

The Justice Argument Against Catholic Integralism

Kevin Vallier

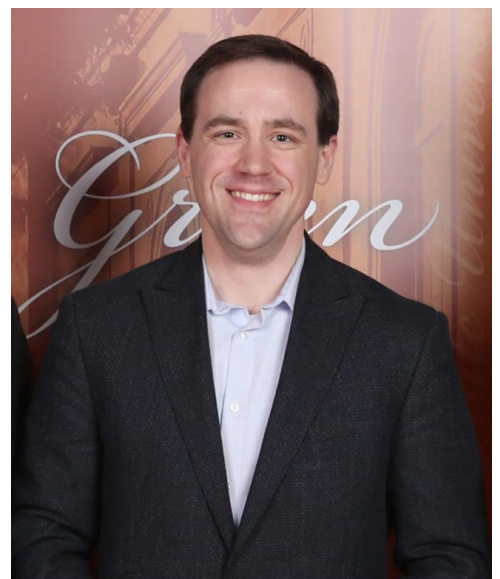
ABSTRACT

Catholic integralism claims that governments must secure the earthly and heavenly common good. God authorizes two powers to do so. The state governs in matters temporal, the Catholic Church in matters spiritual. Since the church has the nobler end of salvation, it may direct the state to help enforce church law.

The integralist adopts two seemingly conflicting norms of justice: (a) coercion into the faith is always unjust, but (b) coercion to keep the faith is just. But if religious coercion is wrong at the start of the Christian life, why is it permitted after that? The integralist answer is baptism. Baptism is a normative transformer: it transforms religious coercion from unjust to just.

My thesis is that baptism fails as a normative transformer. I critique Thomas Aquinas's approach to this question and then adapt gratitude, associative, and natural duty theories of political obligation to repair his argument. These strategies fail.

Kevin Vallier is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Bowling Green State University. He specialises in Political Philosophy and Ethics, and is the author of five books, most recently "Trust in a Polarized Age" (Oxford University Press)



DATE AND TIME

MELBOURNE
9:00 am, 2nd September

NEW YORK
7:00 pm, 1st September

SEMINAR HELD OVER ZOOM

Register at
tinyurl.com/DASSPP22

To join our Seminar email list or for other questions, please email dmitri.gallow@acu.edu.au.