

VALID-INVALID BAPTISMS

VALID: The following is a list of baptisms which are considered **valid**, as both water (*pouring, sprinkling, or immersing the one baptized*) and the Trinitarian formula (*"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"*) are used. Also, the minister must intend to do what the Church does when baptizing.

- All Eastern non-Catholics (including all Orthodox churches)
- Adventist Valid Baptism
- African Methodist Episcopal
- Amish/Mennonite
- Anglican / Church of England
- Assembly of God
- Baptists
- Chinese Catholic Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Chinese Christian
- Christian and Missionary Alliance
- Christian Fellowship
- Church of the Brethren
- Church of Christ
- Church of God
- Church of the Nazarene
- Community of Pope Pius X (Lefebvre) Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Congregational
- Disciples of Christ
- Dutch Reformed
- Eastern Non-Catholics (Orthodox) Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Episcopal
- Evangelical
- Evangelical Church of Covenant
- Evangelical United Brethren
- International Council of Community
- Liberal Catholic
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Mennonite
- Missionary Hill
- Moravian

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- New Apostolic Church
- Church of the Nazarene
- Old Catholic
- Old Roman Catholic
- Orthodox (see Eastern above) Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Polish National
- Presbyterian
- Reformed
- Seventh Day Adventist
- United Church
- United Church of Canada
- United Church of Christ
- United Reformed
- United Church of Australia
- Waldensian
- Zion

DOUBTFUL: The following communities have baptismal practices which are not uniform and are considered to be **doubtful**, requiring an investigation into each case. Some of their communities have valid baptism, others do not.

- ☒ Mennonite
- ☒ Moravian
- ☒ Pentecostal
- ☒ Seventh Day Adventist

INVALID: The following is a list (albeit incomplete) of baptisms considered to be **invalid**, due to a number of reasons.

- All non-Christian groups and communities (Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Baha 'I, Vedanta Society)
- Amana Church Society
- American Ethical Union
- American (United American) Catholic Valid Baptism/Confirmation doubtful
- Apostolic Church ("Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God")
- Apostolic Faith Mission
- Bohemian Free Thinkers
- Baha'I Faith
- Brethren
- Children of God ("The Family")
- Christadelphians

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- Christian Community (disciples of Rudolph Steiner)
- Christian and Missionary alliance
- Christians of Universalist Brotherhood
- Church of Christ, Scientist (“Christian Scientists”) – **no baptism**
- Church of Divine Science
- Church of David’s Band
- Church of Illumination
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (“Mormons”) – **as of 2001**
- Church of Revelation
- Church of the New Jerusalem
- Church of the Scientology
- Erieside Church
- General Assembly of Spiritualists
- Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association
- House of David Church
- Iglesia ni Kristo (Philippines)
- Independent Church of Filipino Christians
- Jehovah’s Witnesses
- Masons / Freemasonry – **no baptism**
- Metropolitan Church Association
- New Church of Mr. Emmanuel Swedenborg
- National David Spiritual Temple of Christ Church Union
- National Spiritualist Association
- New Jerusalem Church (Swedenborg or “New Age” Church)
- Peoples Church of Chicago
- Pentecostal Churches
- Plymouth Brethren
- Quakers (“Society of Friends”) – **no baptism**
- Reunification Church (“Moonies”)
- Salvation Army
- Shakers (“United Society of Believers”) – **no baptism**
- **Some communities of Mennonites, Morovians, of the Plymouth**
- Spiritualist Church
- Swedenborg (New Age)
- Unitarians
- Universal Emancipation Church
- Word Harves

Determining Baptismal Validity by Church of Origin

The following has been compiled to assist you in determining the canonical status of your people. This list is not exhaustive. If you have questions, contact the Office for Divine Worship 213-637-7595

Eastern Churches in Communion with Rome

Baptism and Confirmation conferred in the Eastern Churches is always valid. It is sufficient to establish the fact that Baptism was administered. Valid Confirmation is always administered at the same time as Baptism. Usually, the child has also received First Communion at the time of Baptism. The Eastern Churches in Communion with Rome include:

The Alexandrian Rite

The Coptic Catholic Church

The Ethiopian Catholic Church

The Antiochene Rite (West Syrian)

The Malankara (Malankarese) Catholic Church

The Maronite Catholic Church

The Syrian (Syriac) Catholic Church

The Armenian Rite

The Armenian Holy Apostolic Church

The Chaldean Rite (East Syrian)

The Chaldean Catholic Church

The Syro-Malabar Catholic Church

The Byzantine Rite

The Melkite Catholic Church

The Byzantine Slovak Catholic Church

The Byzantine Ukrainian Catholic Church

The Albanian Catholic Church

The Byelorussian Catholic Church

The Bulgarian Catholic Church

The Greek Catholic Church

The Italo-Albanian Catholic Church

The Byzantine Yugoslav Catholic Church

The Russian Catholic Church

The Byzantine-Romanian Catholic Church

The Ruthenian Catholic Church

Eastern Churches in Communion with Rome continued

- Children who have celebrated the full initiation rite in the Eastern Church are to be further catechized concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist. The families should be encouraged to enroll them in the parish religious education program and to continue to bring their child to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

- If a person of any of the above rites wishes to join the Latin rite (Roman Catholic) they will need to obtain permission of the Holy See. This is to be done outside the RCIA. Please contact the Chancery for assistance in this matter.
- When a husband or wife is of a different rite, one may change to the rite of the other. If the marriage ends, the person who changed rites may return to their original rite.

Eastern Churches Not in Communion with Rome:

The initiation rites conferred by the Eastern Churches not in communion with Rome are considered valid rites. The churches included in this are any of the Orthodox Churches and the Assyrian Churches of the East (also known as the Nestorian Church).

- An individual who wishes to enter into the Roman Catholic Church from an Eastern Church not in communion with Rome does not become a Latin rite Catholic, but rather a member of the ritual rite indicated by their baptism. (E.g.: a Russian Orthodox becomes a Russian Catholic; a Syrian Orthodox a Syrian Catholic, and so on)
- The Roman Catholic Church recognizes all of the sacraments of the Eastern rites. A child receives all of the rites of initiation (Eucharist and Confirmation) when baptized so a person should never be reconfirmed. Instead, after catechesis, they would simply make a profession of faith (RCIA 474).

Christian Baptism:

It is important to read a baptismal certificate thoroughly. On occasion a certificate may read that the person has been baptized in the “holy catholic church”. This does not mean that they have been baptized Roman Catholic.

The Roman Catholic norm for valid baptism must follow the proper matter and form. The “matter” is water baptism by immersion or pouring. The “form” is the Trinitarian formula (canons 849, 850; RCIA 226). Always ensure that this has been followed.

If the rituals or established customs of a church or community prescribe baptism by immersion, pouring, sprinkling together with the Trinitarian formula (in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit), doubt can only arise if it happens that the minister did not observe the regulations of his or her own church or community.

CONSIDERATIONS

If an individual is from a church with a valid baptism and they wish to enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, they will need to make a profession of faith and receive the sacrament of Confirmation after a suitable period of catechesis. (RCIA, 400-504)

Individuals from a Church with an Invalid Baptism

If an individual is from a church with an invalid or no baptism and they wish to enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, they will be treated as a catechumen and will need to enter into the steps and periods of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. They are fully initiated at the Easter Vigil. (RCIA, 1-251)