

WORLD & NATION

Survey distinguishes 'spiritual' responses

PRINCETON, N.J. (CNS) — Most Americans think of themselves as religious, but in a recent Gallup Poll 30 percent called themselves "spiritual but not religious."

The survey, conducted in early December and released Dec. 24, found that Catholics were more likely than Protestants to describe themselves as religious.

But it also found that Catholics were more freethinking than Protestants about following religious teachings in their own lives and about the validity of other religions as true paths to God.

The Gallup Poll, conducted for *USA Today* and CNN, was described as possibly the first to ask whether Americans think of themselves as spiritual but not religious. Generally surveys have asked about religious attitudes without making a distinction between religion and spirituality.

Poll-takers asked the question, "Which of the following statements comes closest to describing your beliefs: you are religious, you are spiritual but not religious, or you are neither?"

Fifty-four percent of the respondents said they were religious, 30 percent spiritual, and 9 percent neither. Six percent volunteered that they were both religious and spiritual, and 1 percent had no answer.

Among the respondents, 54 percent said they were Protestant, 27 percent Catholic and 2 percent Jewish. Eight percent gave other religious preferences and 9 percent said they had none.

Only one-third of the Protestants said they rely on their own views and the views of others, more than on God and religious teachings, when they decide how to conduct their lives. Among Catholics, 55 per-

cent said they rely more on their own views or the views of others.

Catholics were also more likely than Protestants to say other religions besides their own offered a true path to God. Eighty percent of Catholics and 74 percent of Protestants held that view.

Only 42 percent of the Protestants surveyed said non-Christian religions can offer a true path to God, but 61 percent of Catholics held that view.

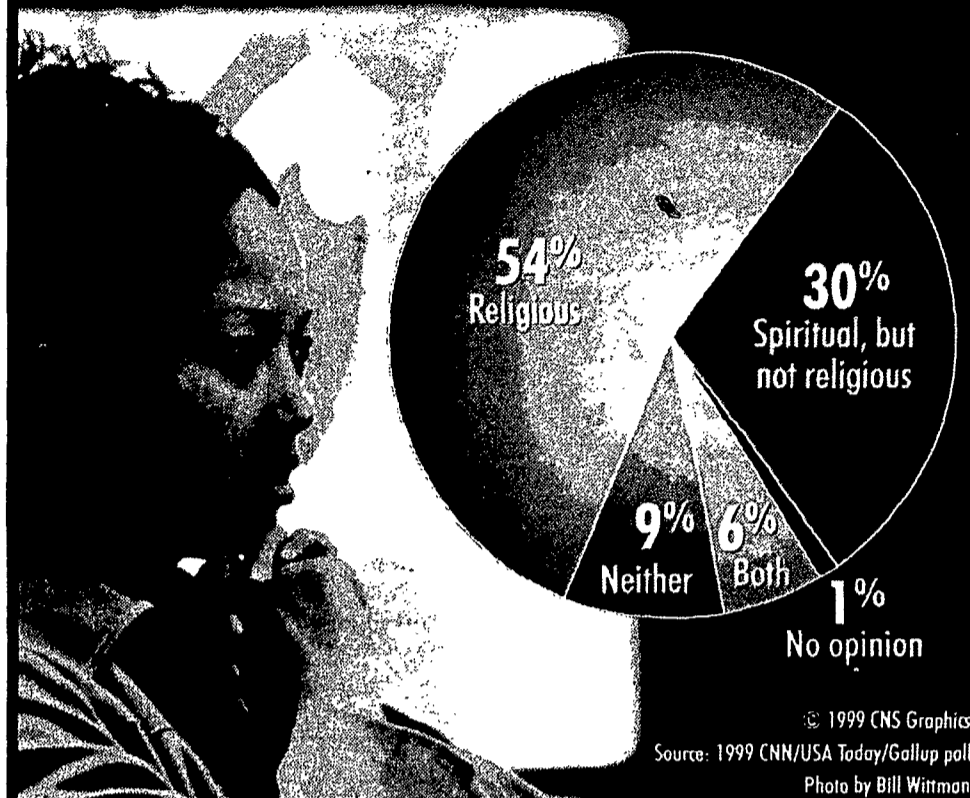
The survey found that four-fifths of Americans believe that one day God will judge them and send them to heaven or hell. But 44 percent said good people can go to heaven even if they don't believe in God.

It found that 86 percent of Americans believe in God and an additional 8 percent believe in some other kind of "universal spirit or higher power."

For the survey, 1,037 adults were interviewed by telephone Dec. 9-12. The standard margin of sampling error for the results of such a poll is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Religious or Spiritual?

Six of 10 Americans say religion is very important in their life. Asked how they would describe their beliefs, U.S. adults responded...



Ogdensburg Diocese to install new bishop

Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito was to be installed as the 12th bishop of the Diocese of Ogdensburg at 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 7, at St. Mary's Cathedral.

He succeeds Bishop Paul S. Loverde, who was named bishop of Arlington, Va., a year ago.

Bishop Barbarito has served as auxiliary bishop in Brooklyn since 1994.

Israel

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dent's reception, told Catholic News Service that despite the statement made by Latin-rite Patriarch Michel Sabbah of Jerusalem regarding a new compromise solution and the proposed construction of an interfaith center at the controversial site instead of the mosque, the Israeli government was maintaining its original decision, which allows for the construction of a mosque.

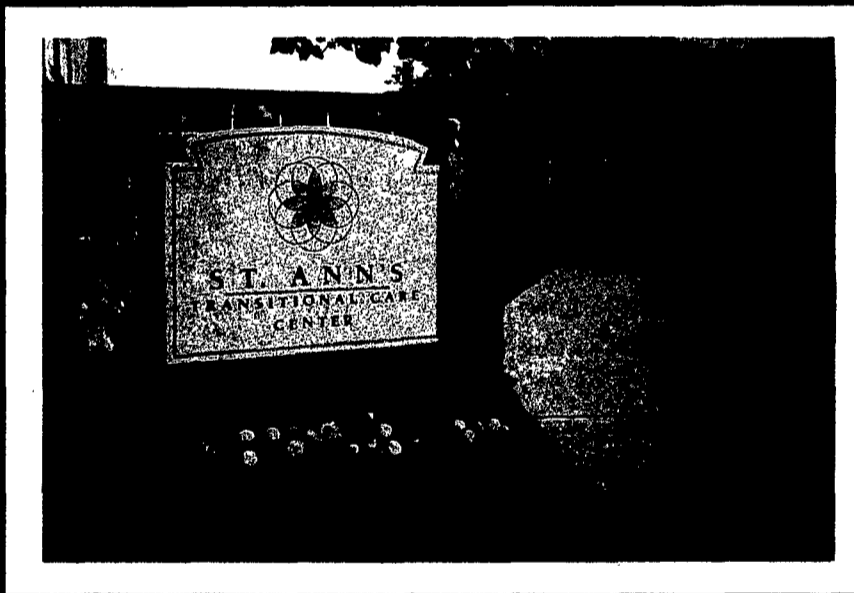
"The government is monitoring the situation on the ground and is sticking to the letter and the spirit of the government's resolution," he said.

Representatives of Christian churches in Israel met Dec. 28 with Foreign Minister David Levy to discuss the situation in Nazareth, and he promised to pass their concerns on to Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

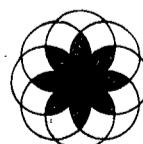
Auxiliary Bishop Kamal Hanna Bathish of Jerusalem represented the Latin patriarchate at the meeting, and he later declined comment, noting that Christian leaders had agreed to refrain from discussing the content of the meeting.

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