When the Church Votes Left:
How Progressive Bishops Supported the Workers’ Party in Brazil

Guadalupe Tuñón*

Abstract

Social scientists routinely characterize religious influence in electoral politics as conservative and left-wing parties as fundamentally secular. Against these claims, I argue that progressive Catholic bishops—who actively supported state-led redistribution—were essential to the mobilization of poor voters in favor of the left-wing Workers’ Party (PT) in Brazil. The paper uses a natural experiment stemming from Pope John Paul II’s appointment to the papacy in 1978, which generated plausibly as-if random variation in the length of progressive bishops’ tenures in office. I find that the PT gained electorally in municipalities with longer exposures to progressive bishops. Organizational linkages between progressive bishops and the PT allowed the party to grow its territorial presence and build an enduring electoral advantage. The findings suggest that religious leaders’ economic leanings can play an important role in shaping their political effects. They have important implications for theories of political party development and religion’s political influence.

*Assistant Professor of Politics and International Affairs, Princeton University. tunon@princeton.edu. I thank Caren Carvalho, Tommaso Giulia, and Victoria Werner for excellent research assistance. I thank Aala Abdelgadir, Natália S. Bueno, Anna Callis, Ruth Berins Collier, Melani Cammett, Danny Choi, Ernesto Dal Bó, Danny Hidalgo, Horacio Larreguy, Daniel Masterson, Gwyneth McClendon, Pablo Michel, Lucas Novaes, Nathan Nunn, Alison Post, Kenneth Scheve, Luis Schiumerini, Jasjeet Sekhon, Fiona Shen-Bayh, Niloufer Siddiqui, Jazmin Sierra, Anurag Sinha, Ann Swidler, Deborah Yashar, and workshop participants at the University of Chicago, Columbia, Florida State, Harvard, Notre Dame, NYU, Princeton, Stanford, UCLA, USC, UC Berkeley and the Stanford-Berkeley Political Economy Working Group for helpful feedback. I am especially grateful to Thad Dunning for his generous advice throughout this project. I thank the staff at the Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil (CNBB) and the Biblioteca Central da Província Franciscana do Rio Grande do Sul for access to archival material; and the Institute of International Studies at UC Berkeley, the Penn Identity and Conflict Lab, the Global Religion Research Initiative (GRRRI), the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, and Princeton’s School of Public and International Affairs for financial support.
Scholars of political economy conventionally characterize religion’s electoral influence as conservative, claiming that religiosity decreases electoral support for left parties and undercuts redistribution. Some have argued that religion provides a source of spiritual and material insurance, as well as redistribution through religious charities, thereby substituting for the welfare state. Others have emphasized the conservative orientation of religious economic and social moral teachings, reducing demand for redistribution among religious voters and potentially leading them to support parties on the right.

Yet, leaders of religious organizations at times have actively supported progressive economic positions that both seek to mitigate inequality and advocate state-led redistribution. Often, this progressivism stems from religious doctrines that profess strong concern for the poor, a critical view of inequality, and an obligation for the rich to support the less fortunate. Following the U.S. Civil War, for example, Protestant ministers sought to apply the teachings of Christianity to American political, economic, and social problems. In the mid-20th century, Catholic priests around the world promoted the causes of the poor from their pulpits and, at times, in the electoral arena. This movement was particularly strong in Latin America, where progressive clergy often led opposition to military rule and grassroots movements for economic redistribution, human rights, and ethnic rights for rural and indigenous populations. More recently, Pope Francis has repeatedly called on global leaders to redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor.

In this paper, I focus on the role of religious leaders and examine the electoral impact of these progressive religious movements. I argue that the presence of progressive religious leaders can allow left-wing parties to expand their base of electoral support and win national political office. Despite the support of organized workers—their core constituency—left-wing parties often struggle to build coalitions

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1 On religion as a source of spiritual insurance, see Scheve and Stasavage (2006a). On material insurance, see Dehejia, DeLeire and Luttmer (2007) and Chen (2010). On the role of religious charities as an alternative source of redistribution, see Huber and Stanig (2011). On how right wing parties can use this technology to attract poor voters, see Thachil (2014).

2 On the role of economic moral teachings, see Benabou and Tirole (2006). On teachings on social issues, see Roemer (1998); De la O and Rodden (2008).

3 For example, Islamic scripture underscores the importance of economic protections for the poor, promotes economic equity, and mandates that society provide for the less fortunate (Davis and Robinson, 2006; Pepinsky and Welborne, 2011). Similar directives exist in Christian doctrine, which affirms the importance of compassion for the poor and the need to alleviate suffering (Kahl, 2005).

4 See e.g., Carter (1954); White, Hopkins and Bennett (1976).

5 On progressive Catholicism in western Europe, see, e.g., Horn (2015).


7 I define left-wing parties as those that appeal to lower-class constituencies—often with roots in organized labor—and seek the support of these constituencies by offering some level of wealth redistribution.
that can secure electoral victories without sacrificing their redistributive goals (Przeworski and Sprague, 1986). Because of high levels of religiosity among the poor, securing the support of religious leaders offers left parties a solution to this challenge. Progressive leaders are an ideal partner for left-wing parties because they share the party’s preference on economic redistribution. Their moral authority and role in mediating religion for congregants allows them to shape parishioners’ beliefs and preferences about economic inequality, redistribution, and politics as a means for social change. Such leaders can provide access to a dense organizational network that is national in scope, granting the resources needed to build a base of support beyond the means of organized workers.

I evaluate my argument in the context of Brazil after the democratic transition in 1985. To provide evidence of progressive religious leaders’ effect on the electoral success of left parties, I study the role of Catholic bishops in shaping the development and electoral success of the Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT). The limited scale of Brazil’s labor movement made it a very unlikely setting for the emergence of a left-wing party. Yet the left-wing PT, which rose to prominence in the 1980s, built an electoral coalition with country-wide support. I argue that progressive bishops had substantial effects on the success of the PT in the democratic period.

To test this argument, I analyze a novel natural experiment which provides as-if random variation in the length of diocese exposure to an economically progressive bishop. After two decades of progressive Catholic leadership, the death of Pope Paul VI in 1978 brought about a conservative shift in the Vatican’s outlook due to the appointment of John Paul II (JPII) as Pope. To curb progressives’ influence in Brazil, JPII sought to replace incumbent bishops with his preferred conservative candidates. However, institutional rules within the Church prevented him from doing so before these bishops reached the retirement age of seventy-five. Since the timing of their replacement varied across dioceses, this generated exogenous variation in the length of time that progressive bishops remained in office.

I show that exposure to progressive bishops had important and lasting effects on the electoral success of the left-wing PT. I find that the party’s vote share increased significantly in localities that spent more years under a progressive bishop. In 1989, during Brazil’s first direct presidential elections after its democratic transition, the party increased its vote share by 3 percentage points in districts that retained their progressive bishop until after 1985 as compared to those in which bishops were replaced during the initial years after the 1978 papal transition—roughly a 20% increase over the PT’s average vote share in that election. The positive effects of progressive-bishop tenure are present throughout the period I study (1989-2002), indicating that the presence of a progressive bishop had a long-term impact on the PT’s organizational development and electoral
Using original evidence from an array of sources, I employ a multi-method approach that draws on quantitative and qualitative data to document how progressive bishops contributed to the electoral success of the PT by building a dense network of progressive lay organizations that the party was able to access for party-building. First, I document that places with progressive religious bishops were more likely to experience bishop activism around land and social conflict. Second, through a case study of Bom Jesus da Lapa, a progressive diocese in the northeast of Brazil, I show that progressive bishops facilitated collective action and political mobilization and created conditions favorable to the rise of a left-wing party promising economic redistribution, allowing the PT to expand its territorial reach. Third, I complement the case study evidence with analysis of an original panel of PT local branches compiled for a subset of Brazilian states to demonstrate the breadth of progressive bishops influence over the party’s organizational development. I find that municipalities in dioceses with progressive bishops are 50% more likely to have a local party branch compared to municipalities in dioceses in which progressive bishop are no longer in office. Finally, I construct a parish-level dataset of the universe of local priests between 1970 and 1997 and examine patterns of priest turnover at the local level. I show that the bishops appointed by JPII significantly increased turnover, preventing progressive priests from developing ties to local networks in their communities and limiting their political influence.

In the final empirical section I show that the PT benefited the most from religious resources in areas where its core constituency was weakest. Exploring heterogeneity across levels of urbanization, I find that the effects of longer progressive-bishop leadership are higher in areas with lower levels of urbanization. In these areas, the PT had access to fewer labor unions to mobilize the poor without external help. Instead, they were able to rely on the support of a dense networks of religious and lay organizations built by progressive Catholic bishops to expand their base of electoral support.

These findings contribute to scholarship about the rise of left-wing parties. Scholars have argued that left parties can build electoral coalitions that extend beyond their core constituency of working class voters by appealing to sectors of the middle class, making salient liberal social positions, providing patronage, or through appeals based on ethnicity and kinship ties—efforts that often undermine the party’s preferred class-based politics. In this paper, I show that the presence of progressive religious leaders allows the left to incorporate poor religious voters through redistributive programmatic appeals that do not undermine their class-based politics. However, this strategy leads to the formation of left parties with religious roots that distinguish them from

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8See e.g. Przeworski and Sprague (1986); Levitsky (2003); Dancygier (2017).
their secular European counterparts, which are the focus of dominant theories of left-wing party development.\(^9\)

The paper also contributes to our understanding of the influence of religion on politics. I provide evidence of the ways in which religious leaders’ ideas about economic redistribution can shape the effect of a given religious denomination in the electoral arena. At least since Durkheim and Weber, modern social science has focused on the impacts of denominational differences, highlighting how the content of different religious teachings across denominations can influence social and political outcomes. I isolate the political effects of changes in religious leadership within a single religious denomination, highlighting the role of religious leaders in interpreting shared religious teachings and documenting their impact in the political arena. In doing so, I build on a body of scholarship that emphasizes that religious denominations are often multivocal, with different interpretations of a shared religious doctrine co-existing in a single denomination (Stepan, 2000; Philpott, 2007; Grzymala-Busse, 2012).\(^{10}\) I provide evidence that these contrasting interpretations of a shared religious doctrine can also have important social and political consequences.

Finally, I contribute to the understanding of the political influence of the Roman Catholic Church specifically by identifying the effects of bishop appointments—one of the key channels through which popes can influence domestic politics. While I focus on the effects of religious leadership on the electoral success of the political left in post-democratization Brazil, the research design I introduce can be used to study the effects of papal appointments across countries and pontificates. This article therefore makes a methodological as well as a substantive contribution to the study of the Church’s political influence.

1 Progressive Religion and Left-Wing Parties

In many democratic regimes, left-wing political parties face a critical challenge: their core constituency of organized workers comprise only a minority of the electorate. While left parties historically rose to prominence through their linkages with labor unions, these organized workers rarely comprise a large enough share of the population to propel left parties to electoral victory on their own (Przeworski and Sprague, 1986; Van Biezen, 1998). This challenge is well documented in Europe and is even more pronounced in the developing world, where levels of industrialization

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\(^9\)See e.g. Duverger (1959); Bartolini et al. (2000).

\(^{10}\)My work also speaks to a more recent literature that seeks to “unbundle” religion, employing survey and field experiments to study to isolate the effects of religious interpretations specifically on individual-level outcomes. See McClendon and Riedl (2015, 2019); Masoud, Jamal and Nugent (2016).
are low and geographically concentrated, the informal economy predominates, and often only a small share of the workforce is unionized (see e.g. Collier and Collier 1991; Auerbach et al. 2018). Absent the ability to win outright with the support of organized workers, left parties must expand their coalition to improve their electoral fortunes.

In response to this challenge, left-wing parties can recruit the support of the unorganized poor, such as rural and informal workers (Garay, 2016; Feierherd, 2020). The unorganized poor are an attractive potential source of electoral support because they are numerically large and their economic preferences, while potentially different from those of organized workers, are also redistributive in nature. Recruiting the support of these voters allows left parties to greatly expand their electoral base without sacrificing their support of redistributive economic policies.

Yet it is difficult for left parties to bring the unorganized poor into their coalition. These voters are not members of labor unions, nor are they concentrated in industrial sectors of the economy in urban areas, where the presence of left parties is traditionally strongest. As a result, few organic channels exist through which left parties can mobilize these voters. Moreover, because the unorganized poor lack ties to labor unions or other economically progressive organizations, they are more likely to be mobilized through clientelistic channels or alternative appeals. Finally, efforts to develop linkages from scratch with the unorganized poor are costly and the benefits from such investments often take years to materialize.

While left parties often depend on organized labor, these parties can benefit from the support of organized religion. Religious organizations can facilitate the expansion of left parties’ electoral support among the unorganized poor. These organizations are especially well suited to recruiting the support of poor voters because of the high levels of religiosity among this group (Norris and Inglehart, 2011). They can also provide left parties with attractive organizational resources; while left parties are often concentrated in specific geographic regions, religious organizations are more likely to be national in scope (Cammett and Luong, 2014), providing linkages to poor voters in areas where labor unions are weak. Though scholars have often emphasized the ways in which organized religion can benefit right parties, left parties can also take advantage of the resources provided by religious organizations when these organizations are led by economically progressive leaders.

Across a wide variety of denominations, religious leaders play a pivotal role in shaping parishioners’ experience within organized religion. These leaders are responsible for interpreting sacred texts and holy traditions and conveying them to their followers (Grzymala-Busse, 2012). More-

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11See e.g., Stokes et al. (2013); Chandra (2007); Dancygier (2017); Frank (2007); Romer (1975).
over, they embody religion’s moral authority, which grants them extensive influence over their congregants. They also have at their disposal dense local networks of individuals and organizations that facilitate collective action (Wickham, 2002; Cammett and Luong, 2014; Warner, 2000; Grzymala-Busse, 2012).

Their position at the head of religious organizations also allows progressive leaders to influence the redistributive preferences of their parishioners. Beliefs about the causes of poverty and the extent to which people feel responsible for their own fate shape individuals’ demand for redistribution (Benabou and Tirole, 2006). Through their role in the interpretation of sacred texts and holy traditions, progressive religious leaders can shape these beliefs by, for example, emphasizing the unfairness of poverty and inequality (Grzymala-Busse, 2012; McClendon and Riedl, 2019). Increasing demand for redistribution and other policies that address economic inequality can translate into greater electoral support for parties that champion economic redistribution. Together, these activities can provide immediate aid to specific candidates or left parties more broadly.

In addition to their direct access to the religion’s extensive organizational resources, progressive religious leaders can also encourage the formation of secular organizations that enable collective action around these issues. Even when parishioners hold more redistributive preferences, they may fail to turn out in support of left parties if they are not part of organizations that facilitate the development of ties with these parties. Indeed, political parties can directly benefit from secular organizations with religious roots, which often mobilize parishioners around social and political issues that these parties also prioritize (Kalyvas, 1996; Thachil, 2014b; Haßert, 2022). By supporting the formation of lay organizations that promote redistribution or ethnic mobilization, for example, progressive religious leaders can organize the previously unorganized poor (Gill, 1998; Trejo, 2009). Left parties can leverage these lay organizations to extend their own organizational footprint and mobilize voters who are otherwise difficult to reach.

The argument developed here highlights the role of progressive religious leaders in building left-wing political parties. Left parties can leverage the presence of progressive leaders to expand their base of electoral support to include previously untapped poor voters and win national political office. Progressive leaders can provide these parties with direct support through their existing religious organizations as well as indirect assistance through the formation and support of lay organizations. Where left parties lack a large base of organized workers that they can rely upon for electoral support, these religious resources can be critical to their electoral success. In such contexts, pious voters will be a crucial component of the left’s coalition.
Progressive Catholic Bishops and the Rise of the PT

I have argued that the presence of progressive religious leaders can increase the electoral success of left-wing parties. In this paper, I study the influence of progressive bishops within the Catholic Church. Studying variation in the ideological leanings of bishops within Catholicism has methodological advantages over looking at differences across denominations. Whereas both organizational and doctrinal differences distinguish Protestants and Catholics, I hold constant the organizational structures of the Catholic Church and isolate the political effects of changes in bishop leadership.

Progressive Catholic bishops comprise a substantial share of many national Churches across the world and are particularly prevalent in Latin America, especially in the period following Vatican II (1962-1965). In Brazil, Vatican II consolidated the local clergy’s commitment to the economic well-being of the poor (Lowy, 2000; Mainwaring, 1986). The 1968 Conference of Latin American Bishops in Medellín further cultivated this strain of progressive Catholicism under new labels such as “liberation theology” and the “preferential option for the poor.”

By the late 1970s, as Brazil began its abertura process—a period of elite-led political liberalization in which opposition parties were allowed to operate freely and direct elections were reinstated—progressive bishops increased their efforts to organize civil society. Their activities included educating parishioners about their economic and political realities and serving as a nexus between religious and secular organizations (Keck, 1995). Indeed, members from Catholic lay organizations also became activists in other popular and political organizations, including the labor movement and political parties (Mainwaring, 1986, 1987).

This increased social and political engagement on the part of progressive Catholic bishops coincided with the rise of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), Brazil’s main left-wing party. The PT was founded during Brazil’s democratic opening and was granted legal recognition in 1982. The party developed out of Brazil’s union movement and many of its founders and prominent political figures hailed from the rank and file of labor unions. Building on these roots, the party espoused a redistributive economic platform that prioritized the concerns of organized workers (Keck, 1995, 2010; Samuels, 2004; Hunter, 2010).

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12 See Appendix Figure A1 for a cross-regional comparison on the prevalence of progressive bishops.

13 Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, during Brazil’s military dictatorship, the Brazilian National Bishops Conference (CNBB) issued several progressive documents and official statements, including a number of plans that called for major socioeconomic reforms. In 1962, for example, it criticized the “social imbalances produced by the egotism and profit promoted by economic liberalism” (Mainwaring, 1986, 123-124). In 1963, it issued a document that supported land reform and stated that all people deserve access to land (Cleary, 1997; Mackin, 2010).

14 While the party moved away from its initial socialist agenda, it remained economically progressive and never aban-
In the years following its formation, the PT sought to expand its party base and grow its electoral support. Despite the military dictatorship’s gradual transition to democracy during the 1980s, the party struggled to gain an electoral foothold. In 1982, it obtained only 8 of 479 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and no seats in the Senate. In a context in which organized workers comprised only a small share of the electorate, the PT struggled to expand its presence beyond urban centers. To overcome this challenge, the PT leveraged civil society organizations to build mass partisanship (Samuels and Zucco, 2015). The support of Catholic organizations—with their presence throughout Brazil and their deep roots in Brazilian society—was particularly attractive (Keck, 1995; Meneguello, 1989). In the next section, I explore the role of progressive Catholic leaders in shaping the organizational and electoral success of the PT, which went from a small party in 1982 to winning the presidency only twenty years later.

3 The 1978 Papal Transition as a Natural Experiment

The movement led by the progressive Catholic bishops in Brazil was allowed to grow under the papacies of John XXIII and Paul VI, but the appointment of John Paul II (JPII)—a conservative Pope—in 1978 shifted the Vatican’s position. JPII initiated the “restoration”—an explicit effort to curb the influence of progressives in the Church hierarchy.\(^\text{15}\)

The appointment of conservative bishops represented a key component of JPII’s efforts to curb the influence of progressives within the Brazilian Church. Bishops are autonomous within their dioceses—they retain all executive, legislative, and judicial ecclesiastical power, control religious policy, and are responsible for ensuring the authentic teaching of the Catholic faith (Code of Canon Law, 1983, 391).\(^\text{16}\) Popes whose preferences do not align with those of bishops can thus exert little influence over local churches. However, when a bishop vacancy arises, popes enjoy complete discretion over the selection of the replacement bishop (Della Cava, 1993).\(^\text{17}\) The power to select bishops allowed JPII to use his appointments strategically to empower the conservative faction of the Brazilian Church.\(^\text{18}\)

Scholars and journalists studying the Catholic Church in Latin America were quick to take note of the “restoration” and its emphasis on redistribution (Samuels, 2004; Hunter, 2007, 2010).

\(^{15}\)On the process of restoration within the Church, see Ratzinger, Mackenzie and Messori (2006).

\(^{16}\)See also Woywod (1918). Dioceses are the basic administrative unit of the Church. They are an exhaustive and mutually exclusive geographical area akin to a state or province.

\(^{17}\)Indeed, scholars have often classified bishops’ ideological inclinations based on the Pope who appointed them (see e.g., Gill, 1998; Hale, 2015).

\(^{18}\)See e.g., Alves Barbosa (2007); Lowy (2000); Cleary (1997).
tice of this strategy in Brazil. For example, Lernoux (1989) and Betances (2007) underscore JPII’s efforts to reduce the influence of progressives through the appointment of conservative bishops. Lowy (2000, 216) argues that these new bishops were appointed “to substitute bishops that used to support pastoral activities committed to social change and who died or retired.” In 1988, the New York Times reported that the Pope was “using his authority to name new cardinals and bishops as a way of reasserting Vatican control” through “clergymen who unquestioningly accept Rome’s authority and share the Pope’s interpretation of church doctrine” (The New York Times, 1988).

Did the presence of progressive bishops increase electoral support for the left-wing PT in Brazil? In my analysis, I focus on the variation in the length of exposure to progressive bishops—the number of years each diocese spent under a progressive bishopric before a given election. As Figure 1 demonstrates, bishop turnovers spanned more than three decades, producing significant variation in the amount of time that each diocese was led by a progressive. The longer progressives remained in office, the more time the PT had to benefit from their presence. A simple comparison of the observed length of exposure, however, may lead to biased results. For example, if JPII was more likely to replace progressive bishops in larger, more urban dioceses, where the left often enjoys an electoral advantage. In the next section, I describe an empirical strategy to overcome this inferential challenge.

Figure 1: Brazilian Dioceses and the Timing of JPII’s Appointments

The figure shows variation in the timing of JPII’s first appointment across the Brazilian dioceses. Lighter shades indicate earlier JPII appointments. The black lines represent state borders.
3.1 Empirical Strategy

To estimate the effects of the length of exposure to progressive bishops on outcomes for the PT, I employ an empirical strategy in which I exploit exogenous variation in the timing of progressive bishops’ retirement. JPII’s efforts to replace Brazil’s progressive bishops with conservatives were constrained by the fact that bishops have stable tenure in office until their death or retirement at the age of 75.\(^\text{19}\) As a result, the timing of progressive bishops’ 75\(^{th}\) birthday or their death provides as-if random variation in the number of years until JPII was able to replace them. As shown in Panel (a) of Figure 2, JPII’s strategy was constrained by the mandated retirement rule—the correlation between the year of a progressive bishop’s mandated retirement and the year he was in fact replaced is .62.\(^\text{20}\)

**Figure 2: First Stage: Mandated and Observed Length of Exposure to a Progressive Bishop**

The figure examines the strength of the first stage relationship between the year of mandated retirement and the observed length of exposure to a progressive bishop. Panel (a) shows a scatterplot of the raw variables—the year of mandated replacement and the year of the first JPII appointment for each diocese. The solid line marks the regression line; the dashed line illustrates perfect compliance. Panel (b) reports the main coefficient from the first stage regression for each year between 1979 and 2015. Panel (c) reports the corresponding F-statistic for each year. In panels (b-c), estimates for the years that are employed in the main analysis are highlighted in black.

\(^{19}\)Bishops were appointed for life until 1966, when a decree by Paul VI introduced a system of strongly encouraged resignations at the age of seventy-five. Bishops were “earnestly requested of their own free will to tender their resignation from office no later than at the completion of their 75\(^{th}\) year of age” Paul VI (1966). The age limit was later incorporated into the 1983 Code of Canon Law: “A bishop who has completed his 75\(^{th}\) year is asked to voluntarily submit his resignation to the pope” (Code of Canon Law, 1983, 401).

\(^{20}\)While some bishops left office early (those that fall below the 45 degree line), most remained in office until their 75\(^{th}\) birthday or death. Figure A2 in the Appendix further disaggregates this noncompliance based on the different reasons that bishops left office.
I employ the as-if random variation in the number of years until progressives’ mandated retirement to identify the causal effects of the length of dioceses’ exposure to progressive bishops. I first estimate intention-to-treat effects using the following cross-section, reduced-form specification:

\[ Y_{i,d,s,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{Mandated Exposure}_{d,t} + \delta_s + \epsilon_{i,d,s,t} \]  

(1)

where \( Y_{i,d,s,t} \) is the outcome of interest for municipality \( i \) located in diocese \( d \) in state \( s \) measured in year \( t \). In the main analysis, the outcome of interest is the presidential vote share for the PT.\(^{21}\) For diocese \( d \) in a given year \( t \), \( \text{Mandated Exposure}_{d,t} \) is the difference between the year a progressive bishop was scheduled to retire (the year of his death or 75\(^{th} \) birthday) and 1978. If the progressive bishop is still alive and under 75 years old in year \( t \), this variable takes a value of \( t - 1978 \). Consider, for example, the diocese of Caxias do Sul, whose sitting bishop in 1978 turned 75 and retired in 1983. In this case, \( \text{Mandated Exposure}_{\text{Caxias do Sul},t} \) takes a value of \( t - 1978 \) for every year until 1983 and 5 from 1983 onward. Figure 3 depicts the geographic distribution of \( \text{Mandated Exposure}_{d,t} \) at the time of each presidential election in the analysis. Finally, \( \delta_s \) are state-level fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the diocese level (\( d \)), which is the level of treatment assignment. The higher the value of \( \text{Mandated Exposure}_{d,t} \), the longer the diocese was mandated to be overseen by a progressive bishop. Hence, I expect to find \( \alpha_1 > 0 \) when the dependent variable is a measure of PT electoral returns.

I then turn to an instrumental variables (IV) approach in which the number of years until a progressive bishop’s mandated retirement serves as an instrument for the length of his tenure. To measure the effect of exposure to a progressive bishop on PT outcomes, I estimate the following 2SLS model:

\[ Y_{i,d,s,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \hat{\text{Exposure}}_{d,t} + \delta_s + \epsilon_{i,d,s,t} \]  

(2)

where all terms remain as in Equation 1 except for the independent variable, \( \hat{\text{Exposure}}_{d,t} \), which indicates the predicted values for diocese \( d \) in year \( t \) from the first-stage regression of the observed number of years of exposure to a progressive bishop on \( \text{Mandated Exposure}_{d,t} \). For the IV strategy to work, it is crucial that a strong first-stage relationship exists between the observed length of exposure to progressive bishops and the instrument. Panels (b) and (c) in Figure 2 report the estimated coefficient and the F-statistic, respectively, from the cross-section first-stage regressions of \( \text{Exposure}_{d,t} \) on \( \text{Mandated Exposure}_{d,t} \) for each year between 1978 and 2015. The results provide

\(^{21}\) Additional outcomes are described throughout the paper as they become relevant.
The figure shows the values of mandated exposure for the year of each presidential election included in the analysis. Darker shades indicate longer exposure to a progressive bishop. Archdioceses are shaded in black. The black lines mark state borders.

The validity of the IV design rests on two further identifying assumptions. The first is that the length of mandated exposure to a progressive bishop is as good as randomly assigned—that is, it is random with respect to the outcome. The second is that the assignment is exogenous to the treatment—i.e., the length of mandated exposure is exogenous to the demand for contraception.

For both the intention-to-treat and IV analysis, I focus on the municipalities contained within the 189 dioceses that existed in Brazil at the time of JPII’s appointment. In addition to these dioceses, there were 32 archdioceses. Due to their higher stature, popes often appoint older bishops to these districts than for regular dioceses. As a result, archdioceses have a higher probability of experiencing shorter exposure to progressive bishops. Because they are typically wealthier and more urban, the inclusion of these archdioceses could introduce bias in the cross-sectional analysis. In the Appendix, however, I show that the results are robust to their inclusion.

3.2 Identifying Assumptions

The validity of the IV design rests on two further identifying assumptions. The first is that the length of mandated exposure to a progressive bishop is as good as randomly assigned—that is, it

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22 Figure A3 in the Appendix compares the age distributions of Brazilian bishops and archbishops in the year JPII took office and shows that archbishops were indeed systematically older.

23 See Table A6 in the Appendix.
is exogenous to underlying factors that might affect the electoral fortunes of the PT. This is a valid assumption for several reasons. First, the timing of progressive bishops’ retirement is strongly related to their age, specifically when they turn 75, or death. As such, their retirement was determined prior to the papal transition of 1978. Second, the papal transition itself was unexpected and was unrelated to the religious and political dynamics in Brazil generally and those of specific dioceses. Furthermore, prior to the death of Paul VI, the ideology of his would-be successor was unknown. The combination of these features makes it unlikely that the length of mandated exposure to progressive bishops is correlated with dioceses’ potential outcomes. Empirical analyses reported in the Appendix further support the claim that the length of mandated exposure to progressives is uncorrelated with many predetermined diocesan characteristics. I first regress the year of progressives’ mandated retirement on a host of pre-treatment covariates, including measures of Catholic institutional organization, population, and electoral outcomes for the 1972 and 1976 elections held under the dictatorship (Table A1). I also estimate the main models, which study the effect of mandated exposure, using a key placebo outcome—vote share for the opposition to the dictatorship’s party during the 1976 elections (Table A2). These tests provide support for the assumption that the length of mandated exposure to a progressive bishop is unrelated to other factors that may affect electoral outcomes.

Finally, a crucial assumption in the design is the exclusion restriction, which requires the instrument (the number of years of mandated exposure to a progressive bishop) to influence the outcomes of interest only through the observed length of exposure to a progressive bishop. A potential violation of the exclusion restriction stems from the fact that dioceses that retained their progressive bishops do not only have longer exposure to these bishops, but also have not experienced a process of bishop turnover that could shape the Church’s ability to influence the electoral performance of the PT (i.e., a “bundled treatment”). In Section 4, I present evidence that the results are not driven by turnover disruptions.

3.3 Data

Data on the names, appointment dates, vacancy dates, and reasons for vacancy for all bishops in office between 1978 and 2015 comes from the Catholic Church’s Pontifical Yearbook (Annuario Pontificio). To account for changing municipal and diocesan borders in Brazil over time, I built a crosswalk between Brazil’s municipal and diocesan borders for the years between 1978-2002 using data from the IBGE and the Brazilian Catholic Yearbooks (Anuário Católico do Brasil) from 1977 to 1997. Section B.2.1 in the Appendix describes the process to build the crosswalks. Data sources
for all outcomes are described as they become relevant in the paper. Section B in the Appendix provides further details regarding these data sources and details the construction of the main data set.

4 Progressive Bishops and the PT’s Electoral Success

In this section, I examine the relationship between the length of exposure to progressive bishops and electoral support for the PT. The main outcome of interest is the PT’s presidential vote share from 1989, the first direct presidential election after Brazil’s dictatorship, to 2002, the first election in which the party won the presidency. The data for this outcome comes from IPEA (*Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada*). The results are presented in Table 1. Panel A displays the results from the IV estimation and Panel B reports the intention to treat effects from the reduced form analysis. Both the IV estimates and the reduced form estimates show a strong, statistically significant, and positive effect of the length of exposure to a progressive bishop on the vote share for the PT across all four presidential elections. A one-year increase in exposure to a progressive bishop increases the vote share of the PT by .57 percentage points in 1989, roughly .4 percentage points in the 1994 and 1998 elections, and .23 percentage points in 2002.

These are large effects. To get a better sense of the magnitude of these results, consider the following conservative calculation based on the smallest estimate of the treatment effect (a .23 treatment effect per additional year of exposure). Compared to a diocese which lost its progressive bishop by 1980, the predicted overall increase in support for the PT in a diocese that retained its bishop until 2000—and thus had 20 additional years of exposure to a progressive bishop—is 4.6 percentage points. That translates to more than a 10% increase from the mean of the PT’s vote share for the 2002 election, which was 42.15.

These findings are robust to several alternative specifications. Table A3 in the Appendix presents results from the analysis when the outcome is aggregated to the diocese level; the estimates are largely consistent with those presented in Table 1. Table A4 also reports results from an alternative, reduced form specification that looks at the effect of each additional electoral cycle for which a progressive bishop was mandated to remain in office and relaxes the linearity assumption of the treatment effects. Compared to places with a progressive bishop whose mandated retirement occurred prior to the 1985 election, the effect of retaining a progressive bishop for an additional electoral cycle is always positive. Moreover, the magnitude of the estimated effects is largely consistent with that of the coefficients from the linear specification. I also show that these effects hold
Table 1: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on the PT’s Presidential Vote Share

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PT vote 1989</th>
<th>PT vote 1994</th>
<th>PT vote 1998</th>
<th>PT vote 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>0.571*</td>
<td>0.430**</td>
<td>0.400**</td>
<td>0.235*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.221)</td>
<td>(0.150)</td>
<td>(0.133)</td>
<td>(0.097)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Exposure</td>
<td>0.385**</td>
<td>0.302**</td>
<td>0.271**</td>
<td>0.154*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.138)</td>
<td>(0.100)</td>
<td>(0.090)</td>
<td>(0.064)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>13.99</td>
<td>21.47</td>
<td>24.43</td>
<td>42.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>3593</td>
<td>4070</td>
<td>4489</td>
<td>4540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include state fixed effects.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

when the outcome is recoded to include the presidential vote share for all left-wing parties, rather than solely considering the vote share of the PT (Table A5). In Table A6, I show that the results hold when archdioceses are included in the study group.

Finally, I consider the possibility that the results could reflect the bundled nature of the treatment, which combines variation in the length of exposure to a progressive bishop with bishop turnover. I find no evidence to suggest that bishop turnover is driving the effects. Table A4 shows that bishop turnover has no effect on the vote share for the PT among those dioceses where turnover occurred immediately before an election. Moreover, Table A7 shows that the main estimates remain largely consistent when limiting the study group to only those dioceses in which bishops’ mandated retirement occurred prior to the relevant election, suggesting the effects are not driven by differences across dioceses depending on whether or not they experienced bishop turnover.

5 How Progressive Bishops Facilitated the Growth of the PT

This section examines the channels through which progressive bishops can shape the electoral fortunes of left parties. My argument suggests that progressive bishops increase support for the
left by fomenting local activism around progressive economic and social issues in their dioceses and encouraging the development of local organizational networks related to these issues. I provide both qualitative and quantitative evidence that progressive bishops in Brazil were more likely to support activism to combat social and economic injustices, to emphasize these concerns in pastoral outreach within their dioceses, and to encourage parish priests to develop local networks to engage parishioners around these issues.

5.1 Bishop Activism Around Land and Social Issues

Across Brazil, progressive bishops encouraged their parishioners to support activities and organizations to combat social and economic injustices. Often, this engagement included an explicit political component. The Pastoral Land Commission, for example, sought an end to the widespread violence of landowners against the rural poor, offered legal services, and encouraged peasants to organize to protect their land and to create rural unions (Mainwaring, 1986, 1987). In this subsection, I analyze original evidence collected from the Brazilian National Archive to evaluate the claim that progressive bishops supported activities that aligned with the economic and political concerns of the left.

In the late 1980s, the Brazilian Intelligence Service (SNI) produced a set of reports that documented the bishops who engaged in activism around land conflict and social issues (SNI, 1987, 1989a, 1990). For example, the bishops named in the 1987 report are described as working to raise awareness among rural workers about their rights to land and encouraging rural workers to join “sociopolitical-union organizations with the goal of breaking with capitalist domination and conquer[ing] their rights.” (SNI, 1987, 1). Similarly, the 1990 report focuses on bishops who emphasize human rights, the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples, as well as access to land for the landless (SNI, 1990, 4). I collected data from the four reports, all published between 1987 and 1990, built a diocese-year panel across these years and constructed a dummy variable equal to one if the sitting bishop in a given diocese was categorized as engaged in these activities.

Figure 4 documents the results of a descriptive analysis of the data in the SNI reports. It compares the rate at which bishops were recorded as participating in land and social activism. Across Brazil, progressive bishops were roughly twice as likely to be identified in the SNI reports as taking part in these activities. These results support the claim that progressive bishops supported activities concerning social and economic justice and sought to reshape the social landscape in their dioceses at higher rates than JPII’s appointees.
The figure shows the percentage of progressive and JPII appointees reported in the SNI reports as engaging in activism around social and economic issues. The unit of analysis is the bishop-report. The estimate for the difference across progressives and JPII bishops comes from a regression including report fixed effects. The full results are in the Appendix Table A8.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

5.2 Case Study: The Church and the PT in Bom Jesus da Lapa

How did progressive bishops’ activities, such as those surrounding land activism described above, translate into parishioners’ support for the PT? In this section, I provide an illustration of the channels through which progressive bishops promoted the electoral success of the PT through a case study of Bom Jesus da Lapa (BJL). I draw on archival evidence produced by the SNI during the 1980s that is currently housed in the Brazilian National Archive. Located in the northeast of Brazil, BJL was a predominantly agrarian diocese with high rates of poverty and landlessness in the latter half of the twentieth century. Its small urban population and low levels of industrialization provide an ideal setting to examine the expansion of labor-based political parties beyond their core coalition of organized workers. Because BJL’s progressive bishop, José Nicomedes Grossi, remained in office until 1990, a study of the diocese can illuminate the ways in which progressive bishops are able to facilitate this expansion.

Bishop Grossi is often described as a progressive who was concerned about the social conditions of the diocese and actively sought material solutions to the plight of the poor.24 He often

24See e.g. SNI (1985c, 1987, 1988b,c,a, 1989b).
incorporated political themes into church activities, linking the economic crises in BJL to political issues. For example, during the commemoration of the diocese’s patron saint in 1982, Grossi gave a “sermon in which he highlighted themes such as land inequality, rural unionization, and political participation. He called on the faithful to take part in diocesan events […] to address themes such as unionization and political education in preparation for the upcoming elections” (SNI, 1982).

The Church in BJL sought to engage existing pro-poor lay organizations and established new organizations that responded to the social needs in the diocese. For example, diocesan priests held leadership roles within the Rural Workers Union in several localities in BJL (SNI, 1986). The local branch of the Pastoral Commission for Land (CPT), which Bishop Grossi established, educated rural workers about the injustice of their economic hardship and economic inequality (SNI, 1980). It also provided information about workers’ political rights and the channels through which they could organize to affect change. Moreover, Church agents intended for these religious events to translate into political organizing (Comissão Pastoral da Terra, 1988).

The clergy’s participation in economically progressive lay organizations such as the Rural Workers’ Union and the CPT facilitated the development of linkages between the Church and the political left. Although these organizations were not explicitly partisan, they provided a space in which Church leaders could come into close contact with members of left-wing political parties. As one SNI report in 1987 described:

The mobilization of the ‘progressive’ clergy in favor of the ‘landless’ aroused the attention and interest of ideological organizations and political parties. These entities, sensing the opportunity to profit from the work of the clergy in the countryside, began to wield the same ‘banners’ that the clergy defended, (...) with the ultimate goal of incorporating members into their organizations (SNI, 1987).

It was through this mutual participation in progressive organizations, such as the CPT and Rural Workers Party, that the PT developed a relationship with the Church (SNI, 1980, 1985a). Indeed, the progressive clergy and members of the PT are often cited as joint leaders of local chapters of the CPT (SNI, 1985b, 1988c). In addition, the clergy’s efforts to encourage rural parishioners to join the Rural Workers’ Union meant, in practice, that the Church was promoting individuals’ participation in one of the PT’s most important channels of political recruitment. Finally, both the PT and the Church played a large role in supporting land invasion efforts in BJL, providing information and organizational tools to the landless peasants occupying unused land (SNI, 1987, 1988c).

The case of BJL is illustrative of broader trends in Brazilian dioceses with progressive bishops,
who encouraged their parishioners to mobilize around issues of economic justice and participate in social and political organizations championing these issues. The existence of these organizations at the local level facilitated the expansion of the PT, especially in rural dioceses that would otherwise have represented an unfriendly environment for a labor-based political party. In BJL, this allowed the relatively small and young PT to successfully elect several candidates to the local city council as early as 1985 and 1988. In the next section I provide further evidence of the ways in which bishops can shape the social and political landscape of their dioceses through an analysis of local turnover in parish priests.

5.3 Progressive Bishops and the PT’s Territorial Expansion

I have argued that the Catholic Church’s extensive organizational presence across Brazil helped the PT, a new party with a primarily urban electoral constituency, to grow in localities where it otherwise had few organizations and activists to depend upon. To further understand how the support of progressive Catholic bishops shaped the electoral success of the PT, this section provides quantitative evidence of the relationship between the presence of a progressive bishop and the formation of PT party branches at the local level.

Determining a party’s organizational presence at the municipal level in Brazil is challenging; the PT’s records of its local branches only date back to 2001 and Brazil’s national electoral court (TSE) did not begin compiling official records of parties’ local organizations until 2010 (Van Dyck, 2014). An alternative proxy of party presence at the local level, proposed by Samuels and Zucco (2015), is a binary indicator of whether a party fielded at least one candidate in elections for a municipality’s city council (vereador). This is a good proxy for the formation of a party branch presence because Brazilian law requires that parties establish at least a “provisional” municipal office in order to field a candidate in these municipal elections. However, the TSE only began reporting the partisanship of municipal candidates in 1996. To measure local PT presence between 1982 and 1996, I collected original data based on the electoral returns of five Brazilian states: Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina, Ceará, Paraíba, and Piauí.25 This data allows me to track variation in the presence of PT branches within each municipality in these states since the party first ran for office in 1982.

To estimate the effect of the presence of a progressive bishop on PT branch creation at the local level

25See the Appendix for information on data sources and coverage.
level, I estimate the following two-stage least square regression:

\[
PT\text{ party branch}_{i,d,t} = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \widehat{\text{Progressive Bishop}}_{d,t} + \lambda_i + \theta_t + \epsilon_{i,d,t} \tag{3}
\]

where PT party branch\(_{i,d,t}\) is a binary measure of whether there was at least one PT candidate for vereador running for office in municipality \(i\) in diocese \(d\) and year \(t\) and \(\widehat{\text{Progressive Bishop}}_{d,t}\) indicates the predicted values for diocese \(d\) in year \(t\) from the first-stage regression of a binary indicator of whether the sitting bishop was appointed before JPII became pope on a binary indicator of whether the progressive bishop is alive and under retirement age. I include municipality and election fixed effects, cluster standard errors at the 1978 diocese borders, and include both the reduced form and the two-stage least squares results.

Table 2 summarizes the results of this analysis. The presence of a progressive bishop had a positive and significant effect on the probability of observing a party branch at the municipal level, a roughly 19.4 percentage point increase. This effect is large—a 47.5% increase from the outcome mean of 0.407.

Table 2: Progressive Bishops and Local Party Branches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive Bishop</td>
<td>0.194** (0.067)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Progressive Bishop</td>
<td>0.126** (0.048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>0.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality FE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Year FE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>2,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the 1970 municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include municipality and year fixed effects.

\(+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001\)

These findings suggest that one of the main channels through which progressive bishops increased the PT’s electoral success was by facilitating the PT’s organizational growth in their dio-
ceses. Prior work has characterized the PT’s party building strategy as effectively mobilizing networks of pre-existing organizations (Samuels and Zucco, 2015; Amaral, 2011). This section provides evidence that Catholic networks specifically provided the party with the organizational structure it needed to grow.

5.4 Bishops and Diocesan Organization: Evidence from Parish-Level Data

Evidence suggests that progressive bishops encouraged like-minded local priests to engage with social issues in their communities and to build local networks of parishioners and organizations that would address their shared concerns. As the case study highlights, these priests were often pivotal in fostering the growth of left parties in their parishes, for example through their moral leadership centered around the role of the Church in social justice, the empowerment of the poor, and the formation of local progressive organizations. These priests frequently backed PT candidates, such as Catholic activist Luiza Erundina in her surprise victory in the 1988 São Paulo mayoral election. They also provided the PT with key organizational resources, encouraged civic engagement, and promoted voters’ political education.

How did bishops appointed by JPII reshape these local networks cultivated by progressive priests? I examine the turnover of parish priests to explore the ways in which JPII’s bishops disrupted local networks of progressive priests and parishioners. Within their dioceses, bishops exercise complete control over the assignment of priests to parishes. Replacing priests severs the ties between them and their communities, preventing the development of progressive networks at the local level.

To measure priest turnover, I constructed a parish-level dataset that draws from the six Brazilian Catholic yearbooks published between 1970 and 1997. This data includes the name of the priest leading each parish for each yearbook and covers a total of almost 46,000 parish-year observations. I aggregate the data to the municipal level and calculate the change in priests from one yearbook to the next. To estimate the effect of the termination of a progressive’s control over a diocese on priest turnover, I modify the main independent variable in Equation 3 to focus on the effect of JPII’s appointees. For the outcome, I consider three measures of parish turnover at the municipal level: a binary indicator of whether any of the parishes experienced turnover, the inverse hyperbolic sine

---

26 Bishops can reassign sitting priests to new parishes or to other work within the diocese as they see fit. While less common, bishops can also remove priests from their dioceses entirely.

27 The yearbooks were published in 1970, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1993, and 1997. An additional yearbook was published in 1981, but it does not include data on the identity of the priest leading each parish.

28 To keep the units constant over time, I aggregate the data to the 1970 municipal borders.
(IHS) of the number of parishes that experienced turnover.\textsuperscript{29} and the share of parishes within each municipality that experienced turnover.

Table 3 reports the results of the analysis. I find that the presence of a bishop appointed by JPII increased the probability that a municipality experienced priest turnover by almost 8 percentage points—a 12% increase from the outcome mean of 0.65. The estimated effect is consistent when employing the two additional measures of turnover, which focus instead on the intensive margin. These findings suggest that JPII’s bishops curbed priests’ ability to develop strong local networks within their communities.

Table 3: JPII Bishops and Priest Turnover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPII Bishop</td>
<td>0.078*</td>
<td>0.073+</td>
<td>0.079*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.039)</td>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td>(0.039)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated JPII Bishop</td>
<td>0.040*</td>
<td>0.037+</td>
<td>0.040*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Binary</td>
<td>0.647</td>
<td>0.665</td>
<td>0.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality FE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year FE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>15,277</td>
<td>15,277</td>
<td>15,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the 1970 municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include municipality and year fixed effects.

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Taken together, the results in this section suggest that progressive bishops fostered the growth of organizations and activities to address social and economic inequality in the local communities within their dioceses. These bishops supported pro-poor activism within their dioceses, expressed concern about the injustice of inequality from their pulpits, facilitated the development of the PT’s territorial presence at the local level, and encouraged parish priests to develop networks around these issues at the local level. Dioceses that spent a longer period under progressive rule had more

\textsuperscript{29}I use the IHS of the number of parishes due to the right-skewed nature of the distribution of the number of parishes with turnover.
time for these organizations and activities to flourish, fomenting a political landscape that was more amenable to the growth and electoral success of the PT. Where progressive bishops were replaced with JPII appointees, these dynamics were instead disrupted.

6 Religion and the Geography of Left-Wing Support

I have shown that progressive Catholic bishops improved the PT’s electoral performance by emphasizing the moral need to address economic inequality and by providing the party with access to the organizational resources of the Church. My theory suggests that these resources should be most beneficial in places where left parties, such as the PT, are otherwise unable to rely on labor unions to mobilize workers in the industrial sector. To evaluate this claim, I examine how urbanization moderates the effect of the length of progressive bishop tenure on the vote share of the PT. I use a binning model that divides the share of the municipal population that is urban into three categories, one for each tercile of the overall distribution.\(^{30}\) The model follows the reduced form intention-to-treat estimates in Equation 1 and includes the share of urban population as a moderator. I also show results from standard linear interaction models.

Figure 5: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects by Level of Urbanization (Reduced Form - ITT)

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level. The unit of analysis is the municipality and the specification includes state fixed effects.

\(^{30}\)Hainmueller, Mummolo and Xu (2019). Binning models limit some of the concerns about common support and nonlinearity in the data that are present when using linear interactions.
Figure 5 reports the results of this analysis when the outcome is the vote share for the PT in the first round of the 2002 presidential election.\footnote{These results are reported in more detail in Appendix Table A9.} The results are consistent with the expectations of my argument. Longer mandated exposure to a progressive bishop has the greatest effect on support for the PT in municipalities with lower levels of urbanization, while the effect is smaller in magnitude and statistically indistinguishable from zero in municipalities in the highest tercile of urbanization. In municipalities that fall in the lowest tercile of urbanization (27.7\% or less of the total population is urban), the PT’s vote share increased by .32 percentage points for each additional year of mandated exposure. To a lesser extent, the party also benefited in municipalities with intermediate levels of urbanization (27.7\% - 47.8\%)—in these localities, each year of additional mandated exposure to a progressive bishop increased the party’s vote share by roughly .18 percentage points. Finally, municipalities in the highest tercile of urbanization (greater than 47.8\%) experienced a smaller increase in vote share, around .04 percentage points for each year that a progressive bishop held office. Figure A4 in the Appendix reports the results for the 1989, 1994, and 1998 election, which show a pattern consistent with that of 2002. Taken together, the results in this section provide evidence that longer exposure to a progressive bishop improved the electoral success of the PT and that the party benefited the most in places where it was more difficult to mobilize the poor through labor unions.

7 Conclusion

The presence of progressive religious leaders played a crucial role in driving the expansion and electoral success of the left-wing PT in Brazil. Constrained by the limited size of organized labor, party leaders relied on progressive Catholic networks to recruit the support of the unorganized poor and expand the party’s reach. I provide causal evidence that longer exposure to progressive Catholic bishops improved the electoral performance of the PT and played a critical role in the expansion of the party’s electoral support across the country. I leverage a combination of qualitative and quantitative evidence to show that progressive bishops engaged in extensive activism and community organizing around economic issues in their dioceses, establishing a network that served as the base of the PT’s party-building efforts.

The findings in this paper challenge established ideas that characterize religion’s influence in electoral politics as conservative and left-wing parties as fundamentally secular. In countries where secular labor organizations are limited in scope, progressive religious leaders can greatly expand
the left’s electoral constituency, making pious voters a crucial component of the left’s coalition. However, this reliance on progressive religious leaders has important implications for the development of left parties. Contra the expectations of many existing theories about left-wing party development, left parties built with the support of progressive religious leaders are not purely secular political organizations, but rather rely heavily on pious voters.

Two main areas for future research emerge from this study. First, scholars might explore the degree to which left-wing parties have relied on religious support beyond the case of the PT in Brazil. Existing work on other countries in Latin America suggests that economically progressive religion has supported left parties across the continent. Examining the impact of Catholic progressivism on left-wing parties outside of Latin America, as well as of progressive religious leaders from other denominations, would refine the scope conditions and generalizability of the argument presented here.

Second, diverging positions on social issues may prevent collaboration between progressive religious groups and left-wing parties. Even in contexts where left parties can rely on progressive religious leaders to obtain the support of pious voters, the left’s platform on social issues can preclude this collaboration. Economically progressive religious leaders and voters may maintain a conservative stance on social issues—particularly those related to gender and sexuality as well as issues of religious regulation, such as the provision of religious education. Left parties may adopt positions that contradict those of religious leaders on these issues as a strategy to court the support of socially progressive groups in the electorate. In Brazil, feminist and socially progressive groups were small during the period I study, which allowed the PT to limit the progressivism of its social policy agenda. Yet in contexts such as the United States, the Democratic Party’s support for issues such as abortion has limited its ability to form an enduring coalition with economically progressive religious movements. Future research might explore the effects of progressive religion on electoral outcomes when the left pursues this socially progressive approach.

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32 Catholic bishops, priests, and lay leaders played a pivotal role in the growth of the left-wing FMLM in El Salvador (Wood, 2003), the PVP in Costa Rica (Yashar, 1997), the emergence of Bolivia’s MAS, Nicaragua’s FSLN, and Ecuador’s Pachakutik (Yashar, 2005; Van Cott, 2005), and the success of left parties in parts of Mexico and Guatemala (Trejo, 2012). More recently, journalists have suggested that Pope Francis and a group of *slum priests* in Argentina played a crucial role in the return to power of the left-wing FPV in 2019.

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Horn, Gerd-Rainer. 2015. *The spirit of Vatican II: Western European progressive Catholicism in the long sixties*. Oxford University Press, USA.


29


URL: https://tinyurl.com/y9gl5p2h

URL: https://nyti.ms/2t5CxR6


URL: https://time.com/94264/pope-francis-redistribute-wealth/


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Supporting Information

When the Church Votes Left

1. Section A presents cross-regional data on the prevalence of progressive bishops
2. Section B describes the data sources and the data construction strategy
3. Section C presents all the tests and figures related to the research design
4. Section D reports all the robustness checks
A  Progressive Bishops: Cross Regional Prevalence

Figure A1 shows the regional share of bishops that belonged to a religious order or society with a historical commitment to caring for the poor. While not all progressive bishops belonged to these orders and societies, this measure allows for a systematic comparison of the share of bishops who were members from 1970 to 2020. The figure documents the notable heterogeneity in their presence across regions—while in North America fewer than 5% of bishops formed part of these progressive orders and societies in any given year, as many as one in five bishops were members in Latin America.

The figure shows the proportion of each region’s territorial bishops who belonged to a progressive order or religious society. Point size reflects the number of Catholic bishops in each region.

34This includes all mendicant orders and the Jesuits.
B  Data Sources and Data Construction

B.1  Data Sources

**Bishop Biographies**  Data on bishops’ biographical information comes from the Catholic Church’s *Annuario Pontificio* and was obtained from the Catholic Hierarchy Organization (Cheney, Accessed October 2016).

The classification of progressive bishops in Figure A1 includes all mendicant orders as well as the Society of Jesus as progressive. The complete list of Mendicant Religious orders was obtained from Catholic Hierarchy and includes the following orders: O.A.D. (Agostiniani Scalzi), O.M.D. (Discalced Mercedarians), O.F.B. (Betlemitas), O.A.R. (Augustinian Recollects), O.C.D. (Discalced Carmelites), O.S.M. (Servites), O.F.M. (Franciscans), O.F.M. Cap. (Capuchins), O.F.M. Conv. (Conventual Franciscans), O.P. (Dominicans), O. de M. (Mercedarians), O. Carm. (Carmelites), O.S.A. (Augustinians), O.M. (Minimi), O.SS.T. (Trinitarians), T.O.R. (Franciscan Friars).

**Catholic Administrative Divisions**  Data on the geographic coverage of the Catholic dioceses in 1978 comes from the *Catholic Yearbook of Brazil*, which details the municipalities that compose each diocese. Since 5 dioceses were created in 1978, I combined information from the 1977 and 1985 editions of the yearbook (CERIS, 1977, 1985). Due to changes in municipal borders over time, historical maps of the municipalities were needed to map dioceses onto the historical municipal boundaries and geolocate them. I used historical municipal shapefiles for 1970, 1980 and 1991 produced by the IBGE.

**Diocese Characteristics**  Data on the pre-1978 diocese characteristics comes from Brazil’s Catholic Yearbook of Brazil (*Anuário Católico do Brasil*) for 1977 (CERIS, 1977) and the *Annuario Pontificio per L’Anno* 1980, the 1980 yearbook published by the Vatican (Città del Vaticano, 1980), which has data for 1978.


**Electoral Data**  Municipal level returns for the 1989, 1994, 1998, and 2002 Presidential elections were obtained from the Institute for Applied Economic Research (*Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada* - IPEA). Data on electoral candidates for the 1982-1992 municipal elections come from the State Electoral Courts and was complemented with data for 1996 from the TSE.
B.2 Data Construction

B.2.1 1978 Diocese Borders

I reconstructed the boundaries of Brazil’s Catholic dioceses at the time of JPII’s appointment by combining information from the 1977 and 1981 editions of the Brazilian Catholic Yearbook. The Yearbooks list the municipalities within each diocese at the time of their publication. I merged this information with historical maps of Brazilian municipalities from the same period to identify the municipalities within each diocese and produce a shapefile of the diocesan borders in 1978.\(^{35}\)

There were 48 municipalities that were under more than one diocese. To classify those cases, I first followed the following strategy. If all the parishes and Catholic institutions located in the municipality were under the government of the same diocese, I assigned the municipality to that diocese. A total of 34 municipalities were classified using this rule. If, instead, the religious facilities were divided between the dioceses, I assigned the municipality to the diocese which controls a majority of the facilities. I was able to classify the remaining 14 municipalities using this rule.

B.2.2 Parish Level Panel 1970-1997

The main challenge to construct the municipal-level panel of priest turnover was to identify the municipal location of each parish reported in the Catholic Yearbooks. To do this, I matched each parish to its contemporary municipalities using a combination of fuzzy matching (matching locality information reported in the yearbooks with municipality names) and web searches using addresses (when reported) as well as parish names. Because municipality borders have changed since 1970, I then use a historical crosswalk of municipality genealogies to assign all parishes to their 1970 municipality. This results in a 1970 municipality-yearbook panel dataset.

\(^{35}\)Historical shapefiles for the Brazilian municipalities were obtained from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).
C Figures and Tests of the Research Design

Figure A2 shows the relationship between the year of a sitting bishop’s retirement and the date when the bishop was replaced by the reason the vacancy was created.

Figure A3 compares the age distribution of bishops and archbishops in office in October, 1978.

Table A1 reports the results of the balance tests.

Table A2 reports results of the analysis using the vote share for the opposition during the 1976 local elections as a placebo outcome.
The figure shows the relationship between the year the sitting bishop’s vacancy was expected to occur when following the retirement rule (75th birthday/death, x-axis) and the date when the bishop was actually replaced (y-axis) by the reason that triggered the exit of the sitting bishop—his death, resignation, retirement, or transfer. The solid red line marks the correlation between the two variables. The dashed black line illustrates perfect compliance.
Figure A3: Age Distribution of Bishops by Type of EC, October 1978.

The figure shows the density of the age of Brazilian prelates in October 16th 1978, the date of JPII’s appointment. Vertical dashed lines mark the mean of each distribution. The density for Archbishops is shifted to the right, providing evidence that these prelates are, on average older than those ruling dioceses.
### Table A1: Balance Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel A: Diocese Characteristics</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Std.Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Resident Priests</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Resident Priests (Not Incardinated)</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Non-Resident Priests</td>
<td>-0.227</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.358</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Deacons</td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Religious Priests</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.914</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nr. of Male Religious Houses</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.850</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nr. of Female Religious Houses</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.943</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nr. of Parishes</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.677</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Nr. of Charity Centers</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Nr. of Charity Initiatives</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.634</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Nr. of Municipalities</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.284</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Municipal Parish Presence</td>
<td>-0.496</td>
<td>0.543</td>
<td>0.364</td>
<td>3990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel B: Social Variables</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Total Population (1970)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.580</td>
<td>3949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Urban Population (1970)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>3949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Rural Population (1970)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.259</td>
<td>3949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel C: Electoral Variables</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Electorate (1976)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>5483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 MDB Vote Share (1976)</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.910</td>
<td>3731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ARENA Vote Share (1976)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.890</td>
<td>3731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Electorate (1972)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td>5445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MDB Vote Share (1972)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td>5292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 ARENA Vote Share (1972)</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.855</td>
<td>5292</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all models, the outcome is the year of progressives’ mandated retirement. In Panel A and line 1 of Panel B the unit of analysis is the diocese and I report robust standard errors. In Panel C and lines 2-4 of Panel B the unit of analysis is the municipality and I report clustered standard errors at the diocese level. The number of districts vary by specification because of missing information on the corresponding variable. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and include state fixed effects.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001
Table A2: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on the MDB’s 1976 Vote Share

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.041</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.373)</td>
<td>(0.197)</td>
<td>(0.154)</td>
<td>(0.133)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Exposure</td>
<td>-0.058</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.251)</td>
<td>(0.139)</td>
<td>(0.103)</td>
<td>(0.086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>23.59</td>
<td>23.59</td>
<td>23.59</td>
<td>23.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>2932</td>
<td>2935</td>
<td>2937</td>
<td>2937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include state fixed effects. + p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01
D Robustness Checks

Table A3 reports results for the main analysis performed at the diocese level.

Table A4 reports results for a specification looking at the effects of each additional electoral cycle under progressive bishop rule.

Table A5 reports results when recoding the outcome to include the vote share for all left-wing parties, not just the PT.

Table A6 reports the main results for the complete sample of all ecclesiastical districts (including archdioceses).

Table A7 reports results when limiting the study group to dioceses in which bishops’ mandated retirement occurred prior to the relevant election.
Table A3: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on the PT’s Presidential Vote Share - Diocese-level Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PT vote 1989</th>
<th>PT vote 1994</th>
<th>PT vote 1998</th>
<th>PT vote 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>0.514*</td>
<td>0.380**</td>
<td>0.318*</td>
<td>0.181+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.207)</td>
<td>(0.134)</td>
<td>(0.123)</td>
<td>(0.104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Exposure</td>
<td>0.315*</td>
<td>0.252**</td>
<td>0.211*</td>
<td>0.119+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.124)</td>
<td>(0.088)</td>
<td>(0.082)</td>
<td>(0.068)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include state fixed effects. 
+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001
Table A4: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on the PT’s Presidential Vote Share - Flexible Treatment Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PT vote 1989</th>
<th>PT vote 1994</th>
<th>PT vote 1998</th>
<th>PT vote 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Retirement Due 1985-1989</td>
<td>1.261</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>2.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.451)</td>
<td>(1.473)</td>
<td>(1.946)</td>
<td>(1.787)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Retirement Due 1989-1994</td>
<td>1.548</td>
<td>1.487</td>
<td>2.577+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.273)</td>
<td>(1.358)</td>
<td>(1.439)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Retirement Due 1994-1998</td>
<td>5.553*</td>
<td>4.967*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.564)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.940)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Retirement Due 1998-2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.162**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.794)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Retirement Due Post-Election</td>
<td>2.904*</td>
<td>3.643*</td>
<td>3.776**</td>
<td>3.296*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.136)</td>
<td>(1.339)</td>
<td>(1.385)</td>
<td>(1.577)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>13.99</td>
<td>21.47</td>
<td>24.43</td>
<td>42.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>3593</td>
<td>4070</td>
<td>4489</td>
<td>4540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares and include state fixed effects. + p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01
Table A5: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on Left-Wing Parties’ Presidential Vote Share

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PT vote 1989</th>
<th>PT vote 1994</th>
<th>PT vote 1998</th>
<th>PT vote 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>0.663*</td>
<td>0.501**</td>
<td>0.395**</td>
<td>0.229*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.320)</td>
<td>(0.169)</td>
<td>(0.131)</td>
<td>(0.106)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Exposure</td>
<td>0.436*</td>
<td>0.347**</td>
<td>0.265**</td>
<td>0.149*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.203)</td>
<td>(0.111)</td>
<td>(0.087)</td>
<td>(0.071)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>3593</td>
<td>4070</td>
<td>4489</td>
<td>4540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include state fixed effects.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01
Table A6: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on the PT’s Presidential Vote Share - Results Including Archdioceses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PT vote 1989</th>
<th>PT vote 1994</th>
<th>PT vote 1998</th>
<th>PT vote 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.376**</td>
<td>0.380**</td>
<td>0.231**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.184)</td>
<td>(0.122)</td>
<td>(0.118)</td>
<td>(0.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Exposure</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.264**</td>
<td>0.261**</td>
<td>0.155**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.124)</td>
<td>(0.084)</td>
<td>(0.082)</td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. Obs.</td>
<td>4472</td>
<td>5011</td>
<td>5497</td>
<td>5555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include state fixed effects.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01
Table A7: Effects of the Length of Exposure to Progressive Bishops on the PT’s Presidential Vote Share - Only Dioceses With Mandated Retirement Prior to the Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PT vote 1989</th>
<th>PT vote 1994</th>
<th>PT vote 1998</th>
<th>PT vote 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: 2SLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.415*</td>
<td>0.287**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.485)</td>
<td>(0.173)</td>
<td>(0.181)</td>
<td>(0.109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel B: Reduced Form (ITT)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandated Exposure</td>
<td>0.305</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.318*</td>
<td>0.213**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.249)</td>
<td>(0.118)</td>
<td>(0.140)</td>
<td>(0.078)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Mean</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num.Obs.</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>2114</td>
<td>3090</td>
<td>3657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. of Clusters</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level in parentheses. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications are estimated using ordinary least squares (ITT) and 2SLS (CACE) and include state fixed effects.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01
E  Extended Results

Table A8 reports the full results from Figure 4 in the main text in table form.

Table A9 reports the full results from 5 in table format. Figure A4 complements these result by reporting the analysis for all election years.
Table A8: Bishop Activism, 1987-1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JPII Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.108***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num.Obs. 756</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The unit of analysis is the bishop-report. The regression was estimated using ordinary least squares and includes report fixed effects.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001
Table A9: Binning Estimates: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects by Level of Urbanization (Reduced Form - ITT) - 2002 Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderator Interval</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L: [0.0192, 0.277]</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>[0.157-0.483]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M: [0.277, 0.478]</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>[0.042-0.314]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H: [0.478, 1]</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>[-0.083-0.173]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dependent variable is the vote share for the PT in the first round of the 2002 election. The moderator is the urban share of the population. The unit of analysis is the municipality. The model includes state fixed effects and standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level.

Figure A4: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects by Level of Urbanization (Reduced Form - ITT) - All Election Years

![Graph showing vote share over years with error bars and shaded areas representing different urbanization levels.]

Standard errors clustered at the 1978 diocese level. In all models, the unit of analysis is the municipality. All specifications include state fixed effects.