From Tradition to Transition: Spain’s Relationship with the Catholic Church
A Traditionally Catholic Country

Holy Week

Some of the world’s largest and most famous cathedrals
Protests & Public Masses

Demonstrations against social reforms regarding abortion, divorce, and same-sex marriage.
Franco & the Church

- Church supported Franco in Spanish Civil War
- Developed mutually beneficial relationship
- A structural-functional model of church-state relations

“Generally stable and jointly advantageous”
Transition to Democracy and the Constitution of 1978

- Catholic Church maintains relative influence in Spanish affairs
- Not official religion, but was acknowledged in constitution for its cultural impact
- strategic actor model of church-state relations

*Polls were beginning to show public support for “Anti-Catholic” reforms
The Relationship Today: Zapatero at odds with the Catholic Church

Zapatero consistently supports legislation that conflicts with church doctrine.

secular anticlerical model emerging?
Modernization & Secularization

• Often occur simultaneously

• Religious institutions & doctrines tend to lose social significance

• Secularization in Spain a side effect of “catching up” with the rest of Europe