

'I can't become Orthodox, because then you'll want me to give up living with my partner'.

No, we want you and your partner to enjoy the Divine blessing of Holy marriage so that your union will become spiritual as well as physical, and you will be joined legitimately as husband and wife.

'I can't become Orthodox, because you have to fast'.

You mean you reject Christ's sacrifice of fasting in the desert and His Gospel instructions about freeing yourself from demons through prayer and fasting?

'I can't become Orthodox, because some Sundays I won't be able to have a roast for lunch'.

You mean you have an all-important passion for meat?

'I can't become Orthodox, because I can't go to the pub on Saturday nights'.

You mean you are too weak to stop your drinking bouts?

'I can't become Orthodox, because the priest says that I should try to overcome sinful habits.

You mean your passions are stronger than your faith?

'I can't become Orthodox, because I don't believe in God'.

I understand. But how do you know? When you have been surprised or scared haven't you called out God's name? If you start searching now, you will find faith and then be able to become Orthodox. Seek and you will find.

'I can't become Orthodox, because my family will reject me'.

I understand you. But are you sure? In any case, Christ will not reject you.

'I can't become Orthodox, because I do not live near an Orthodox church'.

I understand you. Change your way of life, so that your priorities are based around the Church.

'I can't become Orthodox, because there's lots I don't understand'.

If you want to understand something, then begin by praying about it.

And the all-time top excuse for not becoming part of the Church:

'I can't become Orthodox, because you have to stand and pray'.

You mean you can't be bothered. At least this is not an excuse, but honest.

What more can we say than repeat the words of Christ?

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead (Luke 16, 31).

And one did, and still they will not.

(Adapted from an article by Fr Andrew Phillips)

40 Excuses for Not Joining the Orthodox Church

A message from:

St Patrick Orthodox Mission

Cnr Way Street & Brooklyn Tce, Kilburn SA 5084

<http://www.stpatrickrocor.com>

ph. 0466 720088

'I can't become Orthodox, because I was born Roman Catholic/Protestant'.

No, you weren't. You were born a pagan, like all of us. You were then conditioned by a set of ethnocentric cultural values. Look at the Apostles: they were born Jews, but they freely changed to Orthodoxy.

'I can't become Orthodox, because it's not like other Christian groups I know'.

For 2,000 years, billions of people have held to the Apostolic Faith and found salvation in the Orthodox Church. Are you so certain they were wrong?

'I can't become Orthodox, because you have saints'. Sadly, that is your loss. Don't you want to know the friends of Christ?

'I can't become Orthodox, because your way of taking communion is so unhygienic'.

Then why aren't Orthodox all constantly ill?

'I can't become Orthodox, because you don't have a Pope'.

You don't need a Pope; Christ is the Head of the Church.

'I can't become Orthodox, because you don't say that the Holy Spirit "proceeded from the Father and the Son"'.
Nor does the New Testament. See John 15:26.

Nor does the New Testament. See John 15:26.

'I can't become Orthodox, because you don't have purgatory'.

The Gospel never mentions this idea. The Latin term itself was first used at the end of the twelfth century.

'I can't become Orthodox, because you kiss icons'.

Don't you kiss members of your family? Don't you love Christ and those close to him? Are you not members of the family of Christ? Or are you a victim of Protestant scientism?

'I can't become Orthodox, because you have to confess'.

You mean you have no sins? Then give me your photograph and I will stick it on the iconostasis.

I can't become Orthodox, because Orthodox are sinners and argue among themselves'.

Yes, we know about ourselves, that we are sinners. We also think our Faith is important – that's why we argue, because we are not lukewarm and indifferent. And that's why we go to church and go to confession and communion, repent, read the Lives of the Saints and find healing for our arguments. You mean you do not know about yourself and your own need to repent?

'I cannot become Orthodox, because you don't sing our hymns'.

Why sing Victorian platitudes or chintzy choruses, when you can have ancient spiritual depth?

'I can't become Orthodox, because the choir sings badly'.

Then come and sing yourself and help improve it.

'I can't become Orthodox, because the services are always the same'.

You mean have never been to more than one Orthodox service in its entirety?

'I can't become Orthodox, because you can't take part in the services'.

You mean you have never tried praying?

'I can't become Orthodox, because I will no longer be free to change the Faith and pick from it what I want'.

You don't come to the Church to change the Orthodox Faith, you come to the Church to be changed by the Orthodox Faith. Or do you consider that you do not need changing?

'I can't become Orthodox, because I can pray anywhere, without ritual'.

And do you? If you can live without ritual, why then do you have a daily routine?

'I can't become Orthodox, because there's no difference between it and my present religion'.

Why hesitate then?

'I can't become Orthodox, because it won't help me'.

Correct. Nothing will help you, if you don't first make an effort to improve yourself.

'I can't become Orthodox, because you don't have the same calendar'.

No, it's you who don't have the same calendar.

'I can't become Orthodox, because it's not Western, it's Oriental'.

Then it's like Christ. He came from the Middle East. He wasn't Western and secular either.

'I can't become Orthodox, because I am Australian'.

I didn't know that 'Australian' is a religion.

'I can't become Orthodox, because there are so many 'ethnic' people in church'.

For racists and xenophobes. Christ also was born an 'ethnic'.

'I can't become Orthodox, because you are so diverse'.

That's why we are not boring.

'I can't become Orthodox, because the other people are different from me'.

Are you anti-social? Yes you are different from them, and they accept you.

'I can't become Orthodox, because the clergy wear beards'.

So did Christ.

'I can't become Orthodox, because women don't wear trousers in church and cover their heads. It's like Islam'.

Yes, like the Mother of God? Or do you think that she was a Muslim? Or do you mean that you have no sense of modesty?

'I can't become Orthodox, because men don't wear shorts in church'.

Nor did the Apostles and the saints and your ancestors, when they went to church. Why this need to distract others from prayer by your immodest way of dress?

'I can't become Orthodox, because the services are too long'.

You mean you are lazy?

'The services start too early and finish too late'.

See above.

'I can't be bothered'.

See above, but thank you for being honest.