

Faith Digest: Survey shows diminished trust in the Bible

April 11, 2014

Survey shows diminished trust in the Bible as divinely inspired. The [American Bible Society's](#) latest State of the Bible survey documents steep skepticism that the Good Book is a God book. The study, conducted annually by [Barna Research](#), finds the most "engaged" readers—who read the Bible almost daily and see it as sacred—now are matched by "skeptics" who say it's just a book of stories and advice. Both groups measured 19 percent. While the engaged stayed steady since 2011, skeptics grew by 10 percentage points, since the same survey was conducted that year. Skeptics cut into the number of folks Barna calls "Bible friendly," those who read the Bible occasionally and see it as inspired by God. The "friendly" demographic fell to 37 percent, down from 45 percent in 2011. The percentage of people who view the Bible as sacred has dropped to 79 percent, down from 86 percent in 2011. Millennials, ages 18 to 29, lead the skeptics tally: 64 percent say the Bible is sacred literature; 35 percent say the Bible offers "everything a person needs to know to lead a meaningful life," compared with half of all adults; and 39 percent of millennials admit they never read the Bible, compared with 26 percent of adults as a whole. The study is based on 2,036 interviews with U.S. adults in January and February.

Muslim Brotherhood warns Brits. If England bans the Muslim Brotherhood, it will leave itself wide open to terrorist attacks, warned one of the group's senior leaders, Ibrahim Mounir. His warning followed Prime



Minister David Cameron's ordered investigation into the Muslim Brotherhood amid growing fears the organization is planning extremist activities in England. MI5, the domestic intelligence agency, will seek to discover how many senior leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood are based in England. A court in Cairo last month sentenced to death 529

Muslim Brotherhood members and banned it as a terrorist organization. Mounir insisted a ban on the Muslim Brotherhood would damage England's reputation in the Muslim world.

Catholic Mass translation may get another overhaul. A new translation of the Mass has been used in U.S. Catholic parishes less than three years, but there are signs the language—often criticized as stilted and awkward—could be in for another edit. A national poll of priests and lay leaders in parishes around the country found more than half (52 percent) of the 444 clergy who responded reject the new missal. Just 27 percent said the new translation has lived up to expectations. In the survey, 75 percent of clergy and lay leaders said “some of the language of the new text is awkward and distracting,” and 58 percent of clergy said they do not like the more formal style of language in the new text. The Godfrey Diekmann Center for Patristics and Liturgical Studies at St. John’s School of Theology in Collegeville, Minn., commissioned the study, carried out by the [Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate](#) at Georgetown University. The survey is based on 539 interviews, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.2 percentage points.