News



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Here are five faith facts about Kavanaugh:

1. Kavanaugh is Catholic. The judge is a regular lector at his church, the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Washington, D.C., near his Maryland home. He also volunteers for the St. Maria's Meals program at Catholic Charities, according to his biography on the court website and has tutored at the Washington Jesuit Academy.
2. He has ruled on issues important to religious conservatives, including abortion rights. Nominated by President George W. Bush, whom he served as a White House lawyer, Kavanaugh has spent 12 years as a judge on the D.C. Circuit and has a long history of judicial decisions behind him. Among them: Kavanaugh

dissented last year on a controversial decision that allowed an undocumented teenager who had crossed from Mexico into Texas as an unaccompanied minor to get an abortion while living in a government-funded shelter. The decision, he wrote, was "ultimately based on a constitutional principle as novel as it is wrong: a new right for unlawful immigrant minors in U.S. government detention to obtain immediate abortion on demand."

3. He also opposed the Affordable Care Act's birth control mandate. In 2015, he wrote a dissent opposing an accommodation to the birth control mandate. A panel had upheld the accommodation requiring religious organizations to sign a form facilitating contraceptive coverage for their employees. He wrote those regulations "substantially burden the religious organizations' exercise of religion because the regulations require the organizations to take an action contrary to their sincere religious beliefs (submitting the form) or else pay significant monetary penalties."
4. Some conservatives are worried he's not conservative enough. His ruling on that abortion case involving the unaccompanied minor was less restrictive than other judges, giving some cause to worry that he is too pragmatic. Similarly, these voters favor his dissent opposing the birth control mandate, but worry it conceded that the government has an interest in providing coverage for contraceptives, but that "the government can achieve it in other ways," according to SCOTUSblog. Meantime, LGBTQ groups have expressed concern about his promotion by the conservative Family Research Council in 2005 when he initially was nominated for the D.C. circuit. Family Research Council is a Christian lobbying group that believes "homosexual conduct is harmful to the persons who engage in it and to society at large, and can never be affirmed."
5. He preserves the current religious ratio on the court. He replaces his fellow Catholic, Kennedy, for whom he clerked. That means, if his nomination is approved, the religious makeup of the court would remain the same. That currently includes five Catholic justices, three Jewish justices and Trump's previous pick, Neil Gorsuch, who was raised Catholic but now attends an Episcopal church.

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