

Here in the United States, churches and religious organizations are mostly exempt from paying any taxes...specifically they don't have to pay property taxes or income taxes.

And this got me wondering...

Which church has benefitted the most from not paying taxes in the United States?

After all, if a church has lots of members, gets lots of donations, and, most important, has LOTS of real estate, they are saving millions if not billions of dollars by not having to pay taxes. Therefore, the easiest way to figure this out is to look at the churches in the United States with the most membership, making the most money, and holding the most assets.

The Church of Scientology might immediately come to mind to many of you, but it's just worth an estimated \$2 billion and has only not had to reliably worry about paying since the 1990s. So how about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints? Well that's a good guess. It's worth an estimated \$265 billion dollars.

But the Mormons ain't got nothing on the Catholics.

The Roman Catholic Church is the biggest organization in the world and richest, and 23% of Americans are Catholic.<sup>1</sup> According to one source, the Roman Catholic Church has at \$73 billion in assets around the world, but that same source also said one church in New York City alone is worth \$7 billion so that \$73 billion is probably wildly underestimating their total assets.<sup>2</sup> And there are 17,754 OTHER Catholic churches in the country.<sup>3</sup> Plus the missions and other centers. Assuming each one of THOSE places is worth at least a million dollars, that's tens of billions of dollars worth of assets there, and that's not including all the other money coming in.

Nah man, based on my research, the Catholic Church has benefitted the most from not paying taxes in the United States. In fact, the Catholic Church saves BILLIONS of dollars not paying property or income taxes each year.

Sources/further reading:

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf>

<https://www.britannica.com/procon/churches-and-taxes-debate>

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<sup>1</sup> "The World Factbook — Central Intelligence Agency". [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov). Archived from the original on June 13, 2007. Retrieved September 27, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.marketplace.org/2023/02/10/how-much-money-does-catholic-church-have/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.usccb.org/offices/public-affairs/laity-and-parishes>