

# There Is No Remission of Sins Outside the Catholic Church

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“Outside the Church sins are not remitted. For the Church alone has received the pledge of the Holy Spirit, without which there is no remission of sins  
(St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, Chapter 65)

Because there is no salvation outside of the Catholic Church, then there can be no remission of sins outside of the Catholic Church. Indeed, it is an ordinary magisterium dogma from AD 33 on Pentecost Day that there is no remission of sins outside the Catholic Church. And from the information I have, it became a solemn-magisterium dogma in 314 at the Council of Arles.

God never blesses or makes fruitful the sacraments used outside the Catholic Church but instead curses both the ministers and recipients (both adults and infants). If God did not do this but instead blessed and sanctified them, then he would be the author of sin by participating in, condoning, and encouraging their schism, heresy, or idolatry and the sacrilegious and illegal use of his sacraments.

Hence all those outside the Catholic Church (both infants and adults, baptized or unbaptized) cannot have their sins remitted and be in the way of salvation.

Therefore, sacraments that are validly administered outside the Catholic Church, such as the sacrament of baptism, do not bestow any grace. (See in RJMI book *The Salvation Dogma and Related Topics*: Baptisms outside the Catholic Church are illegal but valid.)

## Catholics' teachings on no remission of sins outside the Catholic Church

### *Bible*

“My sister, my spouse, is a garden enclosed, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up.” (Can. 4:12)

*Catholic Commentary* on Cantic of Canticles 4:12: “**A garden enclosed:** Figuratively the Catholic Church is enclosed, containing only the faithful. **A fountain sealed up:** That none can drink of its waters; that is, the sanctifying grace and spiritual benefits of the holy sacraments but those who are within its walls.”

Only those in the midst of the Catholic Church receive God’s mercy regarding sanctifying grace:

“We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple.” (Ps. 47:10)

*Catholic Commentary* on Ps. 47:10: “**Temple:** In the Catholic Church we receive many graces, to which those who refuse to be Catholic can have no title.”

*Catholic Commentary* on Ps. 47:10: “**Temple:** Sanctifying grace is only granted to those that are within or come into the Catholic Church.”

Only men who dwell in the house of the Lord can praise him and be sanctified:

“Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord, they shall praise thee for ever and ever.” (Ps. 83:5) “His enemies I will clothe with confusion, but upon him shall my sanctification flourish.” (Ps. 131:18)

Only those within the Catholic Church are blessed:

“Because he hath strengthened the bolts of thy gates, he hath blessed thy children within thee.” (Ps. 147:13)

“Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord, they shall praise thee for ever and ever.” (Ps. 83:5)

Men must believe in the Catholic faith to have their sins remitted:

“By mercy and faith sins are purged away.” (Prv. 15:27)

All who are outside the Catholic Church are unclean and cannot make anything clean and thus cannot get or bestow sanctifying grace and be made clean by having their sins remitted:

“What can be made clean by the unclean? And what truth can come from that which is false?” (Eccus. 34:4)

Jesus said that those who do not believe in him will die in their sins and thus cannot have their sins remitted:

“Therefore I said to you, that you shall die in your sins. For if you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin.” (Jn. 8:24)

Jesus said that only those who abide in the vine (Jesus Christ and his Catholic Church) can bear fruit and thus have their sins remitted and be sanctified:

“Now you are clean by reason of the word, which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me.” (Jn. 15:3-4)

### *1st to 4th centuries: Apostolic Constitutions*

*Apostolic Constitutions*, 1st to 4th centuries: “XV. Be likewise contented with one baptism alone, that which is into the death of the Lord; not that which is conferred by wicked heretics but that which is conferred by unblameable priests, ‘in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:’ Matthew 28:19 And let not that which comes from the ungodly be received by you, nor let that which is done by the godly be disannulled by a second. For as there is one God, one Christ, and one Comforter, and one death of the Lord in the body, so let that baptism which is unto him be but one. But those that receive polluted baptism from the ungodly will become partners in their opinions. For they are not [legal] priests. For God says to them: ‘Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from the office of a priest to me.’ (Osee 4:6) Nor indeed are those that are baptized by them initiated, but are polluted, not receiving the remission of sins, but the bond of impiety.”<sup>1</sup>

### *3rd century: St. Cyprian*

St. Cyprian of Carthage, *Letter 73*, to Pompey, 3rd century: “11. For it has been delivered to us that there is one God and one Christ and one hope and one faith and one Church and one baptism ordained only in the one Church, from which unity whosoever will depart must needs be found with heretics; and while he upholds them against the Church, he impugns the sacrament of the divine tradition. The sacrament of which unity we see expressed also in the Canticles, in the person of Christ, who says, ‘A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a fountain sealed, a well of living water, a garden with the fruit of apples.’ But if his Church is a garden enclosed and a fountain sealed, how can he who is not in the Church enter into the same garden or drink from its fountain? Moreover, Peter himself, showing and vindicating the unity, has commanded and warned us that we cannot be saved except by the one only baptism of one Church. ‘In the ark,’ says he, ‘of Noe, few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water, as also baptism shall in like manner save you.’ In how short and spiritual a summary has he set forth the sacrament of unity! For as, in that baptism of the world in which its ancient iniquity was purged away, he who was not in the ark of Noe could not be saved by water, so neither can he appear to be saved by baptism who has not been baptized in the Church which is established in the unity of the Lord according to the sacrament of the one ark.”

St. Cyprian, *Letter 72*, to Jubaianus, 3rd century: “5. ...Widely different is the faith with Marcion, and moreover with the other heretics, nay, with them there is nothing but perfidy and blasphemy and contention which is hostile to holiness and truth. How then can one who is baptized among them seem to have obtained remission of sins and the grace of the divine mercy by his faith, when he has not the truth of the faith itself?...”

“15. But if we consider what the apostles thought about heretics, we shall find that they in all their epistles execrated and detested the sacrilegious wickedness of heretics. ...They may do nothing towards conferring the ecclesiastical and saving grace, who, scattering and attacking the Church of Christ, are called adversaries by Christ himself, and by his apostles, Antichrists...

“18. ...How, then, do some say, that a Gentile baptized without, outside the Church, yea, and in opposition to the Church...can obtain remission of sin...What else is it, then, than to become a partaker with blaspheming heretics, to wish to maintain and assert that one who blasphemes and gravely sins against the Father and the Lord and God of Christ can receive remission of sins in the name of Christ?...”

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<sup>1</sup> b. 6, sec. 3.

“19. ...Think you that Christ grants impunity to the impious and profane, and the blasphemers of his Father, and that he puts away their sins in baptism...”

#### *4th century: Council of Arles (infallible decree)*

An infallible decree from the First Council of Arles in 314 teaches that “anyone” (and thus infants and adults) baptized in a heretical sect and thus baptized outside the Catholic Church must not be rebaptized but does not “receive the Holy Spirit” and thus the sanctifying grace of baptism and hence the remission of his sins until he enters the Catholic Church. Hence it infallible teaches there is no remission of sins outside the Catholic Church:

*First Council of Arles, 314: “Canon 8. Concerning the Africans, because they use their own law so as to rebaptize, it has been decided that, if anyone from a heretical sect come to the Church, he should be asked his creed, and if it is perceived that he has been baptized in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, only the hand should be imposed upon him in order that he may receive the Holy Spirit. But if upon being questioned he does not answer this Trinity, let him be baptized.”<sup>2</sup>*

#### *4th century: St. Cyril of Jerusalem*

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, Lecture 3 (On Baptism), 4th century: “4. ...When going down, therefore, into the water, think not of the bare element but look for salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit, for without both thou canst not possibly be made perfect. It is not I that say this, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the power in this matter; for he saith, ‘Except a man be born anew (and He adds the words) of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ Neither doth he that is baptized with water but not found worthy of the Spirit receive the grace in perfection; nor if a man be virtuous in his deeds, but receive not the seal by water, shall he enter into the kingdom of heaven. A bold saying, but not mine, for it is Jesus who hath declared it...”

#### *4th century St. Ambrose*

St. Ambrose, *On the Mysteries*, c. 387: “23. ...The baptism of unbelievers heals not but pollutes.”<sup>3</sup>

St. Ambrose, *On Repentance*, c. 384: “7. ...Heresy, which does not have the priests of God, cannot claim the right to loose from sins... 8. ...Wherefore, he who cannot loose sin does not have the Holy Spirit.”<sup>4</sup>

#### *4th/5th centuries: St. Augustine*

*Catholic Commentary* on Luke 13:26. “**Eaten and drunk:** It is not enough to feed with Christ in his sacraments...unless we live in unity of the Catholic Church. So St. Augustine applieth this against the Donatists, that had the very same service and sacraments which the Catholic Church had, yet severed themselves from other Christian countries by schism.”

St. Augustine, *On Baptism, Against the Donatists*, 400: “Book 1, Chapter 2] 3. ... We do not therefore say to them [the Donatists], ‘Abstain from giving baptism,’

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<sup>2</sup> D. 53.

<sup>3</sup> c. 4.

<sup>4</sup> b. 1, c. 2.

but ‘Abstain from giving it in schism.’ Nor do we say to those whom we see them on the point of baptizing, ‘Do not receive the baptism,’ but ‘Do not receive it in schism.’...

“[Book 1, Chapter 3] 4. There are two propositions, moreover, which we affirm, that baptism exists in the Catholic Church and that in it alone can it be rightly received, both of which the Donatists deny. Likewise there are two other propositions which we affirm, that baptism exists among the Donatists but that with them it is not rightly received...

“[Book 1, Chapter 12] 18. ...Let them understand that men may be baptized in communions severed from the Church in which Christ’s baptism is given and received in the said celebration of the sacrament, but that it will only then be of avail for the remission of sins when the recipient, being reconciled to the unity of the Church, is purged from the sacrilege of deceit by which his sins were retained and their remission prevented... So...in the case of the man who, while an enemy to the peace and love of Christ, received in any heresy or schism the baptism of Christ, which the schismatics in question had not lost from among them, though by his sacrilege his sins were not remitted, yet when he corrects his error and comes over to the communion and unity of the Church, he ought not to be again baptized: because by his very reconciliation to the peace of the Church he receives this benefit, that the sacrament now begins in unity to be of avail for the remission of his sins, which could not so avail him as received in schism...

“[Book 3, Chapter 13] 18. ...Although among heretics and schismatics there be the same baptism of Christ, the remission of sins, nevertheless, is not operative there because of the very rottenness of discord and wickedness of dissension... It is the one and the same Baptism which outside the Church works death because of discord and inside the Church works salvation because of peace.”

St. Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, Sermon 21, On the Words of the Gospel of Matthew 12:32: “32. ...Wherefore whosoever are baptized in the congregations or separations rather of schismatics or heretics... have not been born again of the Spirit... Yet when they come to the Catholic Church and are joined to the fellowship of the Spirit, which without the Church they beyond doubt had not [the Spirit], the washing of the flesh is not repeated in their case. For ‘this form of godliness’ [indelible mark, the brand of Christ] was not wanting to them even when they were without; but there is added to them ‘the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,’ which cannot be given but within. Before they were Catholics indeed, they were as they of whom the Apostle says, ‘Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.’ For the visible form of the branch may exist even when separated from the vine, but the invisible life of the root cannot be had but in the vine. Wherefore the bodily sacraments, which even they who are separated from the Unity of Christ’s Body bear and celebrate, may give ‘the form of godliness’; but the invisible and spiritual power of godliness cannot in any wise be in them, just as sensation does not accompany a man’s limb when it is amputated from the body. 33. And since this is so, remission of sins, seeing it is not given but by the Holy Spirit, can only be given in that Church which hath the Holy Spirit...”

St. Augustine, *Sermo ad Caesariensis Ecclesiae Plebem*, c. 418: “No man can find salvation except in the Catholic Church. Outside the Catholic Church one can have everything except salvation. One can have honor, one can have the sacraments, one can sing alleluia, one can answer amen, one can have faith in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and preach it too, but never can one find salvation except in the Catholic Church.”

St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 421: “Outside the Church sins are not remitted. For the Church alone has received the pledge of the Holy Spirit, without which there is no remission of sins.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> c. 65.

St. Augustine, *Letter 98*, 408: “5. ...The sacrament of Christian baptism, being always due and the same, is of value even when administered by heretics, and though not in that case sufficing to secure to the baptized person participation in everlasting life...”

St. Augustine, *Sermon 8* (Denis), On Baptism: “2. ...For there are some who have put on Christ in the sacrament [of baptism], but are not endued with his faith or morals. Certainly, many heretics have the sacrament of baptism, but they have neither the fruit of salvation nor the bond of peace, ‘having a semblance of piety but disowning its power’ ...for either they have been enrolled by deserters or they have become deserters themselves.”<sup>6</sup>

### *5th/6th centuries: St. Fulgentius*

St. Fulgentius, *The Forgiveness of Sins*, 6<sup>th</sup> century: “2. Anyone who is outside this Church, which received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, is walking a path not to heaven but to hell. He is not approaching the home of everlasting life; rather, he is hastening to the torment of everlasting death. And this is the case not only if he remains a pagan without Baptism, but even if, after having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, he continue as a heretic. ...For he is saved by the Sacrament of Baptism, whom the unity of love holds within the Catholic Church up to his passing from this present life.”<sup>7</sup>

St. Fulgentius, *The Rule of Faith*, To Peter: “43. ...Anyone who receives the sacrament of Baptism, whether in the Catholic Church or in a heretical or schismatic one, receives the whole sacrament; but salvation, which is the strength of the Sacrament, he will not have if he has had that Sacrament outside the Catholic Church. He must, therefore, return to the Church, not so that he might receive again the Sacrament of Baptism, which no one dare repeat in any baptized person, but so that he may receive everlasting life in Catholic society, for the obtaining of which no one is suited who, even with the Sacrament of Baptism, remains estranged from the Catholic Church...

“79. Hold most firmly and never doubt in the least that outside the Catholic Church the Sacrament of Baptism cannot be of any profit; nay, just as within the Church salvation is conferred through the Sacrament of Baptism upon those who believe rightly, so too, outside the Catholic Church, ruin is heaped up for those who were baptized by that same Baptism if they do not return to the Church...

“80. Hold most firmly and never doubt in the least that no person baptized outside the Catholic Church can become a participant of everlasting life if, before the end of this life, he has not returned and been incorporated in the Catholic Church.”

### *6th/7th century: Pope St. Gregory the Great*

Pope St. Gregory the Great teaches that all those who are baptized into heretical sects do not have the remission of their sins until they convert into the Catholic Church. But he also teaches that these persons are validly baptized and thus have the indelible mark and therefore are not to be rebaptized if they convert into the Catholic Church:

Pope St. Gregory the Great, Epistle *Quia Charitati* to the bishops of Spain, 601: “From the ancient institution of the Fathers we have learned that those who are baptized in the name of the Trinity, although amid heresy, whenever they return to the holy Church, may be recalled to the bosom of their mother the Church either

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<sup>6</sup> Contained in *The Fathers of the Church*, by Catholic University of America. Volume 11, Saint Augustine: Seventeen Related Sermons: On Life’s Pilgrimage: Sermon 8, p. 331.

<sup>7</sup> b. 1, sec. 19.

with the anointing of chrism, or the imposition of hands, or with a profession of faith alone... , because the holy baptism, which they received among the heretics, at that time restores the power of cleansing in them when they have been united to the holy faith and the heart of the universal Church.”<sup>8</sup>

*7th century: Quinisext Council (aka Trullan Council)*

The Quinisext Council decrees that those with use of reason who were baptized outside the Catholic Church must not be rebaptized but do not receive the “gift of the Holy Spirit” and thus the sanctifying grace of baptism and hence the remission of their sins until they enter the Catholic Church:

*Quinisext Council* (aka Trullan Council), 692: “Canon 7. Those who embrace orthodoxy and join the number of those who are being saved from the heretics, we receive in the following regular and customary manner: Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians, those who call themselves Cathars and Aristae, Quartodeciman or Tetradites, Apollinarians—these we receive when they hand in statements and anathematise every heresy which is not of the same mind as the holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church of God. They are first sealed or anointed with holy chrism on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, and ears. As we seal them, we say: ‘Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ ”

*11th century: Pope Leo IX*

Pope Leo IX, *Congratulamur Vehementer (Symbol of Faith)*, to Peter, Bishop of Antioch, 1053: “I believe that the one true Church is holy, Catholic and apostolic, in which is given one baptism and the true remission of all sins. I also believe in a true resurrection of this body, which now I bear, and in everlasting life.”<sup>9</sup>

**Nominal Catholics’ teachings on no remission of sins outside of the Catholic Church**

*3rd century: Apostate Firmilianus*

Apostate Firmilianus, *Epistle 74*, to Cyprian, 256: “14. But if the baptism of heretics can have the regeneration of the second birth, those who are baptized among them must be counted not heretics but children of God. ...But the synagogue of heretics is not one with us because the spouse is not an adulteress and a harlot. Whence also she cannot bear children of God... 16. What is the greatness of his error and what the depth of his blindness who says that remission of sins can be granted in the synagogues of heretics and does not abide on the foundation of the one Church, which was once based by Christ upon the rock, may be perceived from this, that Christ said to Peter alone, ‘Whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’”

*13th century: Apostate Bonaventure*

Apostate Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, 13th century: “1. ...Once these conditions [intention and Orders] are present, the sacraments may be conferred by either the good or the wicked, the faithful or the heretical, within the Church or outside it: but

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<sup>8</sup> D. 249.

<sup>9</sup> D. 347.

within the Church, they are conferred both in fact and in effect, while outside it, although conferred in fact, they are not effective... 4. ...But because none may be saved outside the communion of faith and love which makes us children and members of the Church, whenever the sacraments are received outside it, they are received with no effect toward salvation, although they are true sacraments. They may become effective, however, when the recipient returns to Holy Mother Church, the only Bride of Christ, whose sons are the only ones Christ the Spouse deems worthy of the eternal inheritance.”<sup>10</sup>

#### *14th century: Antipope Boniface VIII*

Apostate Antipope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctum*, 1302: “With Faith urging us we are forced to believe and to hold the one, holy, Catholic Church and that, apostolic, and we firmly believe and simply confess this Church outside which there is no salvation nor remission of sin, the Spouse in the Canticle proclaiming: ‘One is my dove, my perfect one. One she is of her mother, the chosen of her that bore her’ (CC. 6:8)]; which represents the one mystical body whose head is Christ, of Christ indeed, as God. And in this, ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4:5).”<sup>11</sup>

#### *15th century: Antipope Eugene IV*

Apostate Antipope Eugene IV, invalid and heretical *Council of Florence*, 1441: “It firmly believes, professes and preaches that... the unity of the ecclesiastical body is of such importance that only for those who abide in it do the Church’s sacraments contribute to salvation.”

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

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<sup>10</sup> pt. 6, c. 5 (On the Administration of the Sacraments).

<sup>11</sup> D. 468.