



# American Catholics: Gender, Generation, and Commitment

*William V. D'Antonio, James D. Davidson, Dean R. Hoge, Katherine Meyer, Bishop William B. Friend*

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How much do American Catholics still identify with the Catholic Church? Do they agree with the Church's teachings, and how often do they participate in its sacraments? What do they think it takes to be a good Catholic? What do they consider to be the Church's core teachings? How do they believe issues of faith and morals should be decided: by the hierarchy, the laity, or some combination of the two? How are they coping with the priest shortage, and what do they believe the Church should do to solve the problem? How do they feel about social issues such as capital punishment and increased military spending? In *American Catholics*, four distinguished sociologists use national surveys from 1999, 1993, and 1987 to examine these issues. They show that Catholics' beliefs and practices are changing. They also demonstrate how differences in gender, generation, and commitment to the Church influence attitudes on all of these issues. Balanced and clear, filled with useful tables and charts, and unique in its ability to compare results over time, *American Catholics* makes essential reading for anyone interested in the future of Catholicism in the United States.



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