

Polish bishops and those who want to leave Church

It was reported in The Universe, Sunday 12 October 2008, that there was a bishops conference in Poland that laid down guidelines for Catholics who wished to renounce their baptism and depart from the Church. The conference stated in a 22 page document, "The duty to stay in communion with the Church is violated in the most radical way by a Catholic who carries out an act of separation from it, either as an apostate who totally rejects the Christian faith, or as a schismatic who refuses to recognise the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. This is why persons in peril of committing such a deed should be instructed and encouraged in love to give up their intention of leaving the Church. But their natural right to decide their path in life should be upheld". The Church said that it was "pained by every sin" of leaving the Church. The document spelled out procedures that were deemed necessary. The person had to put their decision to leave the Church down in writing in front of the parish priest and two witnesses.

Poland at the time had a third of all Catholics attending Mass. 95% deemed themselves Catholics. Clearly the Church thinks that to become a non-Catholic of any kind is to defy duty and to commit sin. The Church speaks of a natural right to decide their path. The Church speaks of a right! Rights are based on justice and nobody has the right to knowingly leave a true religion! The Church should speak of a natural freedom that must be granted but not of a right.