

LEO XIII AND FREEMASONRY

No one can feel such implacable hatred for his worst enemies as the Evil One feels for the human race.

St John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, 6.13

We have dealt in recent papers on this website with *instrumental* causes of the evils that afflict the Church—the abdication of authority by Popes and bishops; the turning away from the Church’s perennial philosophy; the adoption of the Feminist ideology. We turn now to *principal* causes of these evils.

The first, and most frightful, of these is Freemasonry.

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Freemasonry is the collective name for an esoteric group of cults which became formalised around 1717 but, in truth, had their beginnings much earlier¹. It manifests characteristics which are offensive to God and degrading to man. Known to their followers as ‘the Craft’, these cults are the reincarnation of a heresy, almost as old as the Catholic Church, called Gnosticism.

Gnosticism springs from tendencies visible even in Apostolic times, but only appearing as a clearly definable heresy or group of heresies about the middle of the second century. During the three hundred years or so in which we see it opposing the Church of God, setting its pride of knowledge against the humility of faith, we find it taking a bewildering variety of shapes.²

The word, gnosticism, is derived from *gnosis*, the Greek word for knowledge. Gnosticism asserts that its followers possess esoteric (ie, hidden) knowledge of spiritual things.

For every candidate, the Initiation Ceremony implies that whatever academic or scientific learning he possesses, whatever philosophical ideas he holds, whatever religious creed he professes, prior to Initiation, there remains something more—

¹ Their *material* source was the old craft guilds formed to preserve and protect artisans; their *formal* source (that is, as heretical organizations) was the antipathy for the Church, which had always existed among evil men, given free rein following the Protestant revolt. Cf. Mgr George F Dillon in his *The War of Antichrist with the Church and Western Civilisation*, [M H Gill & Son, Dublin, 1885]. This work is reproduced, with a Preface by Rev. Denis Fahey, in *Grand Orient Freemasonry Unmasked*, Christian Book Club, Palmdale, California, 1950. His assessment of Freemasonry’s pre-history is at pp.11-19 of this latter book. See also, Walton Hannah, *Christian by Degrees*, Augustine Press, London, 1954, pp. 17-32 where he says, referring to Dr James Anderson, Presbyterian minister, one of two Protestant clergymen who formalised Freemasonry in England: *Anderson’s Constitutions eliminated almost all traces of Christianity from a previous Christian fraternity.*

² M. L. Cozens, *A Handbook of Heresies*, 1928; republished Sheed & Ward, 1974; 5th Impression, 1989, p. 20.

*indeed something vastly more—for him yet to learn and to which the Craft can help him.*³

This hidden, and superior, knowledge is rooted in that pride of the devil which says 'I will not serve'.

Freemasonry has been prohibited and condemned by the Church since 28th April 1738 when Pope Clement XII issued his Bull *In eminenti*, in which he said this—

[I]t has come to Our ears, and common gossip has made clear, that certain societies, companies, assemblies, meetings, congregations or conventicles called in the popular tongue Liberi Muratori or Francs Macons or by other names according to the various languages, are spreading far and wide and daily growing in strength; and men of any religion or sect, satisfied with the appearance of natural probity, are joined together, according to their laws and the statutes laid down for them, by a strict and unbreakable bond which obliges them, both by an oath upon the Holy Bible and by a host of grievous punishments, to an inviolable silence about all that they do in secret together. Now it is in the nature of crime to betray itself and to show itself by its attendant clamour. And so these aforesaid societies or conventicles have caused in the minds of the faithful the greatest suspicion, and all prudent and upright men have passed the same judgment on them as being depraved and perverted. For if they were not doing evil they would not have so great a hatred of the light. Indeed, this rumour has grown to such proportions that in several countries these societies have been forbidden by the civil authorities as being against the public security, and for some time now have appeared to be prudently eliminated.

The Evils Of Freemasonry

150 years later Pope Leo XIII analysed Freemasonry and set forth its associated evils in a number of encyclicals, including *Humanum Genus* (20. 4. 1884); *Praeclara Gratulationis Publicae* (20. 6. 1894); *Dall'alto Dell'apostolico Seggio* (15. 10. 1890); *Inimica Vis* (8. 12. 1892)—addressed to the bishops of Italy—and *Custodi Di Quella Fede* (8. 12. 1892), addressed to the Italian People. First, its insistence on secrecy and discipline—

*There are many things like mysteries which it is [their] fixed rule to hide with extreme care, not only from strangers, but from very many of their members also; such as their secret and final designs, the names of the chief leaders, and certain secret and inner meetings, as well as their decisions, and the ways and means of carrying them out. This is, no doubt, the object of the manifold difference among the members as to right, office, and privilege, of the received distinction of orders and grades, and of that severe discipline which is maintained.*⁴

Next, blind obedience—

³ W.L. Wilmshurst, *The Ceremony of Initiation; Analysis and Commentary*, W.H. Bean, Leeds, 1932, p. 4.

⁴ *Humanum Genus*, n. 9

... to be enrolled, it is necessary that the candidates promise and undertake to be thenceforward strictly obedient to their leaders and masters with the utmost submission and fidelity, and to be in readiness to do their bidding upon the slightest expression of their will; or, if disobedient, to submit to the direst penalties and even death itself.⁵

Dissimulation—

... with a fraudulent external appearance, and with a style of simulation which is always the same, the Freemasons, like the Manichees of old, strive, as far as possible, to conceal themselves, and to admit no witnesses but their own members. As a convenient manner of concealment, they assume the character of literary men and scholars associated for purposes of learning. They speak of their zeal for a more cultured refinement, and of their love for the poor; and they declare their one wish to be the amelioration of the condition of the masses, and to share with the largest possible number all the benefits of civil life.⁶

The submission, through fear, of its adherents

As a fact, if any are judged to have betrayed the doings of the sect or to have resisted commands given, punishment is inflicted on them not infrequently, and with so much audacity and dexterity that the assassin very often escapes the detection and penalty of his crime.⁷

Its recourse to naturalism as a supreme principle—

For its own part, it preaches the worship of nature and maintains that truth and probity and justice are to be measured and regulated by the principles of nature. In this way, as is quite evident, man is being driven to adopt customs and habits of life akin to those of the heathen, only more corrupt in proportion as the incentives to sin are the more numerous.⁸

Now, the fundamental doctrine of the naturalists, which they sufficiently make known by their very name, is that human nature and human reason ought in all things to be mistress and guide. Laying this down, they care little for duties to God, or pervert them by erroneous and vague opinions. For they deny that anything has been taught by God; they allow no dogma of religion or truth which cannot be understood by the human intelligence, nor any teacher who ought to be believed by reason of his authority.⁹

The insidiousness of its operations—

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *Praeclara Gratulationis Publicae*

⁹ *Humanum Genus*, n. 12

*It has already sallied forth from the hiding-places where it hatched its plots into the throngs of the cities... But what is most disastrous is, that wherever it has set its foot it has penetrated into all ranks and departments of the commonwealth, driven by the hope of obtaining, at last, supreme control.*¹⁰

Its resort to conspiracy —

*Its followers, joined together by a wicked compact and by secret counsels, give help one to another and excite one another to an audacity for evil things.*¹¹

And, the Masonic end —

*[T]he utter overthrow of that whole religious and political order of the world which the Christian teaching has produced, and the substitution of a new state of things in accordance with their ideas, of which the foundations and laws shall be drawn from mere naturalism.*¹²

According to one source—*Whoever is invited to join the Masonic family must undergo a rigorous initiation, including a three year apprenticeship during which one receives three degrees—apprentice, guild member and, finally, master of the lodge. All promotions are confirmed by secret vote. The title of master confers upon the member the right to speak in the temple.*¹³

The Masonic Imposition

It will assist to put the burden on the Masonic initiate in concrete terms.

He must take part in a quasi-religious ceremony in which he submits himself to another than Almighty God.

In the course of this ceremony, he must swear a series of oaths.

These oaths are twofold, 1) not to reveal Masonic secrets; and, 2) to obey without question his superiors in the Craft.

The oaths he must take are *blind*, that is, taken without the initiate having the slightest idea of their ambit—for the Masons hide their secrets even from their own—and he cannot know in advance what the secrets are that he will be asked to keep, or what will be asked of him by these superiors.

The oaths are administered under penalty of punishment, even death.

He becomes thereby, and remains thenceforth, the property of the Masonic lodge where he submits himself.

His obligation, once given, is, according to the Masonic rules, given for all time.

Let us consider these elements in turn.

¹⁰ *Praeclara Gratulationis Publicae*

¹¹ *Humanum Genus*, n.37

¹² *Humanum Genus*, n. 10

¹³ *Shroud of Secrecy, The Story of Corruption Within The Vatican*, by 'The Millenari', Ontario, 2000, p.174. This work is the English translation by Ian Martin of *Via col vento in Vaticano*, Kaos edizioni Milano, 1999. Elsewhere the three degrees are described as *Apprentice, Fellow-Craft* and *Master Mason*.

First, *latria*, that is, worship, is owed to Almighty God alone. The First of the Commandments is: *I am the Lord Thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me.* The act of submission to some man, or group of men, purporting to stand for some higher and esoteric principal, and not directed to Almighty God, is worship of a false god and in breach of this Commandment.

Next, an oath is a religious act¹⁴, that is, an act of worship, which calls on God to witness the truth of a statement made or the fulfilment of a promise. The Second Commandment is: *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain.* St Thomas teaches—

An oath is in itself lawful and commendable... Yet an oath becomes a source of evil to him that makes evil use of it, that is, who employs it without necessity and due caution. For if a man calls God as a witness, for some trifling reason, it would seemingly prove him to have but little reverence for God... Now two conditions are required for the good use of an oath. First, that one swear, not for frivolous, but for urgent reasons, and with discretion... Secondly, as regards the point to be confirmed by oath, that it be neither false nor unlawful, and this requires both truth, so that one employ an oath in order to confirm what is true, and justice, so that one confirm what is lawful. A rash oath lacks judgment, a false oath lacks truth, and a wicked or unlawful oath lacks justice.

...

[I]f this thing [to be done] be such as not to be in his power, his oath is lacking in judgment of discretion: unless perchance what was possible when he swore become impossible to him through some mishap... If on the other hand, it be something that he can do, but ought not to, either because it is essentially evil, or because it is a hindrance to a good, then his oath is lacking in justice: wherefore an oath must not be kept when it involves a sin or a hindrance to good. For in either case its result is evil¹⁵.

Typical of the oaths taken by the candidate for Freemasonry in England and America is the one that follows. It is taken from a Masonic website. There are other examples of such oaths available¹⁶.

I,, in the presence of the great architect of the universe hereby swear most solemnly and sincerely upon the holy script, that I will always hide, conceal and never reveal any part or parts, point or points of the secrets of the mysteries belonging to free and accepted Masonry which have been revealed to me or may be communicated to me in the future, unless it be to a true and lawful brother or

¹⁴ *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q.89, art. 4

¹⁵ *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q.89, arts 3, 4 and 7.

¹⁶ Mgr George F Dillon gives three, those that apply to initiation into each of the first three degrees—*Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master*—in his *The War of Antichrist with the Church and Western Civilisation*, reproduced in *Grand Orient Freemasonry Unmasked*, op. cit., pp. 98-103 of this book for the texts of the oaths referred to. These and other oaths and the accompanying rituals may be found in Walton Hannah's *Darkness Visible*, Augustine Press, London, 1952, Part II.

brothers and not to him or them until after the most ruthless test their of faithfulness. Further, I promise solemnly that I will never write down these secrets, nor inscribe, hew, draw, engrave, scribble, cut, scratch, carve or in any other way or manner repeat or communicate them. It will be further cause or fault, if another do so when it is in my power to hinder him by anything sensible or insensible under the canopy of heaven, or if anyone in the world understand or be able to read by or through any such letters, signs, or symbols or if our secret art and our hidden mysteries (through my unfaithfulness) be given to the profane! All these several points I solemnly swear to observe without exception, ambiguity or spiritual reserve of any kind, under no less a penalty than by breaking any of these points to have my throat cut through from ear to ear, my tongue cut out, my heart torn from my body, my body cut in two below the navel, my innards ripped out and thrown into the deepest sea or tossed out to the vultures to eat. So help me God my oath to keep faithfully which is the vow of a Freemason.

An oath such this lacks justice for a number of reasons, each of which involves an evil.

First, the oath involves something he *can* do, but ought not, as it subverts his God given freedom without due reason. No man is his own possession. He does not bring himself into existence. He does not keep himself in existence. The religious, the priest, subjects himself to God in the person of his superior, whether religious, or bishop. The citizen, too, must subject himself to the state in all that is lawful. He may be bound by an oath for a limited purpose, as to give truthful evidence in a court case; or to uphold an office—as constable of police, or as lawyer, magistrate, or judge. It is a breach of the moral law for anyone to submit himself to another by an oath other than at the instance of the Church or the state.

Secondly, since a man is not his own possession, but is of God and must return to Him, he may not abuse the gifts of God by promising to allow harm to his person such as the harm contemplated in Masonic oaths.

Thirdly, no mere association of men, that is, no association falling short of the authority of the state, has power to punish another or to impose death as a penalty. All authority comes from God (*Romans 13: 1*) and no man, or group of men, may arrogate it to themselves.

Fourthly, an oath takes its force from the fact that it calls on God as witness. This force is supreme: there can be no greater sanction than that of offending God. The addition of the threat of a physical penalty, even death, subverts the supreme force of the oath and makes it a mockery.

Fifthly, and most grievously, the Masonic oath is perverted because it calls on God to witness that the oath taker *inverts the loyalties to Church and state which God Himself*

*commands as essential to man's dignity.*¹⁷ This compounds the mockery in the oath a hundred fold.

For these reasons it will be seen that any Masonic oath is essentially evil.

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Needless to say, the process of initiation into Freemasonry, and every element of it, is abhorrent to Almighty God, and degrading to man. It is slavery—the subjection of man made in the image and likeness of God to some unknown principal; for some unknown mediate purpose; unto some unknown ultimate end. Nor is it any the less slavery because the initiate submits himself willingly.¹⁸

The Masonic Agenda

In sections 12 to 23 of *Humanum Genus*, Pope Leo XIII sets forth the manifold evils that Freemasonry seeks to put into effect. Freemasonry asserts—

- i. human nature and human reason ought in all things to be mistress and guide;
- ii. nothing has been taught by God;
- iii. no dogma of religion or truth is to be allowed which cannot be understood by the human intelligence;
- iv. the teaching office and authority of the Church should be of no account in the civil state;
- v. Church and state ought to be altogether disunited;
- vi. (consequently) states ought to be constituted without any regard for the laws and precepts of the Church;
- vii. it should be lawful to attack with impunity the very foundations of the Catholic religion, in speech, in writing, and in teaching;
- viii. only the least possible liberty should be allowed the Church to manage her affairs and this by laws framed and fitted to hinder her freedom of action;
- ix. exceptional and onerous laws should be imposed upon the clergy to the end that they may be continually diminished in number, and be in need;

¹⁷ On this point, see Fr Robert I Bradley S.J., *Catholicism vs. Freemasonry; irreconcilable forever*, at <http://www.olrl.org/doctrine/vsmasons.shtml>

¹⁸ Indeed, it is worse than slavery for the slave owner owns the body of his slave, but not his mind and will; but the Masonic bond demands that the initiate subject even his mind and will to the Craft. Walton Hannah quotes Lord Byron to the point—*He who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not is a slave*. The reader can get some idea of the extent of this enslavement in some of the fictional works of Freemason, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, especially his *The Valley of Fear*.

- x. the possessions of the Church should be fettered with the strictest conditions subjecting them to the power and arbitrary will of the administrators of the state;
- xi. the religious orders should be uprooted and scattered;
- xii. it should be declared openly that the sacred power of the Pontiffs must be abolished, and the papacy itself utterly destroyed;
- xiii. a regard for religion should be held as an indifferent matter;
- xiv. all religions are alike and there is no reason why one should have precedence over another—reasoning calculated to bring about the ruin of all forms of religion, and especially of the Catholic religion, which, since it is the only one that is true, cannot, without great injustice, be regarded as merely equal to other religions;
- xv. those things which are fully understood by the natural light of reason, such as the existence of God, the immaterial nature of the human soul, and its immortality, can no longer be considered certain and permanent;
- xvi. marriage belongs to the genus of commercial contracts and may be ended as they may be;
- xvii. the civil rulers of the State have power over the matrimonial bond;
- xviii. in the education of youth nothing is to be taught in the matter of religion as of certain and fixed opinion;
- xix. each one must be left at liberty to follow, when he comes of age, whatever religion he may prefer;
- xx. each one is naturally free;
- xxi. all men have the same right, and are in every respect, equal and of like condition.
- xxii. no one has the right to command another;
- xxiii. it is an act of violence to require men to obey any authority other than that which is obtained from themselves;
- xxiv. all power is held by the command, or permission, of the people; and,
- xxv. the State should be without God.

Freemasonry denies the truths—

- a. that all things were made by the free will of God the Creator;
- b. that the world is governed by Divine Providence;
- c. that souls do not die;

- d. that after this life of men upon the earth there will succeed another and an everlasting life;
- e. that the last end of men is a destiny far above human things and far beyond the sojourning upon the earth;
- f. that our first parents sinned, and, consequently, denies that free will is at all weakened and inclined to evil; and,
- g. that there is any need at all of a constant struggle and a perfect steadfastness to overcome the violence and rule of our passions.

Freemasonry presses its members to ensure that—

- the youth of the state be educated according to its own designs;
- such education be exclusively in the hands of laymen; and,
- in that education nothing which treats of the most important and most holy duties of men to God be introduced in instructions on morals.

Masonry's Involvement With The Devil

The literature available via the internet, and elsewhere, reveals much that is disturbing about Freemasonry in its myriad forms—associations with the occult, with magic, with ritualised perverted sexual activity and with Gnostic or black Masses. Any one of these would be sufficient to show the influence in it of the devil, were this not already indicated by the institutionalised breaches of the First and Second Commandments entailed in Freemasonry's very existence. This literature makes plain, too, that the cult is, as Pope Leo XIII implied in *Humanum Genus*, nothing but a reincarnation of the Gnostic Manichean heresy in modern times.¹⁹

Leo XII [1823-9] is reported to have said: *The highest degrees of Masonry lead to explicit worship of Satan*. Consider the following extract from an article in *The Remnant* by Paul A. Fisher, American authority on Freemasonry and author of *Behind the Lodge Door*, (Tan Books, Rockford, 1994)—

Jacques de Molay, the first Grand Master of the Knights Templar... was burned at the stake in 1314, following an extensive trial which lasted from 1307 to 1314, under the authority of King Phillip the Fair of France and Pope Clement V. The Scottish Rite's Knight Kadosh Degree (30th), honours de Molay. In that Degree's initiation ceremony, the candidate faces a table on which are three skulls. One is adorned with a papal tiara, a second has a regal crown, and the third skull is festooned with a laurel wreath, representing Jacques de Molay. The Grand Master of the Degree stabs the

¹⁹ The Manichees flourished in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. St Augustine of Hippo was an adherent before his conversion to Catholicism. Mani taught that there are two contrary principles of creation, one good, the other evil. Thus he maintained that the devil is not an angel created by God—something good which has turned to evil—but the principle and substance of evil. *Manicheism* resurfaced in the 12th century in southern France around the town of Albi, from which its name, *Albigensianism*, is derived. St Dominic, one of the patrons of this website, was the chief influence responsible for the waning and eclipse of *Albigensianism*.

skull with the papal tiara as the candidate shouts "Down with Imposture! Down with crime!" The same procedure occurs regarding the skull with the royal crown. Finally, the candidate and the Master kneel before the skull adorned with the laurel leaf and say: "Everlasting glory to the immortal martyr of virtue." [i.e., de Molay]. The candidates then take a second oath to "strive unceasingly... for the overthrow of superstition, fanaticism, imposture and intolerance." There are two other oaths, and, finally, in the fourth oath the focus is on the "cruel and cowardly Pontiff, who sacrificed to his ambition the illustrious order of those Knights Templar of whom we are the true successors." Then all present trample on the papal tiara as they jointly shout: "Down with imposture." Candidates in the 31st degree agree that the Masonic ideal of justice "is more lofty than the actualities of God". The 32nd Degree teache[s] that "Masonry will eventually rule the world."²⁰

Leo XIII points out that Freemasonry admits candidates to membership without commanding them to abjure Catholic doctrines in any form of words—an omission, he says, so far from being adverse to [its] designs... more useful for its purposes [because] they easily deceive the simple-minded and the heedless, and can induce a far greater number to become members.²¹ Indeed, Freemasonry admits candidates to membership no matter what may be their form of their religion.²²

The vast majority of Masons may have no idea of the seriousness of the step they take in submitting themselves to the Craft. There is about Freemasonry, after all, much that is otherwise familiar in trade or professional associations where the 'club' mentality flourishes. They may be persuaded that the Craft will provide them with security, or certitude of progress in their chosen trade or profession²³ and close their minds to its bizarre paraphernalia, salving their consciences over the matter with the reflection that this is hidden from all but a select few, themselves sworn to secrecy. Yet they are not guiltless, as Leo XII taught:

[N]o one can be a member of those sects, without being guilty of the most serious and disgraceful act... [D]rive from your ears the words of those who vigorously declare that you may assent to your election to the lower degrees of their sects; that nothing is admitted there which is opposed to reason; nothing opposed to religion; indeed, nothing proclaimed, nothing performed which is not holy, not right, not undefiled. Truly that abominable oath... which must be sworn even in that lower echelon, is sufficient for you to understand that it is contrary to Divine Law to be enlisted in those lower degrees, and to remain in them... [A]lthough they are not accustomed to commit things which are more serious and more criminal to those who have not attained to the higher degrees, nevertheless the force and boldness of those most pernicious societies grow with the unanimity and the multitude of all who enroll in

²⁰ *On Freemasonry and Other 'Paranoid Fantasies'*, reproduced at the website cathinsight.com/apologetics/fisher1.htm

²¹ *Humanum Genus*, n. 16

²² *Ibid*

²³ Cf. the comment by Sid Musgrove to Frank Letters reported by Frank's widow, Kathleen, in her *History will out: F.J.H. Letters at the New England University College*, Armidale, 1997, pp. 67-68—I wouldn't get anywhere if I didn't belong.

*them. Therefore, even those who have not passed beyond the inferior degrees, must be considered sharers in their crimes. And that passage of the Apostle to the Romans [1: 32] applies to them: "Not only they who do such things, but also those who consent to those doing them."*²⁴

If anecdotal evidence is to be believed, few Masons progress beyond the first three degrees of initiation, those of *Apprentice*, *Fellow-Craft* and *Master Mason*. Perhaps there are few only who advance to the highest degrees where the worship of Satan and the hatred of God and of His Holy Church become explicit.

Pope Leo XIII's Admonitions

Pope Leo XIII urges the bishops of the world to join their efforts with those of the Papacy and earnestly strive to extirpate what he describes as *this foul plague creeping through the veins of the body politic*. He urges the bishops to judge prudently the means best to be used to overcome the difficulties and obstacles they will meet. He then sets forth some suitable ways of proceeding²⁵.

First... tear away the mask from Freemasonry and... let it be seen as it really is. By sermons and pastoral letters... instruct the people as to the artifices used by societies of this kind in seducing men and enticing them into their ranks... [n.31] Further... by opportune writings and sermons [the multitude must] be taught the elements of those sacred truths in which Christian philosophy is contained. The result... will be that the minds of men will be made sound by instruction and... protected against many forms of error and inducements to wickedness... [n.32] Great, indeed, is the work; but in it the clergy will share your labours, if, through your care, they are fitted for it by learning and a well-ordered life. [It] requires to be helped also by the industry of those among the laity in whom a love of religion and of country is joined to learning and goodness of life... [n.33]

[T]he third order of St Francis... should be studiously promoted and sustained; for the whole object of this Order... is to invite men to an imitation of Jesus Christ... [n.34 [We recommend the re-establishment] of guilds of workmen for the protection, under the guidance of religion, both of their temporal interests and of their morality... Those who support themselves by the labour of their hands... are... especially exposed to the allurements of men whose ways lie in fraud and deceit. Therefore they ought to be helped with the greatest possible kindness and to be invited to join associations that are good, lest they be drawn away to others that are evil. [n.35] Fourthly... We commend in a special manner the young as being the hope of human society. Devote the greatest part of your care to their instruction, and do not think that any precaution can be great enough in keeping them from masters and schools whence the pestilential breath of the sects is to be feared... [n.36]

[O]ur united labours will by no means suffice... unless the Heavenly Master of the vineyard shall mercifully help us in our endeavours. We must therefore, with great

²⁴ *Quo Graviora* (13.3.1826), n. 7

²⁵ The following are taken from clauses 31 to 37 of *Humanum Genus*. The emphasis is mine.

and anxious care, implore of Him the help which... the danger and... the need requires... Let us take as our helper and intercessor the Virgin Mary, Mother of God... Let us beseech Michael, the prince of the heavenly host... Joseph, spouse of the most holy Virgin and heavenly patron of the Catholic Church, and the great Apostles, Peter and Paul... By their patronage, and by perseverance in united prayer, we hope that God will mercifully and opportunely succour the human race encompassed by so many dangers. [n.37]

The Damage Caused To Society

It is not understood just how damaging in practical terms Freemasonry is to society. Any state in which Freemasonry flourishes can never be assured that the best man for a task will be appointed. There are any number of instances of this.²⁶ A topical one is, perhaps, the inability of the MI5 officer, Peter Wright, the author of *Spycatcher*, to make progress in his chosen profession though he served his country faithfully for more than 30 years, and the refusal of those ruling the organization to provide him with an appropriate pension on his retirement.²⁷ It is entirely likely that the inability of the British security services (MI5 and MI6) for so long to weed out the subversives in their midst was assisted by Freemasons within those services.²⁸

The potential for the damage they do may be seen from the following self-evident consideration. A constable of police, or a lawyer, or a magistrate or judge, or a member of a State or Commonwealth parliament, or the Governor of a State, or of the Commonwealth, who is also a Mason, is *de jure* unfit to hold the position he has sworn to uphold. The reason is that any one of the oaths he must take as a Mason constitutes a betrayal of his oath of office. In a paper published in *Christian Order*, in November 2000²⁹, expatriate Australian, Michael McGrade, quoted some public comments on the influence of Freemasonry on the British justice system which, if it were necessary, bear out this contention—

[O]ne can only speculate about the extent of Masonic influence on the arrogantly liberal outlook of so many British judges which has drawn heavy criticism from all quarters in recent years as the courts of this country, according to Dr John Casey,

²⁶ Eg, Frank Letters, lecturer in Classics at Sydney University and the University of New England in New South Wales: see Kathleen Letter, *History will out*, op. cit., pp. 37-8 and 116 et seq. which elaborates her husband's inability to make progress at either University or to gain a professorship because of his Catholicism. Michael McGrade, in his paper *Bugnini, Bernadin & Basil: Modernist Masons or Masonic Modernists*, published in *Christian Order*, in November 2000—see http://www.christianorder.com/features/features_2000/features_nov00.html#—relates the story of a French Cabinet Minister precluded from obtaining the presidency of a major French Foundation because the position 'was reserved for a Brother'.

²⁷ Cf. *Spycatcher, The Candid Autobiography of a Senior Intelligence Officer*, Peter Wright with Paul Greengrass, William Heinemann Australia, Melbourne, p. 187. Wright disapproved of Freemasonry. He was warned by research officer, Evelyn McBarnet: '...you'd better join if you want to be a success in this place.'

²⁸ In his study of Freemasonry in England, *The Brotherhood* [Panther Books, London, 1985], English journalist, Stephen Knight, deals with the effects of the Craft in the British security services. *Few people in MI5*, he says, *now doubt that Sir Roger Hollis, Director General of the service in the crucial years 1956-65, was a Russian spy for nearly thirty years.* He quotes one officer of long standing in MI5 as telling him baldly, *Hollis was certainly a Mason.* [p. 291]

²⁹ *Bugnini, Bernadin & Basil: Modernist Masons Or Masonic Modernists?* Op. cit.

Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, have set about imposing their "utilitarian, secular dogma" (especially in family and life issues) while "casually setting aside the Judaeo-Christian tradition of two millennia" [Daily Mail, 5/9/00]. As a Welsh barrister wrote to The Times [23/11/98]: "After 30 years at the Bar, it is my view that the influence of Freemasonry in the law is insidious and overwhelming. By contrast my own 'religious beliefs, political views or sexual preferences' are manifest for all to see. The liberty of the ordinary individual is too important to be left to a judiciary with secrets to hide."

The Position In The 21st Century

It is characteristic of modern Freemasonry for its exponents to assert that the Craft has changed from what it once was; that it is now only a body involved in altruistic activities; that it no longer exerts the influence in the world it once exercised; and, that the differences that existed between Catholicism and Freemasonry have largely disappeared. Similar assertions to this last have been made by commentators recently in Australia.³⁰

Masons point to the diminution in the penalty in the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* for a Catholic who becomes a Freemason. In the 1917 *Code*, the penalty was excommunication—canon 2335³¹. The penalty under the 1983 *Code* is interdict or punishment with a just penalty—canon 1374³². The difference, however, is apparent only. Later in the same year in which the present *Code* was promulgated, the *Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* issued a statement indicating that the penalties excluded the subject from the Church's sacraments.

*The Church's negative position on Masonic associations... remains unaltered since their principles have always been regarded as irreconcilable with the Church's doctrine. Hence, joining them remains prohibited by the Church. Catholics enrolled in Masonic associations are involved in serious sin and may not approach Holy Communion.*³³

A review of the manifold evils Pope Leo XIII identifies as associated with Freemasonry leaves one appalled at the extent to which they are already in place in this country and elsewhere throughout the world. One might argue from these effects that, far from Freemasonry having waned as a force, its power is approaching that 'supreme control' of which the great Pope warned. The saints assert about the

³⁰ For example, James Franklin, in *Catholics Versus Masons*, *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society* 20 (1999), pp. 1-15: *Since the 1960s, better relations have prevailed mainly because Catholic theology has itself adopted a more tolerant view of other religion. And, It is the multiculturalism of Australia that has done as much as anything to make the old conflicts irrelevant.* And Gerard Henderson in *The Secret we should all be let in on*, *The Age* newspaper, 3 September 2002: *Without question, Freemasonry is not the organization it once was...*

³¹ *All those who enrol their names in the sect of Freemasons, or similar associations which plot against the Church or legitimate civil authorities, incur by this very fact the penalty of excommunication, absolution from which is reserved simply to the Holy See.*

³² *A person who joins an association which plots against the Church is to be punished with a just penalty; one who promotes or takes office in such an association is to be punished with an interdict.*

³³ *Quaesitum est*, November 26, 1983. AAS, 76 (1984), p. 200.

devil that he has his greatest influence and effect where there is the greatest denial of his presence and power. May not this denial of the extent of the influence and effect of Freemasonry in the modern world reflect the *modus operandi* of the master of all its activities?

And what about the Catholic Church? To what extent has Freemasonry penetrated her halls? True, the antipathy towards the Catholic Church which flourished as sectarianism in this country in the 1950s and 1960s has largely disappeared, as James Franklin has noted in the paper footnoted above. But that does not necessarily argue to the waning of Freemasonry's power. For what would be the need for continuance of the 'old conflicts' between Church and Craft if bishops and clergy of the Catholic Church had adopted the Masonic agenda? Or if they simply no longer stood in the way of that agenda!³⁴

Are there Freemasons in the Catholic Church? among the laity? the clergy? Are there Freemasons in the Church hierarchy? Are there Freemasons in the Curia? In future papers we will explore whether, and if so, to what extent, Freemasonry has penetrated the Church of God.

Michael Baker

14th September 2005—*Exaltation of the Holy Cross*

³⁴ *All that is needed for evil to triumph, is for the good men to do nothing.* Attributed to Edmund Burke [1729-1797]