

Religion and the Death Penalty within the United States: How does a person's religious views affect their view on the death penalty?

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Catholic Nations are the most likely to advocate for the abolishment the death penalty.

God loaded special significance into humankind that entitles individuals to certain rights and privileges (Griffin 2008).

Fratelli tutti: states that “the death penalty is, inadmissible and the Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide” (Pope Francis 2020).

Observed: Catholics Against Capital Punishment.

Formed in 1992, this is a national organization that mobilizes Catholics and all people of goodwill to value life over death, to end the use of the death penalty, to transform the U.S criminal justice system from punitive to restorative, and to build capacity in U.S society to engage in restorative practices.

Most religious groups prefer life in prison over the death penalty.

“Black Protestants (80 percent), white Catholics (54 percent), and non-Christian religious groups (57 percent)—also favored life in prison, with two notable exceptions: white evangelicals (62 percent) and white mainline Protestants (54 percent) both preferred the death penalty” (Jenkins 2020).

More religions are now opposed to the death penalty than they were in the past.

“American denominations began turning against the death penalty in the late 1950s. Entering the modern (post-Gregg) era, the majority of American churches had declared or had” (Santoro 2014).

Church Attendance may be a factor when it comes to support or opposition of the death penalty.

”Although a majority of frequent and infrequent churchgoers support the death penalty, the data show that 65% of those who attend services weekly or nearly weekly favor capital punishment, compared with 69% of those who attend services monthly and 71% of those who seldom or never attend” (Death Penalty Support and Religion 2020).

Persons who view their deity as compassionate are more likely to be opposed to the death penalty.

“One’s conceptualization of God affects how we attribute human actions” (Bones and Sabriseilabi 2018).