicals can feel smug about how no one ever lingers in their congregations solely for the beauty of the liturgy— even as Catholics are feeling smug about exactly the same thing. When authority figures in the evangelical world are compromised by scandal, they each bear their own culpability independently. When authority figures in the Catholic world are compromised, their culpability is chained right up the hierarchy to the seat of the pope. A Catholic who witnesses bishops sit idly by while predator priests shuffle between parishes is going to be permanently nauseated by the sight of a clerical collar for years to come. The culture itself becomes poisoned. If evangelicals are naive biblicists who live in perpetual dread of discovering their Bible is not True, then Catholics are naive clericalists who live in perpetual dread of discovering that their Church is not Good. The standard apostasy narrative for a fallen evangelical is that he goes off to college, encounters an evolutionary biology textbook, and spends the rest of his life as an abrasive Dawkins-esque agitator denouncing his own former tribe. The standard apostasy narrative for a fallen Catholic is that she quietly quits Mass, joins a yoga class or a Buddhist discussion group that meets twice a week, and spends the rest of her life discovering her own inner voice of spiritual enlightenment. I say all this not to provide ammunition to each side when it attacks the other, but to encourage each to find compassion for the other. Catholics need to understand how besieged evangelicals feel by assaults on Biblical authority and be gentle with them in public — even as they privately wish evangelicals would become more Catholic, and stop fretting over whether the odder miracles in the Pentateuch are literally true. Sometimes, alas, I think even Rod is guilty of piling more wood on this particular fire! I think the observations about religion being a prerequisite for understanding art are true and helpful to me. Now maybe I know why! The fact that I took well to Tolstoy — whereas Rod had a lot more trouble tackling him — is probably an inversion of the dynamic at work for Dante. Pre-Conciliar Catholicism, whether strong or dysfunctional, wholly tribal or more intellectual and the sauce made by all these flavors and more plus all the history behind it in Europe made for a way of being that really formed a person—even if they later rejected the doctrines of the Faith or just quit going. The beautiful liturgy and ritual, all the Benediction, Novenas, devotions, chaplets, etc. The markers that struck pantry and hearth and pretty much gone too. All of these things indeed did seep down into the bones. What they were

replaced by is vapid and has no way of holding that same influence. The author of the original piece is very correct in that theology discussions on their own will not convert the world, or warm the heart of a fallen away Catholic or a wayward theologian. Its a trifecta of things, it seems to me. Theological argumentation is important, but it has to come along with beauty in liturgy and the appointments of churches and also the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Orthodoxy and orthopraxis go hand in hand. During the Counter-Reformation we had St. Robert Bellarmine, and St. Vincent de Pauls, as well as St. Theresa of Avilas etc. During the Vatican II revolution, which was supposed to usher in a new and glorious time in the Church, what did we get? We rode on the coattails of the Counter-Reformation Church for pretty much any of the luminaries. Much of what we got from Vatican II was an arid Modernist tinged theology that killed much of the popular piety that had sprung up over the years. It replaced at least what could be a very beautiful liturgy with lots of banality based on that arid and lifeless theology which in turn bleeds into the Eastern Rites in various degrees like the Latinizations of the past half-heartedly condemned in Vatican II. The art that came along with it was just as pointless and lost as what was outside in the World. There will be nothing even worth rebelling against if this becomes all encompassing. Like all impositions, it is unnatural and has no way to continue itself without the push of its authors. Precious few care to try to continue it. Those of a younger generation that bother to go to Mass and try to be Catholic anymore want something that actually looks, smells, feels, tastes, etc. Thursday January 27, at 1: There is considerable influence of Contemporary Christian music on Katy Perry. This sounds like a praise song. Considering how horrible that particular genre is, I am surprised anything half decent could be made of it.

Russell Shaw in his new book, American Church: The Remarkable Rise, Meteoric Fall, and Uncertain Future of Catholicism in America, describes the history of Catholicism in America, "a brilliant.

FOX This chapter explores the early days of the English colonies, when the rights of Catholics were not respected, to the end of the nineteenth century. Cecil Calvert - The English colonies were founded at the same time the Church was persecuted in England. Catholics were not permitted in these colonies. Catholics were excluded from the Dutch colony in New York and the Swedish settlement of Delaware also. By , laws against Catholics were again put into place. Catholics of New York had to travel to Philadelphia as late as the Revolutionary War to participate in Mass and receive the sacraments. Was religious freedom permitted in Maryland? A Catholic colony was settled in Maryland by Cecil Calvert in . A church and school were built as Catholic settlers arrived, accompanied by Jesuit priests. They permitted religious freedom to others and, as a result, Protestants obtained control of the colony. The English Church was then established and Catholics were denied their right to vote. The religious freedom of Catholics in Maryland was then restricted until after the Revolutionary War. Were Catholics given freedom in Pennsylvania? In the Church was given greater security when a Jesuit, Fr. Joseph Greaton, settled in Philadelphia and had St. When Catholic emigrants came from Germany, they too built churches. Most of them lived in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Summarize the development of Catholicism in other parts of the New World. The Capuchins built a chapel in New Orleans in , just three years after the city was founded. They opened a school for boys. The French king gave the Ursuline sisters permission to settle in New Orleans and they opened the first convent in the United States. They built a hospital, an orphanage, and a school for girls. The priest blessed the first church in St. Attempts to colonize Florida failed at first because of the hostility of the Indians. Early missionaries did not succeed, even though as early as Fr. Juan Juarez, a Spanish Franciscan, was appointed bishop of Florida. In a group of missionaries landed near Tampa Bay and within a few days all were savagely killed by the Indians. Twelve Franciscans and four Jesuits went with him to convert the Indians. Sailing along the Florida coast on August 28, , Admiral Menendez saw an ideal peninsula and ordered the boats to drop anchor. On September 8 he proclaimed the founding of St. Augustine to convert the Indians, with many priests losing their lives as the new, advancing civilization was resisted by the Indians. Missionaries were determined to bring Christianity to Florida and so the priests who lost their lives were always replaced, and gradually St. Augustine developed and the new colony grew. The countryside became peaceful as missions and monasteries were founded throughout Florida and most of the Indians north of the Gulf of Mexico and east of the Mississippi River converted to the Catholic Church. Missionaries and the faithful were put to death with extreme cruelty. The British, who had been colonizing in the north, also began to destroy Spanish gains. Governor Moore of South Carolina in directed a raid of the Apalachee Mission, valuable for food supplies. Franciscan missionaries were put to death; 1, Indians were taken into slavery by the English governor and Catholic Indians were killed. The Catholic faith in Florida was then even more suppressed. In Florida was purchased as part of the United States. It consisted of soldiers, 10 missionaries, 83 supply wagons and carts, and 7, head of stock. Onate went as far as Wichita, Kansas, and California. Francis, known today as Sante Fe Holy Faith. Santa Fe was founded in and became the headquarters for future missions in New Mexico. By there were forty-three missions and 34, Christian Indians. A Jesuit priest, Fr. It is the finest example of Spanish Renaissance architecture in the United States. Kino traveled thousands of miles on horse, ever anxious to convert souls. Some of this trails became roads, and he kept journals of his extensive travels. Kino won the faith of the Pima Indians for Jesus Christ, he was always sad that he did not succeed in converting the Apache Indians. Kino died on March 15, , in poverty, as he had lived. He is venerated as a great American pioneer. The cause for canonization of Fr. Antonio Margil, who developed missions in Texas, has been introduced. One of the missions he founded near San Antonio San Antonio de Bexar Mission is still used as a parish church and has been declared a National Historic Site by both the state and nation. Margil is compared to Kino and Serra as among the greatest of Spanish missionaries. Louis in Victoria County. They built hospitals, schools, and guard posts as protection

from Apache and Comanche Indians. The Spanish crown withdrew support and in the mission of San Jos de Aguayo was suppressed by the Mexican government. The Franciscans had to leave when the new Mexican government took over the missions in , and with the passing of years the mission was neglected. San Jos, which had earned the name Queen of the Missions, began to be restored to its former beauty in when the archdiocese of San Antonio began a restoration program. In arrangements began whereby it was named a National Historic Site. Junipero Serra - Fr. Serrra arrived in the harbor of Veracruz, Mexico, on December 6, , with a group of Franciscan missionaries assigned to evangelize the Indians of northern Mexico. The Franciscans were welcomed in the New World missions. Junipero was known for his great oratory, and his keen philosophical mind gave him a reputation among scholars. Nonetheless, he requested an assignment as a missionary. Learning of California and the needs of its Indians moved him. He then received permission to begin mission work there. His motto was "Always forward, never back. Serra walked whenever possible, in spite of poor health. He carried on a most heroic conquest of America for Christ from until his death in , with no other weapon than a crucifix and the love of God. Serra founded nine important missions in California. His successors founded twelve more. The cities of California grew around these missions. Junipero Serra was always on the move, back and forth between his missions, urging all to greater charity and zeal and encouraging new converts. Not satisfied with simple conversion to the Catholic faith, this great Franciscan priest and missionary taught the Indians a better life by teaching them how to sow and harvest. He led in the development of farmlands and wine presses and helped build, with his own hands, forges, mills, and slaughter houses. Serra once walked 2, miles to Mexico City to get retribution from the viceroy when a commandant of the Spanish military practiced cruelty to the Indians. His death at Carmel Mission, on August 28, , marked the end of Spanish extension in the United States in the pioneer missionary era. Did religion continue strong in the hearts of people after the early pioneer days? To some extent it did, but once the hardships of the pioneer days were over and the descendants grew wealthy from trade and agriculture, the old religious spirit weakened among Protestants. The spirit of the Enlightenment overtook them and Rationalism dominated in too many cases, as many depended more on themselves than on God. Thomas Paine, a leader of the revolutionary spirit, resembled in some respects the infidelity of Voltaire. Thoms Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, was a deist who sympathized with the Freethinkers of France. Catholics were blessed with heroic and saintly missionaries. Their faith continued to spread. There were three Catholics among those who signed the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation: The Carroll family of Maryland played a great role in the foundation of our American nation. One of the great Carroll family became a priest, namely John, who was born in Maryland on January 8, On July 1, , Fr. John Carroll was appointed superior of the Catholic clergy in America. In Monsignor Carroll was appointed bishop, and was consecrated bishop of the United States in , with his see at Baltimore. When Bishop Carroll returned from England where he was consecrated , he took a survey of his vast church. The first national census showed that in there were approximately 30, Catholics in a population of 3, , There were fewer than thirty priests for the widely scattered Catholic population. More than half the Catholics, about 16,, lived in Maryland; 7, lived in Pennsylvania; 3, around Detroit and Vincennes, and 2, in Illinois. How did the first bishop of the United States prosper in ruling the Church? He called the first Synod of Baltimore, which set up rules and regulations that had governed the Church until the present day.

Chapter 4 : Los Angeles Times - We are currently unavailable in your region

The book The Catholic Church and American Culture: Why the Claims of Dan Brown Strike a Chord, Eric A. Plumer is published by University of Scranton Press. The Catholic Church and American Culture: Why the Claims of Dan Brown Strike a Chord, Plumer.

As a professor at The Catholic University of America and head of an institute that considers public policy from a Catholic perspective, my engagement in public life takes place at the intersection of religion, policy, and politics. I grew up in a Catholic cultural bubble. The culture I grew up in—the culture of millions of other American Catholics—is now gone for good. This has both welcome and worrisome implications; for the future of the Church in America, the question of Catholic culture may be more important than ever. Clinton, in my boyhood, had five parishes, each with its own grade school, all pretty neatly divided between Catholics of German and Irish heritage—St. The Germans had come in the 19th century to farm and the Irish a bit later for the railroads and to work in a milling industry that had closed shop before I was born. The town was split between Catholics and mainline Protestants mostly Lutherans and Presbyterians and we tended to stay with our own. As kids we played with other Catholics, had our own Catholic scouting troops, CYO athletics and mixers, and even our own 4-H groups. Our parishes forbade us from joining the YMCA and the like so as not to mingle too much with the Protestants. We were encouraged to avoid the public schools. Our parents, likewise, tended to socialize within the faith. We marched around the block for the feast of Christ the King and for May crowning, surrounded by a thick and comforting Catholic culture that offered us identity and place. Over the course of my growing up, much of that changed. The high schools closed and only a single, much smaller, Catholic high school remains. The grade schools all merged, too. Our white Catholic ethnicities pretty much melted away with the march of assimilation. The little things that once mattered—probably way too much—about being Catholic and distinct from other Americans seemed over time not to matter so much. The Catholic cultural bubble of my boyhood gradually faded into the American societal landscape. Similar changes occurred in other Catholic communities of the Northeast, the upper Midwest, and the northern Plains. In big cities like Chicago, New York, and so on it was a little different, with waves of new Catholic immigrants arriving. Likewise, it was a little different in West Coast Catholic communities that also experienced new immigration. But for white Catholics nationwide, the changes seemed profound. There was a feeling that our cultural identity had disappeared. Catholicism that was for us a way of life and a culture faded—leaving only Catholicism, the religion. Arguably, that shift is a very important one for understanding Catholicism in America today and its future. Many studies of the state of the Catholic Church in the United States seem to overlook this fact. Consider the studies of the many who have left or are leaving the church. Those are sobering numbers. No denomination in America is losing more adherents than Catholics. Pundits tend to approach such issues by focusing on the religion side, talking about doctrine and liturgy. So some blame the post-Vatican II changes in religious practice that, to their mind, compromised orthodoxy Rod Dreher, for example. Some, on the other hand, blame our religion for not adapting to mainstream norms of American society regarding things like abortion, same-sex marriage, and so forth Damon Linker, for example. These approaches miss something. Even when culture does get mentioned, the focus is usually wrong. The talk too often is about Catholicism versus American culture—with some wanting to change American culture to accommodate religion and some wanting to change religion to accommodate American culture. But both groups overlook the problem of our own Catholic culture, as distinct from Catholic religion. Yes, of course Catholicism is a religion. Doctrine, liturgy, scripture—of course! Of course our religion should be something intentionally chosen, something open to our reason and knowledge. It ought not be reduced to a pastiche of folkways, social customs, lifestyles, and communal attitudes. What can be done? There was very much not to admire about that closed Catholic culture of my youth. And, cultures cannot be artificially recreated. Nothing is phonier than manufactured culture. Going back now to meatless Fridays, CYO mixers, and women with doilies over their hair would be about as authentic as sword-toting reenactors at a Renaissance Fair. In fact, culture is authentic when it is not a task for itself. It grows only in

fresh solidarity. It works when it speaks to its historical moment. It flourishes in communities that open outward rather than retreat inward. The culture issue is one reason why. Follow him on Twitter StephenSchneck.

The talk too often is about Catholicism versus American culture—”with some wanting to change American culture to accommodate religion and some wanting to change religion to accommodate American culture. But both groups overlook the problem of our own Catholic culture, as distinct from Catholic religion. Yes, of course Catholicism is a religion.

Email As controversy and anger mount over the latest reports of Catholic Church clerical abuse and coverup, fingers of blame are pointing everywhere. Some say sexual abuse, child pornography, sadomasochism, etc. The Pennsylvania grand jury report released in August supports that view; it is filled with damning documents obtained from church archives. Others are quick to defend the pope, citing his institution of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors as proof of his sincerity in tackling the problem of sexual abuse in the priesthood. Consider the New York Times for example: Is sodomy at the root of the sexual abuse epidemic? Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights and considered a foremost authority on clerical sexual abuse, published a Critical Analysis of the study in which he wrote that "what seriously mars the report is its ideological reluctance to deal forthrightly with the role of homosexuality. Eighty-one percent of the victims researched were male, mostly post-pubescent, and the report stated, "The majority of priests who were given residential treatment following an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor also reported sexual behavior with adult partners," most of whom were male as well. How does Donohue explain the perplexing conclusion? This is especially true in higher education. Donohue laments, "This is unfortunate because unless we come to grips with this issue, our understanding of how this problem emerged will never progress. Private Lives and Public Policy. Using information published by homosexual organizations in the United States, Father Rueda uncovered a systematic, well-planned and well-funded infiltration of sodomites into church leadership throughout the country —” in many denominations, including the Catholic Church —” which began in Rose tells the story of Catholic seminarians with more traditional and conservative values being passed over and stifled in religious formation to make way for liberals and progressives. He postulates that the current shortage of priests in the church is a result of this aggressive agenda promoted in seminaries. When I was in the seminary, if you were not homosexual or radical feminist, you were in big trouble. He left the Church. Altier noted that William Z. In it he blamed the morality, patriotism, and family values of Americans for stymying communist efforts in the United States, and he boldly called for a counter-attack using homosexuality and radical feminism. He quoted Bella Dodd, former-communist-turned-Catholic, who testified before Congress in about her work in the United States for the Soviet Kremlin, in which she helped infiltrate Catholic seminaries, chanceries, and episcopates with young men hand-picked by communist agents. What is the solution? It is time to admit that there is a homosexual subculture within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church that is wreaking great devastation in the vineyard of the Lord. And the decision to act upon this disordered inclination is a sin so grave that it cries out to heaven for vengeance, especially when it involves preying upon the young or the vulnerable. Such wickedness should be hated with a perfect hatred. Christian charity itself demands that we should hate wickedness just as we love goodness. But while hating the sin, we must never hate the sinner, who is called to conversion, penance, and renewed communion with Christ and His Church, through His inexhaustible mercy. We value our readers and encourage their participation, but in order to ensure a positive experience for our readership, we have a few guidelines for commenting on articles. If your post does not follow our policy, it will be deleted. No profanity, racial slurs, direct threats, or threatening language. Please post comments in English. Please keep your comments on topic with the article. If you wish to comment on another subject, you may search for a relevant article and join or start a discussion there.

Chapter 6 : The History of the Catholic Church in Latin America and Liberation Theology

Father Hunwicke comments on the call by the Youth Synod closing document for the certification of Catholic websites: "The Synod hopes that in the Church appropriate official bodies for digital culture and evangelisation are established at appropriate levels .

Yet identification with Catholicism has declined throughout the region, according to a major new Pew Research Center survey that examines religious affiliations, beliefs and practices in 18 countries and one U. In nearly every country surveyed, the Catholic Church has experienced net losses from religious switching, as many Latin Americans have joined evangelical Protestant churches or rejected organized religion altogether. For example, roughly one-in-four Nicaraguans, one-in-five Brazilians and one-in-seven Venezuelans are former Catholics. The pattern is reversed among Protestants and people who do not identify with any religion: While the Catholic Church has lost adherents through religious switching, both Protestant churches and the religiously unaffiliated population in the region have gained members. Much of the movement away from Catholicism and toward Protestantism in Latin America has occurred in the span of a single lifetime. Indeed, in most of the countries surveyed, at least a third of current Protestants were raised in the Catholic Church, and half or more say they were baptized as Catholics. The survey asked former Catholics who have converted to Protestantism about the reasons they did so. Of the eight possible explanations offered on the survey, the most frequently cited was that they were seeking a more personal connection with God. Many former Catholics also said they became Protestants because they wanted a different style of worship or a church that helps its members more. What is a Median? Most tables and charts in this report cite country-level findings. But on some questions, regional medians are reported to help readers see cross-national patterns. The median is the middle number in a list of numbers sorted in ascending or descending order. In a survey of 18 countries and Puerto Rico, the median result is 10th on a list of country-level findings ranked from highest to lowest. In addition, evangelization efforts by Protestant churches seem to be having an impact: And the survey finds that Protestants in the region are much more likely than Catholics to report sharing their faith with people outside their own religious group. While the movement from Catholicism to Protestantism has occurred among people of all ages and socio-economic levels, the survey reveals some broad demographic patterns among converts. In most countries surveyed, pluralities of Catholic-to-Protestant converts say they left Catholicism before the age of Geographic mobility may also be associated with conversion. In a few countries – Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua – Catholic-to-Protestant converts are significantly more likely than current Catholics to have changed their place of residence, rather than to have always lived in one place. But former Catholics are more skeptical about Pope Francis. Only in Argentina and Uruguay do majorities of ex-Catholics express a favorable view of the pope. In every other country in the survey, no more than roughly half of ex-Catholics view Francis favorably, and relatively few see his papacy as a major change for the Catholic Church. Many say it is too soon to have an opinion about the pope. For details, see Chapter 9. Protestant Identity in Latin America Protestants in Latin America, like Protestants elsewhere, belong to a diverse group of denominations and independent churches. Fewer than a quarter of Protestants in most countries surveyed say they belong to a historical Protestant church. Roughly half say they belong to a Pentecostal church. And, in most countries, at least a quarter say they belong to another Protestant church or that they do not know their denomination. Among those who belong to Pentecostal churches, Assemblies of God is one of the most commonly cited affiliations. See topline for full results. Religious Observance The new survey finds that Protestants in Latin America tend to be more religiously observant than Catholics. Protestants also are more likely than Catholics to read scripture outside of religious services, to approach the Bible literally and to believe that Jesus will return during their lifetime. For more details, see Chapter 2. Some Protestants identify as Pentecostal in both ways. Although many Catholics in Latin America also say they have witnessed divine healing or other gifts of the Holy Spirit, these experiences are much less common in Catholic churches than in Protestant congregations. For more details, see Chapter 4. Many Latin Americans – including substantial percentages of both Catholics and Protestants – say they subscribe to beliefs and practices often associated

with Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Brazilian or indigenous religions. Other beliefs and practices vary widely from country to country. Differing Views on Social Issues and Helping the Poor Even though the Catholic Church opposes abortion and same-sex marriage, Catholics in Latin America tend to be less conservative than Protestants on these kinds of social issues. On average, Catholics are less morally opposed to abortion, homosexuality, artificial means of birth control, sex outside of marriage, divorce and drinking alcohol than are Protestants. The differences between Catholics and Protestants on most of these issues hold true even when accounting for levels of religious observance. For example, Protestants who participate in religious services at least once a week are somewhat more likely to oppose abortion and divorce and considerably more likely to oppose homosexuality, sex outside of marriage and drinking alcohol than are Catholics who attend Mass at least weekly. Across the region, both Catholics and Protestants generally say it is incumbent on Christians to help the poor in their societies, but they give somewhat different answers on how best to achieve this goal. When asked what is the most important way Christians can help the poor and needy, Protestants are more likely than Catholics to point toward bringing the poor to Christ, while Catholics are more inclined to say that performing charity work for the poor is most important. Yet across the countries surveyed, a considerably higher share of Protestants than Catholics say that they themselves or the church they attend engage in charity work helping people find jobs, providing food and clothing for those in need or organizing other community initiatives to help the poor. For more details, see Chapter 6. These are among the key findings of more than 30, face-to-face interviews conducted across 18 countries and Puerto Rico by the Pew Research Center between October and February. The survey encompasses nearly all Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries and territories stretching from Mexico through Central America to the southern tip of South America. Due to fieldwork constraints and sensitivities related to polling about religion, Cuba could not be included; it is the only Spanish-speaking country in Latin America that was not polled. The survey of Latin America is part of a larger effort, the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures project, which analyzes religious change and its impact on societies around the world. The remainder of this Overview explains the major findings in greater detail and provides additional context, beginning with some comparisons with Hispanics living in the United States. Hispanics Many of the major patterns revealed by this survey mirror trends found among U. Hispanics, according to a Pew Research poll. Hispanic population now approximately Hispanics have converted to Catholicism after being raised in another religious tradition or with no affiliation a net drop of 22 percentage points. The scale of this exodus is roughly on par with several Latin American countries that also have experienced steep declines in the share of adults who identify as Catholic, including Nicaragua minus 25 percentage points, Uruguay minus 22 points, Brazil minus 20 and El Salvador minus. Like their counterparts in Latin America, many U. Hispanics have left Catholicism for Protestant churches. Religious Affiliations of Latin Americans and U. Catholics make up between one-half and roughly two-thirds of the population in five of the places surveyed: In three Central American countries El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua about half of the population is Catholic, while roughly four-in-ten adults describe themselves as Protestant. See Religion in Uruguay. In a majority of the countries surveyed, at least half of Protestants report that they have witnessed or experienced the divine healing of an illness or injury, and at least a third say they have experienced or witnessed the devil being driven out of a person. Smaller but substantial shares of Catholics also report charismatic experiences. Most Latin American Protestants say that speaking in tongues, praying for a miraculous healing and prophesying are frequent occurrences in their religious services. In several countries in Latin America, however, at least half of Catholics say they have witnessed these practices during Mass at least occasionally. For definitions of terms, see the glossary. The unaffiliated category includes individuals who describe themselves as atheist, agnostic or having no particular religion. Across Latin America, as well as among Hispanics in the United States, most people who are unaffiliated say that they have no particular religion rather than describing themselves as atheist or agnostic. Laicidad, or the separation of religion and the state, has a long history in Uruguay. In, the government nationalized cemeteries across the country, breaking their affiliations with churches. Soon after, the government prohibited churches from having a role in public education or issuing marriage certificates. A new constitution enshrined the separation of religion from public life, references to God were removed from

the parliamentary oath and religious references were dropped from the names of cities and villages. When it comes to social views and attitudes toward morality, Uruguay consistently stands out for its liberalism. Religious Commitment Catholics and Protestants in Latin America differ in their levels of religious observance. In every country surveyed, Protestants are more likely than Catholics to exhibit high levels of religious commitment – that is, to say they pray daily, attend worship services at least once a week and consider religion very important in their lives. Some of the widest gaps are found in Venezuela, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Peru and Uruguay, where the share of adults who demonstrate high religious commitment is at least 30 percentage points higher among Protestants than among Catholics. The gaps between Protestants and Catholics on these standard measures of religious commitment are smallest, but still statistically significant, in the Central American countries of Guatemala 17 points, Costa Rica 15 and Honduras 8. Relatively few Latin Americans who are religiously unaffiliated say they attend worship services on a weekly basis. Age and Gender Differences in Religious Commitment In many countries across the region, women demonstrate higher levels of religious commitment than do men, and people ages 35 and older tend to be more committed than those between the ages of 18 and 24. Protestants generally display higher levels of religious commitment than Catholics in comparable demographic categories. For example, Protestant men report attending church more frequently than do Catholic men, and young Protestants report attending religious services more frequently than do young Catholics. Morality and Social Views Compared with U.S. Hispanics, Latin Americans are generally more conservative when it comes to social and sexual mores. In most Latin American countries, by contrast, solid majorities oppose allowing gays and lesbians to legally marry. Same-sex marriage is currently legal in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and parts of Mexico, but nowhere else in Latin America. In most Latin American countries, opposition to same-sex marriage is more pronounced among Protestants than among Catholics. And in countries where there are adequate sample sizes to permit separate analysis of the views of religiously unaffiliated people, this group tends to be more supportive of granting marriage rights to gays and lesbians. Differences among Catholics, Protestants and the religiously unaffiliated also are apparent on other social issues. Across Latin America, Protestants generally are more likely than Catholics and the unaffiliated to say that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases, that sex outside marriage and divorce are morally wrong and that a wife is always obligated to obey her husband. Addressing Poverty When asked what they think is the most important way for Christians to help the poor, Catholics in nearly every Latin American country point most often to charity work. Even though Catholics are more likely than Protestants to say charity work is most important, higher percentages of Protestants report that they, personally, have joined with members of their church or others in their community to help the poor and needy. In most countries surveyed, solid majorities of Protestants say they have participated in charity work in the past 12 months. Among Catholics, roughly half or fewer report that they have done so. In addition, among those who attend church, higher percentages of Protestants than Catholics say their house of worship helps people find jobs or provides food and clothing for those in need. Favorable views of the new pontiff prevail across the region, with two-thirds or more of the population in most countries expressing a positive opinion of Pope Francis when the survey was conducted in late 2013 and early 2014. Latin American Catholics are particularly enthusiastic about Pope Francis, with clear majorities across the region rating him favorably.

Chapter 7 : The Catholic Church and American Culture: Why the Claims of Dan Brown Strike a Chord, Plur

Catholic Culture and the Church-State Conundrum Catholic culture consists of groups with recognizably Catholic habits, customs, behavioral patterns and idiosyncrasies.

The Roman Catholic Church Introduction Although Roman Catholics were not the first Europeans to set foot in what would be the American colonies, it was not long before they made their presence felt on the other side of the Atlantic. Since their first arrival in in what became Florida, Roman Catholicism has become the largest Christian tradition in the United States with Although hindered in its growth by its connection with the more traditional European church and the pope, the American church continues its allegiance to, and guidance from the see in Rome. They were under the control of the Vicar Apostolic of London, but the American Revolution made that arrangement untenable. Realizing the negative effects of a state-controlled church, Carroll endorsed the separation of church and state. He believed in a more private and personal piety than public, clerically led, devotional services. Rome acceded and Carroll became Bishop of Baltimore in When the laity manifested a reluctance or refusal to participate in the operations of the church and their own private worship, Carroll later stressed leadership from the clergy, American bishops and the bishops in Rome. French missionary efforts that penetrated northern tier regions clear to Oregon, and the Spanish discovery and colonization of the Americas , especially regions that would become southwestern states, left a deep Catholic imprint on the future country. He induced Native Americans to abandon their traditional lifeways and convert to Roman Catholicism. His agenda also included expanding Spanish landholdings. Lay and clergy members The Catholic Church, the most hierarchical of all Christian traditions, maintains a complex system of clergy and laity. Deacons, priests, and bishops comprise the ordained clergy, who are members of the diaconate, the presbyterate, and the episcopate. Among the hierarchy of bishops, there are metropolitans, archbishops, patriarchs, and the pope, who is the bishop of Rome. Cardinals are nearly always bishops, but that was not always the case. Some cardinals in the past were nonordained prelates. Unless they originally received Holy Orders to the diaconate, they were not part of the clergy and could not administer the sacraments of the church. Among those typically nonordained and considered to be part of the laity are nuns, friars, and religious brothers and sisters. As part of the reforms handed down by the Second Vatican Council to , the laity have since taken a more active role in church activities and worship services Mass. Before being ordained a priest, canon law currently requires an education of two years of scholastic philosophy and four years of theology. Dogmatic and moral theology, the Holy Scriptures, and canon law must be studied at a seminary. As more stringent adherence to Catholic doctrine began to be required, the once-sanctioned, peculiar practices within monasteries and convents became limited. In contrast to others in the liturgical family, Catholic clergy are not allowed to marry. By weekly and even daily distribution of the Eucharist Communion , Catholics maintain a strong moral universe. In addition, the church includes an opportunity for its adherents to be absolved of their sins, through the Sacrament of Confession. Following the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Catholic Church became a stabilizing influence during the Medieval Period. As such, it incorporated a variety of members from all over Europe who held beliefs unlike those within the Church. Monasteries and convents were established to serve their specific needs or practices. In an effort to include all Europeans in the Roman Catholic Church, it also made allowances for, rather than excommunicate, those who transgressed canon law. However, at the Vatican Council of through , the pope was given primary authority over every Catholic diocese. Also, the church became less tolerant of adherents with specialized needs and practices. Many left the church or were excommunicated, owing to those differences and transgressions. Clergy tighten the reins in the s Unlike the European Roman Catholic tradition, American laypeople were encouraged to participate in the services in the American church. However, as the church evolved through the s, power and authority were directed back to its hierarchy. Accustomed to the leadership role the clergy played in the European Church, immigrants did not involve themselves in its operation. They handed over to the local priest many of their opportunities to help guide the church. Also, according to U. Rather than rushing to be Americanized, Catholics instead established their own schools “ especially after states passed laws requiring all children to attend. Values and customs they deemed necessary

for rearing their children were taught and reinforced in those schools. Some blacks, however, did become Catholic, but because of discrimination, they maintained such segregationist practices as the two separate communities of black nuns: The first black American priest, James Augustine Healy, was ordained in 1865. By the mid-19th century, lay participation was frowned upon and even condemned for resisting the hierarchical structure of the church. Because of their preoccupation with Catholic culture and their willingness to accept and defer to priestly authority, adherents did not participate in local politics. The only difficulties in yielding to ecclesial authority occurred at ethnic parishes where the priest was not of the same ethnic group as his parishioners. Toward the end of the 19th century, when many Protestants enthusiastically embraced such social reforms as the Temperance movement and improvements in the labor conditions of those in industrial jobs, Catholics chose to remain uncommitted. It was the rare priest or bishop who encouraged union organization or supported labor reforms. The church did, however, provide for the working poor among their communicants. Modernization during the 19th century By the middle of the 20th century, typical Catholics no longer saw themselves as immigrants in a hostile country. Even as immigration from Latin America and the Caribbean increased, most American Catholics had no memory of the Mother Country or the immigrant outlook. The fear of anti-Catholic backlash no longer kept them from becoming involved in politics or social activism. Having elevated their status in society through good education, occupational success and the accumulation of wealth, Catholics began to wield power in politics and society. Traditionally conservative socially, they set their own reform agenda through such groups as the National Catholic Welfare Conference. With the election of Catholic John F. Kennedy to the White House, Catholics felt more confident politically. Churches no longer felt the need to shelter their adherents from a society that would discriminate against them. The pendulum of laity participation in the operation of their parishes swung in the other direction. Forming church councils, the laity participated in molding policy for the American church. The laity also assisted in filling a need in their parishes when vocations to the priesthood declined. With most readings printed in English, and the priest not only facing his congregation at the altar, but also praying with them instead of for them, the laity felt included in the new ways of parish life. Programs that catered to the needs of a more confident and participatory congregation were established. Catholic revivals and such group-oriented programs as Marriage Encounter became popular. Controversy involving clergy members Throughout the ages, Roman Catholicism has been accused of indiscretions involving members of the church, and wielding its political power over local authority. In the 20th century, accusations and convictions of sexual abuse against children were increasingly documented. While not all cases stood up to scrutiny, many charges of abuse within churches, church-run schools, and orphanages, have been lodged and legally prosecuted. Some dioceses have been bankrupted by losing such cases. Prior to the exposure of clergy involved in sexual abuse of children in the United States in the 1980s and early 1990s, the European church had suffered such scandals as early as the 16th century. While there is little evidence to prove that pedophiles join the Catholic priesthood as a cover for those activities, it has been charged that the lack of disciplinary action by bishops towards abusive clergy members has perpetuated the problem. Homosexuality within the clergy also has supposedly been perpetuated by the same means. Although homosexuality is against church laws, some clergy have suggested that one of its causes is that little has been done to prepare priests for a lifetime of celibacy. Some within the church have expressed strong opposition to the influence the laity currently enjoys in church operations. American Catholics in general are opposed to severing its ties with the see in Rome, but their future allegiance may also be strained by decrees from the new pope, Benedict XVI, whose conservatism diametrically opposes the social stands many Catholic Americans have taken. Smith I summarize my creed as an American Catholic. I believe in the worship of God according to the faith and practice of the Roman Catholic Church. I recognize no power in the institutions of my church to interfere with the operation of the Constitution of the United States or the enforcement of the law of the land. I believe in absolute freedom of conscience for all men and in equality of all churches, all sects, and all beliefs before the law as a matter of right and not as a matter of favor. I believe in the absolute separation of church and state and in the strict enforcement of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States. Article in The Atlantic magazine Indeed, Mr. Jefferson, what could be invented to debase the ancient Christianity which Greeks, Romans, Hebrews and Christian factions, above all the Catholics, have not fraudulently

imposed upon the public? Miracles after miracles have rolled down in torrents.

Chapter 8 : Cultural Catholics Vs. Observant Catholics | The American Conservative

A chief provider and curator of Catholic information on the web since Our editorial voice, always faithful to the teachings of the Church, assists and inspires Catholic clergy and laity.

Check out what was in the blogpost basket. How would we best go about that without watering down Catholicism or moving towards some kind of pantheism? The Church does have a long history of incorporating the cultures of a converted people into the Christian life. Gregory the Great, for example, urged St. Augustine of Canterbury, who was evangelizing England at the time, to refrain from tearing down the pagan shrines to the various gods. Instead, Pope Gregory suggested using the temples as churches, clearing out the idols, of course, but keeping the location and even the building, as it was more comfortable for the new converts. Likewise, we see throughout the Church a variety of cultural traditions that have sprung up from local, pre-Christian customs that were baptized, so to speak. And, of course, we have intellectual contributions like the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato in our Christian intellectual tradition. As far as Native American culture is concerned, I agree that the Church can and should incorporate what is naturally good in Native American spiritualities while not embracing what is detrimental to the Faith. In fact, such cultural appropriation has been practiced since the earliest missionaries came to the Americas. Think, for example, of St. Jean Baptiste de Brebeuf. Instead of merely trying to teach French to the Hurons, St. Jean learned their language. There are also examples of using different prayers for Masses and feasts among Native American Catholic communities translated into the Native American languages that might merit classifying these liturgies not merely as translations of the Latin Roman Rite into Native American languages, but perhaps even the development of new, diverse forms of the Roman Rite. Many of the earliest missionaries met with hostile responses or martyrdom from several native tribes and confederations, but their sacrifice produced great fruit. Kateri Tekakwitha, and her beautiful story. There are also several later, notable converts to Catholicism from various Native American tribes, including, perhaps most famously, Black Elk and Red Cloud of the Lakota Sioux. However, converts from various native religions did have to abandon aspects of their native culture in the process of becoming Catholic; Black Elk in particular demonstrates this tension between the Native American pantheism and Catholic monotheism. Black Elk was a medicine man who became a catechist and worked with Jesuit missionaries to evangelize other members of his tribe. Black Elk with daughter and second wife c. 1880. While most of the native religions have some sense of a Great Spirit, there is often a strong thread of pantheism. Pantheism does not allow for monotheism by definition. Where can we have overlap? If we seek proper cultural appropriation with Native Americans, we must incorporate the good aspects of their religious practices and beliefs. What would that look like? To an extent, visible forms of this cultural appropriation began soon after the close of the Second Vatican Council. The liturgical changes following the Council, while disruptive in many parts of the Church, were helpful in evangelization efforts in the developing world and among Native Americans. The result was the Catholic liturgy with Native American trappings. One report describes the following: Steve] Boes burns sacred cedar branches instead of incense, spreading the fragrance with an eagle feather instead [of] an ornamental censer. For most Catholic Native Americans and there are a lot of them, making up about a quarter of all Native Americans, the idea of a conflict between their Catholic Faith and their cultural heritage is strange. Many of their tribes teach there is one Creator God, rather than holding a pantheistic view of the world. They pray to God using rituals and prayers similar to those practiced before their conversion to Christianity. The Church teaches that we are custodians of the environment. A similar thought runs through most Native American cultures. While they use the environment, it is not an abuse of nature, but rather with the intention of working with it. You find in Native American, and many other cultures around the world, a sense of gratitude towards natural things for allowing people to use them. The condition, as always, is to make sure we ultimately praise the Creator of the world, not the creatures that inhabit it. All thanks we give to the world for working with us should have as its final end praise and glory to God. Jenne and anyone else interested, I encourage you to check out resources the Church has put out in recent decades about Native American spirituality. One is a homily given by Pope St.

Chapter 9 : Is Homosexuality the Cause of Catholic Church Scandals?

The Catholic Culture Podcast Musician and writer Thomas V. Mirus provides weekly views and interviews on everything Catholic, with a special focus on arts and culture. Dedicated to the Holy Family.

The Catholic population of the United States, which had been 35, in , increased to , in and then ballooned to about 1. Between and the population of Roman Catholics in the United States tripled primarily through immigration and high birth rates. By the end of the century, there were 12 million Catholics in the United States. During the mid 19th century, a wave of "old" immigrants from Europe arrived from Ireland and Germany, as well as England and the Netherlands. From s to a "new" wave arrived from Italy, Poland and Eastern Europe. Substantial numbers of Catholics also came from French Canada during the midth century and settled in New England. After large numbers of Mexicans arrived. Many Catholics stopped practicing their religion or became Protestants. However there were about ,, converts to Catholicism from to Thus, the Diocese of Baltimore achieved a pre-eminence over all future dioceses in the U. It was established as a diocese on November 6, , and was elevated to the status of an archdiocese on April 8, This decree gave the archbishop of Baltimore precedence over all the other archbishops of the United States but not cardinals in councils, gatherings, and meetings of whatever kind of the hierarchy in conciliis, coetibus et comitiis quibuscumque regardless of the seniority of other archbishops in promotion or ordination. History of Catholic education in the United States The development of the American Catholic parochial school system can be divided into three phases. During the first â€” , parochial schools appeared as ad hoc efforts by parishes, and most Catholic children attended public schools. During the second period â€” , the Catholic hierarchy made a basic commitment to a separate Catholic school system. These parochial schools, like the big-city parishes around them, tended to be ethnically homogeneous; a German child would not be sent to an Irish school, nor vice versa, nor a Lithuanian pupil to either. Instruction in the language of the old country was common. In the third period â€” , Catholic education was modernized and modeled after the public school systems, and ethnicity was deemphasized in many areas. In cities with large Catholic populations such as Chicago and Boston there was a flow of teachers, administrators, and students from one system to the other. In , Republican President Ulysses S. Grant called for a Constitutional amendment that would prohibit the use of public funds for "sectarian" schools. Grant feared a future with "patriotism and intelligence on one side and superstition, ambition and greed on the other" which he identified with the Catholic Church. Grant called for public schools that would be "unmixed with atheistic, pagan or sectarian teaching. Catholic Church and slavery Two slaveholding states, Maryland and Louisiana, had large contingents of Catholic residents. Archbishop of Baltimore , John Carroll , had two black servants â€” one free and one a slave. Realizing that their properties were more profitable if rented out to tenant farmers rather than worked by slaves, the Jesuits began selling off their slaves in Its main focus was against slave trading, but it also clearly condemned racial slavery: We, by apostolic authority, warn and strongly exhort in the Lord faithful Christians of every condition that no one in the future dare bother unjustly, despoil of their possessions, or reduce to slavery Indians, Blacks or other such peoples. However, the American church continued in deeds, if not in public discourse, to support slaveholding interests. Some American bishops misinterpreted In Supremo as condemning only the slave trade and not slavery itself. Bishop John England of Charleston actually wrote several letters to the Secretary of State under President Van Buren explaining that the Pope, in In Supremo, did not condemn slavery but only the slave trade. In an Catholic Telegraph editorial Purcell wrote: There is no life in it. It is the hard-working laboring man who builds the church, the school house, the orphan asylum, not the slaveholder, as a general rule. Religion flourishes in a slave state only in proportion to its intimacy with a free state, or as it is adjacent to it. The Catholic Church, having by its very nature a universal view, urged a unity of spirit. Catholics in the North rallied to enlist. Nearly , Irish Catholics fought for the Union, many in the famed Irish Brigade , as well as approximately 40, German-Catholics, and 5, Polish-Catholic immigrants. Catholics became prominent in the officer corps, including over fifty generals and a half-dozen admirals. Along with the soldiers that fought in the ranks were hundreds of priests who ministered to the troops and Catholic religious sisters who assisted as

nurses and sanitary workers. The French Code Noir which regulated the role of slaves in colonial society guaranteed the rights of slaves to baptism, religious education, communion, and marriage. The parish church in New Orleans was unsegregated. Predominantly black religious orders emerged, including the Sisters of the Holy Family in . Some owners and slaves moved west to Kentucky. White mobs forced it to close. African-American Catholics operated largely as segregated enclaves. They also founded separate religious institutes for black nuns and priests since diocesan seminaries would not accept them. For example, they formed two separate communities of black nuns: James Augustine Healy was the first African American to become a priest. Because of the rising threat of Civil War and the Jesuit custom of pursuing further studies in Europe, he was sent to Belgium in . He earned a doctorate at the university of Leuven, becoming the first American of African descent to earn a doctorate; and he was ordained a priest in Liege, France in . Immediately following the Civil War he was ordered to return to the U. Spalding of Baltimore convened the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore , partially in response to the growing need for religious care for former slaves. Attending bishops remained divided over the issue of separate parishes for African-American Catholics. The Congress met in Washington, D. Plenary Councils of Baltimore[edit] Main article: Plenary Councils of Baltimore Catholic bishops met in three of Plenary Councils in Baltimore in , and , establishing national policies for all diocese. Labor union movement[edit] Further information: Most Catholics were unskilled or semi-skilled urban workers, and the Irish used their strong sense of solidarity to form a base in unions and in local Democratic politics. By a third of the leadership of the labor movement was Irish Catholic, and German Catholics were actively involved as well. Anti-Catholicism was led by Protestant ministers who labeled Catholics as un-American " Papists ", incapable of free thought without the approval of the Pope, and thus incapable of full republican citizenship. This attitude faded after Catholics proved their citizenship by service in the American Civil War , but occasionally emerged in political contests, especially the presidential elections of and , when Catholics were nominated by the Democratic Party. Americanism heresy Americanism was considered a heresy by the Vatican that consisted of too much theological liberalism and too ready acceptance of the American policy of separation of church and state. Allegations came from German American bishops angry with growing Irish domination of the Church. The Vatican grew alarmed in the s, and the Pope issued an encyclical denouncing Americanism in theory. In he lamented an America where church and state are "dissevered and divorced," and wrote of his preference for a closer relationship between the Catholic Church and the State. In response, Gibbons denied that American Catholics held any of the condemned views. The Irish Catholics increasingly demonstrated their total loyalty to the Pope, and traces of liberal thought in the Catholic colleges were suppressed. At bottom it was a cultural conflict, as the conservative Europeans were alarmed mostly by the heavy attacks on the Catholic church in Germany, France and other countries, and did not appreciate the active individualism self-confidence and optimism of the American church. In reality Irish Catholic laymen were deeply involved in American politics, but the bishops and priests kept their distance.