

Poll Shows Very Favorable View of Pope

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(March 27, 2008) When Pope Benedict lands in Washington, DC on April 15, he will find himself in a country where the majority of the people view him in a favorable light.

This was the result of a poll commissioned by the Knights of Columbus and conducted between February 25 and March 5, 2008 by the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion.

By a ratio of more than four to one (58 percent to 13 percent), respondents said they had either a favorable or very favorable view of Pope Benedict XVI. An even higher percentage, 65 percent, have a favorable view of the Church.

The poll also found that the desire to attend one of the Pope's appearances is shared by most Americans, whether they are Catholic or not. While 66 percent of Catholics said they'd like to attend an event, 42 percent of other respondents shared the same hope.

Americans also have very definite views about what they'd like to hear from the Pope during his visit.

According to the survey, 73 percent want to hear him talk about how to make God a part of our daily life; seventy-one percent would like him to address how they can find spiritual fulfillment by sharing their time and talent; and 70 percent would like to know how they can make a positive difference in the world.

This amounts to nearly two-thirds of respondents who expressed an interest in hearing the Pope talk about how they can have a society where spiritual values play an important role.

"The bottom line," said Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, "is that, despite years of very negative stories about the Catholic Church scandals, and dissenting views of the Pope as some sort of 'panzer cardinal' determined to pursue the unorthodox to the ends of the earth, the American people have a very sensible and balanced view of Benedict and the Church. And they are very open to hearing his views on matters of how they might live their faith and put it into action in their daily lives."

The Knights of Columbus has launched a new website, www.papaltrip.org which offers detailed information about the Papal trip.

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