

# Once a Priest . . . It's Forever

## A. Biblical:

1. Psalm 110:4= The Lord has sworn and will not waver: "You are a priest forever . . . ."
2. Heb 5:6 = Just as he says in another place: "You are a priest forever according . . . ."
3. Heb 7:17 = For it is testified: "You are a priest forever according to the order of . . . ."

## B. Catechism of the Catholic Church:

4. CCC #1582 = as in the case of Baptism and Confirmation this share in Christ's office is granted once for all. The Sacrament of Holy Orders, like the other two, confers an indelible spiritual character and cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily.
5. CCC #1583 = It is true that someone validly ordained can, for grave reasons, be discharged from the obligations and functions linked to ordination, or can be forbidden to exercise them; but he cannot become a layman again in the strict sense, because the character imprinted by ordination is for ever. The vocation and mission received on the day of his ordination mark him permanently.

## C. Code of Canon Law of Roman Catholic Church

6. Can 976 = Any priest, even though he lacks the faculty to hear confessions, can validly and lawfully absolve any penitents who are in danger of death, from any censures and sins, even if an approved priest is present.
7. Can 986 § 2 = In an urgent necessity, every confessor is bound to hear the confessions of Christ's faithful and in danger of death every priest is so obliged.
8. Can 844§2. Whenever necessity requires it or true spiritual advantage suggests it, and provided that danger of error of indifferentism is avoided, the Christian faithful for whom it is physically or morally impossible to approach a Catholic minister are permitted to receive the sacraments of penance, Eucharist and anointing of the sick from non-Catholic ministers in whose these sacraments are valid.

## D. Dominus Iesus (August 6, 200) Congregation for the doctrine of the Faith

9. Article 17 Sentences # 2 & 3 = The Churches which, while not existing in the perfect communion with the Catholic Church, remain united to her by means of the closest bonds, that is, by **apostolic succession** and a **valid Eucharist**, are true particular Churches (cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree Unitatis Redintegratio, 14 and 15; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter Communio in notione, 17: AAS 85 (1993), 848). Therefore, the Church of Christ is present and operative also in these Churches, even though they lack full communion with the Catholic Church, since they do not accept the Catholic doctrine of the Primacy, which, according to the will of God, the bishop of Rome of Rome objectively has and exercises over the entire Church (cf. First Vatican Council, Constitution Pastor Aeternus: DS 3053-3064; Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, 22).