

## Once Saved - Always Saved

The Catholic Church has always taught and encouraged its members to show their faith by the way they lived. That approach has never changed, and never will change. Catholic people, in every parish, monastery and convent, are supposed to continue living in the love of Jesus Christ and practicing their faith fervently as was done in the beginning in the church in Jerusalem.

*“All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the Temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the good will of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” ( Acts 2: 44- 47)*

Some Catholic people by the way they live seem to believe that they have a sure ticket to heaven because they were baptized Catholic. They don't make much effort to live in the love relationship with God, the family relationship with God, that they were given at baptism.

God loves us. We must live in a way that shows that we love God. We are saved by living in the love of God. God is a faithful friend to us always. We have been given the opportunity by God in Jesus Christ to begin living as his faithful friends in this world. At the end of our lives, if, by the way we are living, we are faithful friends to God, we will be allowed to enjoy a more perfect friendship and a deeper love relationship with God in heaven.

Many people who are not Catholic say, “I have been saved on such and such a date”. Then they continue to live after that, in immoral and unchristian ways. Do they really believe that everything is all right, between them and God forever, because they were baptized; or, at some time, they publicly proclaimed belief in Jesus Christ, as their Lord and Savior?

*“If the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, if he keeps all my statutes and does what is right and just, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of the crimes he committed shall be remembered against him; he shall live because of the virtue he has practiced. Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? Says the Lord God. Do I not rather rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live?*

*And if the virtuous man turns from the path of virtue to do evil, the same kind of abominable things that the wicked man does, can he do*

*this and still live? None of his virtuous deeds shall be remembered, because he has broken faith and committed sin; because of this, he shall die. You say, 'The Lord's way is not fair!' Hear now, house of Israel: is it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair? When a virtuous man turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. **But if the wicked man, turning from the wickedness he has committed, does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins which he committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.***"  
(Ezekiel 18: 21-28)

When we profess belief in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and are baptized, we have entered into an intimate relationship of love and truth, with God in Jesus Christ. We must continue to live in that relationship, and persevere in the Christian life of love and truth, in order to be saved.

We must not presume, as some are doing, that God is so merciful that anyone who, even only is baptized, or says at some time in life, that he or she believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, will be saved regardless of what ever they do, good or bad, after that. **God is merciful and forgiving to the repentant sinner** who is trying, at the end of his life, to live the life he was called to live by Jesus Christ. **God is not permissive.** In the Holy Bible, **we will never find Jesus condoning sin.** He warns us to avoid sin, and when we fail, return to the good Christian life as repentant sinners, pleading for his mercy and forgiveness.

*"Be on guard so that your hearts and not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and **that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap.** For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and **to stand before the Son of Man.**"* (Luke 21:34-36 )

*"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it empty, swept ,and put in order. Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; **and the last state of that person is worse than the first.** So it will be also with this evil generation."* (Matthew 12:43-45)

*“My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another , you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner’s soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” (James 5:19-20)*

*“For if , after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them.” (2 Peter 2:20-21)*