

**Looking for Answers –
Explore What The Catholic Church Really Teaches –
Part 14**



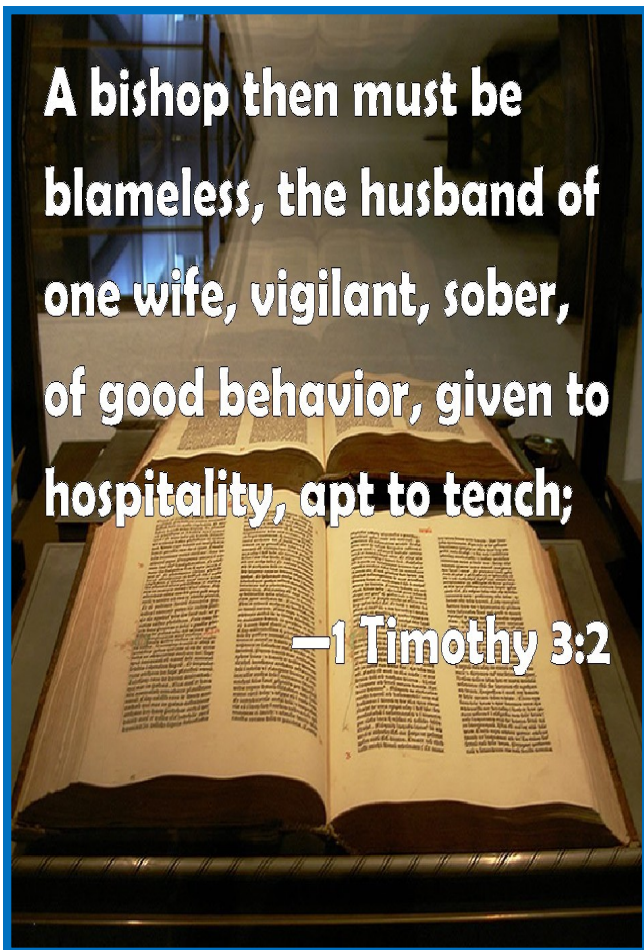
Question:

Why don't Catholic priests marry? The Bible says that a bishop should be *blameless, the husband of one wife*, (1 Timothy 3:2) which certainly indicates that Christ approves of marriage for the Christian clergy.

Answer:

Catholic priest do not marry because, while Christ does indeed approve of marriage for the Christian clergy, He much prefers that they do not marry. He made this quite clear when He praised the Apostles for giving up *all* to follow Him, saying: *And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting.* (St. Matthew 19:27 – 29). The Apostle Paul explained why the unmarried state is preferable to the married state for the Christian clergy: *He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided.* (1 Corinthians 7:32 – 33).

In other words, matrimony is good – Christ made it one of the holy sacraments of His Church – but it is not conducive to that complete dedication which is incumbent upon those who submit themselves to another of Christ's holy sacraments – that of Holy Orders. Even so, the unmarried state of the Catholic priesthood is not an inflexible law – under certain conditions a priest may be dispensed from this law.



**A bishop then must be
blameless, the husband of
one wife, vigilant, sober,
of good behavior, given to
hospitality, apt to teach;**

—1 Timothy 3:2

to that complete dedication which is incumbent upon those who submit themselves to another of Christ's holy sacraments – that of Holy Orders. Even so, the unmarried state of the Catholic priesthood is not an inflexible law – under certain conditions a priest may be dispensed from this law.



Question:

The Bible says that after Christ was baptized *He came out of the water*, (St. Matthew 3:16) indicating that He was baptized by total immersion. Why doesn't the Catholic Church also baptize by total immersion instead of by pouring on the head?

Answer:

The Catholic Church usually baptizes by pouring: first, because water sufficient for total immersion is not readily obtainable in some localities; second, because total immersion would be cruel for babies, fatal for some sick people and impossible for some prison inmates; and third, because the Apostles baptized by pouring.

In the Didache, composed by the Apostles, the following procedure for Baptism is prescribed: *Pour water three times on the head in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*. The words *came out of the water* do not necessarily imply *total* immersion. They could just as well imply that Christ came up on the shore of the river Jordan after standing ankle-deep in the water.

This is not to say that the Catholic Church considers baptism by total immersion invalid – She simply does not consider it practical as a universal form.



Question:

Why does the Catholic Church baptize infants, who have no understanding of what is taking place?

Answer:

The Catholic Church baptizes infants because Christ wills it. He must will it because He said, *Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to Me*. (St. Matthew 19:14). According to the Apostle Paul, one cannot truly come to Christ except through Baptism. (Romans 6:3 – 4).

Christ must will it because the Apostles baptized *all the people* (St. Luke 3 – 2) and whole households (Acts of the Apostles 16:15, 1 Corinthians 1:16). Certainly *all the people* and whole *households* included infants. Christ must will it because He stated most emphatically that Baptism is a necessary prerequisite for salvation (St. John 3:5), and Jesus certainly desires the salvation of infants. He must will it because the primitive Christian Church, which had fresh, first-hand knowledge of His Will, baptized infants.

In the ancient catacombs of Rome the inscriptions on the tombs of infants make mention of their having been baptized. One such inscription reads: *here rests Archillia, a newly baptized; she was one year and five months old; died February 23rd*.

An unbaptized infant is not simply in a *natural* state; it is in the state of reprobation, living under the reign of Satan, with the sin of Adam *staining* its soul. Therefore infants should be baptized as soon as it is reasonably possible – usually within two or three weeks of birth.

When children grow up with Our Lord dwelling in their souls, they have a powerful protection against sin. Moreover, Our Lord can thereby draw children to a deep love for Himself at a very early age – as He did with St. Therese, the Little Flower, St. Maria Goretti, St. Dominic Savio, and Blessed's Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

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