

## MORE ON ARCHBISHOP CHAPUT, JOHN F KENNEDY & THE AMERICAN BISHOPS

Sacred Scripture warns that he who fails in little things shall fall little by little. This applies not only to the will, but to the intellect. The intellectual drift away from principle is likely, then, to occur gradually. Such a drift is demonstrated in the 1948 pastoral letter, *The Christian in Action*, where the American Catholic bishops failed to stand up for Catholic principle as they addressed the decision of the United States Supreme Court in *Everson v. Board of Education* to endorse the Masonic principle of separation of Church and State.

The pastoral letter included at least tacit acknowledgement, i) that religion should be totally excluded from the operations of the state, ii) that each man should be free to acknowledge any religion, or no religion, as he chose, and iii) that the State had rights over the education of children superior to those of their parents.

Christ's Holy Church in her wisdom had foreseen these perils and had condemned the principles giving rise to them as Masonic in origin. [1] She had, moreover, warned America's bishops about the dangers inherent in the unbridled enthusiasm for democracy and the liberal spirit towards religion which characterised their nation—

“[I]t would be very erroneous to conclude that in America is to be sought the type of status most desirable for the Church, or that it would be universally lawful or expedient for State and Church to be, as in America, dissevered and divorced. The fact that Catholicity with you is in good condition, nay, is even enjoying a prosperous growth, is by all means to be attributed to the fecundity with which God has endowed His Church, in virtue of which unless men or circumstances interfere, she spontaneously expands and propagates herself ; but she would bring forth more abundant fruits if, in addition to liberty, she enjoyed the favour of the laws and the patronage of the public authority.” [2]

The bishops chose to ignore her warnings ; chose to be silent on the essential issue that the institution established on earth for man's eternal salvation is the Catholic Church and no other ; chose to neglect to make it clear that while America may have flourished in large measure under the influence of Protestantism, it had done so because Protestantism was underpinned by Catholic principle.

They said nothing of the perils attendant on the Protestant distortion of Christianity ; nothing of that particular evil amounting to idolatry, itself a product of Protestantism, whose adherents had exercised great influence in America's founding, Freemasonry [3] ; nothing of the perils that would flow to the American people from the continued toleration of Masonic influence. They failed, moreover, to assert that, far from harming the operations of the state, the involvement of Christ's Church in those operations could not do otherwise than assist it in achieving the welfare of its citizens. [4]

Had the American bishops followed Catholic teaching in *The Christian in Action*, their objection to the ruling of the US Supreme Court in *Everson* written by the Mason, Justice Hugo Black, would have had a logical foundation. As it was, their characterisation of the doctrine of separation of Church and state as “the shibboleth of doctrinaire secularism” was rodomontade. They had themselves embraced

doctrinaire secularism.

Archbishop Charles J Chaput praised this 1948 pastoral letter in his address to members of the Houston Baptist University on 1st March 2010, for its strong endorsement “of American democracy and religious freedom”. He criticised John Fitzgerald Kennedy for remarks he had made in his Speech to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association in September 1960 but the criticism was misplaced. If the American bishops had deemed it appropriate to ignore the Church’s teaching on the important issues mentioned, why should a member of the laity think it inappropriate to emulate them ? John Kennedy’s endorsement of separation of Church and state simply made explicit what was implicit in the American bishops’ letter.

Let the reader test the thesis for himself : see if he can find any criticism by the body of the American Catholic Bishops of what Kennedy said in his 1960 Houston address.

The Church’s repeated warnings to America’s bishops failed to bear fruit. There were to be grave consequences. Fourteen years after they took their preoccupation with Masonic principle to Rome where it exercised a profound influence on the determinations of the Second Vatican Council. The practical result of that influence may be seen in the Vatican's wholehearted embrace of the Masonic protocols of religious freedom and separation of Church and State.

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March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010—*Solemnity of St Joseph*

[ This paper was originally published on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2010. It erroneously asserted that the American bishops had embraced the Masonic doctrine of separation of Church and State in *The Christian in Action* when the bishops had been at pains to reject that doctrine there. However, their acceptance of Masonic principle in regard to the rights of the State over education and of 'religious freedom', and their silence over the unique right of Christ's Church to be acknowledged as the one true religion on earth involved *de facto* acceptance of that Masonic doctrine. ]

[1] Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884) ; *Immortale Dei* (1.11.1885) ; and *Libertas praestantissimum* (20.6.1888).

[2] Leo XIII, *Longinqua oceani* (6.1.1895), n. 6. See also the same Pope’s warnings to the American bishops of the incipient heresy called 'Americanism' in *Testem benevolentiae* (22.1.1899).

[3] Clement XII, Bull *In Eminentissimi* (28.4.1738) ; Benedict XIV, Constitution *Providas* (18.3.1751) ; Pius VII, Constitution *Ecclesiam a Jesu Christo* (13.9.1821) ; Leo XII, Apostolic Constitution *Quo Graviora* (13.3.1826) ; Leo XIII, Encyclical *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884).

[4] *Immortale Dei*, nn. 19 and 22 ; *Longinqua oceani* (6.1.1895).