



**Marist
Poll**



Knights of Columbus

Observing the Season of Lent
and the Celebration of Easter

April 2009



- As Easter Sunday 2009 approaches, people around the country participate in religious services and personal preparation for one of the most important and for many *the* most important religious observance of the year.
- The Knights of Columbus, in partnership with the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion, spoke with Americans and American Catholics, about their observance of Lent and their celebration of Easter.
- The survey was conducted March 24th through March 31st, 2009 by telephone. 2,078 Americans including 521 American Catholics were interviewed. The results for Americans have a margin of error of +/- 2.5%; for Catholics, the error margin is +/- 4.5%.

Please note that some totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.



The 40 days of Lenten Observance that began on Ash Wednesday and will end this Sunday on Easter is the most solemn of religious seasons for American Catholics. It is a time to reject sin and accept Faith through sacrifice, fasting, and prayer.

Nearly two thirds of American Catholics (63%) are observing the Season of Lent this year. This is led by 77% of practicing Catholics who adhere to the Lenten tradition.

	Americans	American Catholics		
	Americans	American Catholics Overall	Practicing Catholics	Non-Practicing Catholics
Yes	34%	63%	77%	40%
No	63%	35%	21%	59%
Unsure	3%	2%	2%	<1%

Are you observing the Season of Lent this year by giving up something or by doing anything differently?



For approximately seven in ten Americans whose faith observes Easter and Catholics (70% and 71%, respectively), Easter is one of the most important holidays – if not *the* most important religious holiday.

Nearly four in ten practicing Catholics (37%) value Easter as the most significant religious celebration in their faith.

Americans

American Catholics

Americans whose Faith Celebrates Easter

American Catholics Overall

Practicing Catholics

Non-Practicing Catholics

	Americans whose Faith Celebrates Easter	American Catholics Overall	Practicing Catholics	Non-Practicing Catholics
Most important religious holiday	26%	29%	37%	15%
One of the most important holidays	44%	42%	43%	42%
One of many important holidays	23%	21%	15%	31%
Not an especially important holiday	5%	7%	5%	11%
Unsure	2%	1%	<1%	2%

Do you consider Easter to be [options shown above]?



Nearly nine in ten Americans and Catholics, alike, are able to identify Easter as the religious celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection.

	Americans	American Catholics		
	Americans	American Catholics Overall	Practicing Catholics	Non-Practicing Catholics
Birth	4%	4%	2%	7%
Death	4%	5%	7%	3%
Resurrection	86%	88%	89%	88%
Unsure	6%	3%	3%	2%

Is Easter the religious celebration of Jesus Christ's [options shown above]?



Nearly two-thirds of Americans (63%) and about three-quarters of Catholics (74%) plan to attend Church services on Easter Sunday.

Most practicing Catholics (90%) anticipate celebrating Easter at Mass, and nearly half of non-practicing Catholics (47%) plan to do so, as well.

Americans

American Catholics

	Americans	American Catholics Overall	Practicing Catholics	Non-Practicing Catholics
Yes	63%	74%	90%	47%
No	33%	22%	8%	48%
Unsure	4%	4%	1%	6%

Do you plan on attending Church services on Easter Sunday, or not?



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The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic men's fraternal benefit society that was formed to render financial aid to members and their families. Mutual aid and assistance are offered to sick, disabled and needy members and their families. Social and intellectual fellowship is promoted among members and their families through educational, charitable, religious, social welfare, war relief and public relief works. The Knights of Columbus has grown from several members in one council to more than 13,000 councils and 1.7 million members.



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Founded in 1978, the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion (MIPO) is a survey research center at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. The Marist Poll has conducted independent research on public priorities, elections, and a wide variety of social issues. Through the regular public release of surveys, MIPO has built a legacy of independence, reliability, and accuracy. Its results are featured in print and electronic media throughout the world.