

What Do Americans Think About the Christian Genocide in the Middle East?

Regardless of which party you belong to, or who you plan to vote for in the 2016 presidential election, a recent poll suggests you're likely to share your view of the persecution and murder of Christians in the Middle East by ISIS and other Islamists.

In fact, it really wasn't even close.

According to the poll conducted by Marist on behalf of Knights of Columbus, most Americans—by a margin of 55 to 36 percent—agree in calling ISIS' atrocities against Christians in the Middle East "genocide." And based on statements made on the campaign trail, nearly all of the Republican and Democrat presidential candidates have made the same assessment.

"The American people, together with presidential candidates and elected officials of both political parties agree that Christians and other religious minorities are facing genocide in the Middle East," Knights of Columbus CEO Carl Anderson said. "With such a bipartisan consensus, inaction on a declaration of genocide by Congress and the State Department is unconscionable. An entire year has gone by with their silence. The time for action is now—while those being persecuted can still be saved."

The survey of 1,517 adults was conducted last month and has a margin of error of 2.5 percentage points. The results will no doubt add to mounting pressure on Secretary of State John Kerry to include Christians in a determination of genocide.

A measure in Congress has been offered by U.S. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-Neb.) that would reflect the "sense of

Congress” that genocide is being committed by ISIS. Bishop Oscar Cantú of Las Cruces, New Mexico, chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace, has urged members of Congress to pass the resolution.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has also announced it is urging the State Department to declare what is happening to religious minorities in the region as genocide.