

INVALID CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Religion is something you add to yourself and it cannot be inherently you or you inherently it. So things like Once Catholic always Catholic are nonsense. Religion and especially religion that is so superficial that it tries to own you forever is a social construct. You can cease to belong even if the religion does not do the paperwork to let you defect and confirm your departure.

Some people say that Catholics who reject the Church reject what they think the Church is not what it is. This is thought to imply that they have not really left the Church or really rejected it. Then it may be said that those people are implicit Catholics for if they knew better they would not have tried to leave.

It assumes that there is no religion better than the Catholic religion. It is arrogant and patronising.

It also assumes that Church teaching is really good. But if it is so good, then why do even the popes not behave in a way consistent with believing all of the faith? For example, the pope should recoil and vomit when he sees Gay Pride marching in Rome if he really believes homosexuality is a sin that takes people to the place of everlasting and irrevocable punishment.

The angels belong to God from the first moment of their creation. Angels are not human so they don't contract original sin. The angels always belong to God until they turn against him like Satan did. Satan reversed his membership in God's family by sin. Adam and Eve were created as members of God's family and members of his circle of friends. We would have been too if we had no original sin. The Church teaches that beings who come into existence without original sin and who are made as holy beings cease to be members of God's family and Church upon sinning. They have to restore membership by repenting.

It seems the Church thinks if we were born sinless, we would lose our membership of the Church by sin. If that is so, it would be strange to say that if we have original sin which keeps us out of the Church and get baptised to put us into the Church we cannot lose such membership if we then fall into sin! It would make no sense. It would contradict the fact that angels belonged to God and many of them no longer belong to him and are demons. The doctrine that Adam and Eve ceased to be members of God's family and ceased to belong to him when they sinned implies that if you renounce baptism you cease to be a member of God's Church which is his family on earth.

If original sin, a sin which you have not even committed but which you carry from the first moment of your existence until its forgiven in baptism, excludes you from the Church how much more will your own sin do it?

If once Catholic always Catholic means that you never reject the Church because it is right and you don't know what you are doing then it is very patronising and arrogant indeed. It shows that heretics who call themselves Catholics are misguided if they think of themselves as reformers for they don't know what they are doing.

PAPERWORK

The paperwork method of obtaining membership in the Roman Church should be universal

God could have decreed that once you sign a few papers you become a member of the Church - (indeed the Church says he has laid out that rule for Protestants who wish to convert). If he had it left up to us, it would have been more dignified for us and also for himself. The baptism system would be undignified.

Conclusion: A person can cease to be a member of the Catholic Church. Once Catholic says you were a Catholic once. Always Catholic contradicts that! Religions claim to be true and that they educate people in religious truth and this religious truth will cover issues such as history and miracles and science and ethics. Catholicism does not tell you to refrain from adultery because it hurts people but because the faith reveals that it is wrong. If you are Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Mormon or Jewish do not think that your religion's truth claims are incidental to its identity. The claims are integral to the religion. The claims are the religion - they are the religious identity. If the claims are lies or false then there is no such thing in reality as a Catholic. The religion's actions are a reflection of its truth claims. The Mass for example becomes a mere ceremony and a shell if the truth claims are false. The faith is not about the Mass but about the faith expressed by the Mass.