

SECTION ONE

**PASTORAL POLICIES FOR THE  
PREPARATION FOR AND  
CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS**

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Prayer, and the book of the Gospels are not proper except for those who have received no Christian instruction and formation.

It is preferable that reception into full communion not take place at the Easter Vigil lest there be any confusion of such baptized Christians with the candidates for Baptism, possible misunderstanding of or even reflection upon the sacrament of Baptism celebrated in another Church or ecclesial community, or any perceived triumphalism in the liturgical welcome into the Catholic Eucharistic community (National Statutes 33). In fact, their reception can occur at any time during the year, though a Sunday or Easter season are preferred liturgical times.

Nevertheless if there are both catechumens to be baptized and baptized Christians to be received into full communion at the Vigil, for pastoral reasons and in view of the Vigil's being the principal annual celebration of the Church, the combined rite is to be followed: "Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation and of the Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church". A clear distinction should be maintained during the celebration between candidates for sacramental initiation and candidates for reception into full communion; ecumenical sensitivities should be carefully respected. (National Statutes 34)

The celebration of the Sacrament of Penance with candidates for reception into full communion is to be carried out at a time prior to and distinct from the celebration of the Rite of Reception. As part of the formation of such candidates, they should be encouraged in the frequent celebration of this sacrament. (National Statutes 35)

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## **DIVISION D    RELATED ISSUES WITH THE RCIA**

### **A    Validity of Baptism in Separated Christian Communities.**

Christians other than Eastern Christians: Baptism in other Christian Churches is presumed valid by Roman Catholics and any practice which might be interpreted as "re-baptism" must be avoided. (C.845) Baptism by immersion, pouring or sprinkling, together with the trinitarian formula, is of itself valid. In determining the validity of the Baptism conferred in other Christian communions, account must be taken of matter, form and sufficient intention. (EGD p. 4)

Matter and Form: Baptism by immersion, pouring or sprinkling, together with the Trinitarian formula (in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit), is of itself valid. (C.849, 854) (With regard to all Christians, consideration should be given to the danger of invalidity when Baptism is administered by sprinkling, especially, of several people at once). Therefore, if the rituals and liturgical books or established customs of a church or community prescribe one of these ways of baptizing, doubt can only arise if it happens that the minister does not observe the regulations of his own community or church. What is

necessary and sufficient, therefore, is evidence that the minister of Baptism was faithful to the norms of his own community or church.

For this purpose, generally, one should obtain a written Baptismal certificate with the name of the minister. In many cases, the other community may be asked to cooperate in establishing whether or not in general or in particular cases a minister is to be considered as having baptized according to the approved ritual.

Faith and Intention: Sufficient intention is to be presumed in the minister who conferred the Baptism unless there is a serious reason to question the desire "to do what Christians do." (EGD p. 4)

The application of the Matter: Where doubt arises about the application of the matter, both reverence for the sacrament and respect for the ecclesial nature of the other communities demand that a serious investigation of the community's practice and/or the circumstances of the particular Baptism be made before any judgment is passed on the validity of a Baptism by reason of its manner of administration.

When, because of a serious doubt, conditional Baptism is conferred, the meaning of and the reason for the conditional Baptism should be explained as well as the fact that it is not a re-baptism. Further, the Baptism should be administered privately with a minimum of notice in the simple form. (EGD p. 4; RCIA n. 7; C.869)

Information concerning validity of Baptism of non-Catholic churches and communities:

Note: Many non-Catholic churches and communities have a dedication ceremony or other ceremony which is not a Baptism. If the church has a dedication ceremony, Baptism is generally not conferred until the age of reason or until the approximate age of 13.

Religion	Description
Adventists	Water Baptism is by immersion with the Trinitarian formula. Baptism is given at the age of reason. A dedication ceremony is given to infants. The two ceremonies are separate.
African Methodist Episcopal	Baptism with water by sprinkling, pouring, or dunking. Trinitarian form is used. There is an open door ceremony which is not Baptism.
Amish	This is coupled with Mennonites. No infant Baptism. The rite of Baptism seems valid.
Anglican	Valid Baptism.
Apostolic Church	An affirmative decision has been granted in one case involving "Baptism" in the apostolic church. The minister baptized according to the form found in the second chapter of the Act of the Apostles, and not St. Matthew. The form used was: "We baptize you into the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive a gift of the Holy Ghost." No Trinitarian form was used.
The Assembly of God	The dedication ceremony is possible. Infants are not customarily baptized. Baptism through water takes place when a person is mature enough to understand its implications. The method of Baptism is not outlined, but appears valid.
Baptists	No infant Baptism. There is a ceremony of dedication. Valid Baptism takes place at the approximate age of 13.
Evangelical United Brethren	Members are not received into this church unless they have been baptized. Assurance of Baptism is required before membership is extended. There is a dedication ceremony. Baptism by water seems valid and is generally done by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling. The Trinitarian form is used.

Religion	Description
Church of the Brethren: (Formerly call Dunkers)	Baptism is made by triple immersion. The formula in Matthew is used. Valid Baptism.
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter - Day Saints (Mormons)	According to a decision of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: The Catholic Church does not recognize the baptism of Mormons due to theological differences on the Trinity (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 6/2001).
Church of God	There is a public baby dedication with no sacramental significance. Baptism is conferred later by immersion and with a the Trinitarian formula. Baptism is conferred when the individual asks for it. Valid Baptism.
Christian and Missionary Alliance	No belief in infant Baptism, but only to those who give evidence of repentance and new birth. Baptism is seldom conferred before the age of 12. It is conferred by immersion. It is given upon the personal confession of Christ as the Savior of this person. The formula is not given.
Christian Scientists	The mother church of all Christian Science Churches states: "Baptism is an individual spiritual experience. It is not a religious rite or ceremony performed by an ordained minister or priest." The textbook states that it is purification by spirit. A letter from the board of directors states there is no Baptismal ritual in the Christian Science Movement. In other words, they have no true Baptism.
Church of Divine Science	Apparently invalid Baptism. The ceremony is a christening ceremony, but not one of Baptism. There is no change brought about in the person who is blessed. The church does not believe in original sin, so that the child is blessed only when received into the church.
Congregational Church	Valid Baptism.
Disciples and Christians	There is a dedication service; no infant Baptism; Trinitarian formula used in Baptism by immersion at an older age. Valid Baptism. These churches are sometimes known as the Disciples of Christ.
Episcopalians	Valid Baptism.
Evangelical Churches	Valid Baptism.
Jehovah's Witnesses	Water is used but no Trinitarian formula. Baptism is invalid.
Lutheran Church	Valid Baptism.
Methodist Church	Valid Baptisms.
Liberal Catholic Church	Apparently valid Baptism with respect to matter and form.
Masons	No Baptism.
Mormons	See above, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.
Church of the Nazarene	Infants are baptized or dedicated according to the wish of the parents. The form is Trinitarian. The matter is not mentioned. The dedication ceremony is not Baptism. The adult Baptisms are valid.
Old Catholics	Valid Baptism.
Pentecostal Churches	Baptism is considered necessary for salvation and is done by immersion. Because a Unitarian formula is used rather than Trinitarian, baptism is considered invalid.
Peoples Church of Chicago (Doctor Bradley)	Doctor Bradley states that the doctrine of his church on Baptism is that it is a naming ceremony, a dedication and consecration of the child, and a commitment of the parents by teaching and example to help the child grow in knowledge and love of God. It is not absolutely necessary for salvation. Water is used, but only the name of God the Father is mentioned in the formula. Hence, baptism is considered invalid.
Philippine United Methodist Church	Valid Baptism
Philippine United Church of Christ	Valid Baptism
Philippine Episcopal Church	Valid Baptism

Religion	Description
Philippine Independent Church	aka: Iglesia Catolica Filipins Independiente; Iglesia Catolica Apostolica Filipina Independiente or the Philippine Independent Catholic Apostolic Church; Iglesia Aglipayana or Aglipayan Church; Iglesia Catolica Aglipayana or Aglipayan Catholic Church; Iglesia Independiente Aglipayana or Aglipayan Independent Church locally founded by Rev. Isabelo de los Reyes, Sr.: Valid Baptism
Philippine Independent Church of Fillipino Christians	Not a recognized church of Iglesia Filipina Independiente, hence, baptism is considered invalid
Philippine IEMELIF Church or Iglesia Evangelica Metodista	also known as the Evangelical Methodist Church, a Filipino indigenous church: Valid Baptism
Philippine Lutheran Church	Valid Baptism
Philippine Iglesia Unida Ekyumenikal or UNIDA Ecumenical Church	Valid Baptism
Philippine Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches	Valid Baptism
Polish National Church	Valid Baptism.
Presbyterian Church	Valid Baptism.
Quakers	Enrollment on Sunday School rolls does not mean Baptism. The Friends Church does not observe Baptism as an outward rite, but rather an inward work of God. There are no Baptismal records. Baptism is spiritual, and "in no way strengthened by the application of water." The Quakers are sometimes called the Society of Friends. Since no water is used, there is no valid Baptism.
Reformed Churches	Apparently valid Baptism.
Salvation Army	No baptism
United Church of Christ	(Congregationalist, Evangelist and Reformed Church) Valid Baptism.
Unitarian Universalist Association (Church)	Universalists and Unitarians voted to merge in 1960. There is a denial of the Trinity and the Divinity of Jesus. No valid baptism in either church
Unity Church of Christianity (Houston)	Invalid Baptism due to faulty form.

### **B** Validity of Confirmation in Separated Christian Communities.

Eastern Christians (Orthodox) and those equated with Eastern Christians: Their confirmation is held as valid, hence, the candidate is not re-confirmed. (C.845)

Non-Eastern Christians (e.g. Protestants): Some ecclesial communities have a confirmation rite (ex. Episcopalians and Lutherans). These are not held as valid in the Catholic Church and so candidates from these churches are to be confirmed.

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## **DIVISION E RCIA: COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **A** Introduction

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is an important development of Vatican Council II which has renewed the practice of the early Church and energized parish