



**Marist  
Poll**

President John F. Kennedy:  
*His Legacy 50 Years Later*

A Multi-Generational Perspective

January 2011

# President John F. Kennedy's Legacy



**Fifty years have passed since the inauguration of America's 35<sup>th</sup> President - John F. Kennedy.**

**At the time, his inaugural address captured the American spirit.**

**How meaningful is JFK's inaugural address after five decades?**

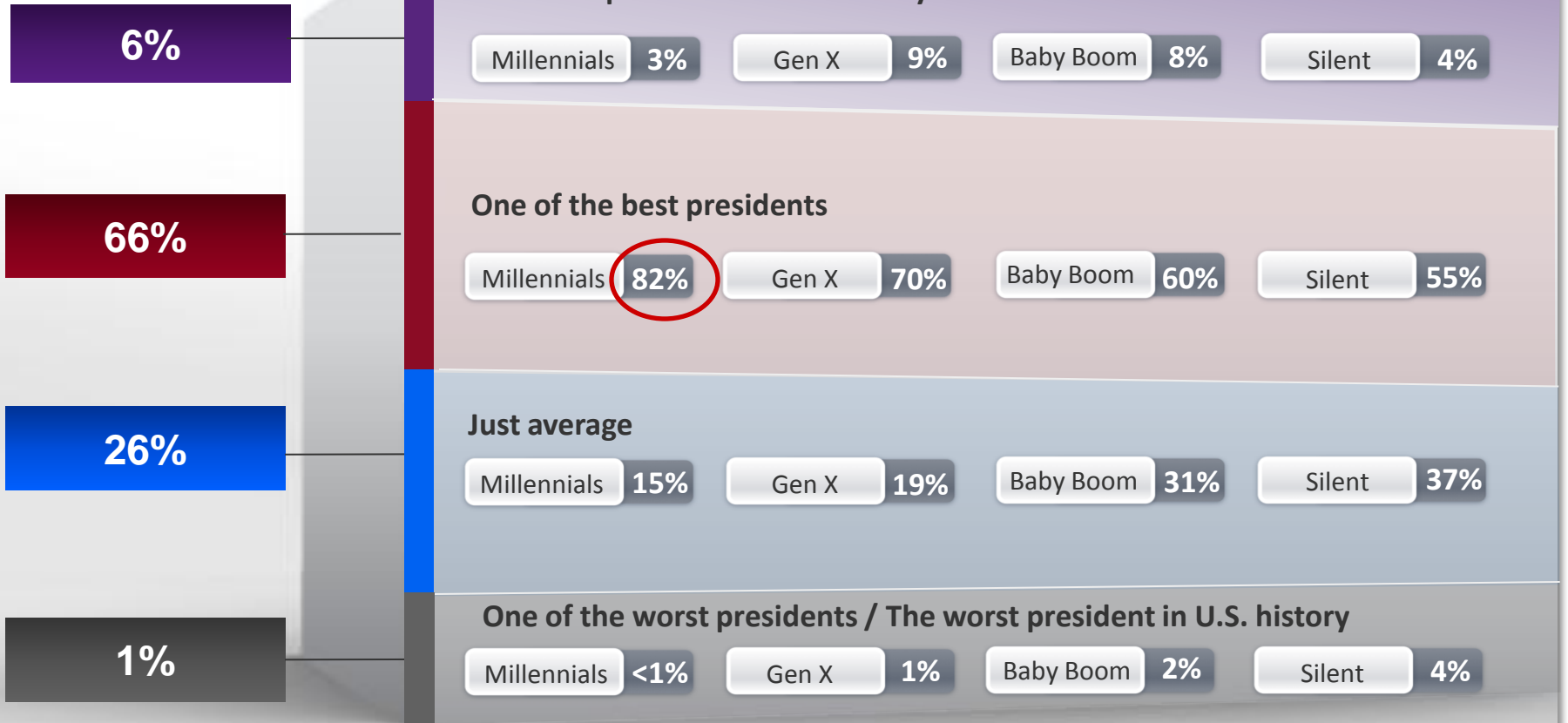
**This national survey of 1,018 adults, conducted in January 2011, takes a multi-generational look at how President Kennedy's words resonate with Americans today.**

# For the Ages

Many Americans, especially younger generations, hail the legacy of John F. Kennedy. Overall, more than seven in ten Americans - 72% - describe him as either the best or one of the best presidents in U.S. history.

Do you think John F. Kennedy will be remembered as the best president in U.S. history, one of the best presidents, just average, one of the worst presidents, or the worst president in U.S. history?

## National Adults



# Memorable Passages from JFK's Inaugural Address

For most Americans, the words of John F. Kennedy's inaugural address resonate 50 years later. In fact, nearly all Americans believe in the importance of the preservation of liberty and how one can serve one's country and an overwhelming number revere his references to God's work.

Fifty years ago, John F. Kennedy gave his inaugural address. Please tell us how important you think each of the following statements from his speech should still be considered in America today: very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?\*

**"We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty"**



**"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country"**



**"Here on earth God's work must truly be our own"**



**"The rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God"**



\*Presents percentage reporting either *Very important* or *Somewhat important*

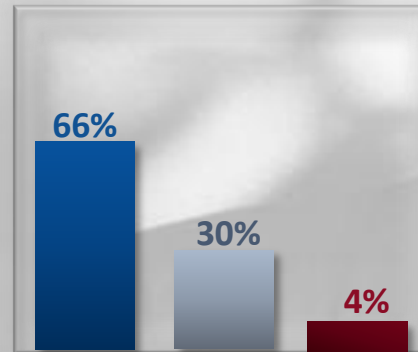
# Assuring Liberty

"We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty!"

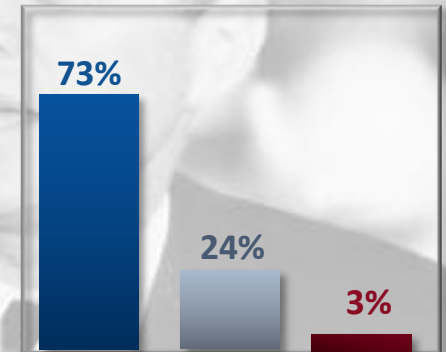
	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important/ Not important at all
National Adults	73%	23%	5%

The preservation of liberty – at any price, burden, or hardship – is a core American value.

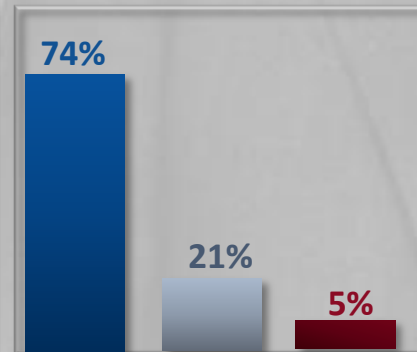
Its importance resonates across all generations.



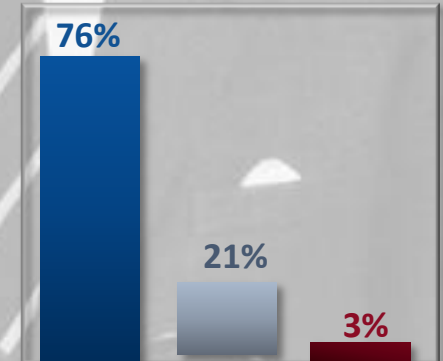
Millennials



Generation X



Baby Boomers



Silent-Greatest



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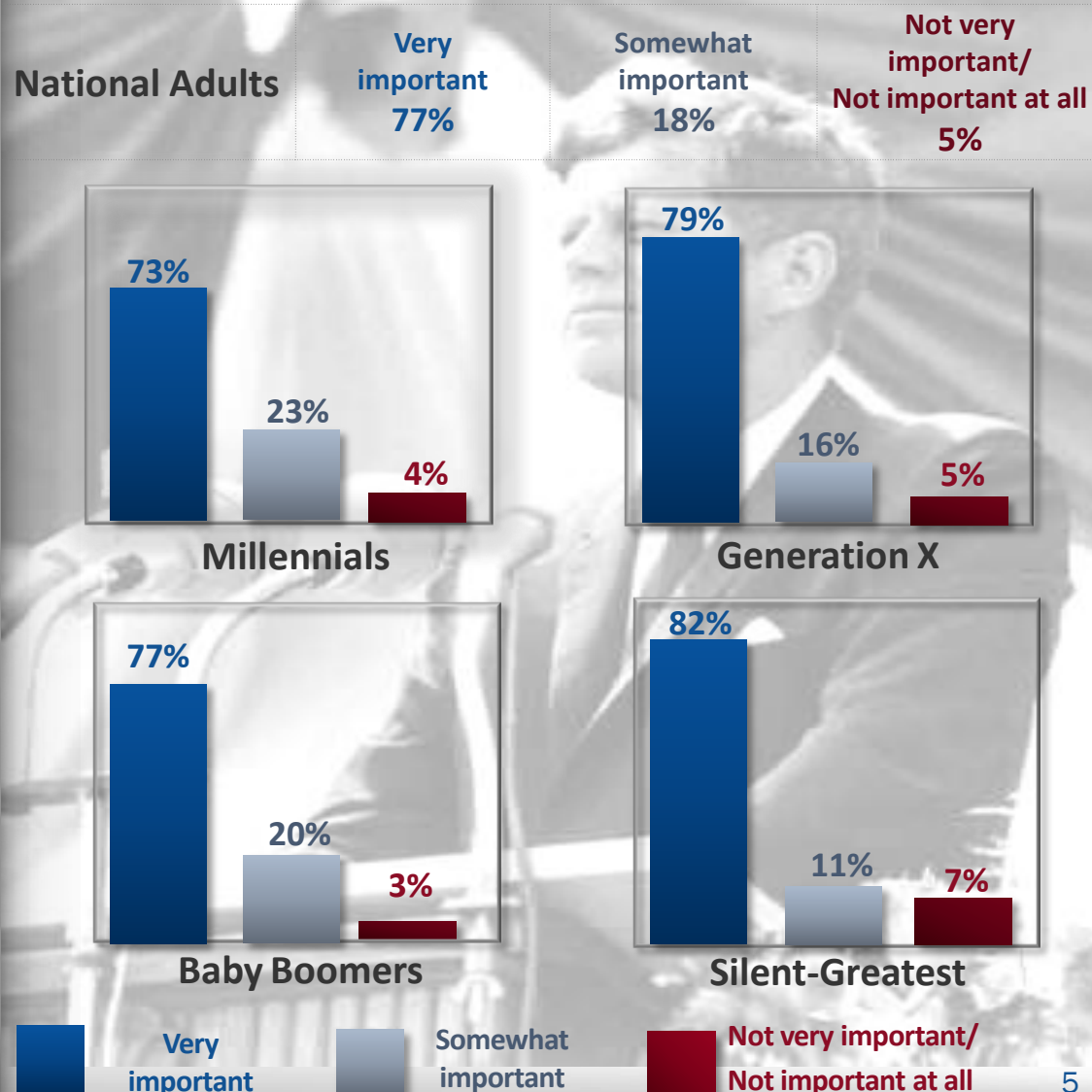
# “...What You Can Do for Your Country”

Nearly all Americans recognize service to their country as an important principle in the United States today.

About three-quarters of Americans across generations place great importance on President Kennedy’s call to action.

Fifty years ago, John F. Kennedy gave his inaugural address. Please tell us how important you think each of the following statements from his speech should still be considered in America today: very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?

“Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country”



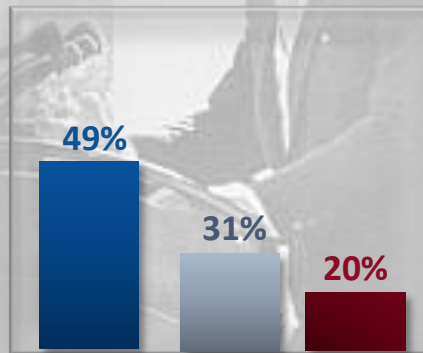
# God's Work on Earth

Carrying out the work of God is a responsibility deemed important by most Americans today.

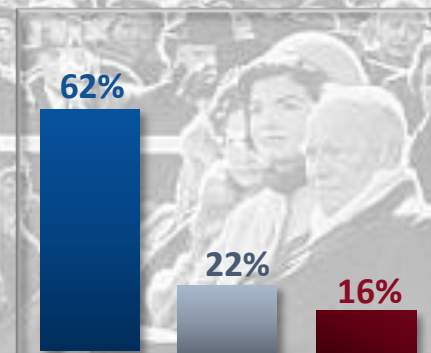
This passage most strongly resonates with Americans over 30 years of age.

Fifty years ago, John F. Kennedy gave his inaugural address. Please tell us how important you think each of the following statements from his speech should still be considered in America today: very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?

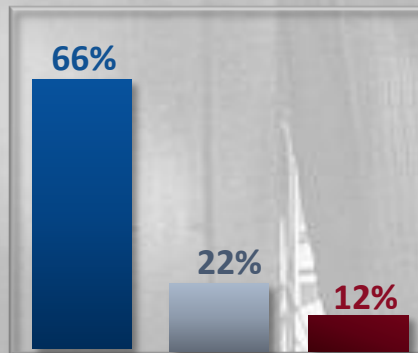
"Here on earth God's work must truly be our own"



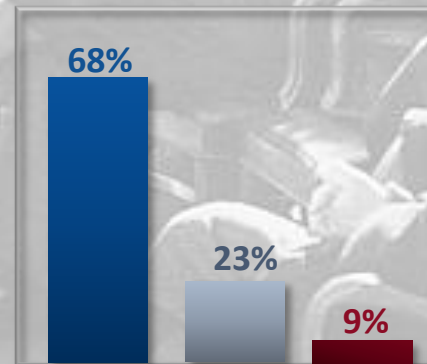
Millennials



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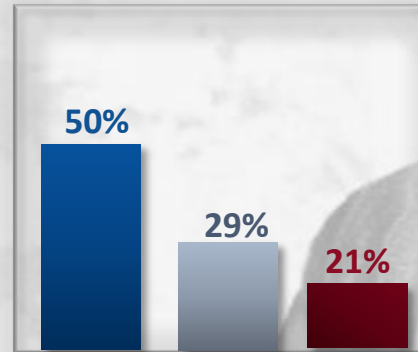
# The Rights of Man

President Kennedy’s view that the rights of man stem from the hands of God, rather than the generosity of the state, is still important to most Americans today.

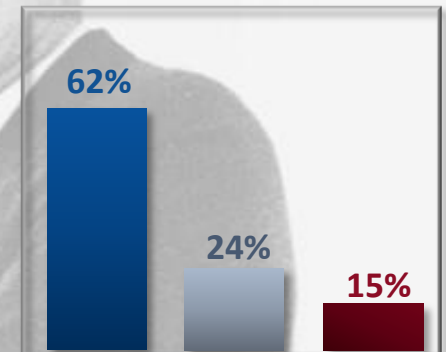
While there is a consensus about the relevance of this passage today, it is especially important to Americans over 30 years of age.

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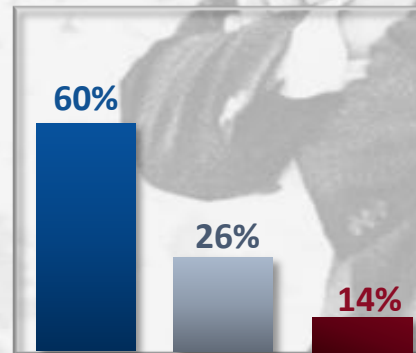
“The rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God”



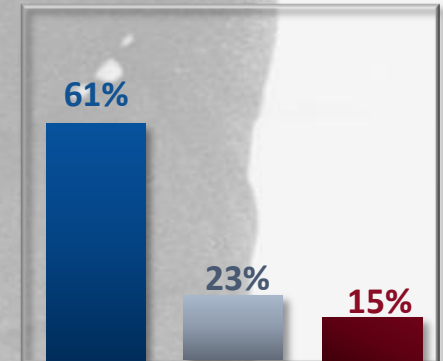
Millennials



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Baby Boomers



Silent-Greatest





# How the Survey was Conducted

This study was undertaken by The Knights of Columbus and conducted by The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion.

This report details the findings from a telephone survey of 1,018 adults residing in the continental United States. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined.

Reports for adults have a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Millennials are defined as American adult residents between the ages of 18-30; Gen X between the ages of 31-46; Baby Boomers between the ages of 47-65; and Silent/Greatest generation over the age of 65.

Interviews were conducted from January 6, 2011 through January 10, 2011.

Please note that some totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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The Knights of Columbus is one of the nation's premiere volunteer and charitable organizations. Last year, Knights worldwide donated nearly 69 million hours, and more than \$150 million to charitable causes in communities throughout the Americas, as well in Europe and Asia. From helping children in need, to providing wheelchairs for the disabled, to helping stock food banks, to offering top-rated and affordable life insurance to its members, the Knights has been at the service of the community for more than 127 years, and is the world's largest Catholic service organization.



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Founded in 1978, The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion (MIPO) is a survey research center at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. The Marist Poll has conducted independent research on public priorities, elections, and a wide variety of social issues. Through the regular public release of surveys, MIPO has built a legacy of independence, reliability, and accuracy. Its results are featured in print and electronic media throughout the world.