

BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION AND NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES
Summer, 2006

Valid Baptisms

The Catholic Church regards as valid the baptisms of the following:

Adventist
African Methodist Episcopal
African Methodist Episcopal Zion
American Catholic
Amish
Anglican
Apostolic Faith Church
Assembly of God
Baptist
Chinese Christian
Christian Church
Christian Fellowship
Christian Missionary and Alliance
Church of Christ
Church of the Brethren
Church of the Nazarene
Church of God
Classical Pentecostal
Congregational Church
Disciples of Christ
Dutch Reformed Church
Eastern Catholic Churches
Eastern Non-Catholic Churches (Orthodox)
Episcopalian
Evangelical Churches
Evangelical United Brethren
International Council of Community Churches
Liberal Catholic Church
Lutheran
Mennonite
Methodist
Missionary Hill Church
Moravian Church (some communities)
New Apostolic Church
Old Catholic
Old Roman Catholic
Polish National Catholic Church
Presbyterian Church
Reformed Churches

Seventh Day Adventists
Society of St. Pius X
Swedish Covenant
United Church of Christ
Wesleyan Church

This list is not exhaustive and can change without notice. It is also a sound practice to ask candidates what words were said at their baptism and confirm that water was used.¹

Anyone baptized in the above named churches or communions who wishes to enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church needs to make a profession of faith and receive the sacrament of confirmation according to the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA, 400-504). This occurs after a suitable period of catechesis has taken place.

Valid Confirmations

The Roman Catholic Church recognizes the sacrament of confirmation in all Eastern rite churches (Orthodox), the Old Catholic Church, the Polish National Catholic Church, and the Society of St. Pius X. When receiving someone from one of these churches or communions, they are not to be “re-confirmed” but simply make a profession of faith according to RCIA, 473-504.

Invalid Baptisms

The Catholic Church regards as invalid the baptism of the following churches or communions:

Apostolic Church
Bohemian Free Thinkers
Christadelphian
Christian and Divine Sciences
Church of Scientology
Jehovah’s Witness
Mason
Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)
Pentecostal Churches
People’s Church of Chicago
The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Salvation Army
Unitarian Universalist

Anyone wishing to join the Roman Catholic Church from the above congregations is treated as a catechumen, receiving suitable catechesis while entering the steps and periods of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA, 1-251). They are fully initiated at the Easter Vigil.

Eastern Rites in Communion with Rome

There are six liturgical rites in the Roman Catholic Church: Latin, Byzantine, Alexandrian, Antiochene, Chaldean, Armenian. There are more than twenty churches² which practice these rites, all of which are in communion with Rome. If any member of the above rites wishes to join the Latin rite, they would not become “candidates for full communion” because **they are already in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.**

A transfer of rite normally requires permission of the Holy See. Such a transfer is not to be treated under any circumstances as part of the RCIA. When a husband or wife are of different rites, one may change to the rite of the other. If the marriage should end, the person who changed rites may return to their original rite.

Eastern Rites not in Communion with Rome

Anyone from an Eastern rite not in communion with Rome who wishes to enter communion with Rome does not become a Latin rite catholic. Instead, they become a member of the ritual rite indicated by their baptism. For example, a Greek Orthodox person becomes a Greek Catholic; a Syrian Orthodox person becomes a Syrian Catholic. This occurs regardless of who receives them into full communion. A Latin rite priest receiving a Greek Orthodox person into full communion does not make that person a Latin catholic. It makes them a Greek Catholic.

The Roman Catholic Church recognizes all of the sacraments of the Eastern rites, regardless of whether they are in communion with Rome or not. This includes the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. Members of Eastern rite churches who have been confirmed, even as infants, are never reconfirmed. After a suitable period of catechesis, they simply make a profession of faith.³

Children

Children of parents who are received into the church need special consideration. If they are not baptized and they are under the age of reason (7), they may be baptized and enrolled into parish formation with children their own age to receive confirmation and Eucharist. If they are older, they enter the catechumenate for a suitable period of time which should be more than one year and are fully initiated at the Easter Vigil. Regardless of who baptizes them, children retain the rite of their parents.

Children of adults received into the Church who are under the age of reason and are validly baptized in another communion do not need to make a public profession of faith. They should be included in the parish religious education program and sacramental preparation with their peers.

At the time of first Communion, they will make a profession of faith with their fellow first communicants. It is **not** necessary for them to add the statement found in RCIA, 491. It should be noted in the first Communion registry that they have made their profession of faith. All pertinent information about their baptism should also be noted in the baptismal registry with a notation that they made their profession of faith at first Communion, including the date.

¹ “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Water must be poured over the flesh of the person.

² The following are Eastern rites which are in communion with Rome: Armenian, Bulgarian, Byelorussian, Chaldean, Coptic, Ethiopian, Greek-Melkite, Hellenic Byzantine Rite, Hungarian Greek Catholic, Italo-Greek and Albania, Krizevsky (Yugoslavian, Croatian, Russine, Macedonian, Ukranian), Latin, Malabar, Malankar, Maronite, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Byzantine-Catholic USA, Slovak Greek Catholic, Syrian and Ukranian. **Note that several have very similar names to Eastern churches that are not in communion with Rome.**

³ In the case of Eastern Christians who enter into the fullness of the Catholic communion, no liturgical rite is required, but simply a profession of Catholic faith, even if such persons are permitted, in virtue of recourse to the Apostolic See, to transfer to the Latin rite. (RCIA, 474)