

Catechumens, Religious Communion, and RJMI’s Former Heresies

by Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi (RJMI)

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Introduction

There were three errors in Version 6/2018 of the *Brief Catholic Profession of Faith* that I composed, and all three were heretical and all three were in Footnote 2. The three heresies were 1) catechumens are not Catholic; 2) the faithful can perform acts of religious communion with catechumens; and 3) under certain circumstances, the faithful can allow good-willed unbelievers to pray in submission to them. The heresies are numbered and underlined:

Brief Profession of the Catholic Faith, Version 6/2018, by RJMI: “Footnote 2: Even though [1] catechumens are not Catholic and thus are outside the Catholic Church, they nevertheless adhere to the Catholic Church as non-members and thus [2] Catholics must be in religious communion with them. However, Catholics must lead prayers when praying with catechumens. Inquirers are those who are curious about the Catholic faith but have not committed themselves to be catechumens. Catholics can teach inquirers how to pray, teach them the faith, [3] and lead prayers while the inquirers pray in submission to the Catholics. Hence Catholics are not in religious communion with inquirers; rather, the inquirers are in religious submission to Catholics.”

While I was revising my book *The Salvation Dogma*,¹ I had the occasion to deeply study the status of catechumens and how they were treated. It led me to discover the three heresies I held, as listed in Footnote 2. As soon as I discovered the heresies, I abjured the heresies and held the dogmas; hence I was a material heretic and not a formal heretic. It took a lot of research to discover these heresies. It was not enough to get one quote from a Church Father. I had to see

¹ My book *The Salvation Dogma* will have a new title, *The Salvation Dogma and Related Topics*. It will contain many of my books and articles in this one book as chapters since the topics relate to one another. For example, some of the chapters are as follows: 1) The Salvation Dogma; 2) The Natural Law; 3) Heresy and Heretics; 4) Schism and Schismatics; 5) Excommunication; 6) Unbelievers, Pre-Catechumens, Catechumens, and the Faithful; 7) Only Pre-Catechumens, Catechumens, and the Faithful Are Christians; 8) Only Members of the Catholic Church (the Faithful) Are Children of God; 9) Few Are Saved; 10) There is No Remission of Sins Outside the Catholic Church; 11) Only Good Members of the Catholic Church Can Be Martyrs; 12) Ignorance Does Not Save; 13) Men Are Not Saved by Following Their Own Conscience; 14) The Catholic Doctrine on Predestination; 15) St. Augustine’s Indelible-Mark Brothers; 16) Damned Infants; 17) Baptized Non-Catholic Infants and Children; 18) St. Augustine on Formal Heretics and the Salvation Dogma; 19) How Catholic Churches Become Non-Catholic Churches; 20) Salvation During the Old Testament Era; 21) The Baptism Controversy (regarding the allowable opinions of baptism of desire and blood); and many other books and articles as chapters regarding the denial of the Salvation Dogma. Hence my book *The Salvation Dogma and Related Topics* will be a mountain of a book and thus worthy of another mountain climb!

what the other Church Fathers taught, if they held the same opinion or if one or more opposed it. And I searched for infallible papal definitions.

1) Heresy: Catechumens are not Christians and thus not Catholic

Catechumens are Christians and thus Catholic

I held the heresy (that most, if not all, of the nominal Catholics hold today) that catechumens are not Catholic. I discovered that it is a deeper dogma of the ordinary magisterium that catechumens are believers and thus Christians and hence Catholic and therefore brothers to the faithful:

Council of Elvira, 306: "Canon 45. A catechumen who has stayed away from the church for a long time may be baptized if one of the clergy supports his claim to be a Christian, or if some of the faithful attest to this and it appears that the person has reformed."

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, Lecture 10 (to competentes, those in the last stage before entering the Catholic Church), 4th century: "16. ...Jesus Christ being the Son of God gave us the dignity of being called Christians... But we, since we are servants of the Lord, have that new name... 20. ...Thou art called a Christian. Be tender of the name. Let not our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, be blasphemed through thee..."

St. Augustine, *Miscellany of Questions in Response to Simplician*, 396: "Catechumens are not unbelievers otherwise Cornelius did not believe in God, although by his prayers and alms he showed himself worthy to have an angel sent to him. But these good deeds would have had no effect had he not already believed... But in certain persons, like catechumens and like Cornelius himself, before he was incorporated into the Church by participation in the sacraments, the grace of faith, as great as it is, is insufficient to attain to the kingdom of heaven."²

St. Augustine, *A Treatise on the Predestination of the Saints*, 428-429: "The book of Wisdom...has deserved to be read in the Church of Christ from the station of the readers of the Church of Christ and to be heard by all Christians, from bishops downwards, even to the lowest lay believers, penitents, and catechumens, with the veneration paid to divine authority."³

St. Augustine, *On Baptism Against the Donatists*, 400: "19. ...For, on this principle, it would be possible for a Catholic catechumen to light upon the writings of some heretic, and, not having the knowledge requisite for discerning truth from error, he might entertain some belief contrary to the Catholic faith yet not condemned by the words of the creed, just as, under color of the same words, innumerable heretical errors have sprung up...⁴ 29. ...I do not hesitate for a moment to place the Catholic catechumen, who is burning with love for God, before the baptized heretic... As, then, we ought not to depreciate a man's righteousness, which begins to exist before he is joined to the Church, as the righteousness of Cornelius began to exist before he was in the body of Christian men."⁵

What follows is the PL 43:147 from paragraph 29:

² Second Question, 2.2.

³ c. 27.

⁴ b. 3, c. 14.

⁵ b. 4, c. 21.

zandi sunt? Sic etiam fieri potest ut in alicujus hæretici librum catholicus catechumenus incidat, et a veritate nesciens discernere errorem, credat aliquid contra catholicam fidem; cui tamen errori verba Symboli non repugnant: sub eisdem quippe verbis innumerabiles hæreticorum errores exorti sunt. Putans

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 403-404, Homily XIII: “For even if one be a catechumen, still he knows Christ, still he understands the faith, still he is a hearer of the divine oracles, still he is not far from the knowledge; he knows the will of his Lord.”

Bishop Commodianus, *Instructions*, 240: “XLVI. TO CATECHUMENS. In few words, I admonish all believers in Christ, who have forsaken idols, for your salvation. In the first times, if in any way thou fallest into error, still, when entreated, do thou leave all things for Christ; and since thou hast known God, be a recruit good and approved, and let virgin modesty dwell with thee in purity. Let the mind be watchful for good things. Beware that thou fall not into former sins. In baptism the coarse dress of thy birth is washed. For if any sinful catechumen is marked with punishment, let him live in the signs of Christianity, although not without loss. [Footnote 1] The whole of the matter for thee is this, Do thou ever shun great sins. XLVII. TO THE FAITHFUL. I admonish the faithful not to hold their brethren in hatred...”

Footnote 1: “Catechumens falling away before baptism must not despair, but persevere and remain under discipline.”

When St. Perpetua (d. 203) was a catechumen, she professed herself a Christian when questioned by her pagan father:

Butler's Lives of Saints, St. Perpetua, 3/7: “A violent persecution being set on foot by the emperor Severus, in 202, it reached Africa the following year; when, by order of Minutius Timinianus (or Firminianus), five catechumens were apprehended at Carthage for the faith; namely, Revocatus and his fellow-slave Felicitas, Saturninus, and Secundulus, and Vibia Perpetua... The father of St. Perpetua, who was a pagan, and advanced in years, loved her more than all his other children... The account Perpetua gives of their sufferings to the eve of their death is as follows: “We were in the hands of our persecutors when my father, out of the affection he bore me, made new efforts to shake my resolution. I said to him: “Can that vessel, which you see, change its name?” He said: “No.” I replied: “Nor can I call myself any other than I am, that is to say, a Christian.” At that word my father in a rage fell upon me, as if he would have pulled my eyes out, and beat me: but went away in confusion, seeing me invincible; after this we enjoyed a little repose and in that interval received baptism...”

The following quote from the *Apostolic Constitutions* lists the catechumens separate from unbelievers and heretics and thus places catechumens as believers:

Apostolic Constitutions, 1st to 4th century: “XII. And I James, the brother of John, the son of Zebedee, say, that the deacon shall immediately say, Let none of the catechumens, let none of the hearers, let none of the unbelievers, let none of the heterodox [heretics], stay here. You who have prayed the foregoing prayer, depart.”⁶

The Council of Neocæsarea decrees that catechumens are not entirely excluded from the Church unless they commit several sins which cause them to be cut off from the Church and thus

⁶ b. 8, sec. 2, XII.

they are no longer catechumens. Hence it teaches that as long as a candidate is a catechumen, he is not “entirely excluded from the Church” and thus adheres to the Church as a non-member:

Council of Neocæsarea, 315: “Canon 5. If a catechumen, after being introduced into the Church, and admitted into the ranks of the catechumens, acts as a sinner, he must, if he is *genuflectens* (i.e., to say, in the second degree of penance), become *audiens* (a hearer), until he sins no more. But should he again sin while *audiens* (a hearer), he shall be entirely excluded from the Church.”⁷

Pre-catechumens are also Catholic

I also discovered that a man must first be made a Christian even before he becomes a catechumen, and thus he is a pre-catechumen. A pre-catechumen has fulfilled the following conditions:

1. He wants to be a member of the Catholic Church for a good motive.
2. He believes in the basic dogmas of the Catholic faith stated in the Apostles’ Creed. But he is not given the actual Apostles’ Creed until he is about to enter the Catholic Church.
3. He rejects and condemns all false gods and false religions and thus believes that the Catholic God, Church, and faith are the only true God, Church, and faith.
4. He believes that only members of the Catholic Church can be in the way of salvation, as this has to be his main motive for wanting to enter the Catholic Church.
5. He promises to live a moral and virtuous life.
6. He pledges obedience to the Catholic Church and her legitimate rulers.
7. He has been tested by the bishop to see if he has fulfilled these obligations, and he has passed the test. Hence he is ready to be made a catechumen by the bishop.

Because pre-catechumens have these dispositions, they are believers and thus Christians and hence Catholic. Therefore, they adhere to the Catholic Church but as non-members and pre-catechumens (although some refer to them as catechumens of the first stage). The following Canon 7, attributed to the First Council of Constantinople,⁸ says that a convert is first made a Christian (a pre-catechumen) before he is made a catechumen:

First Council of Constantinople, 381: “Canon 7. We receive...heathens...in the following regular and customary manner: ... On the first day we make Christians of them, on the second catechumens, on the third we exorcise them by breathing three

⁷ *History of Councils*, apostate Bishop Hefele, v. 1, b. 1, c. 3, sec. 17, pp. 225-226.

⁸ The apostate Bishop Hefele presents evidence that this Canon 7 is not from the First Council of Constantinople, 381. I quote from *A History of the Councils of the Church*, by apostate Bishop Charles Joseph Hefele, D.D., 1894: “While the two preceding canons [6 and 7], though not belonging to the second General Council, still are contained in the old collection of John Scholasticus or Antiochenus, the seventh canon is wanting there also, nor is it to be found in the old Latin translations, and therefore it could not have been in the oldest Greek collections. It is also wanting in the Arabic paraphrase of these canons and in the epitome of Simeon Logotheta. To this it must be added that it really orders nothing, and, moreover, has not the form of a canon, but only relates what was the practice of the Church with regard to the reception of heretics. Now, as we possess a letter from the Church at Constantinople in the middle of the fifth century to Bishop Martyrius of Antioch in which the same subject is referred to in a precisely similar way, Beveridge was probably right in conjecturing that the canon was only an extract from this letter to Martyrius; therefore in no way a decree of the second General Council, nor even of the Synod of 382, but at least eighty years later than the latter. This canon, with an addition, was afterwards adopted by the Quinisext Synod [692] as its ninety-fifth, without, however, giving its origin. Touching the sense of the last lines of this canon, Mayer rightly combats the notion that three classes of catechumens are here meant. He only admits two classes... of catechumens.” (v. 2, b. 7, sec. 99, p. 368.)

times into their faces and their ears, and thus we catechise them and make them spend time in the church and listen to the scriptures; and then we baptise them.”

This Canon 7 is also contained in the Council of Trullo, 682, as Canon 95:

Council of Trullo, 682: “Canon 95. (Concerning how those who convert from heresy are to be received.) ... We receive pagans (in accordance with the following order and custom): on the first day we make them Christians, on the second catechumens, and on the third we exorcize them by blowing thrice in their faces and their ears; then we give them instruction, requiring them to attend Church for a year and attend the reading of the Scriptures; thereupon we baptize them.”

If a convert is not first made a Christian (a pre-catechumen), then the bishop would be making an unbeliever a catechumen. Hence a convert must first be a Christian before he is made a catechumen. However, some hold the allowable opinion that a pre-catechumen is not a Christian until he is made a catechumen by the bishop and thus is a pre-Christian; however, this opinion does not hold up to the evidence, some of which is presented in this section. And more importantly, if the above quoted Canon 7 is in the Second Council of Constantinople, then it is a solemn magisterium dogma that pre-catechumens are Christians.

The *Didascalía* teaches that converts are first made believers and only then does the bishop seal and confirm them by making them catechumens. But even after they are sealed by the bishop and made catechumens, the faithful are not to pray in communion with them; that is, until the catechumens enter the Catholic Church and become one of the faithful:

Didascalía, 1st to 3rd century: “We do not refuse salvation even to the heathen if they repent and renounce and remove from themselves their error. Therefore let him be accounted to you as a heathen and as a publican, he who is convicted of evil works and of falsehood. But afterwards if he promise to repent as the heathen, when they wish and promise to repent and say, ‘We believe, we receive them into the congregation [as pre-catechumens] that they may hear the Word, but we do not communicate with them until they receive the seal and are confirmed [as catechumens].’ Thus also we do not communicate with these [catechumens] until they shew the fruits of repentance; for they can certainly come in, if they wish to hear the Word that they may not perish utterly, but in prayer they take no part but go outside because that even they when they see that they do not take part in the Church restrain themselves and repent of their former deeds and become eager to be received into the Church [as one of the faithful] in prayer.”⁹

Cornelius and his household were believers in true Judaism, believed in Jesus, and were of good will and thus God sent St. Peter to preach the gospel to them. After St. Peter taught them the basic dogmas, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his household confirming that they were worthy believers. And this happened even before St. Peter had a chance to make them catechumens. St. Peter, then, bypassed making them catechumens (as he did not lay his hands upon them) and baptized them:

“While Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word. And the faithful of the circumcision, who came with Peter, were astonished, for that the grace of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they heard them speaking with tongues and magnifying God. Then Peter answered: Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then they desired him to tarry with them some days.” (Acts 10:44-48)

⁹ c. 10, 2, 39.

Hence Cornelius and his household went from being pre-catechumens to members of the Catholic Church in the same day without being made catechumens by St. Peter. Therefore, if they had not been believers and Christians before St. Peter baptized them, then St. Peter would have baptized unbelievers and thus baptized non-Christians.

Another proof that pre-catechumens are believers and thus Christians before being made catechumens by a bishop is that those who died as martyrs right after their conversion did not have time to become catechumens. Many did not even have access to a bishop or priest. Some believe that they did not even have time to receive the sacrament of baptism and thus were baptized in their own blood.¹⁰ Here, then, is a case of those who went from being pre-catechumens to being one of the faithful within one or two days, bypassing the catechumen stage, which proves that as pre-catechumens they were believers and thus Christians and thus Catholic.

Hence pre-catechumens and catechumens are brothers to the faithful

Because pre-catechumens and catechumens are believers and thus Catholic, they are brothers to the faithful:

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, Prologue, 4th century: “1. Already there is an odour of blessedness upon you [*competentes*], O ye who are soon to be enlightened... 16. Great is the baptism that lies before you... 9. ...Let us then, brethren, abide in hope...”

St. Augustine, *Lectures on the Gospel of St. John*, Tractate 12, 416: “3. ...Behold, they already believed on Jesus and yet Jesus did not trust himself to them. Why? because they were not yet born again of water and of the Spirit. From this have we exhorted and do exhort our brethren the catechumens.”

St. Augustine, *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed*, 400: “24. ...Let us also suppose that, on being asked whether the inducement leading him to desire to be a Christian is any advantage looked for in the present life, or the rest which is hoped for after this life, he has answered that his inducement has been the rest that is yet to come. Then perchance such a person might be instructed by us in some such strain of address as the following: ‘Thanks be to God, my brother; cordially do I wish you joy, and I am glad on your account that, amid all the storms of this world, which are at once so great and so dangerous, you have bethought yourself of some true and certain security.’”¹¹

St. Augustine, *On the Creed to the Catechumens*, 425: “5. ...Almighty is the Father, Almighty the Son. If Almighty begat not Almighty, he begat not very Son. For what say we, brethren...”

Heretic Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion*, c. 377: “2,1 Greetings in the Lord from Epiphanius, least of bishops, to my most honored Masters and beloved children and brothers in Arabia who share my orthodox faith, clergy, laity and catechumens!”¹²

¹⁰ However, it is my opinion that the reception of the sacrament of baptism is necessary to be saved. Hence if they were of good will and thus worthy of salvation, they did receive the sacrament of baptism miraculously. Beware of the heretical opinion regarding baptism of desire which teaches that unbelievers (such as apostate Jews, Moslems, and pagans) can be saved by baptism of desire. (See RJMI book *The Baptism Controversy*.)

¹¹ c. 16.

¹² *Against Antidicomarians* 58 (78).

Pre-catechumens and catechumens are nevertheless outside the Catholic Church

Even though pre-catechumens and catechumens adhere to the Catholic Church, they are nevertheless outside the Catholic Church because they adhere to the Catholic Church as non-members. They are said to be in the porch, vestibule, or womb of the Church:

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, 4th century: “[Prologue] 1. Already there is an odour of blessedness upon you [*competentes*], O ye who are soon to be enlightened; already ye are gathering the spiritual flowers, to weave heavenly crowns; already the fragrance of the Holy Spirit has breathed upon you; already ye have gathered round the vestibule of the King’s palace; may ye be led in also by the King!”

Heretic Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History*, 4th century: “Others he joined together about the basilica on both sides; these are the catechumens who are still advancing and progressing and are not far separated from the inmost view of divine things granted to the faithful.”¹³

Apostate Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Canonical Epistle*, 3rd century: “Canon 11. ...The station of the hearers is within the oratory in the porch with the catechumens...”

Apostate Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations*, Oration 49 (On Holy Baptism), 4th century: “XVI. ...As long as you are a catechumen you are but in the porch of Religion; you must come inside and cross the court and observe the Holy Things and look into the Holy of Holies and be in company with the Trinity.”

St. Augustine says that they are conceived in the womb but not yet born:

St. Augustine, *Lectures on the Gospel of St. John*, Tractate 12: “3. ...Behold, they already believed on Jesus and yet Jesus did not trust himself to them. Why? because they were not yet born again of water and of the Spirit... They have been conceived; they must be brought forth to the light...”

St. Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, Sermon 6 (On the Our Father to the Competentes): “5. ...Even now before ye are born, ye have been conceived of his seed, as being on the eve of being brought forth in the font, the womb as it were of the Church.”

St. Augustine, *Sermon 56*: “5. ...Even now, before you are born, you have been conceived of his seed, for you are about to be born of the font, which is, as it were, the womb of the Church.”

St. Augustine, *Miscellany of Questions in Response to Simplician*, 396: “Catechumens are not unbelievers... [But] in order to arrive at everlasting life, one must not only be conceived but also be born.”¹⁴

While the womb example is good, it does not apply exactly because catechumens are not children of God and thus do not have God as their Father until they enter the Catholic Church; whereas children in the womb are children of a father even before they are born.

Hence pre-catechumens and catechumens are sons of the Devil

Because pre-catechumens and catechumens are outside the Catholic Church, they are still in darkness, sons of the Devil, and thus not sons of God and hence do not have God as their Father.

¹³ b. 10, c. 4.

¹⁴ Second Question, 2.2.

St. Ambrose, *On the Sacraments*, c. 390: “19. O man, you did not dare to raise your face to heaven; you directed your eyes toward earth; and suddenly you received the grace of Christ [by baptism into the Catholic Church]; all your sins were forgiven. From an evil servant you became a good son... So raise your eyes to the Father, who begot you through the laver...”¹⁵

St. Augustine, *Lectures on the Gospel of St. John*, Tractate 11: “4. ...And as the catechumens have the sign of the cross on their forehead, they are already of the great house; but from servants let them become sons.”

St. Augustine, *On the Creed to the Catechumens*, 425: “1. ...For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye [catechumens] begin to have him for your Father when ye have been born by the Church as your Mother.”

Even though John Chrysostom was a heretic, he correctly teaches that catechumens are believers in Christ and not far from Christ but nevertheless outside the Catholic Church and thus in darkness and thus sons of the Devil and not sons of God:

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 403-404, Homily 13: “For even if one be a catechumen, still he knows Christ, still he understands the Faith, still he is a hearer of the divine oracles, still he is not far from the knowledge; he knows the will of his Lord.”

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Second Corinthians*, 390-397, Homily 2: “On this account it is that the laws of the Church command prayer also to be thus made, and that not for the faithful only but also for the catechumens. For the law stirreth up the faithful to make supplication for the uninitiated. For when the Deacon saith ‘Let us pray earnestly for the catechumens,’ he doth no other than excite the whole multitude of the faithful to pray for them, although the catechumens are as yet aliens. For they are not yet of the Body of Christ, they have not yet partaken of the mysteries, but are still divided from the spiritual flock...”

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, 390-397, Homily 19: “5. ...For he who calls God Father, by him both remission of sins, and taking away of punishment, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and adoption, and inheritance, and brotherhood with the Only-Begotten, and the supply of the Spirit, are acknowledged in this single title. For one cannot call God Father without having attained to all those blessings.”

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, Homily 25, 390-397: “3. ...For the catechumen is a stranger to the faithful. He hath not the same head, he hath not the same Father, he hath not the same city, nor food, nor raiment, nor table, nor house, but all are different; all are on earth to the former, to the latter all are in heaven. One has Christ for his King; the other, sin and the devil; the food of one is Christ, of the other, that meat which decays and perishes; one has worms’ work for his raiment, the other the Lord of angels; heaven is the city of one, earth of the other. Since then we have nothing in common [of these things], in what, tell me, shall we hold communion? Did we remove the same pangs, did we come forth from the same womb? This has nothing to do with that most perfect relationship. Let us then give diligence that we may become citizens of the city which is above. How long do we tarry over the border, when we ought to reclaim our ancient country? We risk no common danger; for if it should come to pass (which God forbid!) that through the sudden arrival of death we depart hence uninitiated, though we have ten thousand virtues, our portion will be no other than hell, and the venomous worm, and fire unquenchable, and bonds indissoluble. But God grant that none of those who hear these words experience that punishment!”

¹⁵ b. 5, c. 4.

One may ask how catechumens can be Catholic and also sons of the Devil. We can compare them to one of the faithful who commits a mortal sin and thus is a son of the Devil even though he is still Catholic. One difference is that the catechumen is going forward from darkness toward the light while the mortally sinful member of the Catholic Church has gone backward from light into darkness. Both are in darkness and sons of the Devil but are going in different directions.

Hence pre-catechumens and catechumens do not have God as their Father

Because the father of pre-catechumens and catechumens is the Devil and not God, I discovered that they were not allowed to pray the Our Father prayer until eight days before entering the Catholic Church, when they were allowed to pray it in anticipation of having God as their Father. These catechumens who were approved and ready for baptism were called competentes, the last stage of the catechumenate before entering the Catholic Church:

St. Augustine, *On the Creed to Catechumens*, 425: “16. ...The very sins which he remits first, he remits not but to the baptized. When? When they are baptized... For how can they say ‘Our Father’ who are not yet born sons? The catechumens, so long as they be such, have upon them all their sins.”

St. Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, Sermon 6 (On the Our Father to the Competentes): “5. ‘Do ye therefore say,’ saith he, ‘Our Father, which art in heaven.’ Where ye see ye have begun to have God for your Father. Ye will have him when ye are new born.”

St. Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, Sermon 8 (On the Our Father to the Competentes): “1. ...The Son himself, as you heard when the Gospel was read, taught his disciples and his faithful ones this prayer... Learn, then, this prayer [the Our Father] also which you will have to repeat in eight days time. But whosoever of you have not repeated the Creed well, have yet time enough; let them learn it, because on the Sabbath day, in the hearing of all who shall be present, you will have to repeat it, on the last Sabbath day when you will be here to be baptized. But in eight days from today will you have to repeat this prayer which you have heard today...”

An Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism of Christian Doctrine (a.k.a. Baltimore Catechism, No. 4), 1891: “The candidate was then a catechumen of the first class; for two years he was instructed in biblical history, the Ten Commandments, the precepts of charity, and allowed to be present at Mass until the creed. At the end of the second year, he became a catechumen of the second class [competentes]; that is, he was obliged to fast in Lent, to hear sermons, to confess his sins in public and undergo various exorcisms, anointing, and other symbolical ceremonies. In the last week before baptism was administered, after Palm Sunday, that is, the candidates were taught the doctrine of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the Apostles’ Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer. All these ceremonies previous to baptism have been retained until the present day.”¹⁶

As you have read, the competentes were also taught for the first time the Apostles’ Creed and told to memorize it. Even though they had to believe in the dogmas in the Apostles’ Creed to be pre-catechumens and catechumens, they did not learn the actual creed until they were competentes and thus ready to enter the Catholic Church by baptism.¹⁷

¹⁶ p. 3, II (The Sacraments), 1 (Baptism), 7, pp. 581-582. Beware, this book contains many heresies.

¹⁷ See *RJMI Topic Index*: Discipline of the Secret.

2) Heresy: The faithful are allowed to perform acts of religious communion with catechumens

I have discovered that it is a deeper dogma of the ordinary magisterium that members of the Catholic Church (the faithful) are not in religious communion with catechumens and thus are forbidden to perform acts of religion with catechumens.

The *Didascalia* teaches that the faithful are not allowed to pray with pre-catechumens and catechumens:

Didascalia, 1st to 3rd century: “We do not refuse salvation even to the heathen if they repent and renounce and remove from themselves their error. Therefore let him be accounted to you as a heathen and as a publican, he who is convicted of evil works and of falsehood; and afterwards if he promise to repent as the heathen, when they wish and promise to repent and say ‘We believe,’ we receive them [as pre-catechumens] into the congregation that they may hear the Word, but we do not communicate with them until they receive the seal and are confirmed [as catechumens]. Thus also we do not communicate with these [those sealed as catechumens] until they shew the fruits of repentance; for they can certainly come in if they wish to hear the Word, that they may not perish utterly, but in prayer they take no part, but go outside; because that even they [catechumens], when they see that they do not take part in the Church, restrain themselves, and repent of their former deeds, and become eager to be received into the Church in prayer.”¹⁸

The *Apostolic Constitutions* also teaches that the faithful are not allowed to pray with catechumens:

Apostolic Constitutions, 1st to 4th century: “Let not one of the faithful pray with a catechumen, no, not in the house: for it is not reasonable that he who is admitted should be polluted with one not admitted... For ‘what fellowship hath light with darkness?’ ”¹⁹

And the heretic John Chrysostom teaches the same:

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 390-397, Homily 25: “3. ...For the catechumen is a stranger to the faithful. He hath not the same Head, he hath not the same Father... Since then..., in what, tell me, shall we hold communion?”

In the Profession of Faith I composed, I heretically said that members of the Catholic Church (the faithful) can pray with catechumens as long as catechumens do not lead the prayers.

The dogma is that the faithful (members of the Catholic Church) are in religious communion only with one another and thus must not perform acts of religion with those who are not of the faithful. And catechumens are in religious communion only with one another and thus must not perform acts of religion with anyone who is not a catechumen.

Certain blessings and other sacramentals can be given to catechumens

One can also be led into the heresy that the faithful are allowed to perform acts of religious communion with catechumens because Catholic ministers perform certain rites on catechumens, such as making them catechumens by laying their hands on them and/or signing their foreheads with the sign of the cross and giving them certain sacramentals (such as invocative blessings and exorcisms) which some may believe are acts of religious communion:

¹⁸ c. 10, 2, 39.

¹⁹ b. 8, sec. 4, XXXIV.

Nominal *Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Catechumen”: “II. ...In the early ages the rites of admission to the catechumenate were quite simple, but in the course of time they became more elaborate. At first the candidates were merely signed on the forehead with the sign of the cross, or hands were imposed on them with suitable prayers; and sometimes both ceremonies were used. Thus St. Augustine in his model of an instruction to an inquirer says: ‘He should be asked whether he believes what he has heard and is ready to observe it. If he answers in the affirmative, he should be solemnly signed and treated according to the custom of the Church’ (*solemniter signandus est et ecclesiae more tractandus*.—De Cat. Rud., xxvi, P.L., XL, 344). [Apostate] Eusebius mentions the imposition of hands and prayer (*Vita Constantini*, iv. 61, P.G., XX, 1213). Among the Latins, and especially at Rome, breathing accompanied with a form of exorcism and placing in the mouth a little exorcised salt was employed in addition to the signing with the cross and the imposition of hands. Other rites were the opening of the ears (Mark, vii, 34) and anointing.”

However, these are not acts of religious communion for two reasons: 1) the recipients do not pray with the ministers, and 2) the act itself does not indicate religious communion. It is the same when the faithful bestow certain invocative blessings on unbelievers in order to grant them health, healing, protection, virtue, enlightenment, or to be partially delivered from devils (exorcisms). This is the kind of blessing Jacob gave to Pharaoh:

“After this, Joseph brought in his father [Jacob] to the king and presented him before him: and he [Jacob] blessed him [Pharaoh]... And blessing the king, he went out.” (Gen. 47:7, 10)

Catholic Commentary on Gen. 47:7: “**Blessed him:** Saying, perhaps, ‘God save the king’ or ‘O king, live forever’ thus wishing that he might enjoy all sorts of blessings.”

It is this kind of blessing that Jesus’ followers bestow on unbelievers with the hope of converting them:

“And he said to them: Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.” (Mk. 16:15-18)

3) Heresy: Unbelievers are allowed to pray in submission to the faithful

Another thing I discovered is that it is heretical to allow inquirers (respectful unbelievers) to pray in submission to the faithful (members of the Catholic Church). One can be misled, as I was, for two reasons:

1. Respectful unbelievers (inquirers) attend the Mass of the Catechumens along with the faithful while hymns are sung and prayers are said. While trying to uphold the dogma, which I held, that the faithful are not allowed to perform an act of religious communion with unbelievers, I produced the opinion, which I now know is heretical, that unbelievers can pray in submission to the faithful but not with them. The truth is that the inquirers, as well as the catechumens, are to remain silent during the Mass of the Catechumens. They can only sing and pray in their hearts. In this way, they are not performing religious acts with the faithful.

For example, the following author was misled by this and thus teaches the heresy that catechumens, and by implication unbelievers, are allowed to pray with the faithful because they prayed together during the Mass of the Catechumens:

The Priest and the Altar, by apostate Dom Ernst Graf, O.S.B., 1926: “The Mass of the Catechumens always ended with the sermon or homily, which followed the public reading of the Gospel. Up to that moment, catechumens and baptized Christians prayed together. But no sooner was the homily or exhortation of the bishops ended, than the aspirants to baptism were bidden to leave the sacred edifice, and not only they but all penitents and such as were not permitted to take part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice.”²⁰

To be consistent, and by implication, he includes pagans and other unbelievers because they too are allowed to attend the Mass of the Catechumens.

2. How else can unbelievers learn how to pray if the faithful do not teach them? And thus I held the opinion, which I now know is heretical, that unbelievers can pray in submission to the faithful. What I discovered is that one can teach a person to pray without praying with them, which was what the faithful did even in relation to catechumens. The faithful can teach unbelievers and catechumens how and what to pray without praying with them. They can teach them a prayer and have them repeat it but cannot pray it along with them or in union with them.

The other revisions to the Profession of Faith are additions

The dogmas that 1) the faithful are not allowed to perform acts of religion with catechumens, and 2) the faithful are not allowed to let unbelievers pray in submission to them, led me to study extensively what are and are not acts of religious communion. The result will be listed in my revised profession of faith titled *Profession of Faith against the Great Apostasy*, which, as of 6/2019, is not yet completed. And it will contain many additions, most of which deal with the idolatries, heresies, and immoralities of the Great Apostasy, which began in the 11th century.

For the glory of God; in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Michael, St. Joseph, St. Anne, St. John the Baptist, and the other angels and saints; and for the salvation of men

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Mary's Little Remnant
302 East Joffre St.
Truth or Consequences, New Mexico 87901-2878, USA
Website: www.JohnTheBaptist.us
(Send for a free catalog)

²⁰ c. 10, “The Credo,” p. 117.