

Laws Enforcing the Salvation Dogma

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Laws on the reception of baptized non-Catholic infants and adults into the Church

The Catholic Church’s laws that require non-Catholic baptized infant, children, and adult converts to be received into the Catholic Church is one infallible proof that previous to their reception into the Catholic Church these baptized infants, children, and adults were outside the Catholic Church and thus not Catholic. These laws also teach that only when they enter the Catholic Church do they get the gifts of the Holy Spirit of membership in the Catholic Church and of sanctifying grace and thus the remission of their sins and punishment due to their sins.

4th century: Council of Arles (infallible decree)

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 grace of baptism until he enters the Catholic Church:

First Council of Arles, 314 AD: “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.” (D. 53)

4th century: Pope St. Siricius

In his epistle *Directa ad Decessorum* in 385, Pope St. Siricius decreed that baptism outside the Catholic Church is valid and thus those who convert must not be rebaptized. And he also decreed that they do not receive the Holy Spirit and thus do not have their sins remitted until they enter the Catholic Church:

Pope St. Siricius, *Directa ad Decessorum*, to Himerius, Bishop of Terracina, 385:
“(1, 1) And so on the first page of your letter you have indicated that very many baptized by the impious Arians are hastening to the Catholic faith and that certain of our brothers wish to baptize these same ones again. This is not allowed since the Apostle forbids it to be done and the canons oppose it, and after the cessation of the

Council of Ariminum general decrees sent to the provinces by my predecessor Liberius of venerable memory prohibit it. These together with the Novatians and other heretics we join to the company of the Catholics through the sole invocation of the sevenfold Spirit by the imposition of a bishop's hands, just as it was determined in the Synod, which, too, the whole East and West observe. It is proper that you also do not deviate from this course henceforth if you do not wish to be separated from our company by synodal decision.”¹

This decree applies to baptized infants also as he makes no distinction.

4th/5th centuries: The Third Council of Carthage (397), Fifth Council of Carthage (401), and the Code of Canons of the African Church (419)

The Third Council of Carthage in 397 specifically refers to infants baptized in heretical sects who later convert into the Catholic Church, which proves they were not inside the Catholic Church as baptized infants. This below decree involves a dispute as to whether heretics who were outside the Catholic Church from their infancy and then convert and become Catholic when they attain the use of reason are irregular and thus cannot be admitted to Holy Orders:

Third Council of Carthage, 397: “In reference to the Donatists, it is resolved that we do ask the advice of our brethren and fellow-bishops, Siricius and Simplicianus, concerning those only who are in infancy baptized among them, Whether in that which they have not done by their own judgment the error of their parents shall hinder them, that when they by a wholesome purpose shall be converted to the Church of God may not be promoted to be ministers of the holy altar?”

Note carefully that this decree says that when “those...who are in infancy baptized among [heretics]...shall be converted to the Church of God,” which proves they were outside the Catholic Church as baptized infants.

The question of whether converts who were outside the Catholic Church from infancy could be promoted to the ministry of the altar had already been settled by 401, within four years after the Third Council of Carthage, as proved by Canon 1 of the Fifth Council of Carthage:

Fifth Council of Carthage, 401: “Canon 1 (57 in the *Codex Can. Eccl. Afric.*).
“Children of Donatists may, as has been already declared, be ordained after joining the Church.”^{2,3}

These children baptized among the Donatists had to join the Catholic Church before they could be ordained. This proves that they were not joined to the Catholic Church previous to being received into the Catholic Church. In 419 AD, Canon 57 of the *Code of Canons of the African Church* records this same decision—converts who were outside the Catholic Church from infancy could be promoted to the ministry:

The Code of Canons of the African Church, held at Carthage, 419: “Canon 57 [Greek 61] Since in the former council it was decreed, as your unanimity remembers as well as I do, that those who as **children were baptized by the Donatists**, and not yet being able to know the pernicious character of their error, and afterward when they had come to the use of reason had received the knowledge of the truth, abhorred their former error, and **were received** (in accordance with the ancient order) by the imposition of the hand **into the Catholic Church of God** spread throughout the world, that to such the remembrance of the error ought to be no impediment to the reception of the clerical office... They are but one after all, as the blessed Apostle tells us, saying: ‘One God, one faith, one baptism,’ and it is not lawful to reiterate what once only ought to be administered. Those therefore who

¹ D. 88.

² Footnote 6: “Van Espen (*Commentar. In Canones*, etc. Colon. 1755, pp. 340, sqq.) gives an explanation of this and the following canons.”

³ From *A History of the Christian Councils*, by Rev. Hefele, v. 2, bk. 8, sec. 113, p. 422.

have been so baptized having anathematized their error may be received by the imposition of the hand into the one Church, the pillar as it is called, and the one mother of all Christians, where all these Sacraments are received unto salvation and everlasting life, even the same sacraments which obtain for those persevering in heresy the heavy penalty of damnation.”⁴

Note very carefully that this canon teaches that the “children...baptized by the Donatists” did not have the use of reason and thus were baptized non-Catholic infants. Not until they “had come to the use of reason” and “had received the knowledge of the truth” and were “received...into the Catholic Church” did they enter the Catholic Church; hence they were not inside the Catholic Church as baptized infants. Because these converts were outside the Catholic Church from infancy, they were granted the favor of being eligible to obtain Orders (the ministry of the altar). Whereas, adults who “were baptized by the Donatists” and then converted into the Catholic Church were irregular and thus could not obtain Orders.⁵

Note also that this Canon 57 says that only in the “one Church” (the Catholic Church) the “sacraments are received unto salvation and everlasting life” and that all those baptized outside the Catholic Church incur “the heavy penalty of damnation,” which can only be lifted if they enter the Catholic Church. The Council of Trullo in 692 AD speaks of “salvation-bearing baptism” and thus implies that there is a non-salvation-bearing baptism that, which is administered outside the Catholic Church:

Council of Trullo (aka The Quinisext Council): “Canon 53. Whereas the spiritual relationship is greater than fleshly affinity; and since it has come to our knowledge that in some places certain persons who become sponsors to children in holy salvation-bearing baptism, afterwards contract matrimony with their mothers (being widows), we decree that for the future nothing of this sort is to be done. But if any, after the present canon, shall be observed to do this, they must, in the first place, desist from this unlawful marriage, and then be subjected to the penalties of fornicators.”⁶

5th century: Council of Chalcedon (infallible decree)

In 451 the infallible Council of Chalcedon teaches that children “baptized among the heretics” must be brought into the communion of the Catholic Church, which proves they were not in communion with the Catholic Church previously:

Council of Chalcedon, 451, confirmed by Pope St. Leo the Great: “Canon 14. Since in certain provinces it is permitted to the readers and singers to marry, the holy Synod has decreed that it shall not be lawful for any of them to take a wife that is heterodox. But those who have already begotten children of such a marriage, if they have already had their children baptized among the heretics, must bring them into the communion of the Catholic Church; but if they have not had them baptized, they may not hereafter baptize them among heretics, nor give them in marriage to a heretic, or a Jew, or a heathen, unless the person marrying the orthodox child shall promise to come over to the orthodox faith. And if any one shall transgress this decree of the Holy Synod, let him be subjected to canonical censure.”

Hence it is a dogma that “children baptized among the heretics” must be brought “into the communion of the Catholic Church” and thus are outside the Catholic Church. They are baptized non-Catholic children. In order to enter the Catholic Church and thus have their sins remitted, these “children baptized among the heretics” must be brought “into the communion of the

⁴ Found in Dionysius Exiguus, Codex Can. Migne, Pat. Lat., Tom. lxxvii, col. 182.

⁵ This is a disciplinary law and thus can be modified or abolished. Hence it is up to the pope to allow or disallow members of nominal Christian sects who convert and thus enter the Catholic Church to obtain orders, or, if they had orders, to exercise them in the Catholic Church.

⁶ Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. VI, col. 1135 et seqq.

Catholic Church.” If “children baptized among the heretics” were in communion with the Catholic Church, then this infallible decree would be sinful, harmful, and erroneous for banning children from being baptized among the heretics—“they may not hereafter baptize them [children] among heretics”—because it would prevent these children from having their sins remitted and entering the Catholic Church. The obvious meaning of the word “children” in this infallible decree is all children and thus children who do not have the use of reason and children who do have the use of reason.

5th century: Pope St. Leo the Great

Pope St. Leo the Great, *Letter 166*, to Neon, Bishop of Ravenna, 458: “Baptism by heretics must not be invalidated by second baptism. But if it can be proved that any such person has been baptized, though by heretics, let the sacrament of regeneration be by no means reiterated on him; but let that only which was wanting there be now added, that he have the imposition of hands by the bishop for the obtaining the grace of the Holy Spirit...”

Pope St. Leo the Great makes no distinction for infants or adults and thus includes both. He says “any such person” baptized by heretics does not get the grace of the Holy Spirit until he enters the Catholic Church by “the imposition of hands by the bishop.”

5th century – Pope St. Felix III

A Dictionary of Christian Biography, by Smith and Wace, 1880: “Between the date of his rupture with the East and that of his death Felix had been employed in helping to reconstitute the African church, which had lately suffered under persecution at the hands of the Arian Vandals. This persecution, which had raged with great cruelty under king Hunneric, who died in 484, had ceased under his nephew and successor Gundarnund, when a number of apostates sought readmission to catholic communion. A synod of thirty-eight bishops was held at Rome under Felix in the year 488, the result of which was a synodical letter from him, dated the 15th of March in that year, laying down the following terms of readmission:—1. Bishops, priests, and deacons, who had allowed themselves to be rebaptized by the Arians, whether willingly or under pressure, were to do penance during life, and be admitted to lay communion only at the point of death. 2. Others, whether clerics, monks, virgins, or laity, who had been rebaptized voluntarily, were to be reconciled, on condition of repentance, after twelve years, of which three were to be passed among the audientes, seven among the poenitentes, and during the remaining two of which they were to be debarred from offering oblations, the viaticum being still allowed them during any period of their penance if at the point of death. 3. Persons, not being bishops, priests, or deacons, who had been rebaptized under pressure of persecution, were to be admitted to communion after three years’ penance, and imposition of hands. In all cases those who had been rebaptized were declared incapable of ordination. Children who had been rebaptized were, on the ground of the ignorance incident to their age, to be admitted to communion after a short period of penance.”⁷

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

⁷ Felix III, p. 485, col. 1.

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 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.”⁸

Pope St. Gregory the Great makes no distinction for infants or adults and thus includes both. He says “those who are baptized. . .amid heresy.” And elsewhere he explicitly teaches that infants are included among children baptized outside the Catholic Church who do not get the remission of sins until they are received into the Catholic Church:

Pope St. Gregory the Great, *Register of Letters* (Registrum Episcularum), Book 1, *Epistle 17*, To All the Bishops of Italy: “. . .Warn all the Lombards in your districts, seeing that grievous mortality is everywhere imminent, that they should reconcile these their children who have been baptized in Arian heresy to the Catholic faith, and so appease the wrath of the Almighty Lord which hangs over them. Warn, then, those whom you can; with all the power of persuasion you possess seize on them, and bring them to a right faith; preach to them everlasting life without end; that, when you shall come into the sight of the strict Judge, you may be able, in consequence of your solicitude, to shew in your own persons a shepherd’s gains.”

St. Gregory the Great, *Epistle 37*, To Bishop Columbus: “Gregory to Columbus, Bishop of Numidia, . . .Furthermore, a thing altogether hard to be borne and hostile to *the* right faith has come to our ears; namely, that Catholics (which is awful to be told) and religious persons (which is worse) consent to their children and their slaves or others whom they have in their power being baptized in the heresy of the Donatists. And so, if this is true, let your Fraternity study with all your power to correct it, to the end that the purity of the faith may through your solicitude stand inviolate and innocent souls who might be saved by Catholic baptism perish not from the infection of heretics. Whosoever, then, of the persons above mentioned has suffered any one belonging to him to be baptized among the Donatists, study with all your power, and with all urgency, to recall such to the Catholic faith. But, if any one of such persons should under any pretext endure the doing of this thing in the case of such as are his in the future, let him be cut off entirely from the communion of the clergy.”

Hence Pope St. Gregory the Great teaches that innocent souls (infants) who do not receive “Catholic baptism” and thus receive baptism in heretical sects perish “from the infection of heretics.” By “innocent souls,” then, Pope St. Gregory means innocent because infants cannot commit a sin by their own power. But he does not mean that they are not guilty of original sin or even possibly the mortal sin of heresy imparted to them by heretical parents because he says that these infants (these innocent souls) will perish “from the infection of the heretics.”⁹

Pope St. Gregory, then, teaches that infants “baptized in the heresy of the Donatists” will perish “from the infection of the heretics” if they die before being recalled to the Catholic faith and entering the Catholic Church. Therefore, Pope St. Gregory the Great teaches that infants who receive Catholic baptism are in the way of salvation but infants baptized in the heresy of the Donatists or any other non-Catholic sect or religion are not in the way of salvation and thus are baptized non-Catholic infants:

⁸ D. 249.

⁹ See RJMI book *Baptized Non-Catholic Infants and Children: The Allowable Opinion That Baptized Infants Get Their Faith from the Exterior Intention of Their Guardians*.

St. Gregory the Great, *Epistles*, Book 11, Epistle 67, Gregory to Quiricus, Bishop, and the other Catholic bishops in Hiberia: “And indeed we have learnt from the ancient institution of the Fathers that whosoever among heretics are baptized in the name of the Trinity, when they return to holy Church, may be recalled to the bosom of mother Church either by unction of chrism, or by imposition of hands, or by profession of the faith only. Hence the West reconciles Arians to the holy Catholic Church by imposition of hands, but the East by the unction of holy chrism. But Monophysites and others are received by a true confession only, because holy baptism, which they have received among heretics, then acquires in them the power of cleansing when either the former receive the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands, or the latter are united to the bowels of the holy and universal Church by reason of their confession of the true faith.”

Hence Pope St. Gregory teaches that all those who were baptized “among heretics” do not get the “power of cleansing” and thus do not get membership in the Catholic Church and thus the sanctifying grace of baptism which remits their sins and the punishment due to their sins. He teaches that they only get these things if they enter the Catholic Church.

7th century: Quinisext Council (aka Trullan Council)

The Quinisext Council decrees that those who were baptized outside the Catholic Church must not be rebaptized but do not receive the “gift of the Holy Spirit” and thus the grace of baptism 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.’”

Infants who were baptized outside the Catholic Church enter the Catholic Church when their Catholic sponsors make an act of faith for the infant and then the Catholic bishop lays his hands upon the infant, at which point it enters the Catholic Church. (See in this book “Laws on the reception of baptized non-Catholic infants and adults into the Church,” p. [1](#).)

19th century: Form of receiving Protestant converts born outside the Catholic Church

The *1859 Form of Receiving Converts* into the Catholic Church is used for Protestants who were never Catholic previous to being Protestants. It proves that they were outside the Catholic Church as baptized infants by referring to them as being “born outside the Catholic Church”:

Forma Receptionis Neo-Converti, 1859: “I, N. N., having before my eyes the holy Gospels, which I touch with my hand, and knowing that no one can be saved without that faith which the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church holds, believes, and teaches; against which I grieve that I have greatly erred, inasmuch as, having been born outside that Church, I have held and believed doctrines opposed to her teaching...”¹⁰

Hence these Protestants were never inside the Catholic Church as infants nor until they took the above abjuration. Thus the practice of the Catholic Church in receiving baptized converts into

¹⁰ Rescript of the Holy Office, July 20, 1859, to the Bishop of Philadelphia.

the Catholic Church who were never Catholic proves that infants baptized in non-Catholic Churches or religions are outside the Catholic Church and thus are said to be “born outside the Catholic Church.”

(For in-depth information regarding this and related topics, see RJMI book *Baptized Non-Catholic Infants and Children*.)

Laws banning baptizing infants of non-Catholics

If infants validly baptized outside the Catholic Church were to get all the gifts of baptism and hence be Catholic and in a state of grace, then the Catholic Church should promote the use of the sacrament of baptism outside the Catholic Church in these cases. And if infants baptized by Catholics contrary to the will of their non-Catholic guardians could get all the gifts of baptism, then Catholics would be obliged to baptize as many infants of non-Catholics as possible, even by stealth. By doing this these baptized infants who die before they attain the use of reason would be saved. Yet the Catholic Church dogmatically forbids both of these things. She forbids the use of the sacrament of baptism, as well as any other sacrament, outside the Catholic Church for both infants and adults:

St. Augustine, *On Baptism, Against the Donatists*, 400: “3. ... We do not therefore say to them [the Donatists], ‘Abstain from giving baptism,’ 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.’”¹¹

And the Catholic Church also forbids Catholics to baptize infants contrary to the will of their non-Catholic guardians:

Apostate Antipope Benedict XIV, *Postremo Menses*, to Viceregent in the City, 1747: “After we have explained the most obvious cases in which this rule of ours prohibits the baptizing of Hebrew children against the wishes of their parents, we add some other declarations pertaining to this rule, the first of which is this: If parents are lacking, but the infants have been entrusted to the guardianship of a Hebrew, they can in no way be lawfully baptized without the assent of the guardian, since all the authority of the parents has passed to the guardians...”¹²

If infants baptized contrary to the will of their non-Catholic guardians or baptized outside the Catholic Church were to get all the gifts of baptism and hence be in a state of grace, then these dogmatic laws and practices of the Catholic Church would be mortally sinful for depriving these infants of sanctifying grace and, even worse, for sending them to hell if they die unbaptized because of these laws. Hence this is just more proof that infants baptized outside the Catholic Church do not get all the gifts of baptism but get only the indelible mark and that infants get baptized into or outside the Catholic Church by the external intention of their guardians.

Hence the use of the sacrament of baptism outside the Catholic Church is illegal and sacrilegious and thus does not bear blessings and good fruit but brings down God’s curses upon the ministers and recipients. It should be odious to any Catholic of good will to believe that God the Holy Spirit would sanctify the millions of baptisms of infants that are administered outside the Catholic Church by Protestants of all sorts (such as Anglicans, Lutherans, and Evangelicals and other charismatics) and thus lend credence to their rebellion, heresy, and hatred of the true God and His Catholic Church by coming down upon them and blessing their infants.

(For in-depth information regarding this and related topics, see RJMI book *Baptized Non-Catholic Infants and Children*.)

¹¹ b. 1, c. 2.

¹² D. 1486.

Laws on not burying in the Church infants baptized outside the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church's law and practice of forbidding dead infants who were baptized in non-Catholic sects, churches, or religions to be buried in the Catholic Church is another proof that these infants were not Catholic, not inside the Catholic Church, and did not have their sins remitted. If they were Catholic, then this law and practice would be evil for not burying these infants in the Catholic Church. If Catholic popes, Church Fathers, bishops, theologians, and laymen believed that infants baptized in non-Catholic sects, churches, or religions are inside the Catholic Church, then they should have buried these dead baptized infants inside the Catholic Church.

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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