

Poll: U.S. religions fragmented

by UPI

PHILADELPHIA -- A survey released this week shows the historic Protestant majority in the United States as fragmented and rivaled by Roman Catholicism. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life found 51 percent of Americans said they belong to a Protestant denomination compared to 24 percent who said they were Catholic. However, 31 percent of adults surveyed said they were raised Catholic while the majority of immigrants belong to the Catholic Church. "Although there are about half as many Catholics in the United States as Protestants, the number of Catholics nearly rivals the number of members of evangelical Protestant churches and far exceeds the number of members of both mainline Protestant churches and historically black Protestant churches," Pew said in a written statement. Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists each accounted for less than 1 percent of the population while 1.7 percent of respondents identified themselves as Jewish. Pew said each of those religions also includes variants. The survey interviewed more than 35,000 adults with an error margin of 0.6 percent and found that faith is also fluid. Forty-four percent of Americans said they have either switched denominations or stopped going to church.

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