

How Catholic Churches Become Non-Catholic Churches

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Definition of a Local Church

One way that baptized men manifest their beliefs is by the local church they adhere to. A local church is the church that people go to for religious services and to learn their faith. If that church is a non-Catholic church, even if it calls itself a Catholic church, then all the people who adhere to it, infants included, are guilty of the mortal sin of schism because they adhere to a non-Catholic church and thus do not adhere to the true Catholic Church even if they think they do.

Catholic Churches Can Become Non-Catholic Churches

Even though the 1917 Code of Canon Law is invalid and heretical, its Canon 823 reflects previous valid canon laws. Canon 823 is one proof that a Catholic church that was once properly consecrated or blessed can become a non-Catholic church:

Invalid and heretical *1917 Code of Canon Law*: “Canon 823. Mass may not be said in churches of heretics or schismatics, even though they were in the past properly consecrated or blessed.”

Here, then, is one proof that Catholic churches can become heretical or schismatic churches, just like the Catholic churches that became Anglican churches in England in the 16th century.¹ A Catholic church or the Vatican or another Catholic place becomes a non-Catholic church or non-Catholic place when it becomes defiled by heresy, idols, or false gods, just as the Old Covenant churches (the synagogues) and the Temple became unholy places when they were defiled:

“Neither shalt thou bring any thing of the idol [or heresy] into thy house [or church] lest thou become an anathema like it. Thou shalt detest it as dung and shalt utterly abhor it as uncleanness and filth because it is an anathema.” (Deut. 7:26)

“But God did not choose the people for the place’s sake, but the place for the people’s sake. And therefore the place also itself was made partaker of the evils of the people...it was forsaken in the wrath of almighty God.” (2 Mac. 5:19-20)

“What fellowship hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath the faithful with the unbeliever [heretics]? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols [and heretical churches]? ... Wherefore, Go out from among them,

¹ See *RJMI Faith before the Mass and Sacraments*: Catholics who had no access to Catholic priests and avoided non-Catholic priests.

and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing [heretical churches].” (2 Cor. 6:14-17)

Hence a Catholic church that becomes a non-Catholic church is a “partaker of the evils [heresies] of the people,” “anathema,” “forsaken in the wrath of almighty God,” and has become a “temple” of heresy even if it calls itself a Catholic church and says it is submissive to the Roman Pontiff.

How Catholic Churches Become Non-Catholic Churches

A Catholic church becomes a non-Catholic church in three ways: by schism, by doubting or denying a basic dogma, or by culpably doubting or denying a deeper dogma. For a church to become a non-Catholic church, the head priest of the church must either teach the schism or heresy to the flock or allow it to be taught by a priest or someone else under him. Schism or heresy is taught to the flock and thus in the church either from the pulpit or lectures or the classroom or catechisms or newsletters or in any other way.

By schism for denying the supremacy of the papacy

A Catholic church becomes a non-Catholic church when it denies the supremacy of the papacy, as do the Greek Schismatics:

Invalid and heretical *1917 Code of Canon Law*: “Canon 1325, § 2. ...If...he refuses to be subject to the Supreme Pontiff, or to have communication with the members of the Church..., he is a *schismatic*.”

Hence a Catholic church becomes a non-Catholic church when its priest teaches his congregation that the pope is not the supreme head of the Catholic Church on earth, whether he teaches this from the pulpit or lectures or the classroom or catechisms or newsletters or in any other way.

By denying or doubting a basic dogma

Basic dogmas consist of the basic dogmas of the solemn magisterium, the basic dogmas of the ordinary magisterium, and all of the natural laws. All of the natural laws are basic dogmas because all men know them by the law upon their heart.²

No evidence is necessary to incur guilt for doubting or denying basic dogmas

No Catholic person or Catholic church is excused from knowing, believing, and professing all of the basic dogmas of the Catholic Church. If they do not, then they are not Catholic:

St. Augustine, *City of God*, Chapter 21, 413 AD: “For that there shall be a bodily resurrection of the dead when Christ comes to judge the quick and the dead, we must believe if we would be Christians.”

St. Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon*, Book 26, 400 AD: “The reason of our believing Him [Jesus] to have been born of the Virgin Mary, is not that He could not otherwise have appeared among men in a true body, but because it is so written in the Scripture, which we must believe in order to be Christians or to be saved.”

² See RJMI article “Basic Dogmas of the Catholic Church.”

(See RJMI book *Basic Dogmas*.) Hence a Catholic church becomes a non-Catholic church, even if it calls itself a Catholic church and says it is submissive to the Roman Pontiff, when it teaches its congregation a heresy that doubts or denies a basic dogma. There is no excuse for ignorance when a so-called Catholic or so-called Catholic church doubts or denies a basic dogma.

For example, it is a basic dogma that Jesus Christ is God. Hence if a priest teaches his flock that Jesus is not God, then he is a public formal heretic and his church is a public formal heretical church and thus a non-Catholic church. If God were to allow such a church to remain Catholic, then the very basic dogmas of the Catholic faith would be undermined and lost, not only in the eyes of those who belong to that church but also to others who have access to them and their church. Such churches would make true Catholicism unrecognizable. For example, what true Catholic would dare call a church Catholic that teaches that Jesus is not God or Jesus is not the Messiah or Jesus did not die for our sins or Jesus did not rise from the dead!

By culpably doubting or denying a deeper dogma

Deeper dogmas consist of the deeper dogmas of the solemn magisterium and the deeper dogmas of the ordinary magisterium. A Catholic church becomes a non-Catholic church, even if it calls itself a Catholic church and says it is submissive to the Roman Pontiff, when it teaches its congregation a heresy that culpably doubts or denies any deeper dogma.

For a church to culpably doubt or deny a deeper dogma, the deeper dogma must first be made manifest to the priest and the flock and then the priest must teach the heresy to the flock. At that point the Catholic church becomes a non-Catholic church.

For example, the dogma that Jesus Christ has two wills is a deeper dogma that was first infallibly defined by Pope St. Leo the Great in 449. If there was a place in the world, such as Russia, that was isolated from all communication with the Holy See when this dogma was promulgated, then that place would not be culpable for doubting or denying this deeper dogma until it was made manifest to them and then they doubted or denied it. So if the Catholic priest taught his flock that Jesus Christ has only one will before the deeper dogma that Christ has two wills was made known to him and his flock, he would only be a material heretic and his church would only be materially heretical. Now if only the priest and not his flock was informed of the dogma and he then doubted or denied it, the priest alone would be a formal heretic but his church would not be a non-Catholic church until the deeper dogma was also made known to the flock and the priest then taught the heresy to his flock.

Just like a material heretic, a materially heretical church must be treated as if guilty until innocence is proved. Hence a material heretic is an alleged formal heretic until innocence is proved. And a materially heretical church is an alleged non-Catholic church until innocence is proved. If innocence due to inculpable ignorance is proved, then the priest was not a formal heretic and the church was not a non-Catholic church. However, if his and his flock's guilt due to culpable ignorance is proved, then the priest and flock were formal heretics and the church was a non-Catholic church. And in both cases, whether the priest and church are formally heretical or only materially heretical, Catholics who know of the priest and church's heresy are forbidden to be in religious communion with the priest or his church until the heretical priest and his heretical flock publicly abjure their heresy.

Let us take the example of a Catholic named Joseph who is allowed into Russia and knows of the dogma that Jesus Christ has two wills. He then attends Mass at a Catholic church that has never heard of this deeper dogma. Joseph hears the priest teach from the pulpit that Jesus Christ

has only one will. Joseph is then duty bound to denounce the priest as a heretic, show him the evidence, warn the flock, and not attend Mass at that church until the priest publicly abjures the heresy and professes the dogma in front of his flock. And Joseph cannot pray with any members of that church unless they abjure the heresy and profess the dogma and leave the church. Joseph must leave the church and not pray with the members of that church because Catholics are dogmatically banned from being in any kind of religious communion with all heretics, both formal heretics and material heretics.³ Now, this is the action Joseph must take if he wants to remain Catholic, regardless of whether or not the priest and church are materially heretical or formally heretical. And this is precisely how deeper dogmas are made known, enforced, and preserved in local Catholic churches. They are certainly not preserved by members of the church who know that a deeper dogma is being denied in the church and say or do nothing about it.⁴

The same applies to other deeper dogmas, such as the deeper dogma that Adam was made from the slime of the earth. If the priest and his flock are presented with credible and conclusive evidence which proves that the unanimous consensus of the Church Fathers teaches that Adam was created from slime and the priest then teaches his flock the heresy that Adam came from an ape, then the priest is a formal heretic and his church is formally heretical and thus both are not Catholic.

Conclusive evidence is necessary to incur guilt for doubting or denying deeper dogmas

Unlike basic dogmas which require no evidence to incur guilt, deeper dogmas require conclusive evidence to incur guilt. Conclusive evidence of ordinary magisterium deeper dogmas consists of an honest and credible record of the unanimous consensus of the Church Fathers and a convincing refutation of all credible counter arguments. If there is any legitimate dispute as to whether a doctrine is a deeper dogma of the ordinary magisterium or only an allowable opinion, then only an infallible papal decree can settle it. Some ordinary magisterium deeper dogmas are more open to legitimate dispute than others either because of lack of sufficient evidence from the Church Fathers or because of multiple interpretations of a teaching from a Church Father regarding the deeper dogma. It is presumed that the multiple interpretations are of good will and thus credible and not of bad will by forcing a meaning that clearly does not exist. Conclusive evidence of deeper dogmas of the solemn magisterium consists solely of the infallible papal decrees that defined the deeper dogmas. If there is any legitimate dispute over the meaning of a solemn magisterium deeper dogma, then only an infallible papal decree can settle it.

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³ See RJMI book *Heresy and Heretics*: All heretics must be treated as formal heretics.

⁴ See RJMI book *Faith before the Mass and Sacraments*: The Dogmatic Ban on Religious Communion with Heretics.