Religion and Faith in the Public Square
An ARI – Cardus Tracking Project
Final Questionnaire: October 24th, 2019

[INTRO SCREEN]

Today’s survey looks at some different issues in our lives and society today. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers; we're really just interested in everyone's views.

Q1 Please indicate your own personal level of satisfaction with each of the following:

[Rows -- This order]
Your own personal happiness and contentment with your life
The overall quality of life in the community where you live
The way things are going in Canada today

[Columns]
Very satisfied
Moderately satisfied
Moderately dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

Q2 Overall, would you say you are optimistic or pessimistic about each of the following?

[Rows -- This order]
Your own future
The future of Canada
The future of the next generation

[Columns]
Very Optimistic
Moderately Optimistic
Moderately Pessimistic
Very Pessimistic

[The “Index” (Q’s 3 thru 14b will be included in the Index)] [* means tracked pre 2018]

Q3* What is the best way to live life? Should we be MORE focused on:

Achieving our own dreams and happiness
OR
Being concerned about helping others
Now, let’s consider the role of religious and faith communities in Canada today.

By “religious and faith communities” we are generally referring to a group of people who share a religious faith. This could be any religious tradition, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, or any other shared faith. And the group could be members of a formal religious order (nuns, for example) or simply involved lay people, or a combination of the two.

Q4* How would you describe the overall contribution religious and faith communities are making to Canada and Canadian society today?

Very good
More good than bad
A mix of good and bad
More bad than good
Very bad

Q5* What would you consider ideal when it comes to the overall participation and influence of religious and faith communities in Canadian public life today? In your view, should religious and faith communities have:

A major influence on Canadian public life
Some influence
Not much
No influence at all – religion doesn’t belong in public life

Q6* Let’s think for a moment about some of the various social issues and challenges facing Canada today. These could be issues of medical ethics, for example, or how we approach challenges such as poverty and homelessness. To what extent do you think religious communities and faith groups are relevant to addressing these types of social issues and challenges today?

More relevant than ever
As relevant as ever
Becoming less relevant
No longer relevant at all

Q7 What kind of contribution would you say religious and faith communities are making in the following areas of Canadian life and society?

[Rows – Randomize]
Healthcare – hospitals, clinics, homes for the elderly, etc
Education – schools and colleges
Social services – helping people in need
Social justice causes – peace, overseas development, poverty etc
Q8* The Canadian Charter of Rights recognizes “freedom of religion”. Very briefly, this means there is no official national religion and people have the right to choose a religion – or no religion – and to practise it without government interference. In your view, does having “freedom of religion” make Canada a better or worse country?

Better
Worse
No real impact either way
Can’t say/No idea

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*The Canadian government respects my own religious tradition or faith community

*Religious and faith communities strengthen Canadian values such as equality and human rights

*Having a religious or faith-focused upbringing helps shape good citizenship characteristics

*I’m public about my religion and faith and don’t mind other people knowing I’m a believer

*Reducing the presence of religion in our public life is a sign of progress in our society

##It’s important for parents to teach their children religious beliefs

I’m uncomfortable with people wearing religious garments and symbols in the workplace

I think it’s a definite plus to have people from different religious backgrounds and beliefs living here in my community

It doesn’t make sense to continue giving organized religions tax-free charitable status in Canada

[Columns]
Agree strongly
Agree moderately
Disagree moderately
Disagree strongly

Q10* Overall, do you feel Canadian society today tends to make room for or shuts out your own personal values and faith?
Makes room for
Shuts out
No real impact either way
Don’t know/can’t say

Spectrum of Spirituality
[## items are inputs to create the four groups defining Canada’s spirituality spectrum]

[STANDALONE SCREEN]
These next questions are about you and your own personal beliefs. As always there are no right or wrong answers – we just want to understand people better.

Q11a* Do you believe that ## God or higher power exists?
Yes, I definitely do believe
Yes, I think so
No, I don't think so
No, I definitely do not believe

Q11b* Do you believe ##In life after death?
[Columns]
Yes, I definitely do believe
Yes, I think so
No, I don't think so
No, I definitely do not believe

Q12* How often, if at all, do you:

[Rows – Randomize]
##Pray to God or some higher power
##Attend religious services (other than weddings or funerals)
##Feel you experience God’s presence
##Read the Bible, Quran, or other sacred text

[Columns]
[If bottom two box (Don’t think/Definitely do not believe) God or a higher power exists at Q11, ask Q13. Others skip ahead.]

Q13 * ##You have indicated that you do not believe that God or a higher power exists -- or that you don't think so. Just to confirm, how would you describe yourself when it comes to the whole area of personal faith or spirituality? Would you say:

You do not have any feelings of faith or spirituality
Have some/at some times
You do have feelings of faith or spirituality in your life

Q14a*Do you ever think of yourself as part of a religious tradition? For example, do you consider yourself to be: (Please select what best applies to you.)

[This order]
Christian
Jewish
Muslim
Other non-Christian
No, none of these

[If “No, none of these” at Q14a:]
Q14b*Would you say you are:

Agnostic
Atheist
Nothing in particular
Something else

Q1.1. Now, let's get a little more specific for a moment and think about some of the main values and beliefs related to faith and religion.

In your view, would you say the overall presence of each of these in Canadian public life is benefitting or damaging Canada and Canadian society?
[Rows -- Randomize]

Catholicism
Protestantism
Evangelical Christianity
Judaism
Islam
Hinduism
Sikhism
Atheism [Fixed last]

[Columns]

Damaging
No real impact
Benefitting
Don’t know/Can’t say

QL2 to be asked of those NOT choosing:
“No, none of these” at Q14a OR “Definitely do not believe -- God or a higher power” at Q11]

QL2. Generally speaking, to what extent do you or would you personally feel comfortable expressing your own views about each of the following in a public setting – say, at work or somewhere else in the community (not your place of worship) with people outside your own close circle of friends?

[ROWS -- THIS ORDER]
Your personal faith beliefs and practises
Views on issues like abortion or assisted dying that may not be shared by the majority of public opinion

[Columns:]
Always feel comfortable expressing views on that
Usually comfortable
Usually uncomfortable
Always feel uncomfortable expressing views on that
Really depends – could be either

QL3. How comfortable do you or would you feel asking co-workers or others (not from your own close circle and not from your place of worship) for donations for a cause sponsored by a religious group you belong to or support?

Always comfortable with that
Usually comfortable
Usually uncomfortable
Always uncomfortable with that
Really depends – could be either

Turning towards the realm of politics for a moment.....

QE1. Overall, would you say:

The personal faith and beliefs of political leaders should be off limits and not the subject of media coverage

OR

It's appropriate for the media to cover the personal faith and beliefs of political leaders

QE2. During this recent federal election campaign, were you aware of any media coverage or attention on the personal faith and beliefs of any of the following political party leaders?

[Randomize]

Andrew Scheer, Conservative leader
Justin Trudeau, Liberal leader
Jagmeet Singh, NDP leader
Yves-Francois Blanchet, BQ leader [QC ONLY]
Elizabeth May, Green Party leader

Yes, aware
No, didn’t see anything

[For each one aware:]

QE3. And did whatever you saw, heard or read about that party leader's personal faith and beliefs have a positive or negative impact on your opinion of them, or no impact either way?
Andrew Scheer, Conservative leader
Justin Trudeau, Liberal leader
Jagmeet Singh, NDP leader
Yves-François Blanchet, BQ leader [QC ONLY]
Elizabeth May, Green Party leader

Positive
Negative
No impact

QA1. All things considered (and setting aside what party they might be running for), does the idea of a political candidate being a person of faith attract you to that candidate, does it repel you away from them, or do you feel quite neutral about it?

Strongly Attracts
Attracts
Neutral
Repels
Strongly repels

QA2. To what extent, if at all, would a party leader’s personal views on issues such as abortion and same sex marriage have an impact on your own decision as to whether or not you’d vote for them? (And again -- thinking generally, and still setting aside which political party they might be with.)

Huge impact on my vote
Important impact, among other factors
Not much of an impact
No impact on my vote

QA3a) Suppose you hear a party leader acknowledge they are personally “pro-life” and believe abortion is wrong, but also say they will definitely NOT support any attempts to introduce any legislation that would restrict a woman’s right to choose an abortion. Do you tend to believe their assurance that they will keep those personal views out of the political realm?

Yes, believe them
Have doubts
No, do not believe them

QA3b) Suppose it becomes clear that they are 100% convicted when they say their own “pro-life” views will NOT enter their politics and actions in office whatsoever. If that were the case, would you consider that:

An acceptable situation
Disappointing – should use politics to promote personal views on important subjects like abortion
Not acceptable for a political leader to be personally “pro life” even if they keep it out of their politics

Socio-demographics and Other info

QS1. Finally, just to wrap up, some additional questions for our statistical analysis.

More specifically now, which one of the following best describes your religion?

Roman Catholic
United Church
Anglican
Lutheran
Presbyterian
Baptist
Pentecostal
Other evangelical Christian
Other Christian
Muslim
Hindu
Jewish
Sikh
Buddhist
No religious identity
Other (please specify)

QS2. Some people say Canadians variously (1) embrace faith and religion, (2) reject faith and religion, or (3) are somewhere in between the two extremes.

Where would you tend to locate yourself?

I am inclined to embrace my faith and/or religion
I am inclined to reject any faith and/or religion
I am somewhere in between

QS3. Thinking of this recent October 2019 Canadian federal election, which party’s candidate did you yourself support in that election?

Did not vote
Conservative
Liberal
NDP/New Democrat
Green Party
Bloc Quebecois [QC Only]
People’s Party of Canada
Some other party
Rather Not Say