

IF YOU ARE ALWAYS CATHOLIC THAT DOES NOT MEAN YOU CAN'T BE A FAKE CATHOLIC

A BELIEVING CATHOLIC

Even if you agree with once Catholic always Catholic that does not mean you can be labelled Catholic.

The Catholic idea is that baptism marks you forever as a member of the Church. You can be a member of the Smith family and lose any right to call yourself a Smith or be treated as one. It is like you are Smith only in your DNA which does not amount to much. Your Smith label is not accurate though it is not completely wrong.

THREE WAYS

If you are Catholic,

There are three ways of being Catholic (these apply to being a member of any religion) -

* You can be Catholic by affiliation by having your name on its books because of an initiation. That would be over-legalistic.

For Catholics, you can be affiliated in the eyes of the Church but in the eyes of God you might not be Catholic at all - for example, if your baptism for some reason was invalid. So only God knows who is really baptised and initiated into the Church.

* You can be Catholic by belief.

* You can be Catholic socially.

All are necessary to be fully Catholic. If you have not been formally initiated into the Church and think you have been you may be Catholic by belief and socially but not really. Even if it is true that you are Catholic for life, it is not true that you can be a believing Catholic for life. You would be Catholic by membership but not Catholic by belief.

Most Catholics do not support the teachings of the Church.

They cut themselves off the community united by faith. The Church decrees this. As harsh as it looks, the decree is only recognising the truth. It is actually respecting their choice. A Church is a community of faith and you must have its faith to be part of the community.

Catholics picking what they like out of the faith is not enough to make them Catholic. Even atheists do that. Decent persons will not want to be counted among an organisation whose beliefs they do not support. This need not be spiteful. For the church to count them as members is dishonest and disrespectful to them. Likewise, for them to be able to represent themselves as a Catholic is disingenuous and not fair to real Catholics. The Church teaches you excommunicate yourself when you commit certain offences so you cease to become Catholic when you become convinced the Church is false. Also, if the Church is false then being Catholic is certainly only a label. It is only a man-made label conferred by a man-made faith.

A person can be Catholic by initiation through baptism but not a Catholic by faith. Without faith you are not a real member of the faith community. The Catholic who refuses to believe what he is supposed to believe is like the Protestant who selects what he wants out of the Catholic faith for the result will be a new faith that borrows from the old. The Protestants merely followed the Catholic structure and maintained it until they were thrown out. They called themselves Roman Catholics but were they really? No.

The liberal Catholic confuses having the right granted by the Church to have differing views on some matters such as Church discipline and Church politics etc with a right to reject the teaching of the Church. He denies that the Church has a right to be a Church and to bind and obligate members to believe certain things or at least to try to believe. They like to call themselves dissidents which has a better ring to it than the truth which is that they should call themselves heretics or rejecters of required Church teaching. The liberal Catholic surrenders not to the Catholic authorities in Catholic teaching but to the secularist values of the age or to Protestant values. He has to surrender - whether uncritically or not - to some authority and he will not let it be the Church - at least beyond a point.

The liberal "Catholics" confuse atheists and believers about what the Church teaches and that is disgraceful. One liberal disagrees with the next about rights. They may claim that they espouse commonly agreed rights. But who decides? The majority of the people? The opinion polls? The politicians. Rights will clash. Even those who say that morality and rights are just opinions and its intolerant to argue that they are more than that must confess that they are still promoting intolerance. If rights are just opinions then what if there is a clash of rights? The only solution is a might is right attitude that produces legal battles and even bloodshed.

CATHOLIC CATECHISM EXPLAINS THAT NOT ALL CATHOLICS ARE REAL CATHOLICS

From The Catechism Explained:

A Catholic is one who has been baptized and professes himself to be a member of the Catholic Church.

The Church is a community into which admittance is gained by Baptism. Thus the three thousand baptized on the first Pentecost became members of the Church (Acts ii. 41). Moreover a man must make external profession of being a member of the Church, so that any one who breaks away, for instance, by heresy, no longer belongs to the Church in spite of his baptism, though he is not thereby freed from his obligations to the Church. Neither heathens, Jews, heretics, nor schismatics are members of the Church (Council of Florence), though children baptized validly in other communions really belong to it. " For," as St. Augustine says, " Baptism is the privilege of the true Church, and so the benefits which flow from Baptism are necessarily fruits which belong only to the true Church. Children baptized in other communions cease to be members of the Church only when, after reaching the age of reason, they make formal profession of heresy, as, for example, by receiving communion in a non-Catholic church." The Christians were at first known by the name of Nazareans, from Nazareth, or Galileans, from Galilee; it was first in Antioch that the name Christian came to be in use (Acts xi. 26), and the name Christians is appropriate. We are followers of Christ, willing to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. viii. 29). " We receive our name," says St. John Chrysostom, " not from an earthly ruler, nor from an angel, nor from an archangel, nor from a seraphim, but from the King of all the earth."

A true Catholic is not only one who has been baptized and belongs to the Church, but who also makes serious efforts to secure his eternal salvation; who believes the teaching of the Church, keeps the commandments of God, and of the Church, who receives the sacraments, and prays to God in the manner prescribed by Christ.

He is not a true Christian who is ignorant of his faith. Such a one might as well call himself a doctor though knowing nothing of medicine. " ISTor is he a true Christian," says St. Justin, " who does not live as Christ taught him to live." Our Lord said to the Jews : " If you be the children of Abraham do the works of Abraham " (John viii. 39), and He might say to the Christians "If you be Christians do the works of Christ." " If you want to be a Christian," says St. Gregory Nazianzen, " you must live the life of Christ ;" and St. Augustine : " A true Christian is the man who is gentle, good, and merciful to all, and shares his bread with the poor." Christ Himself said that His disciples should be known by their love one for another (John xiii. 35). A Christian who neglects the sacraments is like a soldier who has no weapons ; what a responsibility he incurs ! Louis of Granada says, " A field which is well tended is expected to yield a richer harvest ; so more good works are expected from a Christian than from a heathen, because the Christian has greater graces.

End of quote.

EXCOMMUNICATION

Canon Law decrees a penalty of automatic excommunication for those who say they disbelieve or reject an infallible doctrine of the Church. For example, if you are a Catholic and you say the Pope is not the head of the Church or that marriage is a load of bollocks you are excommunicated. You are barred from the sacraments and the right to hold Church office. You are barred from the sacraments and from holding office in the Church for sinning as well. To contradict the Church is a sin. So does this all mean that being excommunicated for heresy is no different at all from just being a sinner? A sinner can be a member of the Church even though barred from the sacraments and the right to hold Church office if the sin is serious enough. A heretic cannot. The heretic is not excommunicated because he or she is a sinner and has committed the sin of heresy. The heretic is excommunicated because in heresy one repudiates the teaching authority of the Church and denies that the Church is teacher thus the excommunication declares that the heretic has put oneself outside the Church and is not a member. Those Catholics who contradict the Church cease to be Catholics for they are expelled by excommunication.

To put it another way, the Church says I cut myself off from the sacraments by sinning. So if I get excommunicated I will be no better or worse off. So what is the point of excommunication? It is like sacking your employee who has walked out of

the job. It would be vindictive. It would show you spitefully want rid. The only way around this is to consider the fact that excommunicate means you are not in communion or union with the Church anymore. Excommunication puts you out of unity with the Church.

A religion that declares people who have undergone some ritual are members even if they don't believe and no matter what they do is not even loyal to itself. It is self-destruction. The Christian faith would disappear if baptism made you a member of the Church and what you believed and did made no difference. What would you say to the man who upon hearing of Muhammad said he was a Muslim and made no effort to join the Islamic community and said he didn't believe Muhammad was a prophet and didn't believe in the Koran?

You could say nothing if you think faith and genuine membership of a religion don't necessarily go together. If they don't, then the Catholic has the right to claim to be Catholic while saying the Mass is rubbish and nobody should attend it. He would be whatever he called himself? What then if he decided that he was pope?

OFFICIAL TEACHING SAYS YOU CAN LEAVE THE CHURCH

The Church does not teach "Once a Catholic Always a Catholic". The view that once a Catholic always a Catholic is popular among Catholics but does not fit Catholic teaching or canon law. The Church says that strictly speaking there is only Catholic baptism. A Protestant unknowingly receives a Catholic baptism when she is baptised in the Protestant Church. But she is not regarded as subject to Canon Law. Nobody in their right mind would hold that if she joined the Catholic Church and thus came under Canon Law for five minutes and then went back to Protestantism that once a Catholic always a Catholic is true.

Jesus himself did not believe the doctrine of once a Jew always a Jew for he claimed that the bad Jews were not children of Abraham - in other words not real Jews at all. His Church claimed to be the new and updated Judaism thus if once a Jew then always a Jew is wrong so is once a Catholic then a Catholic forever. He said that he was the vine and if a branch does not bear fruit it will be cut off and destroyed. The apostle John wrote of believers who joined the Church and left and stated that they never really belonged. The Bible does not teach that you can be a member of God's visible organisation forever no matter what you do. But how does this fit the Bible teaching that once saved always saved? That doctrine does not imply that you are a member of God's people no matter what you do. It only means you will still go to Heaven if you reject the Church and God.

A Catholic book, Unicorn in the Sanctuary - The Impact of the New Age on the Catholic Church states on page 97, "Is the Christian path the only way to achieve eternal life with God? Or are other religions valid prescriptions for other peoples? Are Hinduism, Buddhism, Mormonism and African religions valid paths to God? Let me be clear that when I speak of a Hindu, I mean one who practices orthodox Hindu religion. In the same way, a Mormon is one who follows the teachings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. If a person calls himself a Mormon, claims allegiance to Joseph Smith, but does not believe that God the Father is a flesh and blood man or that Jesus and Lucifer were brothers, then that person is not an orthodox Mormon. If, instead, he ignores these doctrines, and begins to believe that Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God who came to die for his sins, but still calls himself a Mormon, then we would find it difficult to consider him still a Mormon." The same would be true of Catholicism. Catholics believe you need a valid baptism and when you are old enough to decide for yourself you need to adhere to the entire Catholic faith to be a real Catholic.

The Church says that Catholic Church is in Heaven and on earth and in Purgatory. The Church does not believe that the people in Hell are to be counted members of the Church even if they carry the baptism mark.

In Canon Law you are a lapsed Catholic if you don't practice and you become a non-Catholic if you convert to another religion. The Church accepts the concept of apostasy, Catholics ceasing to be Catholics. The Church teaches that you always belong to the Church if you are baptised but that is not the same as saying you will always be a member. If you belong to Jesus, that does not mean you are a member of his Church no matter what you believe and do. A dog may belong in my house and not be there and wander off and be lost. A sheep may belong to the flock and the flock may be waiting the lost sheep coming back even though the sheep will no longer be a member of the flock. The once a Catholic always a Catholic kind of attitude is a boast that this organisation, the Catholic Church is so special that it can hardly be considered to be a human organisation but divine. You don't say that if somebody is a member of a club they are always a member. You don't say once a doctor always a doctor. Since you don't, if you say once a Catholic always a Catholic then you don't put as much value on being a doctor as being a Catholic and that is bigoted and fanatical and downright evil. You are saying an initiation rite that makes Catholics is more important than a man studying and working to help others.

If you can be received into the Catholic Church if you are validly baptised a Protestant, then you can certainly reverse this reception. You can become un-received. You can leave the Church. You can formally defect. Canon Law speaks of formal defection from the Catholic Church and recognises it.

From the Encyclical Satis Cognitum Pope Leo XIII: "There can be nothing more dangerous than those heretics who admit who admit nearly the whole cycle of doctrine, yet by one word, as with a drop of poison, infect the real and simple faith taught by Our Lord and handed down by apostolic tradition - Augustine. The practice of the Church has always been the same, as is shown by the unanimous teaching of the Fathers, who were wont to hold as outside Catholic communion, and alien to the Church, whoever would recede in the least degree from any point of doctrine proposed by her authoritative magisterium. St Augustine notes that heresies may spring up, not to a single one of which should anyone give his assent, he is by the very fact cut off from Catholic unity. Augustine in De Haeresibus n. 88 wrote that there may be or may arise some heresies and that if anybody holds to a single one of these he is not a Catholic."

Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, 1441: "The Holy Roman Church condemns, reproves, anathematizes and declares to be outside the Body of Christ, which is the Church, the heretic for he holds opposing or contrary views."

Church law (until 2010) decrees that it can be possible to defect from the Church. Those who say the practice of formal defection exempts the Catholic only from marriage law - like the Church letting a rebellious child have its own way - need to consider the following. If the Church can exempt from matrimonial law it can exempt from all of Church law or canon law. Also, defection means leaving the Church. To say it lets you marry as you wish without regard to the Church is ridiculous. It is like saying sacking somebody from their job only means you will give them no bonus at Christmas anymore. And most defectors are not interested in getting married at all. And matrimonial law in the Church is said to be moral law not just judicial law. For example, the Church cannot exempt you so that you can contract a new marriage while your first spouse is still alive. To attempt such an exemption would be invalid. Church law is overridden by divine law.

Those who say Once a Catholic Always a Catholic are often not Catholics or authentic Catholics themselves! They deny what Canon Law says about excommunication. If you can pick and choose what you like out of Catholicism then why can't you do the same with Islam and claim to be a member of both religions? Religion would collapse if picking and choosing was right! There would be no real point in worrying about religious membership at all then!