

# ‘CHARISMATIC CATHOLICS’:

Spotlighted by the nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett.

The nomination by **President Donald Trump** of **Judge Amy Coney Barrett** to replace the recently deceased, **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, on the Supreme Court of the United States, has certainly caught the attention of many in the United States and also around the world.

Many of those who are concerned at her nomination refer to her religious faith as the basis for their concerns. **Judge Amy Coney Barrett** apparently identifies as a ‘**CHARISMATIC CATHOLIC**’. So, what exactly is ‘**Charismatic Catholicism**’?

The link I will now give you takes you to an article written by **Mathew Schmalz** who is a Roman Catholic scholar teaching at a Jesuit college in Massachusetts. This is the link –

[https://churchleaders.com/news/383281-charismatic-catholicism.html?fbclid=IwAR0uOxhcAf8-vtTwzwvHdazkii\\_THJmjOJUjCgLf0o13TbnOL6-bueNCC\\_I](https://churchleaders.com/news/383281-charismatic-catholicism.html?fbclid=IwAR0uOxhcAf8-vtTwzwvHdazkii_THJmjOJUjCgLf0o13TbnOL6-bueNCC_I)

In the article we read

**Catholic Charismatics practice forms of Pentecostalism that embrace the belief that individuals can receive gifts of the Holy Spirit ... These Pentecostal teachings went on to influence the Catholic charismatic movement that initially took hold in the U.S. in the 1960s.**

In the officially approved **Pocket Catholic Dictionary** by **John A Hardon SJ** we read this under the heading ‘**Charismatic Movement**’ – ‘**The term “charismatic” is preferred in Catholic circles to “Pentecostal”, which is more commonly used by Protestant leaders of the movement.**’

A helpful and informative article dated 20 September 2020 and published by **Religion News Service**, a basically secular organisation that comments upon matters across the wide spectrum of world religions, can be found on this link –

<https://religionnews.com/2020/09/20/amy-coney-barrett-controversial-catholic-re-emerges-as-potential-supreme-court-pick/>

In the article we read

**Barrett, a Catholic who once clerked for Justice Antonin Scalia, was discussed as a potential Supreme Court nominee in 2018 for the seat that went to Justice Brett Kavanaugh, another Catholic. Trump told reported on Saturday that his next pick will be announced this week and that “it will be a woman.” Legal observers say there’s a good chance that woman is Barrett, who in addition to serving as a circuit judge is also a professor at the University of Notre Dame.**

This nomination also led to online Facebook activity prompted by a comment posted by one of my Facebook 'friends' and I want now to include here the comment he posted and a response to it by a **Michael Gerner** and my subsequent exchanges with **Mr Gerner**.

[J D J](#) (26 September 2020)

I just watched President Trump present Amy Barrett for SC Justice. Apparently, she's a Charismatic Roman Catholic. I don't know what to do with that theologically, but she seems highly qualified for the job

[Michael Gerner](#)

Hi J D J

Happy for you to PM me if you like, to clarify any theological queries you may have.

I have always lived in Northern Ireland, a place with an anti-Catholicism heritage. But the Christian circles I moved in broke the mold.

As a Christian with a Pentecostal evangelical background, I fellowshipped at University with some precious Charismatic Catholics. They were very dear brothers and sisters.

As a child, I was at the Gormanstown conference where large numbers of practising Catholic priests and nuns were baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. It was Acts 10:44-47 all over again.

[Cecil Andrews](#) (28/9/2020)

So, Michael, do 'Christian' Roman Catholics, Charismatic or otherwise deny that when a priest sprinkles some water on a candidate for baptism, that candidate is cleansed of original and actual sins, is 'born again' and is made a member of the one true church? Do they deny that, when consecrated by a priest, the bread and wine are transubstantiated in the Sacrifice of the Mass into the body blood soul and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and it thus perpetuates Calvary and is a propitiation for the sins of the living and the dead?

If they do deny those things, they are not Roman Catholics and are anathematised by their own church\*\*. If they don't deny those things, they are not Christians and are trusting in a false 'gospel' that is anathematised by God (see Paragraph 1129 of the Catholic Catechism and compare it to Galatians 1:6-9).

I speak from experience of moving for a number of years in such charismatic circles in Northern Ireland after my conversion and then came to see that genuine 'born again' Christians could not fellowship with those who still 'cling to' Rome's sacramental system of salvation.

I also speak from experience of fellowshipping with and ministering with many former Roman Catholics (including former priests) who, when truly converted, realised they could no longer stay within that religious system.

**\*\* Council of Trent: Session 7: Canon 4: 'If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation but are superfluous, and that without them or the desire of them men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of justification, though all are not necessary for each one, let him be anathema.'**

Cecil Andrews (3/10/20)

Michael, are you going to respond to the perfectly reasonable doctrinal questions I set before you? They were designed to show the completely opposing 'gospels' of Roman Catholicism and biblical Christianity but perhaps in your crusade for ecumenical unity 'truth' is 'flexible'.

Michael Gerner (3/10/20)

Hi Cecil Andrews

just noticed your question! Apologies for the delay in answering.

I believe you will be acquainted with Acts 10 and Acts 11:1-18. Do you think Cornelius and his friends had correct doctrine?

Cecil Andrews (3/10/20)

Michael, I should be grateful if you would respond to the matters mentioned in my first post to you concerning supposed 'Christian' Roman Catholics that you have had personal experience of in the here and now.

Michael Gerner (3/10/20)

Cecil Andrews

dear brother, if you read Acts 10 and 11:1-18 as quoted in my reply you will see that I did respond.

Permit me to clarify. The Holy Spirit accepted Cornelius and his friends even though they did not have correct doctrine. **That was evidenced by the gift of tongues.**

As summed up in Acts 11: 17-18:

v17 So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?"

v18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life."

If you reread my original post, you'll see I testified that the Holy Spirit gave the gift of tongues to Catholic priests and nuns. I was faced with Acts 11:17 and, in that situation, I was not going to try to argue that God made a mistake.

Theologically, I believe they were accepted on the basis of faith in Christ (Romans 1:17). **A lot of the other added doctrinal stuff you cite** (which, by the way, I quite agree is incorrect) **appears secondary to the Lord.** I guess He's gracious that way. (**Cecil – Matthew 7:21-23 would appear to challenge that assertion**).

If it's any comfort to you, my observation is that God does over time wean people away from incorrect beliefs by opening their eyes to truths in His word. I just don't insist that people get their application of the Bible right first before God accepts them. It would appear that He agrees.

[Cecil Andrews](#) (4/10/20)

Michael, your acceptance of someone to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, despite incorrect doctrine, based upon their supposed ability to 'speak in tongues' is shall I say, alarming, as you must then accept that others who 'speak in tongues', (like Mormons, Hindus, occultists etc) have been regenerated.

I have already stated that my many brothers and sisters in Christ who were saved out of Roman Catholicism testify to a man (and woman) that saved Roman Catholics come away from that religion. If those priests and nuns you mention had truly received the Holy Spirit, they would have through time quit their vocations, especially the sin-pardoning, sacrifice-offering priests - did they? - 'testimonies' I have read from such show they became even more zealously entrenched in the false Roman sacramental system of salvation.

Paul was concerned about doctrine – if wrong it can pollute the gospel to the point of destroying it as he states in Galatians (despite those who push a supposed **New Perspective on Paul** which basically mirrors what you are advocating) and that is precisely what Roman Catholicism does as former RC William Webster states in 'Salvation, the Bible and Roman Catholicism'.

It is not Christian 'grace' to regard someone as a brother in Christ when they continue to align themselves with soul-damning doctrines and practices and to 'fellowship' with them.

[Michael Gerner](#) (5/10/20)

I cited genuine speaking in tongues as a scriptural precedent because it was accepted by Peter and the other believers in Acts 10:44-46 as a sign of salvation within the context of what God did with the heathen gentiles. Yes, there are other tests to bring to expose the fake. There was, of course, other evidence of salvation in the modern day instances I had in mind. But I note your citing of "incorrect doctrine" as ruling out the salvation of these people will block out any consideration of such evidence.

Correct doctrine is indeed highly important to the healthy growth of the church, but it is not an essential prerequisite to salvation. In fact, a correct understanding of Jesus develops in all Christians over time. The LORD is graciously pleased to accept all who come to Him by faith (Romans 1:17) and progressively sort out our doctrine later (Colossians 2:2). Let us not put the doctrine cart before the faith horse.

[For my concern is] that their hearts may be braced (comforted, cheered, and encouraged) as they are knit together in love, that they may come to have all the abounding wealth and blessings of assured conviction of understanding, and that they may become progressively more intimately acquainted with and may know more definitely and accurately and thoroughly that mystic secret of God, [which is] Christ (the Anointed One).

Colossians 2:2 AMPC

In the light of your comments I sadly conclude there is no point in continuing this discussion. I wish you well.

In the light of **Mr Gerner's** last comment I acknowledged it to him and told him I would address it in the article to be published on the subject (this article). A number of issues arise from his final comments to me and they are as follows –

1. He refers to **'genuine speaking in tongues as a scriptural precedent'** – that was true in **Acts 10** **BUT** what is claimed today to be **'genuine speaking in tongues'** and therefore a **BASIS** of accepting someone as a genuine believer irrespective of wrong 'doctrine' is **NOT** credible because the **'tongues'** of today are **NOT** similar to those of **Acts 10** as **Pastor John MacArthur** demonstrates clearly in the sermon text I provide the link for later on page 7 of this article. I acknowledge some conservative Pentecostal friends who claim to speak in **'tongues'** as genuine brothers and sisters in Christ, not on the basis of their **'tongues'**, but on the basis of their clear biblical understanding of the 'doctrine' of salvation being by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
2. **Mr Gerner** states that **'Correct doctrine ... is not an essential prerequisite to salvation'** and later he writes **'The Lord is graciously pleased to accept all who come to him by faith (Romans 1:17) and progressively sort out our doctrine later (Colossians 2:2). Let us not put the doctrine cart before the faith horse'**. Let's just 'back-up' and consider the 'priests and nuns' that **Mr Gerner** has referred to in his posts to me. These individuals believed that they were already true 'born again' Christians because of their sacramental observances prior to their experience of receiving a supposed gift of **'speaking in tongues'**. The truth is they were **NOT** and so, exercising what is clearly a **COUNTERFEIT** gift of **'tongues'**, is no basis of accepting them as genuine Christians **UNLESS** they subsequently renounce Rome's sacramental system of salvation and separate from that false religious system
3. I stated that some of those whose **'testimonies'** I had read showed that **'they became even more zealously entrenched in the false Roman sacramental system of salvation'**. Let me give one example. In the book **'Adventures in Reconciliation: 29 Catholic Testimonies'** there is the **'testimony'** of **Pat Collins** who is a **Vincentian priest** – and he it was who 'partnered with **J I Packer** in launching the Irish version of **'Evangelicals and Catholics together'** as you can read in my article on <https://www.takeheed.info/evangelicals-and-catholics-together-in-ireland/>

In the book **'Father' Collins** wrote – **'On Easter Sunday 1973 I was invited to attend a charismatic prayer meeting in the Gregorian University in Rome. I was deeply impressed by their singing in tongues ... I remember thinking, this is what I have been looking for, it is the Acts of the Apostles come alive'** (Cecil – I'm not aware of any biblical precedent of people 'singing in tongues' so this is clearly a counterfeit of 'biblical tongues') ... in February 1974 I was invited to attend a **Charismatic Conference** in Benburb Priory ... Rev Cecil Kerr ... from the Christian Renewal Centre ... gave an inspiring talk ... I told Cecil I was looking for a **NEW** awareness of God in my life ...

he began to pray for me, firstly in English, **then in tongues**. Suddenly and effortlessly I too began to **pray fluently in tongues**. I had been baptised in the Spirit ... all that happened **twenty-three years ago**. Since then I have come to a number of conclusions about Baptism in the Spirit ... whereas **one received the Holy Spirit in a sacramental way in BAPTISM-CONFIRMATION**, one received it in an experiential way as a result of the **Baptism in the Spirit**'. (pp 186-188)

This is unscriptural confusion of the highest order – according to **'Father' Collins** he has cited at least 3 methods/occasions of **'receiving'** the Holy Spirit – **'Baptism, Confirmation** and then a **Charismatic Baptism**' and all this after **23 years** of reflection on his part. **'Father' Collins** is still clearly wedded to the false Roman Catholic sacramental system of salvation and so, his claim to speak or perhaps even sing in **'tongues'**, is no basis for viewing him as a genuine believer and is no basis for Christian fellowship with him. He still proclaims and practices a **'gospel'** of **FAITH + RELIGIOUS RITUAL**, precisely the type of **'gospel'** that God anathematizes in **Galatians 1:6-9**.

4. **Mr Gerner** wrote – **'Let us not put the doctrine cart before the faith horse.'** In his epistles, the Apostle Paul often outlined correct **'doctrine'** before then going on to outline how our **'faith'** should work itself out in our lives (His letter to the Ephesian believers is a good example of this) . The evidence of saving **'faith'** will be demonstrated in how we live and witness for Christ because we **"walk by faith"** (**2 Corinthians 5:7**). If our **'faith'** is genuine our walk and witness will be biblical. Continuing to proclaim and practice a false sacramental system of salvation as **'Father' Collins** does, and also supposedly speaking in **'tongues'**, is no basis for accepting him as a fellow-Christian yet clearly it is likely that **Mr Gerner** would accept him as such.

In **Mr Gerner's** responses to me you see a classic example of **'experience'** trumping **'doctrine'**. This is precisely what Paul warned about when he wrote in **1 Timothy 4:1** – **"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly** (in stated, specific terms) **that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils"**.

This verse sets out clearly one of Satan's strongest tactics for subverting the truth of God's Word by attacking people on two fronts, rather like a pincer movement, namely through **'experiential error'** and **'doctrinal deviation'** and both of these elements are 'alive and well' and flourishing in **'Charismatic Catholicism'**.

I want now to simply direct readers to a number of articles that I believe are both relevant and helpful on this whole subject. The first is an article by **Bud Alheim of Pulpit and Pen** and is located on –

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2017/02/22/celebrating-charismatic-catholicism-as-if-they-dont-have-enough-to-worry-about/>

In the article we read

'The CCR (Catholic Charismatic Renewal) would combine charismania with the dangerous and defective doctrinal teachings of Rome ... the CCR found a particularly receptive audience in Latin America and maintains a substantial, though somewhat declining, presence there now ... One of the predominant figures in the Latin American CCR movement is Marcelo Rossi, a 49-year-old, Brazilian Catholic priest. A former aerobics instructor, Rossi is a charismatic Catholic rock star, selling millions of copies of "spirited sacred music" to adoring fans ... Curiously, one of Rossi's ambitions, in addition to his devotion to Mary and the rosary, was expressed during his 1997 meeting with Pope John Paul II. He sought to push back against the Protestantism to which the Catholic church was losing millions of adherents. Rossi's approach was to adopt some of the features of evangelical churches and incorporate them into a more modernized, spiritualized, and experientially emphatic Roman Catholic church. **The primary feature Rossi mimicked was the charismatic element.**

In my response to **Michael Gerner** I referred to the fact that he 'must then accept that others who 'speak in tongues', (like Mormons, Hindus, occultists etc) have been regenerated.' The text (and audio) of an extensive sermon on 'Speaking in Tongues' by **Pastor John MacArthur** can be accessed on this link –

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-61/speaking-in-tongues>

In the text we read

'Ecstatic speech is a part of many pagan religions in Africa, East Africa. Tonga people of Africa, when a demon is exorcised, sing in Zulu, even though they say they don't know the Zulu language. Ecstatic speech is found today among Muslims, Eskimos, Tibetan monks. It's involved in parapsychological occult groups. Did you know that the Mormons – even Joseph Smith himself – advocate speaking in tongues? It could be demonic.

Also, in my response to **Michael Gerner** I wrote that 'perhaps in your crusade for ecumenical unity 'truth' is 'flexible' and this theme of 'ecumenical unity' at the expense of scriptural truth is picked up on in a helpful article by **Roger Oakland** of 'Understands the Times' that is located on -

<http://www.understandthetimes.org/commentary/c34.shtml>

In Roger's article we read

It would seem to me that the "Holy Spirit" can be used as an ecumenical tool. The promise of a coming revival associated with the outpouring of the "Holy Spirit" (if it is a spirit that is poured out by "Mary"), is not the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Bible. In fact, it would be described as "another spirit" that leads to "another Jesus" and "another gospel".

Finally, this link will take you to helpful thoughts by **Dale Rudiger**, a former Roman Catholic and personal friend –

<https://xcjournal.org/the-errors-of-catholicism/charismatic-renewal/>

There we read these helpful observations

**'the movement has also created ecumenical fervour – the idea being that if Catholics can experience the second blessing, then Catholicism must be an acceptable form of Christianity. The Charismatic Renewal is helping to create a false and deceptive unity that is a characteristic of the end times (Mt. 24:24).'**

**Michael Gerner** would like to 'side-line' "**sound doctrine**" for he clearly views it as being unnecessarily divisive BUT in doing so he is completely at odds with the Apostle Paul whose many exhortations to be attentive to "**sound doctrine**" are liberally sprinkled throughout a number of his New Testament epistles.

Whilst **Judge Amy Coney Barrett** may well hold to admirable moral convictions that line up with the teaching found in God's Word, and that is to be welcomed, the litmus test of whether her faith is savingly genuine or not is to be found in where she stands on the questions on '**Baptism**' and '**The Sacrifice of The Mass**' that I put to **Michael Gerner**. Her answers on those issues would currently determine her eternal destiny and, the eternal destiny of others who claim to be '**Charismatic Catholics**', would also hinge on their answers to those questions.

**Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 6th October 2020**