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RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Catholic Attitudes on Condoms in the Prevention of HIV and AIDS

Analysis of a five-nation survey for
Catholics for Choice

November 2007



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Belden Russonello & Stewart conducts survey, focus group and other research for non-profit organizations, foundations, political campaigns, the new media and others. BRS has provided hundreds of clients in the US and elsewhere with research and counsel to help them understand and communicate effectively with the public and their particular audiences since 1982.

Belden Russonello & Stewart
1320 19th Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

T: (202) 822-6090
F: (202) 822-6094
W: www.brspoll.com
E: brspoll@brspoll.com

CATHOLICS
FOR
CHOICE

Catholics for Choice shapes and advances sexual and reproductive ethics that are based on justice, reflect a commitment to women's well being and respect and affirm the moral capacity of women and men to make sound decisions about their lives. Through discourse, education and advocacy, CFFC works in the US and internationally to infuse these values into public policy, community life and Catholic social thinking and teaching.

Catholics for Choice
1436 U Street NW, Suite 301
Washington, DC 20009

T: +1 (202) 986-6093
F: +1 (202) 332-7995
E: cfc@CatholicsForChoice.org
W: www.CatholicsForChoice.org

If you would like to reference this publication, please cite as: Catholics for Choice, "Catholic Attitudes on Condoms in the Prevention of HIV and AIDS: Analysis of a survey in five nations for Catholics for Choice," Washington, DC, 2007.

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ISBN: 0-915365-83-9



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I. Introduction and Summary of Results

As public health campaigns focus on condom use as a key to preventing HIV/AIDS transmission, the Vatican maintains steadfast opposition to the use of condoms for any reason. In anticipation of World AIDS Day, Catholics for Choice asked Belden Russonello & Stewart to conduct an international poll of Catholics to determine their attitudes toward condoms and AIDS. BRS surveyed Catholics over 18 in Ghana, Ireland, Mexico, the Philippines, and the United States; the results of the poll are reported here.

Major conclusions:

- More than six in ten Catholics from all five countries say Catholic hospitals that receive government funding should be required to provide condoms to prevent AIDS and HIV.
- In each of the five nations, Catholics see condom use for AIDS prevention as a prolife measure.
- Catholics hold mixed opinions on whether the church should change its position banning condom use for any reason, including AIDS prevention. In Ireland, Mexico, and the US, majorities say that “the church position on condoms is wrong and should be changed.” Filipino Catholics are split on the issue, and a majority of Catholics in Ghana say that “the church position on condoms is the right one and should not be changed.”
- The survey indicates that local Catholic church leaders have not preached frequently about the church opposition to condom use.

Summary of Methodology

This report is based on a random sample of Catholics over the age of 18 in five countries: 405 Catholics in Ghana, 829 in Ireland, 1,260 in Mexico, 962 in the Philippines, and 1,009 in the United States. Four questions were included as part of omnibus surveys in each country using a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviewing between the dates of August 15 and September 10, 2007. The questionnaire was translated into Tagalog in the Philippines and into Spanish in Mexico; all other countries used the English version of the questionnaire. The margin of sampling error at the 95% level of confidence is plus or minus 4.9 percentage points for Ghana, 3.4 percentage points for Ireland, 2.8 percentage points for Mexico, 3.2 percentage points for the Philippines and 3.1 percentage points for the United States. When appropriate and possible the results have been weighted to match population parameters. A detailed methodology is included in Appendix A.

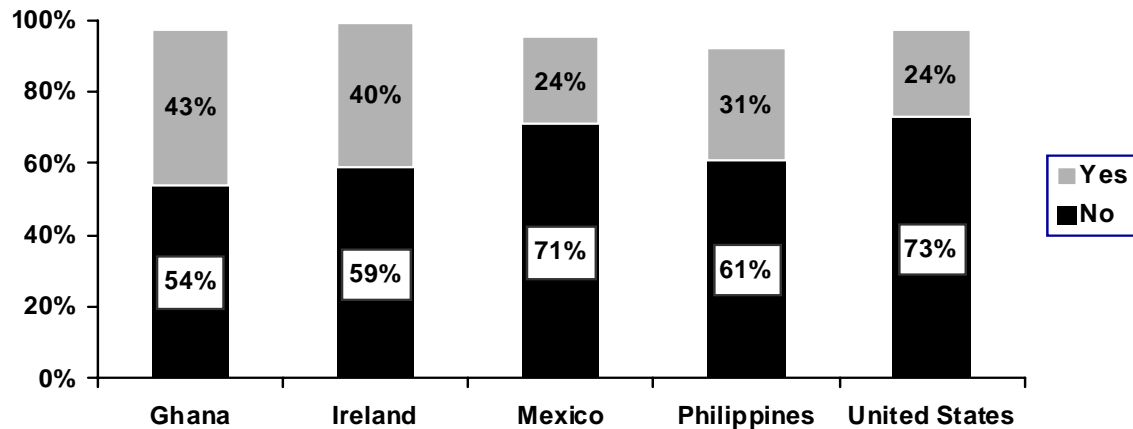
In reading the report, graphs and tables in the text highlight selected survey findings and are expressed in percentages. The base for each graph or table is all respondents unless otherwise noted. Due to weighting, rounding, omission of "don't know," "refuse," or other responses, percentages may add to more or less than 100%. Crosstab tables for age and gender are included in the body of the report.

II. Detailed Results

Church communication on condoms

Majorities of Catholics in all five countries say they have *not* “ever heard a Catholic priest or bishop speak in a sermon, in the media, or in some other way against the use of condoms.”

Few Have Heard Church Leaders Speak about Condoms



Q1. My next few questions have to do with some Catholic church policies. Have you ever heard a Catholic priest or bishop speak in a sermon, in the media, or some other way against the use of condoms?

Less than a quarter of Catholics in the US (24%) and Mexico (24%), and less than one third of Filipino Catholics (31%) recall having heard a speech against condoms. Slightly more Catholics from Ireland (40%) and Ghana (43%) say they have heard such a speech.

In the US, Ghana, the Philippines, and Mexico, gender and age make little difference in respondents' exposure to church opposition to condoms. In Ireland, however, significantly more men (46%) than women (34%), and more Catholics over 35 (44%) than those under 35 (34%) say they have heard opposition from a church leader.

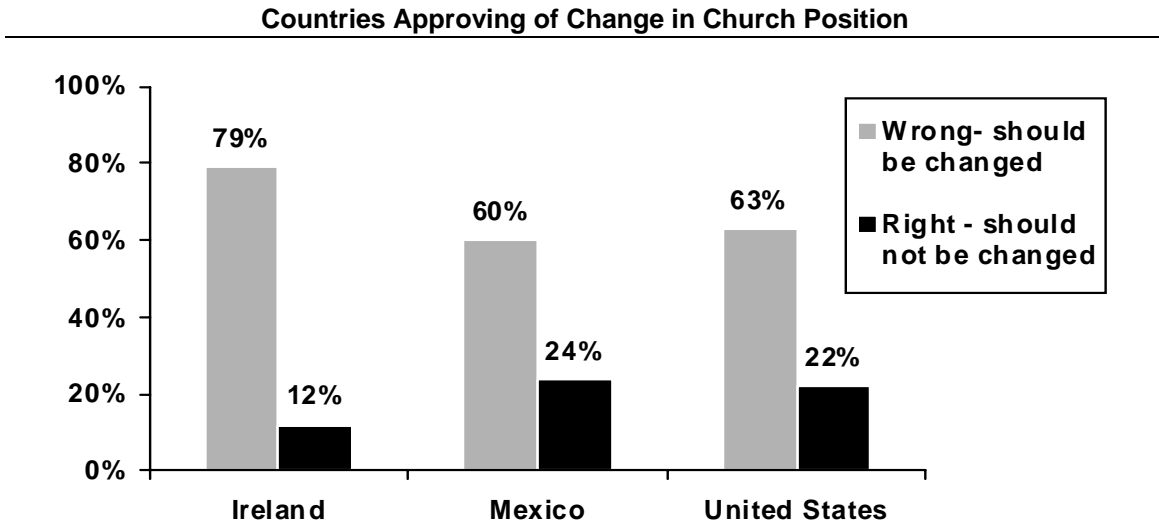
Not Heard Church Position on Condoms

My next few questions have to do with some Catholic church policies. Have you ever heard a Catholic priest or bishop speak in a sermon, in the media, or some other way against the use of condoms?

% saying “no”	Ghana	Ireland	Mexico	Philippines	United States
Total	54%	59%	71%	61%	73%
Male	56%	52%	69%	61%	73%
Female	53%	66%	72%	62%	73%
Under 35	52%	66%	72%	67%	72%
35 and over	52%	55%	69%	56%	73%

Support for changing official church position

In Ireland, Mexico, and the US, majorities of Catholics believe that “the church position on condoms is wrong and should be changed.”



Q2. The Catholic church prohibits Catholics from using condoms for any reason, including preventing HIV and AIDS. Do you agree more that: The church position on condoms is the right one and should not be changed; or that the church position on condoms is wrong and should be changed?

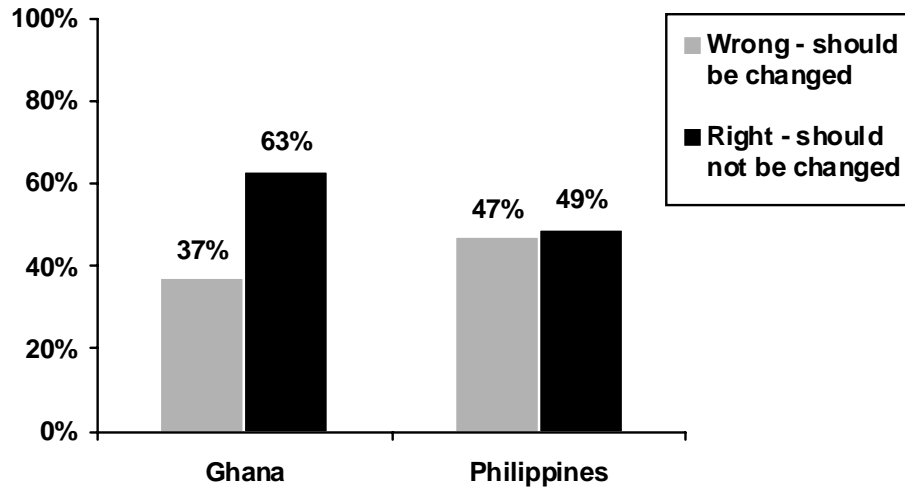
Irish Catholics are the strongest supporters of altering church policy, with nearly eight in ten (79%) in favor of a change. Younger Catholics in Ireland are especially eager for an amendment: eighty-six percent of Catholics under 35 favor a change, compared to 74% of Catholics over 35.

In Mexico, where 60% of Catholics support changing the church position, those under 35 are similarly more supportive of change (66% want change) than those over 35 (56%).

Sixty-three percent of US Catholics support changing the church position, but in this case those 35 and over are slightly more supportive than those under 35. Nineteen percent of those 35 and over oppose change, but among those under 35, 33% oppose. Men are also more likely to oppose altering current church policy than women (26% versus 18%).

Catholics in the Philippines and Ghana are less certain about changing church policy. Filipino Catholics are split on this issue, with 47% in favor of changing the policy and 49% saying that “the church position on condoms is the right one and should not be changed.” Ghanaians are the most determined to leave the status quo in place: 63% say that the church policy should remain the same.

Countries Uncertain about or Opposing Change in Church Position



Q2. The Catholic church prohibits Catholics from using condoms for any reason, including preventing HIV and AIDS. Do you agree more that: The church position on condoms is the right one and should not be changed; or that the church position on condoms is wrong and should be changed?

Support and Opposition for Church's Position on Condoms

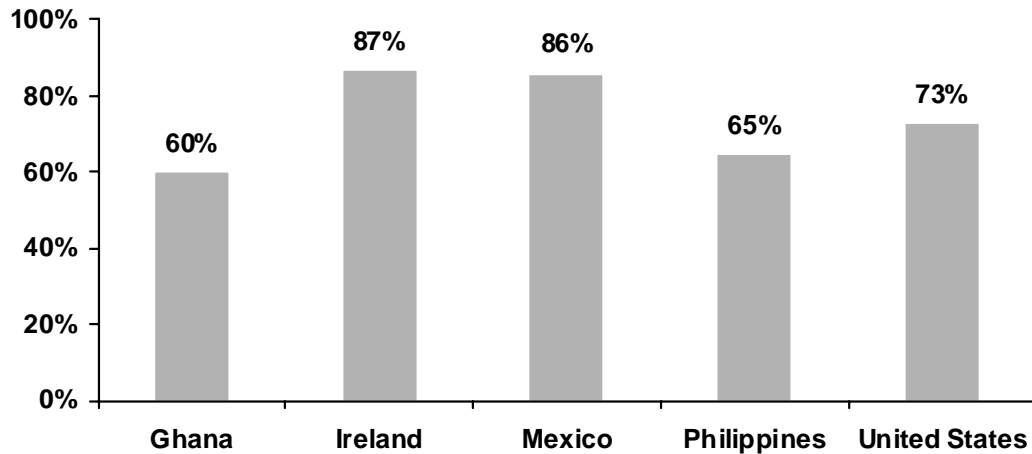
The Catholic church prohibits Catholics from using condoms for any reason, including preventing HIV and AIDS. Do you agree more that: The church position on condoms is the right one and should not be changed; or That the church position on condoms is wrong and should be changed?

	Ghana		Ireland		Mexico		Philippines		United States	
	Don't Change	Change	Don't Change	Change	Don't Change	Change	Don't Change	Change	Don't Change	Change
Total	62%	38	12%	79	24%	60	49%	47	22%	63
Male	61%	39	12%	79	25%	62	48%	49	26%	60
Female	65%	35	12%	78	24%	58	51%	46	18%	66
Under 35	61%	39	10%	86	25%	66	47%	50	33%	60
35 and over	67%	33	13%	74	24%	56	52%	45	19%	64

Requiring government-funded Catholic health facilities to provide condoms for AIDS prevention

Sixty percent or more Catholics in all five countries say “yes” when they are asked, “Do you think Catholic hospitals and clinics that the government funds should be required to include condoms as part of AIDS prevention?”

Government-Funded Catholic Hospitals Should Include Condoms for AIDS Prevention



Q3. Do you think Catholic hospitals and clinics that the government funds should be required to include condoms as part of AIDS prevention?

The highest rates of agreement come from Ireland and Mexico. Eighty-seven percent of Catholics in Ireland say that government-funded Catholic health care should include condoms, and 86% of Mexican Catholics agree. Younger Catholics are the most convinced. More than nine in ten of those under 35 in Ireland (94%) and Mexico (91%) agree.

Over seven in ten US Catholics (73%) also believe condoms should be included in AIDS prevention in government-supported Catholic institutions. Seventy-seven percent of those under 35 agree, as do 71% of those over 35. The strong support from US young people on this issue differs from the slightly conservative views we saw on changing the official church stance toward condoms.

Despite their opposition to changing church doctrine on condoms, Ghanaian and Filipino Catholics muster sizable majorities in favor of including condoms in government-funded Catholic hospitals for AIDS prevention. More than six in ten Catholics from both countries (65% in the Philippines; 61% in Ghana) agree that condoms should be included.

Government-Funded Catholic Hospitals Should Include Condoms for AIDS Prevention

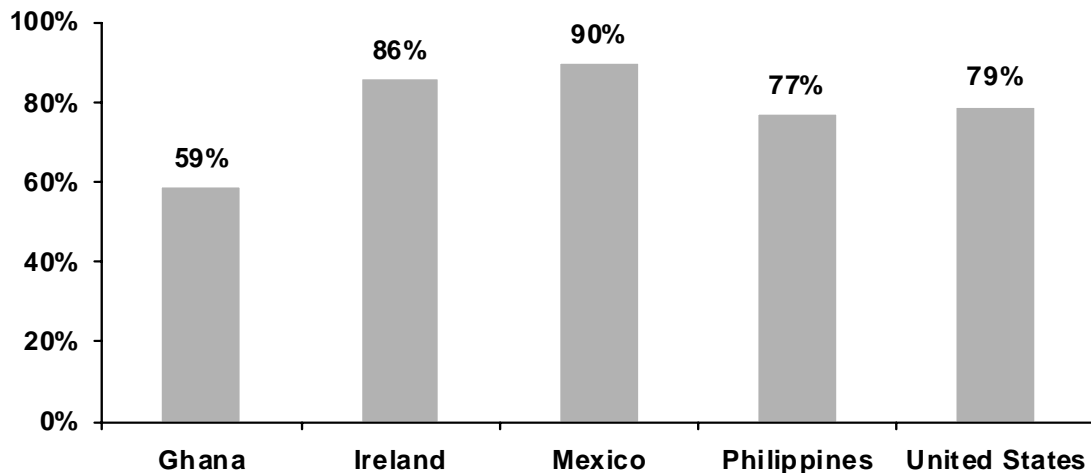
Do you think Catholic hospitals and clinics that the government funds should be required to include condoms as part of AIDS prevention?

% saying "yes"	Ghana	Ireland	Mexico	Philippines	United States
Total	61%	87%	86%	65%	73%
Male	66%	85%	86%	65%	73%
Female	57%	89%	86%	65%	72%
Under 35	62%	94%	91%	66%	77%
35 and over	58%	83%	83%	65%	71%

Condom use is prolife

Catholics in all five countries also agree with the statement that "using condoms is prolife because it helps save lives by preventing the spread of AIDS."

Percent Agreeing that Using Condoms is Prolife because it Prevents the Spread of AIDS



Q4. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Using condoms is prolife because it helps save lives by preventing the spread of AIDS.

Ireland and Mexico again express the most agreement: 90% in Mexico and 86% in Ireland agree that using condoms is prolife.* Nearly eight in ten (79%) of US Catholics agree, as do 77% of Filipino Catholics. Ghanaian Catholics have the lowest percentage of agreement with this statement, but nearly six in ten (59%) still agree.

Those under 35 in Ghana, Ireland, Mexico, and the US agree more strongly with this argument than those over 35. Ninety-four percent of those under 35 in

In Mexico, the phrase "prolife" was translated as "acción a favor de la vida" rather than literally as "pro-vida" to avoid confusion with the name of a major prolife group in Mexico.

Mexico agree, while 87% of those over 35 do; in Ireland, the numbers are 92% to 83%. Eighty-nine percent of US Catholics under 35 agree, compared to 77% of those over 35. In Ghana, 65% of those under 35 agree and only 53% of those over 35 do. In the Philippines, we found no age and gender difference.

Using Condoms is Prolife because it Prevents the Spread of AIDS

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Using condoms is prolife because it helps save lives by preventing the spread of AIDS.

% saying "agree"	Ghana	Ireland	Mexico	Philippines	United States
Total	59%	86%	90%	77%	79%
Male	61%	84%	91%	77%	78%
Female	57%	89%	89%	77%	81%
Under 35	65%	92%	94%	77%	89%
35 and over	53%	83%	87%	77%	77%

Appendix A: Detailed methodology

Catholics for Choice asked Belden Russonello & Stewart to undertake a research project to explore what Catholics around the world think about the church's position on condoms and the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Four questions on this topic were administered to Catholics through omnibus surveys in Ghana, Ireland, Mexico, the Republic of the Philippines, and the United States. This section of the survey report details the methodology of each survey.

The questions used in this study were designed by BRS in collaboration with Catholics for Choice.

All sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error, i.e., the results may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population under study were interviewed. For example, the margin of sampling error for the survey of Catholics in the United States is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every individual Catholic in the United States had been interviewed. The sampling error is larger for smaller groups within the sample. Other non-sampling error may also contribute to total survey error. The table below shows the sample size and margin of sampling error for each country included in the study.

Margin of Sampling Error		
	Sample Size	Margin of Sampling Error
Ghana	405	± 4.9
Ireland	829	± 3.4
Mexico	1,260	± 2.8
Philippines	962	± 3.2
United States	1,009	± 3.1

All omnibus surveys used were studies of the total population of each country. Our questions were then asked to those respondents who identified themselves as Catholic. When appropriate the total survey data have been weighted by demographic characteristics to match the proper proportion in the current population of each country according to official statistics. Weighting the total survey to population parameters should ensure that the Catholic subset is also an accurate representation of demographic characteristics.

Ghana

The fieldwork in Ghana was conducted using face-to-face interviewing, from August 23 through September 8, 2007 by a team of professional, fully-trained and supervised interviewers as part of an omnibus survey administered by Panafields data collection agency.

The sample was selected from 21 centers within Ghana, with locations selected to represent a true national spread (Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi/Sekondi, Tamale, Ho, Cape Coast and Koforidua). Within these centers households were selected randomly and within households respondents were selected randomly. An oversample of Catholics was obtained to ensure adequate sample size for analysis given the country's relatively small Catholic population.

The data of the total survey has been weighted by age to match the demographics to the proper proportion in the current population of Ghana according to the Ghana Statistical Services. The table below shows the weighted demographic makeup of Catholics in our survey along with that of the general population from our survey and from the official statistics of Ghana.

Ghana Demographics			
	Weighted Survey Catholics (18% of total pop.)	Survey General Population	Ghana Statistical Services General Population
Total	100%	100%	100%
Male	43%	49%	49%
Female	57	51	51
18-24	22%	22%	23%
25-34	18	25	27
35-44	15	18	19
45-54	17	12	13
55+	19	16	17

Ireland

The fieldwork in Ireland was conducted by telephone using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system, from August 21 through August 30, 2007 by a team of professional, fully-trained and supervised telephone interviewers as part of an omnibus survey administered by TNS-Global.

The sampling frame was a list of randomly created phone numbers (a technique known as random digit dial or RDD) for telephone exchanges. Telephone

numbers were selected at random from this frame. Within households respondents were selected randomly.

The data have been weighted by sex, age, social class and region to match the demographics of the current population of Ireland according to a 15,000 person survey conducted annually in Ireland by TNS.

The table below shows the weighted demographic makeup of Catholics in our survey, along with that of the general population from our survey, compared to population information provided by the Central Statistical Office of Ireland.

Ireland Demographics			
	Weighted Survey Catholics (81% of total pop.)	Survey General Population	Central Statistical Office General Population
Total	100%	100%	100%
Male	49%	49%	50%
Female	51	51	50
18-24	15%	15%	18%
25-34	25	25	21
35-44	19	18	18
45-54	14	16	16
55-64	15	14	13
65+	13	12	14

Mexico

The fieldwork in Mexico was conducted using face-to-face interviewing, from August 17 through August 20, 2007 by a team of professional, fully-trained and supervised interviewers as part of an omnibus survey sponsored by Grupo Reforma, and conducted by the polling units at *Reforma*, *El Norte*, *Mural*, and *Palabra*, with the collaboration of *El Debate*. The questionnaire was translated into Spanish; a copy of the Spanish questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

The Mexico Federal Election Institute (IFE) has a register that includes the entire adult population. A multi-stage probability sample was employed, and the 101 polling points were selected from a list of over 64,000 electoral sections, previously stratified by IFE according to urban-rural criteria. In each section or polling point, 15 households were selected systematically. One respondent was selected in each household, and this last selection was based on sex and age quotas.

The table below shows the demographic makeup of Catholics in our survey along with that of the general population from our survey and from the official statistics of Mexico. Population information on the general population of Mexico was provided by the Census of Mexico.

Mexico Demographics			
	Survey Catholics (83% of total pop.)	Survey General Population	Census of Mexico General Population
Total	100%	100%	100%
Male	47%	48%	47%
Female	53	52	53
18-24	17%	17%	15%
25-34	24	25	27
35-44	20	21	22
45-54	17	16	16
55-64	12	11	10
65+	10	10	10

Republic of the Philippines

The fieldwork in the Philippines was conducted using face-to-face interviewing, from September 2 through September 5, 2007 by a team of professional, fully-trained and supervised interviewers as part of an omnibus survey administered by Social Weather Stations. The questionnaire was translated into Tagalog; a copy of the Tagalog questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

The Philippines was divided into four study areas: National Capital Region (NCR), Balance Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Multi-stage probability sampling was used in the selection of sample spots, and within those clusters respondents were randomly selected.

The data have been weighted by age and region to match the demographics of the current population of the Philippines according to population projections from the National Statistical Office of the Philippines and US Census International Database.

The table below shows the demographic makeup of Catholics in our survey along with that of the general population from our survey and from the US Census Bureau's International Database for the Philippines.

Philippines Demographics

	Weighted Survey Catholics (80% of total pop.)	Survey General Population	US Census International Database General Population
Total	100%	100%	100%
Male	51%	51%	50%
Female	49	49	50
18-24	23%	23%	23%
25-34	27	27	27
35-44	20	20	20
45-54	14	14	14
55-64	9	9	9
65+	7	7	7

United States

The fieldwork in the United States was conducted by telephone using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system, from August 15 through September 10, 2007 by a team of professional, fully-trained and supervised telephone interviewers as part of the EXCEL National Telephone Omnibus Study administered by International Communications Research.

The sampling frame was a list of randomly created phone numbers (a technique known as random digit dial or RDD) for telephone exchanges. Telephone numbers were selected at random from this frame and respondents were selected randomly within each household.

The data have been weighted by selection probability and by age, sex, region, and education to match the demographics to the proper proportion in the current population of the United States according to the US Census Bureau.

The table below compares the weighted demographic makeup of Catholics in our survey with that of the population of Catholics in the United States. Population information on Catholics in the United States was provided by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

United States Demographics

	Weighted Survey Catholics	US Catholics
Total	100%	100%
Male	51%	46%
Female	49	54
18-34	23%	27%
35-49	31	30
50-64	27	26
65+	17	17

Reading this report

In reading the report, tables and graphs in the text highlight selected survey findings and are expressed in percentages. The base for each table is all respondents (n=405 for Ghana; 829 for Ireland; 1,260 for Mexico; 962 for the Philippines; 1,009 for the US) unless otherwise noted. In reading these data, when the percent sign (%) appears at the top of a column, the numbers add vertically. When % appears at the left of a row, the numbers add horizontally. Due to weighting, rounding, omission of “don’t know,” “refuse,” or other responses, percentages may add to more or less than 100%.

Appendix B: Questionnaires

English questionnaire

1. What is your religion, if any?

CATHOLIC >> CONTINUE.....	1
NO (TERMINATE).....	2
DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE).....	3
REFUSED (TERMINATE)	4

2. My next few questions have to do with some Catholic church policies. Have you ever heard a Catholic priest or bishop speak in a sermon, in the media, or some other way against the use of condoms?

YES.....	1
NO	2
DON'T KNOW	3
REFUSED.....	4

3. The Catholic church prohibits Catholics from using condoms for any reason, including preventing HIV and AIDS. Do you agree more that: the church position on condoms is the right one and should not be changed; or that the church position on condoms is wrong and should be changed?

RIGHT ONE AND SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED.....	1
WRONG AND SHOULD BE CHANGED	2
DON'T KNOW	3
REFUSED.....	4

4. Do you think Catholic hospitals and clinics that the government funds should be required to include condoms as part of AIDS prevention?

YES.....	1
NO	2
DON'T KNOW	3
REFUSED.....	4

5. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Using condoms is prolife because it helps save lives by preventing the spread of AIDS.

AGREE	1
DISAGREE.....	2
DON'T KNOW	3
REFUSED.....	4

Spanish questionnaire

1. ¿Profesa alguna religión? (SÍ) ¿Cuál?

SÍ, CATÓLICO >> CONTINUAR.....	1
OTRA (PASE A PREG #)	2
NO SABE (PASE A PREG #)	3
NO CONTESTÓ (PASE A PREG #)	4

2. Las siguientes preguntas tienen que ver con algunas políticas de la Iglesia Católica. ¿Usted alguna vez ha escuchado a un sacerdote católico hablar en un sermón, en los medios, o por cualquier otra manera en contra del uso del condón?

SÍ.....	1
NO.....	2
NO RECUERDA	3
NO CONTESTÓ.....	4

3. La Iglesia Católica prohíbe a los católicos el uso del condón bajo cualquier circunstancia, incluida la prevención del VIH y del SIDA. ¿Usted está más de acuerdo con que...? (LEER)

LA POSICIÓN DE LA IGLESIA CON RESPECTO A LOS CONDONES ES LA CORRECTA Y NO DEBERÍA CAMBIARSE, Ó	1
LA POSICIÓN DE LA IGLESIA CON RESPECTO A LOS CONDONES ESTÁ EQUIVOCADA Y DEBERÍA CAMBIARSE.....	2
NO SABE (NO LEER).....	3
NO CONTESTÓ (NO LEER).....	4

4. ¿Usted piensa que los hospitales y clínicas católicas que reciben financiamiento del gobierno deberían ser requeridos a incluir condones como parte de la prevención del SIDA?

SÍ.....	1
NO.....	2
NO SABE.....	3
NO CONTESTÓ.....	4

5. ¿Está usted de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con la siguiente frase? “El uso del condón es una acción a favor de la vida porque ayuda a salvar vidas previniendo la propagación del SIDA.”†

DE ACUERDO	1
EN DESACUERDO.....	2
NO SABE	3
NO CONTESTÓ.....	4

Tagalog questionnaire

† The phrase “prolife” was translated as “acción a favor de la vida” rather than literally as “pro-vida” to avoid confusion with the name of a major prolife group in Mexico.

1. (No translation available) What is your religion, if any?

CATHOLIC >> CONTINUE.....	1
NO (TERMINATE).....	2
DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE).....	3
REFUSED (TERMINATE)	4

2. Ang aking mga sumusunod na ilang katanungan ay may kinalaman sa ilangpatakaran ng Simbahang Katoliko. May narinig na ba kayo kahit minsan na Katolikong pari o obispo na nagsalita sa sermon, sa midya, o sa iba pang paraan kontra sa paggamit ng condom?

OO (Yes)	1
HINDI (No).....	2
HINDI MAALALA (Do not recall)	3
TUMANGGING SUMAGOT (Refused)	4

3. Ang Simbahang Katoliko ay nagbabawal sa mga Katoliko sa paggamit ng condom sa anumang kadahilanan, kasama na ang pagpigil ng HIV at AIDS. Ikaw ba ay higit na sumasang-ayon na: ang paninindigan ng Simbahan tungkol sa condom ay tama at hindi dapat palitan; o na ang paninindigan ng Simbahan tungkol sa condom ay mali at dapat palitan?

TAMA AT HINDI DAPAT PALITAN (Right and should not be changed)1	
MALI AT DAPAT PALITAN (Wrong and should be changed)	2
HINDI MAALALA (Do not recall)	3
TUMANGGING SUMAGOT (Refused)	4

4. Sa inyong palagay ang mga Katolikong ospital at klinika ba na pinopondohan ng gobyerno ay dapat na obligahin na isama ang mga condom bilang bahagi ng pagpigil sa AIDS?

OO (Yes)	1
HINDI (No).....	2
HINDI ALAM (Don't know)	3
TUMANGGING SUMAGOT (Refused)	4

5. Ikaw ba ay sumasang-ayon o hindi sumasang-ayon sa statement o pangungusap na ito: Ang paggamit ng mga condom ay prolife o pumapabor sa buhay dahil ito ay tumutulong na magligtas ng buhay sa pamamagitan ng pagpigil sa paglaganap ng AIDS.

SANG-AYON (Agree).....	1
HINDI SANG-AYON (Disagree).....	2
HINDI ALAM (Don't know)	3
TUMANGGING SUMAGOT (Refused)	4

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Catholics for Choice shapes and advances sexual and reproductive ethics that are based on justice, reflect a commitment to women's well being, and respect and affirm the moral capacity of women and men to make sound decisions about their lives. Through discourse, education, and advocacy, Catholics for Choice works in the US and internationally to infuse these values into public policy, community life, feminist analysis, and Catholic social thinking and teaching.

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Catholics for Choice
1436 U Street, NW, Suite 301
Washington, DC 20009-3997
tel 202-986-6093
fax 202-332-7995

Email: cfc@catholicsforchoice.org

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