

### DEFECTION FROM THE RC CHURCH

#### DECLARATION OF DEFECTION FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

I \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby give formal notice of my defection from the Roman Catholic Church. I want it to be known that I no longer wish to be regarded as a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

I further declare that I am aware of the consequences of this act regarding the reception of the sacraments of the Church, including the sacraments of the Eucharist, marriage and the sick and also with regard to burial.

I undertake to make this decision known to my next of kin and to ensure that they are aware of these circumstances in the case of my being incapacitated.

I acknowledge that I make this declaration under solemn oath, being of sound mind and body, and in the presence of a witness who can testify as to the validity of this document.

This declaration is morally valid and in the light of canon law and in how moral law supersedes ecclesiastical law I have a moral right if not a legal right in Church law not to be seen as a Roman Catholic and I wish to invoke all legal rights in Church to be considered a non-member as they are granted.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

With the above Form, you should include a letter with the following PRINTED information:

- Your name,
- Your full address,
- The name under which you were baptised if married since,
- The date of your baptism,
- The parish Church of your baptism,
- Your date of birth,
- The name of your parents, and
- The name of your godparents.

Why do some Catholics return huge numbers when asked how many people are Catholic? That is not down to people counting the baptisms for many baptised become something other than Roman Catholic. It is down to an estimate based on how many call themselves Catholic on census forms. If you consider the law of the land to overrule the Church then clearly you are not Catholic when though you have a Catholic background you do not put Catholic but something else on the census form.

Do not let people make you feel there is or should be a stigma towards leaving the Catholic Church. A religion is a system of belief and practices and worship - the people are in the system but they are not the system. Leaving the Church does not imply that you hate the people. It can but it doesn't need to.

The Church says she is a hospital for sinners. It is far better to see society as a hospital for people who are trying to grow together

The Catholic Church abolished formal defection or formal leaving of the Church in 2010.

However you can still leave. A Catholic who becomes a Protestant for example is no longer subject to canon law regarding

marriages or anything. He is no longer obliged to go to Mass.

You can leave a golf club without getting your name off its membership book. So it is with the Church.

The Church insisted that if people wanted to defect they had to be interviewed by Church authorities to ensure they understood what they were doing. This was in case they were rejecting not the Church but their incorrect understanding of the Church. This requirement was quite reasonable. If a person marries and doesn't really know the other person that marriage is invalid for they did not make a reasonably informed choice. Thus it was not a proper choice. So too it is good to be informed before you leave so that you can leave properly.

It is interesting that the Church considers some decisions to leave her as invalid because of the lack of informed consent. And it regards most people as members though their consent to be members is grossly misinformed or uninformed. Oh the hypocrisy!

We admire one another not for being great Catholics but for being great people. That is why we should honour ourselves and abandon the Church. The Church is a problem - to put it mildly. When you are not part of the solution you are part of the problem. If you are a sensible person in a fundamentalist religion then you risk being a fundamentalist in the making. If you really think you are not to blame for what the Church does if you support it by membership and if you think that you are not an enabler, then why do you say you would be immoral and an enabler if you joined some form of Islam that you considered intolerant and violent? Double-standards!

Do not support Roman Catholics chapels and priests financially. Do not attend Church. Have your baptismal record amended so that you are declared to have departed from the Church. Do not let your name be on the parish record. It is routine for people to leave one parish for another or for no parish. Simply ask the priest to take you off the list. No rudeness in that!

Encourage prospective converts to the Church to inform themselves properly and remind them that they may only be hearing about the side of the religion that looks good. It is your business the same way it is your business if they want a job and you know of one that would suit them. It makes your own life easier if you encourage people to be mature and responsible.

If Catholics were informed properly and knew their religion better they would perceive that it is not the kind of religion they would want to be a part of. If you defect publicly you give them food for thought.

Do not let yourself be put off leaving by the sweetness of Catholics who pick and choose what they like or what they think is good out of the religion. The religion is not a menu.

Reason is really just about seeing facts. It based on a is a. A defection to Humanism is more valid than a defection from Catholicism to Protestantism. That is because Humanism is more rational. You are more authentic and more yourself the more you check things out and learn the truth. Humanism always examines things to see if they are true. The Humanist is always open to revising.

The Catholics argue that Church law, canon law, has real authority because the Church that puts it together is the only religion authorised by God. Why should canon law be regarded as special? Why not make up your own canon law and invalidate your ties with the Church? When there is no proof that the Church is really approved by God and is the true Church why not?

The law of the Church cannot be distinguished from a fake or pretend legal system. To set up law, you must first have authority. To have authority, there must be clear and strong evidence that you really have it. The Church cannot give a shred of acceptable evidence that it has any right to set up laws to control people. The law of the land, as Church and state have to be separate, must only recognise you as a Catholic if you believe in the faith - picking and choosing is not real belief in Catholicism but making your own faith up. And furthermore you must go to Mass and tick Catholic on census forms. In other words, the state cannot recognise you as Catholic on the basis of a mere label. You must give the state evidence. The state is about evidence.

Must the Church be forced to restore defection rights?

The Catholic Church has removed the formal Act of Defection from Canon Law.

CountMeOut.ie has had to suspend the issuing of defection papers, due to changes to the Catholic Church's Canon Law. It seems that the formal defection process has been deleted, but the Church is being characteristically vague about what the changes actually mean.

Why we suspended the site:

The references to defection in canon law was announced in 2009 that they would be removed by the pope, the references to defection has now been removed Because of the number of emails from people trying to defect, saying they were unable to, countmeout got in touch with the Arch-Bishop in Dublin to clarify the situation and kept getting responses back saying that they acknowledge that there were changes coming but could elaborate on what they were. The impression was that they didn't know themselves, it was the Vatican pulling the strings.

Paul said that he thinks the changes have nothing to do with the amount of people leaving the church or the countmeout website. He said it was something that had been in in the pipeworks for quite a while. It is suggested that the law could have been seen as a loophole that needed closing. Paul said that countmeout do not think that. They think it is a side effect of another change they made to canon law.

Church response:

In response to a request by RTE for a balance interview the church just issued a statement:

"The Holy See said that at the end of August that it was introducing changes to Canon Law, and as a result no longer be possible to formally defect from the Catholic Church. This will not alter the fact that many people can defect from the church and continue to do so albeit not through a formal process"

Paul said that this causes more confusion. The question is how can you defect but not formally? How does that work? As of yet countmeout has got no further clarification.

Possible Challenges

He said that there were a number of ways of challenging it would be:

1. The Data Protection Commissioner, as part of the data protection act, any organisation that holds information on you is obliged to hold accurate information and also obliged to divulge that information to you fully, if it's not accurate you're in your rights to challenge that and say that's not accurate, so if you asked for a record from your local parish, and it said baptised, confirmed, holy communion, married etc but no record of defection and they still consider you a member, you could theoretically challenge them on that, saying that's not an accurate reflection of your position in the church, you don't consider yourself a member any more and they haven't recorded that fact.

2. Common Law, freedom of association, freedom of religion, if the church will not allow you to leave it seems they would be in contravention of the constitution. But how to go about that is yet to be tested.

I would suggest the following. It is more than just about membership. It is about dissociating yourself from the errors and lies and dangers of the Catholic religion. A ban on defection would imply that the Church has the right accuse you of all-sorts such as of being a bad Catholic etc.

It would be a very serious matter for Church to try and force membership of the Catholic Church on the Catholic who becomes a Jehovah's Witness or a Seventh-Day Adventist by refusing to accept she is a former member. Why would it be such a serious matter? Well Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists consider Catholicism to be antichrist and cursed by God. A member gives minimal support - letting your name stay on a membership list is the minimum of support you can give. To refuse to recognise Catholic converts Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists as ex-members is blatant shameless dishonesty. Its extreme bigotry to force membership on people like that.

The ban on defection would be null and void.

You can leave the Church by breaking the canon laws that prescribe excommunication for certain so-called sins. The sin of heresy cuts you off the Church. The Church will still assume that you are a member for the sake of convenience. But that is a practical thing and not necessarily declaring you a true member.

WHAT DEFECTION WOULD NEED TO INVOLVE

To defect from the Church properly you would need to,

# Genuinely think or believe that the Catholic religion is untrue and that you have no obligation to obey it. The more you

believe it the less obligation you have.

# Defect without compulsion.

# Declare in writing that you cast off the authority of canon law over you.

# Formally declare you will not live as a member of the Church.

# Formally declare you do not and will not believe the teaching of the Church.

# Communicate this defection in writing to the bishop of the diocese into which you were born and to the priest of the parish where you were baptised.

# Declare that you know what the implications of this decision are if you get married, buried or are asked to be a godparent (you can't be). You will also need to stop declaring yourself Roman Catholic to state authorities or on census forms.

Do a statement along the lines above. Send it to your diocese and make sure that you get a reply letter stating that your intention has been carried out. I would include a statement that I am a heretic or apostate and therefore excommunicated according to the rules of canon law in it. The Church considers a person to have left the Church when they apostatise. You can apostatise simply by becoming a paid-up member of a humanist organisation.

Why bother sending forms to the Church to declare defection from the Church for it is the census figures that the government uses to work out how many members that the Church has? What is so wrong with simply declaring yourself to be of no religion on the census form instead of sending forms to your bishop and/or looking for baptismal annulments? But it is about declaring yourself what you are. You want to assert your right to be seen as no longer Roman Catholic.

Obviously to leave the Church properly you need your piece of paper to prove that you have left according to the rules of the Church. Formal defection rights need to be restored.

You have the right to defect from the Church without the formal defection process. For example, if you are an Anglican and you fall away you can convert or defect to Catholicism without even letting the Anglican Communion know you have gone. This defection has to be regarded as real and valid. If it is not, that is a violation of Data Protection law. The Catholic Church is obliged under such law to record the names of those who no longer consider themselves members of the Church. It is obliged under simple justice.

If I am Catholic and defect to Mormonism, the only time the Catholic Church would have the right to continue to consider me a Catholic would be if my defection and conversion to Mormonism is insincere and I am still a Catholic in my faith and belief. If I abjure my Catholic faith sincerely, then I am no longer Catholic and under excommunication in Canon Law.

LEGAL OR REAL?

A formal defection would only be a legal recognition by the Church of a departure from the Church that has already taken place. The Church law recognises that law and reality are sometimes different things. For example, under Canon Law, your marriage annulment is valid but it may be that the annulment was a mistake made by Church lawyers.

Baptism is supposed to make you a member of the Catholic Church and to impose the authority of canon law on you.

If you can annul your baptism, you can honestly say that you were never a genuine member of the Church. You should have the right to have the baptism declared null and void. If the baptism didn't work, then it can no more make you a member of the church than a pretend baptism can.

Annulment is a valid option. If you feel your baptism didn't work, then your view comes first. It has to be presumed correct.