

The New Catholic Integralism: True or False?

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Catholic Integralism Defined

1. *Natural Authority*: God authorizes a state to advance the natural common good G of a community C .
2. *Supernatural Authority*: God authorizes the church to advance the supernatural common good S of all baptized persons in C . [and to preach the Gospel to the rest]
3. *Supernatural Sovereignty*: to advance S , the church may mandate state policies P backed by civil penalties E that advance S directly (i.e., not merely through advancing G), without excessively undermining G , or S in some other respect.

The Symmetry Argument for Catholic Integralism

- ❖ *Natural Goods*: These are basic goods that have their own worth. Ex. friendship.
- ❖ *Supernatural Goods*: Basic goods grasped with revelation. Ex. salvation.
- ❖ *Promoting Goods*: creating environments within which one can choose or receive them.
- ❖ In the case of supernatural goods, one can hinder hindrances to the reception of grace.

Symmetry Argument

1. States should promote natural goods (natural law premise).
2. If states should promote natural goods, they should promote supernatural goods (symmetry conditional).
- C. States should promote supernatural goods (proto-integralist conclusion).

Why Accept the Symmetry Conditional?

- a. Supernatural goods outweigh mere natural goods. For example, receiving the Eucharist trumps reading a novel, and eternal salvation trumps worldly fame.
- b. Supernatural goods grant eternal life. In heaven, we enjoy natural goods forever.
- c. Supernatural goods can heal our moral sight by bestowing God's grace upon us. With grace, we can better pursue natural goods.

Bottom line: integralism treats goodness symmetrically, which makes it attractive.

The Justice Argument Against Catholic Integralism

- ❖ *Religious ends*: the spiritual ends of the person and community. Ex. Supernatural virtue.
 - ❖ *Religious coercion*: coercion meant to achieve spiritual ends.
 - ❖ *Religious freedom*: immunity from coercive restrictions on the free pursuit of spiritual ends.
 - ❖ *Baptism*: cleanses original sin, brings one into the church, imparts sanctifying grace, etc.
- ❖ Catholic Integralism on Religious Liberty
- The state must never coerce the unbaptized for religious ends.

- The state **may coerce** the baptized for religious ends.
- ❖ Mainstream Catholicism
 - The state must never coerce the unbaptized for religious ends.
 - The state **must never** coerce the baptized for religious ends.
- ❖ **The Baptism Puzzle:** How could baptism change our right to religious freedom?
- ❖ The Justification of Religious Freedom in Mainstream Catholicism
 - John's Dignity → Right of Religious Freedom
 - Suppose John undergoes baptism.
 - John's Dignity still → Right of Religious Freedom
 - Baptism does not mar our dignity or the liberties it grounds.
 - Rationales for freedom don't change.
- ❖ The Integralist Argument Against the Catholic Mainstream
 - Grant that Dignity → Right of Religious Freedom of the Unbaptized.
 - Claim 1: Baptism puts one under the legal authority of the Church (no dignity violation).
 - Claim 2: The Church can authorize the state to coerce the baptized (no dignity violation).
- ❖ Against Claim 2: The Authorization Problem
 - Assume Claim 1 holds, admitting we don't know why. Some say Claim 1 is dogma.
 - Then, if Claim 2 holds, we vindicate the integralist position.
 - *So, can the Church authorize states to physically coerce the baptized for religious ends?*
 - No, the Church only has the authority to use spiritual coercion, not physical.
 - **The Church cannot give the state a power it does not have.**
 - But spiritual coercion is akin to physical coercion—authority transfers?
 - The Church sharply distinguishes the two. They're rather dissimilar.
 - But the Church has the right to physically coerce the baptized. Why?
 - It is a *perfect society*; with all the authority it **needs** to pursue its mission.
 - Priests using physical violence on their flock seems to violate the Gospel.
 - Natural law constrains the Church's means. It can't torture to save souls.
 - If natural law protects religious liberty, as *DH* teaches, perfect societies lack the right to physically coerce for religious ends.
 - The dispute boils down to explanatory priority: natural law or perfect society.
 - *DH argument:* no state has the right to use coercion for religious ends.
 - If so, even Church-authorized states cannot coerce for religious ends.
 - **The Church cannot give the state a power the state cannot receive.**

Bottom line: integralism permits religious coercion that violates our dignity; it is unjust.

Question for you: do the arguments work? If they both work, which one wins out?