

## THE DEACON'S BENCH

Where a Roman Catholic de

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### What the pope will find in

August 25, 2011 by Deacon Greg Kandra

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The numbers are dwindling, according to **this report**:

“Catholic numbers in Brazil strongly declined among all classes in recent years, according to a study released as Rio de Janeiro is slated to host the Catholic World Youth Day in July 2013.

Published Wednesday in local media, the results of the “New Map of Religions,” a census conducted by the Getulio Vargas Foundation (GVF), showed that from 2003 to 2009, the proportion of Brazilians who identify as Catholic dropped from 74 to 68 percent.

“That is a strong transformation rate. Changes that take place in 100 years are now taking place within ten. If this drop of one in 100 Catholics each year continues, in 20 years, less than half of the population will be Catholic,” said Marcelo Neri, the head of GVF.

The strongest drop (9 percent) was among youth from 10 to 19 years old — the target audience for World Youth Day — stressed Neri.

World Youth Day (WYD) is a youth-oriented international event for Catholics attended by the Pope. After being held in Madrid this year, the next WYD is scheduled for July 23 through July 28, 2013 in Rio de Janeiro.

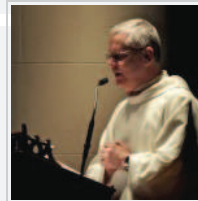
Rio is Brazil's second least-Catholic region, with 49 percent claiming the religion. The only region behind Rio is northern Roraima State at 46 percent.

Brazil remains the most Catholic country in the world, with 130 million adherents, but this is the first time in 140 years that less than 70 percent of the population is Catholic.

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### ABOUT THE DEACON

Deacon Greg Kandra is a Roman Catholic deacon serving the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. A veteran broadcast journalist, Deacon Greg worked for 26 years as a writer and producer for CBS News in both New York and Washington. He now serves as the Executive Editor of ONE, the acclaimed magazine published by the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA). Deacon Greg has been honored with every major award in broadcasting, including two George Foster Peabody Awards, two Emmy Awards, and four awards from the Writers Guild of America.



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