

## Who Is a Real Catholic?

Tom Gallagher | May. 16, 2009 NCR Today

David Gibson's [Sunday Washington Post story](#) [1] offers an insightful and sober reflection on the question of "what it means to be Catholic." After much thoughtful analysis, he quotes Pope Benedict XV (15, not 16). Writes Gibson: "When Pius died, the conclave of 1914 elected Benedict XV, who immediately issued an encyclical calling on Catholics 'to appease dissension and strife' so that 'no one should consider himself entitled to affix on those who merely do not agree with his ideas the stigma of disloyalty to faith.' "

"There is no need of adding any qualifying terms to the profession of Catholicism," Benedict XV concluded. "It is quite enough for each one to proclaim 'Christian is my name and Catholic my surname.'"

And Gibson concludes: "If the Catholic Church had a bumper sticker, that could be it. And it means that the real dilemma for American Catholics today is not whether Notre Dame is Catholic, but whether we are."

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[1] <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2009/05/15/ST2009051503626.html>