

Can a Catholic be a Freemason?

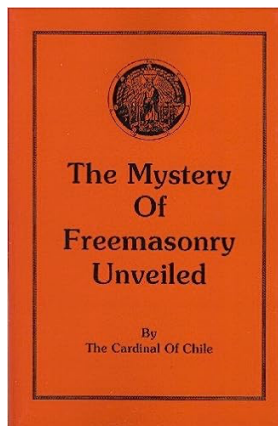
“Remember that Christianity and Masonry are essentially irreconcilable, such that to join one is to divorce the other.” Pope Leo XIII, Custodi di Quella Fede (1892), No. 10.

We will point out some of the teachings that Freemasonry and show why a Catholic cannot be a member of the:

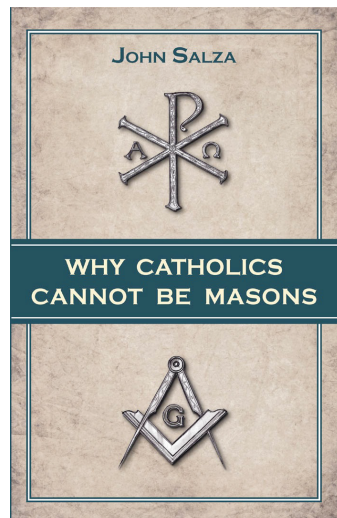
- Freemasons
- The Order of the Eastern Star
- The Order of DeMolay
- Job’s Daughters
- The Rainbow Girls
- The Shriners

Two excellent books:

Cardinal José María Caro **Rodríguez** (Archbishop of Santiago, Chile)



Amazon Description: Originally published in 1925, this book remains the best summary and reference book on the deceits and evils of Masonry. Exposes the worldwide plans for the destruction of the Christian order, as well as its anti-Catholic fury throughout the ..



A lawyer and noted Catholic apologist, John Salza is a former 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Freemason and Shriner. After learning the Catholic Church’s teachings on Freemasonry, Salza renounced his Masonic membership in 1999. In thanksgiving to God for the grace he had received, he has devoted himself to Catholic apologetics. He is a frequent guest and host on Catholic radio and has his own daily feature on Relevant Radio: “Relevant Answers.” Mr. Salza has also appeared on Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), and he has a daily apologetics program on EWTN Radio called “Catholic Q&A.”

“Without doubt, nothing more insane than such a doctrine, nothing more impious or more opposed to reason itself could be devised. For although faith is above reason, no real disagreement or opposition can ever be found between them; this is because both of them come from the same greatest source of unchanging and eternal truth, God.”

Humanum Genus (April 20, 1884) Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Freemasonry, 6.

A harmless fraternal organization?

Like the Knights of Columbus, Masons conduct fundraising activities, donate money to charities, and hold social events for their members and families. Masons are often upstanding citizens who profess a love for God and neighbor. Many prominent men have also been Masons. Why does the Catholic Church’s oppose Freemasonry?

Most people have no idea what Freemasonry teaches about God and salvation. When speaking with non-Masons (profanes), Masons focus on its social or charitable activities and not on what Masonry teaches.

The Catholic Church knows when error threatens her members and when heretical teaching seeks to undermine Catholic truth. **Twelve Popes** have individually issued *two dozen* condemnations of Freemasonry since 1738 on the grounds that Masonry’s teachings are incompatible with the Catholic Faith. The Church has declared that any Catholic who *knowingly* joins Freemasonry puts himself in a state of grave (mortal) sin.

Many “Catholic” Masons in the United States say that the Church’s condemnations apply only to European Masonry, but not to American lodges. The Church is clear that her condemnations apply to Freemasonry both in America and abroad.¹

Some Brief History

Masons trace the origins of Freemasonry back to the ancient stonemasons’ guilds that built the great cathedrals of Europe. Some trace their origins to the times of the Old Testament and the Temple of Solomon, some even back to the Egyptian era. Because these highly skilled craftsmen were independent contractors and not indentured servants, they were known as “free masons.”

Free masons began to organize themselves into lodges, where they would meet and share trade secrets. Over time, the free masons began admitting others, philosophers, merchants and other non-masons into their lodges. These were called “accepted” masons. Eventually, the “Free and Accepted Masons” changed from an organization of “operative” masons—those who built structures, to “speculative” masons—those who build the “spiritual temple,” a metaphor for the soul. The *Masonic Bible*, a popular teaching tool used by Freemasons, says that building the “spiritual edifice” is the “supreme end of Freemasonry.”² The terms “Masonry” and “Freemasonry” are used interchangeably today.

The date that marked the formal transition from operative to speculative Freemasonry occurred on June 24, 1717, during the heart of the **Enlightenment** period. On this date, four Masonic lodges in London founded the Grand Lodge of England which developed the blueprint for the Masonic rituals and ceremonies used today in the United States and throughout the world.

¹ Pope Pius IX, *Etsi Multa* (1873), No. 30.

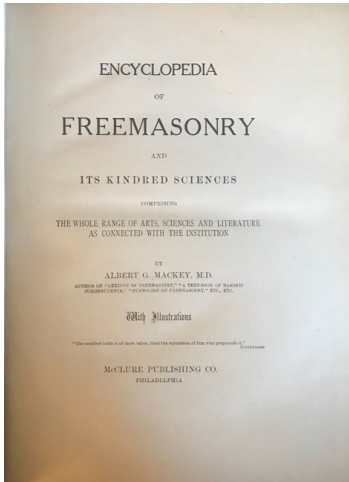
² *Heirloom Masonic Bible*, Master Reference Edition. (Wichita, KS: DeVore & Sons, Inc., 1988), p. 56.

Freemasonry Claims Its Goal Is to Lead Its Members to Heaven

Freemasonry provides Masons “with the means of advancing from earth to heaven, from death to life—from the mortal to immortality.”³ The *Masonic Bible* says, “By the practice of Freemasonry, its members may advance their spirituality, and mount by the theological ladder from the Lodge on earth to the Lodge in heaven.”

Masons claim to Heaven with “no other guarantee of a safe landing than their belief in the religion of Freemasonry.”⁴

Is Freemasonry a Religion?

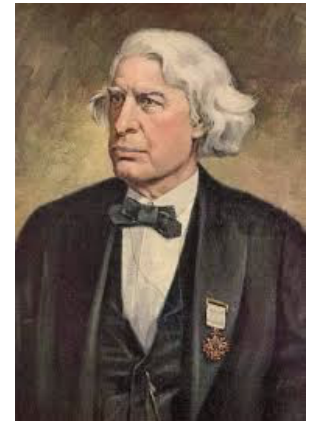


Dr. Albert Mackey (1807-1881) *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*:

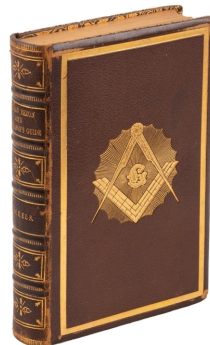
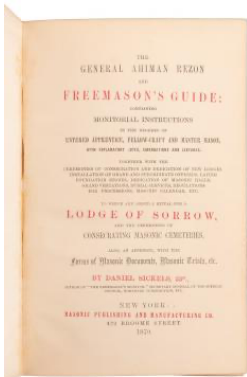
“I contend without any sort of hesitation that Masonry is, in every sense of the word, except one, and that is its least philosophical, an eminently religious institution ... That without this religious element it would scarcely be worthy of cultivation by the wise and good ...”

“The tendency of all true Freemasonry is toward religion ...”

“Look at its ancient landmarks, its sublime ceremonies, its profound symbols and allegories – all inculcating religious doctrine, commanding religious observance, and teaching religious truths, and who can deny that it is essentially a religious institution.”



Dr. Albert Mackey, 1807-1881

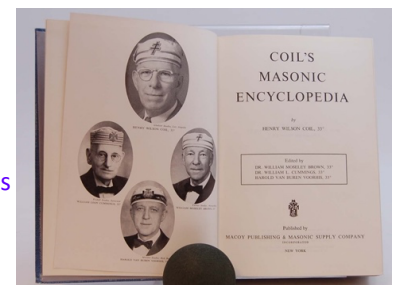


General Ahiman Rezon by Daniel Sickels, *Masonic Manual of the Grand Lodge of Georgia*, is a collection of Masonic rituals, including ceremonies related to the degrees of the Entered Apprentice, Fellow-craft and Master Mason. It includes extensive treatment of funeral rituals. There is musical notation for a number of Masonic hymns. An appendix has a series of model documents for various masonic situations. While it does not disclose anything truly secret, the General Ahiman Rezon gives us an insightful peek behind the veil of 19th century Masonic pomp and circumstance. He says:

[Masonry is] “so far interwoven with religion as to lay is under obligations to pay that rational homage to the Deity, which at once constitutes our duty and our happiness.”

Freemasonry has its own:

- Religious doctrines
- Rituals
- Prayers
- Names and symbols for God
- Names and symbols for heaven
- Soteriology
- Burial rites
- Altar
- Covenants
- Chaplain
- Vestments
- Meeting place
- Consecration rites
- Music
- Calendar
- Feast Days



³ Albert G. Mackey, *Mackey's Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Revised and Enlarged by Robert I. Clegg, Vol. 1 (Richmond, VA: Macoy, 1966), p. 499.

⁴ Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia* (New York: Macoy, 1961), p. 512.

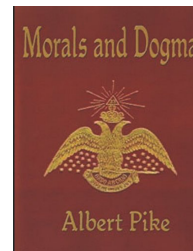
“Some attempt to avoid the issue by saying that Freemasonry is not a religion but religious, seeming to believe that the substitution of an adjective for a noun makes a fundamental difference. It would be as sensible to say that a man had no intellect but was intellectual or that he had no honor but was honorable. The oft repeated aphorism ‘Freemasonry is not a religion’ – has been challenged as meaningless, which it seems to be.”

— Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia*, 2011.

“... through ancient Times, Masons were charg’d in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet ‘tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves.”

— The Constitution of the Free-Masons

Morals and Dogma has been described as "a collection of thirty-two essays which provide a philosophical rationale for the degrees (membership levels) of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The lectures provided a backdrop for the degrees by giving lessons in comparative religion, history, and philosophy."



Albert Pike

“Masonry, like all the Religions, all the Mysteries, Hermeticism and Alchemy, conceals its secrets from all except the Adepts and Sages, or the Elect, and uses false explanations and misinterpretations of its symbols to mislead those who deserve only to be misled; to conceal the Truth, which it calls Light from them and to draw them away from it. p.104-5”

— Pike, Albert, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*

“Freemasonry is a religion, and this religion is not Christianity.”⁵

The Structure of Freemasonry

The basic organizational unit of Freemasonry is the Blue Lodge. Each Blue Lodge comes under the authority of the Grand Lodge. In the United States, there are fifty-one Grand Lodges (one for each state and the District of Columbia). The chief officer of the Blue Lodge is called the “Worshipful Master.” In the Blue Lodge, the candidate studies for and receives the three Masonic degrees called:

- “Entered Apprentice,”
- “Fellowcraft”
- “Master Mason.”

A Master Mason in good standing may join either the Scottish Rite or the York Rite of Freemasonry. These are optional Masonic organizations that elaborate on the religious teachings of the Blue Lodge. In the United States, a 32nd degree Scottish Rite or York Rite Mason may join the “Ancient Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine”—known as the “Shriners.” The Shriners are known for their red hats, circuses and parades and sponsorship of hospitals.

While not all Masons are Shriners, all Shriners are Masons. There are approximately 6 million Masons worldwide, with 4 million of them in the United States.

⁵ Dr. Albert Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*.

Moral Theology 101: Recall that for a human action to be considered “good,” the **object, intention, and circumstance** must all be “good.” If even one of these conditions is not good, neither is the human act.

While Shriners often boast about their sponsorship of hospitals for sick children, the Shrine’s charitable activities have been criticized. For example, the *Orlando Sentinel* reported that the Shrine generated \$23 million in 1985 from its circus parades but gave **less than two percent** to medical care for children.



From the *Orlando Sentinel*:

\$1 MILLION IN CHARITY WENT TO SHRINE STAFF FOR HOME LOANS July 24, 2021

The Shrine of North America gave 13 employees about \$1 million in low-interest loans from funds donated by the public to the Shrine’s hospitals for crippled and burned children, The Orlando Sentinel has learned. The employees used the 6 percent loans to build or buy new homes in the Tampa area when the Shrine moved its headquarters there from Chicago in 1978 ...

ACCUSATIONS, DENIALS CLOUD PROBE INTO SHRINERS CIRCUS July 22, 2021

Former employees of the Orange County Convention and Civic Center and several Shriners say they are convinced they saw a ticket fraud during the 1983 Shriners circus despite denials from the center’s attorney and its former director. Convention center attorney Gordon “Stumpy” Harris and former convention center director Thomas Sewell, who has since been promoted to county administrator, insist the ...

DONATIONS BYPASSED CHARITIES RECORDS SHOW SHRINERS USED MILLIONS FOR PARTIES Sept. 26, 2021

The Shrine of North America gave less than 30 percent of an estimated \$30 million raised from the public in 1985 to its hospitals for crippled and burned children, according to new records obtained from the Internal Revenue Service and Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children. The latest records are consistent with the findings of an Orlando Sentinel series about Shrine fundraising practices ...

While each Grand Lodge is sovereign and independent, the Masonic ritual states that the practices of the Grand Lodges is essentially the same because Freemasonry is built upon certain unalterable principles called “Landmarks.” the universal teachings of Freemasonry handed down through Masonic ritual and oral tradition:

“[The] doctrine of Freemasonry is everywhere the same. It is the Body which is unchangeable—remaining always and everywhere the same.”⁶

⁶ Mackey’s Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Vol. 2, p. 859.

The REAL Problems:

Freemasonry Denies the Uniqueness of Jesus Christ and His Church

Masonry believes that any Mason, no matter what religion he professes, will share eternal beatitude with God. As Catholics we believe the Catholic Church alone possesses the means of salvation (the Seven Sacraments and the infallible Magisterium), and both Christ and the Catholic Church are necessary for salvation. This does not mean non-Catholics have no chance to be saved as God alone judges the interior realities of a person's conscience.⁷

Blessed Pius IX condemned the idea that "Good hope at least is to be entertained of the eternal salvation of all those who are not at all in the true Church of Christ."⁸

Masonry denies the divine truth that the Catholic Church is the one way of salvation since it advances its members to the "heavenly lodge above" regardless of their individual religious beliefs.

Enlightenment Thinking

Masonry's belief that all men are saved was influenced by the Enlightenment period in the late 18th century. The Enlightenment was to free mankind from the "oppression" of religious dogma and the authority of the Catholic Church. Enlightenment thinkers pursued the knowledge of God solely through the rational study of nature. Man was to use his intellect to determine the truth that he would follow. While the Enlightenment thinkers retained a faith in God, they discarded the revealed truths of Adam's Fall, Original Sin, Grace and Redemption through Jesus Christ.

Masonic ritual teaches Masons "to pay that rational homage to Deity" and refers to "geometry" and the "five human senses" as gateways to the knowledge of God.⁹

Masonry uses the letter *G* as a symbol for "God" and/or "Geometry."¹⁰ The Masonic Service Association, which was organized by Masons to educate the public about Freemasonry, even claims that "Geometry provides the nearest possible 'proof' of His existence."

A Religion of Naturalism

Freemasonry holds that the supernatural truths of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, the atoning death of Jesus Christ, the necessity of the Sacraments for salvation, and anything else uniquely Catholic are relative and dispensable. Regarding Scripture and Tradition, Masonry claims that "No man can put such things into words, much less into hard and fast dogma."¹¹

Masonry's view of Revelation was condemned by the First Vatican Council: "If anyone says that it is impossible, or not expedient, that human beings should be taught by means of divine Revelation, let him be anathema."¹²

⁷ See Pope Pius IX, *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* (1863), No. 7.

⁸ Pope Pius IX, *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), No. 17., and whether he may somehow be "inside" the Catholic Church.

⁹ Wisconsin Multiple Letter Cipher, p. 85.

¹⁰ *The Short Talk Bulletin*, "Behind the Symbol," Vol. 32, No. 7 (1954).

¹¹ *The Short Talk Bulletin*, "The Letter G," Vol. 5, No. 7 (1927).

¹² First Vatican Council, Session 3, Canon 2, *On Revelation* (1870).

A Mason must profess only a rational “belief in deity” and in some kind of life everlasting, without regard for specific religious beliefs. To enter into the “heavenly lodge above,” the Mason need not believe in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ or in any divine revelation. While a “Christian” Mason may privately believe in Jesus, Masonry requires no such belief, because the Mason already “has within him the sure foundation of eternal life.”¹³

Because of its exclusively naturalistic approach to God, the Popes have called Freemasonry a religion of “Naturalism.”¹⁴

Naturalism looks upon reason as the fundamental source of all truth and seeks to explain everything in the world in terms of humanly understandable causes. In his condemnation of Freemasonry, Pope Leo XIII defined Naturalism as the denial of any “dogma of religion or truth which cannot be understood by the human intelligence.” Pope Leo XIII accused those who would “substitute Naturalism for Christianity and the worship of reason for the worship of faith” of having “**satanic intent.**”¹⁵

Freemasonry Deceives its Members with Christian-sounding Terminology

To deceive Catholics, Masonry admittedly “uses false explanations and misinterpretations of its symbols to *mislead* those who deserve only to be misled; to *conceal* the Truth, which it calls Light, from them, and to draw them away from it.”¹⁶

Masons uses Christian terminology “not to express the Christian ideas or to show their harmony with Christian thought, but to give them a Christian coloring, the more effectually to *deceive, mislead and hoodwink* the neophyte, the conscientious member and the non-Mason.”¹⁷

Modernism seeks to update the unchanging truths of the Catholic Faith with ideas of modern man. Modernists “cover certain principles of Catholic doctrine, so as to wrap them in the obscurity of oblivion.”¹⁸

In his condemnation of Modernism, Pope St. Pius X observed how the Modernist mix of Rationalism and Catholicism is used to deceive the Faithful and lead souls to ruin: “Further, none is more skillful, none more astute than they, in the employment of a thousand noxious arts; for they play the double role of rationalist and *Catholic*—and this so craftily that they easily lead the unwary into error.”¹⁹

Pope St. Pius X called Modernism “the synthesis of all heresies.”²⁰

Freemasonry Views Catholicism As “Sectarian”

Freemasonry calls any religious belief outside of its system of Naturalism a “sectarian” belief. For example, the

¹³ *Masonic Bible*, p. 38.

¹⁴ Pope Pius IX, *Qui Pluribus* (1846), No. 5; *Quanta Cura* (1864), No. 3; Pope Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus* (1884), No. 12; *Officio Sanctissimo* (1887), No. 7; *Inimica Vis* (1892), No. 8; *Custodi di Quella Fede* (1892), No. 4; Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos* (1928), No. 2.

¹⁵ Leo XIII, *Custodi di Quella Fede* (1892), No. 4.

¹⁶ Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (Charleston, SC: Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, 1881), pp. 104-105 (emphasis added). Pike also said that “Catholicism was a vital truth in its earliest ages, but it became obsolete.” *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁷ Martin L. Wagner, *Freemasonry: An Interpretation* (Dahlonga, GA.: Crown Rights Book Company, 1912), p. 153 (emphasis added).

¹⁸ Pope Leo XIII, *Testem Benevolentiae Nostrae* (1899).

¹⁹ Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907), No. 3

²⁰ Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907), No. 39.

Catholic teachings on the Eucharist are considered *sectarian* beliefs, that is, denominational peculiarities of the Catholic Church which place a barrier between Catholics and non-Catholics.

“Masonry seeks to free men from a limited conception of religion, and thus to remove one of the chief causes of sectarianism.”²¹

Further, the “religion of freemasonry is not sectarian. It admits men of every creed within its hospitable bosom, rejecting none and approving none for his particular faith. It is not Judaism ... it is not Christianity.”²²

All men, “whether they have received their teachings from Confucius, Zoroaster, Moses, Mohammed or the founder of the Christian religion,” can worship at the altar of Freemasonry as they journey to eternal life with God. (Notice the omission of any reference to “Jesus” or “Christ.”)²³

Freemasonry Promotes Indifferentism

Holding that the dogmatic truths of the Catholic Faith are superfluous, and sectarian is a heresy known as *Indifferentism*. Indifferentism holds that all religions are legitimate paths to God. Pope Pius XI explained that Indifferentism “considers all religions to be more or less good and praiseworthy, since they all, in different ways, manifest and signify that sense which is inborn in us all and by which we are led to God and to the obedient acknowledgement of His rule.”²⁴

Pope Gregory XVI declared “Indifferentism” to be “another abundant source of the evils with which the Church is afflicted at present.”²⁵

Blessed Pius IX called Indifferentism “a very grave error entrapping some Catholics, who believe that it is possible to arrive at eternal salvation although living in error and alienated from the True Faith and Catholic unity.”²⁶

Pope Leo XIII even labeled Indifferentism “a rashness unknown to the very pagans.”²⁷

Our Lord also revealed his rejection of those who espouse Indifferentism:

“I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. (*Revelation 3:15-16*).

Indifferentism seeks to destroy especially the Catholic faith. Pope Leo XIII said:

“Again, as all who offer themselves [to Masonry] are received, whatever may be their form of religion, they [the Masons] thereby teach the great error of this age—that a regard for religion should be held as an indifferent matter, and that all religions are alike. This manner of reasoning is calculated to bring about the ruin of all forms of religion, and especially of the Catholic religion, which, as it is the only one that is true,

²¹ Joseph Fort Newton, *The Builders: A Story and Study of Freemasonry* (Cedar Rapids, IA: The Torch Press, 1915; reprint Richmond, VA: Macoy, 1951), p. 243.

²² Albert G. Mackey, *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts, 1887), p. 731.

²³ *Louisiana Monitor* (1980), p. 133.

²⁴ Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos* (1928), No. 2.

²⁵ Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* (1832), No. 13. See also Pope Pius VII, *Ecclesiam Christi* (1821); Pope Pius VIII, *Traditi Humilitati* (1829), No. 4; and Pope Pius IX, *Qui Pluribus* (1846), Nos. 5-6.

²⁶ Pope Pius IX, *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* (1863), No. 7. See also Pope Pius IX, *Multiplies Inter* (1851) and *Maxima Quidem* (1862).

²⁷ Pope Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus* (1884), No. 21.

cannot without great injustice be regarded as merely equal to other religions.”²⁸

Pope Pius XI also explains that Indifferentism leads to Naturalism, which can ultimately lead to atheism: “Not only are those who hold this opinion in error and deceived; but also, in distorting the idea of true religion, they reject it, and little by little turn aside to Naturalism and atheism, as it is called; from which it clearly follows that one who supports those who hold these theories and attempt to realize them is altogether abandoning the divinely revealed religion.”²⁹

Masonry and Satan

Indifferentism is a grave insult to God and an offense against His divine justice. Those who treat Jesus Christ and membership in His Church as sectarian and as unnecessary innovations seek to undermine God’s plan of salvation and divert souls to Hell. Such people have “changed the truth of God into a lie.” (*Romans* 1:25). Thus, the teachings of Freemasonry are from the devil, who is the father of lies. As Bl. Pius IX warned, “For from these [Masonic lodges], the synagogue of Satan is formed, which draws up its forces, advances its standards, and joins battle against the Church of Christ.”³⁰

Masonic Initiation

On his initiation, Freemasonry requires the candidate to divest himself of all reminders of his faith the candidate is required to remove all jewelry, including his wedding ring, crucifix, scapular, and any other sacramental that he might be wearing. He later learns that he was divested of his religious reminders so that he might “carry nothing offensive or defensive into the lodge.”

The Christian Candidate Has “Long Been in Darkness”

A candidate’s darkness refers not just to his ignorance of Freemasonry *but to his current spiritual condition*. The *Masonic Bible* teaches:

... darkness is a symbol of *ignorance*; while light is the symbol of enlightenment and knowledge. It is a principle of Freemasonry that the natural eye cannot perceive of the mysteries of the Order until the heart has embraced the *deep spiritual and mystic meanings* of those sublime mysteries. Hence, all applicants for the Degrees of Freemasonry are required to enter the Lodge in total darkness; this darkness is preparatory and preliminary to his receiving the light he desires and searches.³¹

Even though the Christian candidate has been baptized into the light of Jesus Christ—thereby receiving *Sanctifying Grace*, which is a created sharing in the very life of God, making the recipient a *child of God*; as well as thereby receiving the *virtue of faith*, which enables him to believe all the truths revealed by God; plus receiving in Baptism other *supernatural virtues (powers) and gifts*; not to mention the fact that Baptism actually makes him an *heir of Heaven*—Masonry nevertheless declares that he is in a state of spiritual and mystical darkness. The candidate must die to his former life in Christ and be reborn into the new life of the Lodge. It is his initiation into Freemasonry, and not Christian Baptism, that makes the Mason a “son of light.”

²⁸ Ibid., No. 16. See also Pope Pius IX, *Allocution to the Consistory* (1861).

²⁹ Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos* (1928), No. 2. See also the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), Second Edition (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1997), No. 2128.

³⁰ Pope Pius IX, *Etsi Multa* (1873), No. 28.

³¹ *Masonic Bible*, p. 39 (emphasis added).

“Your preparation for your entrance into Freemasonry began the day your mother brought you into the world. Your entrance into the Lodge for initiation became, symbolically, your *rebirth*.”³²

Of the spiritual, moral and intellectual deficiencies of the uninitiated:

Having been wandering amid the *errors* and covered over with the pollutions of the outer and profane world, he comes inquiringly to our doors, seeking the *new birth*, and asking a withdrawal of the veil which conceals *divine truth from his uninitiated sight* ... There is to be, not simply a change for the future, but also an extinction of the past ... the chains of *error and ignorance* which have previously restrained the candidate in *moral and intellectual* captivity are broken.³³

Only the devil could call light darkness and darkness light. But this should be no surprise, “For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.” (2 *Corinthians* 11:14).

The Grand Architect of the Universe

Freemasonry deliberately omits Jesus’ name from its prayers, as it calls upon the deity as the “Grand Architect” (and by other similar titles). In this way, the Lodge conditions its members to view God according to the Masonic worldview: *as the deity of any and every religious faith*. Masonry calls God the “Nameless One of an hundred names” and states that, no matter how we pray, we are “yet praying to the one God and Father of all.”³⁴ To the true Mason, “Christ, Buddha, or Mohammed, the name means little.”³⁵

Idolatry

If the “Catholic” Mason argues that Masonic prayers are for him an act of worship of Christ, he must also admit that the Hindu sees these same prayers as worship of a false god, Brahma. The “Catholic” Mason is guilty of idolatry and committing mortal sin.

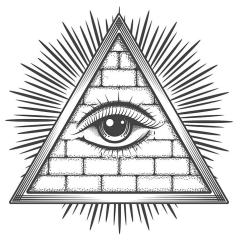
The Letter G

The letter *G* (which stands for both God and/or Geometry) hangs in the eastern quadrant of the lodge room above the chair of the Worshipful Master. The Masonic Bible says that the letter *G* “represents the great God of all Freemasons,,” thus all Masons *bow in worship* before the letter *G*.³⁶



A true Mason is one who “worships at every shrine, bows before every altar, whether in temple, mosque or cathedral, realizing ... the oneness of all spiritual truth.”³⁷

The **All-Seeing Eye**, which has connections to Deism which rejects revealed truth and religious authority in favor of intellectual speculation about God and view God as the All-Seeing Eye, who, after creating the world, no longer takes an active role in its course. Coil claims that the All-Seeing Eye was used by the pagan Egyptians to represent the god Osiris.³⁸



³² Allen Roberts, *The Craft and Its Symbols*.

³³ Albert G. Mackey, *Masonic Ritualist* (New York: Clark & Maynard, 1869), p. 23 (emphasis added).

³⁴ *Short Talk Bulletin*, “The Holy Bible,” Vol. 2 (1924), No. 3.

³⁵ Manly P. Hall, *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry; or, The Secret of Hiram Abiff* (Richmond, VA: Macoy, 1976), p. 65.

³⁶ *Masonic Bible*, p. 42.

³⁷ *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry; or, The Secret of Hiram Abiff*, p. 65.

³⁸ *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia*, p. 27.

The Error of Syncretism

Masonry's use of the letter *G* and the All-Seeing Eye facilitates its syncretistic understanding of deity. *Syncretism* is the (deliberate) blending of different beliefs or practices without regard to their compatibility with Christian truth. Syncretism is the consequence of Indifferentism, for if all religions are equal, there is no problem with mingling them together. By using unique names and symbols that are not particular to any individual religion, Masonry not only unites men of different faiths into one spiritual brotherhood, but also unites the deities of different religions *into one spiritual godhead*. The *Masonic Bible* calls syncretism the "unity of the Godhead."

Presumably, most American Masons are monotheists. On this basis, some Masons may wish to defend the "monotheism" of the Lodge. However, Hindus, Buddhists, Shintoists and other polytheists may also be members of Freemasonry because they "believe in deity." Masonry does not limit its membership to Christians, Jews and Muslims. A Lodge would still regard a deistic or Unitarian understanding of God as an equally acceptable alternative to the truth of the Blessed Trinity.

In the final analysis, The Grand Architect of the Universe of the Masonic Lodge is *not* the Holy Trinity, and therefore, *it is a false god*.

Freemasonry's Profession of Faith in the Deity

After the Worshipful Master prays to the Grand Architect of the Universe, he places his hand upon the kneeling candidate's head and asks, "In whom do you put your trust?"³⁹ If the candidate responds with a profession of faith in *any* "supreme deity," the Worshipful Master declares to him: "Your trust being in God, your faith is well-founded. Arise, follow your conductor, and fear no danger."⁴⁰

No matter what "God" the candidate professes, Masonry assures him that his trust is *in God* and his faith is *well-founded*. Thus, for those candidates who reject Jesus Christ, *Freemasonry lies to them*. No matter how erroneous their beliefs, the Lodge tells these Masons that they have the truth. In Masonry, there is no such thing as a false god. As Past Grand Master explains, "A hundred paths may wind upward around a mountain; at the top they meet."⁴¹

Freemasonry's View of God Is Contrary to Reason

Freemasonry's teaching about God is contrary not only to his Revelation through Jesus Christ, but to reason as well. If two Masons have incompatible beliefs about God and one of them is true, the other one must necessarily be false. Therefore, the erroneous belief of the second person cannot be "well-founded." To hold the beliefs of both Masons to be true, as Masonry does, is to violate reason and to deny objective truth altogether.

The Masonic Service Association says, "One of the greatest truths man has learned, in all his centuries of study, is that there is no absolute to be known; all truths, including the mathematical, are relative."⁴² Besides being incompatible with Catholic belief, is self-defeating—and also self-contradictory, because this Masonic

³⁹ Masonic Bible, p. 32

⁴⁰ Nevada Ritual, p. 19 (Entered Apprentice oath).

⁴¹ Carl Claudy, "Entered Apprentice," Introduction to Freemasonry, Vol. 1, p. 38.

⁴² Short Talk Bulletin, "All-Seeing Eye," Vol. 10, No. 12 (1932).

principle is itself considered an absolute truth in the Masonic belief system, and therefore there *is* an absolute in the Lodge, despite what Masonry says.

About Masonic Indifferentism, Bl. Pius IX stated, “Without doubt, nothing more insane than such a doctrine, nothing more impious or more opposed to reason itself could be devised.” Pope Pius VIII also declared that “this deadly idea concerning the lack of difference among religions is refuted even by the light of natural reason. We are assured of this because the various religions do not often agree among themselves. If one is true, the other must be false; there can be no society of darkness with light.” St. Paul warns:

Bear not the yoke with unbelievers. For what participation hath justice with injustice? Or what fellowship hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath the faithful with the unbeliever? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God; as God saith: *I will dwell in them, and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Wherefore, “*Go out from among them, and be ye separate,*” saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. (2 Corinthians 6:14-17).

The Candidate Swears a Curse upon Himself

After the candidate professes his faith, he is conducted around the lodge room. He is then instructed to approach the Masonic altar, which Masonry calls a “place of sacrifice.”⁴³

the candidate swears he will conform his life to the teachings of Freemasonry. The candidate swears never to reveal Masonry’s secrets to profanes. The candidate also swears a curse upon himself, that he would be worthy of a grisly death if he ever violated his oath. For example, the candidate swears that he would be worthy:

- “Of having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out and with my body buried in the sands of the sea.”⁴⁴
- “Of having my left breast torn open, my heart plucked out and placed on the highest pinnacle of the temple”⁴⁵
- “Of having my body severed in twain, my bowels taken thence and burned to ashes, the ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven”⁴⁶
- “Of having my eyeballs pierced to the center with a three-inch blade, my feet flayed, and forced to walk the hot sands of the sterile shores of the Red Sea.”⁴⁷

The candidate for the Shriners swears this self-curse to the god Allah on the Koran. Note also that Shriners meet in Mosques, wear Islamic vestments, use Islamic symbols like the crescent and scimitar, and use the secret passwords *Mecca* and *Medina*. In light of these practices, either the Shriners either mock the religion of Islam or they sincerely incorporate elements of Islamic religious practice.

Freemasonry’s Oaths Violate the Second Commandment

“Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all;*- not by heaven, for it is

⁴³ *Masonic Bible*, p. 32.

⁴⁴ Nevada Ritual, p. 19 (Entered Apprentice oath).

⁴⁵ Wisconsin Multiple Letter Cipher, p. 79 (Fellowcraft oath).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 114 (Master Mason oath).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 114 (Master Mason oath).

God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one."

Matthew 5:33-37

But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your "Yes" mean "Yes" and your "No" mean "No," that you may not incur condemnation.

James 5:12

The LORD, your God, shall you fear; him shall you serve, and by his name shall you swear. You shall not go after other gods, any of the gods of the surrounding peoples—¹⁵ for the LORD, your God who is in your midst, is a passionate God—lest the anger of the LORD, your God, flare up against you and he destroy you from upon the land.

Deut 6:13-15

The law says you don't have to swear oaths.

"When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not be slack to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin in you. But *if you refrain from vowing, it shall be no sin in you*" (Deut 23:21–22)

Ecclesiastes:

"It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake." (Eccl 5:5)

Sirach:

"Do not accustom your mouth to oaths, and do not habitually utter the name of the Holy One." (Sir 23:9)

Oaths in scripture lead to serious consequences:

⁶But at a birthday celebration for Herod, the daughter of Herodias performed a dance before the guests and delighted Herod ⁷ so much that he swore to give her whatever she might ask for. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." (Matt 14:6-8)

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about!" As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazorean." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!" A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away." At that he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately a cock crowed. (Matt 26:69-74)

Jesus Under Oath at Civil Trial:

The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward who stated, "This man said, 'I can destroy the temple of God and within three days rebuild it.'" The high priest rose and addressed him, "Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus said to him in reply, "You have said so. But I tell you: (Matt 26:59-64)

St. Paul Swears Oaths:

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you ... (Rom 1:9)

But I call God to witness against me ... (2 Cor 1:23)

In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! (Gal 1:20)

For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. (Phil 1:8)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church on Oaths:

2150 The second commandment forbids false oaths. Taking an oath or swearing is to take God as witness to what one affirms. It is to invoke the divine truthfulness as a pledge of one's own truthfulness. An oath engages the Lord's name. "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him, and swear by his name."

2151 Rejection of false oaths is a duty toward God. As Creator and Lord, God is the norm of all truth. Human speech is either in accord with or in opposition to God who is Truth itself. When it is truthful and legitimate, an oath highlights the relationship of human speech with God's truth. A false oath calls on God to be witness to a lie.

2155 The holiness of the divine name demands that we neither use it for trivial matters, nor take an oath which on the basis of the circumstances could be interpreted as approval of an authority unjustly requiring it. When an oath is required by illegitimate civil authorities, it may be refused. It must be refused when it is required for purposes contrary to the dignity of persons or to ecclesial communion.

The Church condemns these oaths as a violation of the Second Commandment because they use God's holy name in vain. An oath must not be taken for purposes contrary to "ecclesial communion: (union with the Church), such as to make a commitment to Freemasonry.⁴⁸ "To promise something evil under oath is mortally sinful, at least if the thing promised be gravely sinful."⁴⁹

An oath must be confessed in the Sacrament of Penance.

The candidate further swears that he will not "have illicit carnal intercourse with a Master Mason's wife, mother, sister or daughter."⁵⁰ This promise is unnecessary because God and the natural law already condemn fornication and adultery. If the Church does not require Catholics to swear oaths promising to avoid sins of impurity, Masonry has no reason to do so. For all these reasons, the Masonic oath constitutes blasphemy—a grave sin against God and His Holy Name.

Pope Benedict XIV called the Masonic oath contrary to the laws of the state and of religion, and Pope Leo XII declared it "abominable," "impious" and "accursed."⁵¹

⁴⁸ No. 186, par. 2 (p. 117). The terms "mortal sin" and "grave sin" mean the same thing.

⁴⁹ Fr. Heribert Jone, *Moral Theology*.

⁵⁰ Wisconsin Multiple Letter Cipher, p. 113 (Master Mason oath).

⁵¹ Pope Benedict XIV, *Providas* (1751), Pope Leo XII, *Quo Graviora* (1826).

The difference between the Masonic oaths and the pledges taken by the Knights of Columbus

- The Masonic oath uses the formulae, “I swear to God” and “so help me God,” it formally calls upon God to witness the promise. Fraternal pledges, on the other hand, do not call God to formally witness the promise— which is why they are pledges and not oaths. The pledge giver says, “I give you my word” (not “I swear to God”).
- Fraternal pledges, such as those required in the Knights of Columbus, are read to the candidate in advance. This is done so that the candidate fully realizes what he is promising. In Freemasonry, the oaths are *not* read to the candidate in advance. The Worshipful Master simply assures the candidate that the oath will not conflict with his religious duties, even though the Master usually has no idea about the candidate’s religious beliefs.
- The Masonic oaths not only include condemnable self-curses, but Masons are required to simulate these curses with various hand gestures (called “Signs”) at every lodge meeting. For example, when giving the Entered Apprentice Sign, the Mason moves his right hand across his neck to imitate the slitting of his throat. The Fellowcraft Sign requires the Mason to move his hand across his chest to simulate plucking out his heart. In the Master Mason Sign, the Mason moves his hand across his waist to indicate severing his body to remove his bowels. All Masons are required to make these signs throughout Masonic ritual and when addressing the Worshipful Master.
- The pledges of Catholic fraternal orders like the Knights of Columbus are meant to inspire the candidate to deepen his relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church. The Masonic oaths do just the opposite. Thus, the pledges of fraternities like the Knights of Columbus and the oaths of the Masons are as radically different as is their theology. For those “Catholic” Masons who would rather give an affirmation rather than swear an oath to God, the *Masonic Bible* says, “Affirmations instead of oaths are entirely inadmissible in Freemasonry.”⁵²

The Bible Is Only a Symbol

Freemasonry calls the Holy Bible one of the Three Great Lights, it views the Bible as *only a symbol* of God’s revelation or will, just like the Square and Compass that rest on top of it. Because the Bible contains God’s supernatural revelation, Masonry’s religion of Naturalism must reject it as an authority. Coil says that “the Bible is only a symbol of Divine Will, Law or Revelation” and adds that “no responsible authority has held that a Freemason must believe the Bible or any part of it.”⁵³

“In fact,” says Masonic author George Chase Wingate, “Blue Lodge Masonry has *nothing whatsoever* to do with the Bible; it is not founded on the Bible. If it was, it would not be Masonry; it would be something else.”⁵⁴

Other Religious Writings Are Equal to the Bible

Just as Freemasonry views all gods as equal to the Blessed Trinity, it views all religious writings as equal to the Bible. The Masonic Service Association tells us, “Whether it be the Gospels of the Christian, the Book of

⁵² *Masonic Bible*, p. 24.

⁵³ *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia*, p. 520.

⁵⁴ George Chase Wingate, *Digest of Masonic Law*, Third Edition (New York: Macoy and Sickles, 1864), p. 206 (emphasis added).

Law of the Hebrew, the Koran of the Mussulman, or the Vedas of the Hindu, it [the Volume of the Sacred Law] everywhere Masonically conveys the same idea— symbolizing the will of God revealed to man.”⁵⁵

Thus, Coil explains that “whatever to any people expresses that will may be used as a substitute for the Bible in a Masonic Lodge.”⁵⁶

When a Muslim is initiated into the Lodge, the *Koran* becomes the “Great Light of Masonry.” When a Zoroastrian is initiated, the *Zend Avesta* is the Great Light. It is the same with the *Talmud*, the *Book of Mormon*, the *Vedas*, the *Sohar*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and any other writing considered sacred by the religion of the initiate. All are legitimate substitutes for the written Word of God.

Masonry’s view of the Bible as a replaceable symbol of the revelation and will of God is repugnant to the Catholic Faith. The Church teaches that “*God is the author of Sacred Scripture. The divinely revealed realities, which are contained and presented in the text of Sacred Scripture, have been written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*”⁵⁷

As with its view of God, Masonry’s view of the Bible is contrary both to Revelation and to reason. To Freemasonry, it does not matter that the Bible affirms the divinity of Christ, whereas the Koran denies His divinity. To the Lodge, *both* views, however contradictory, express the “will of God.” Only the Father of Lies could have contrived such an idea.

Freemasonry Rejects the Catholic Church’s Teaching on Grace

Masonry’s notion that man can gain Heaven by practicing his own version of morality is irreconcilable with the Catholic Faith, not only because it views Catholic morality as relative, but also because it denies any need for the Savior or for His Church. There is absolutely nothing a man can do by his own efforts (whether it be by faith or by works) without Sanctifying Grace in his soul to merit eternal life. The Council of Trent teaches: “If anyone says that man can be justified before God by his own works, whether done by his own natural powers or through the teaching of the law, without divine grace through Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.”⁵⁸

It is only through the “Second Adam”—Jesus Christ— that a man is saved from the condemnation of the law. See *1 Corinthians* 15:45.

Salvation:

Protestantism: Faith alone

Freemasons: Works alone

Catholic Church: Faith and Works

Catholicism was a vital truth in its earliest ages, but it became obsolete, and Protestantism arose, flourished and deteriorated.

— Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma*

⁵⁵ *Short Talk Bulletin*, “The Holy Bible,” Vol. 2, March, 1924, No. 3.

⁵⁶ *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, p. 114.

⁵⁷ CCC, No. 105 (emphasis in original); see also *2 Timothy* 3:16.

⁵⁸ Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 1, *Decrees on Justification* (1547). (Included in *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, p. 42).

The Church's Teachings Are Infallible

Twelve Popes have condemned Freemasonry over the last 250 years on the grounds that Masonry's teachings are incompatible with Catholic faith and morals. The Church's repeated condemnations of the errors of Indifferentism, Naturalism and Modernism, which are inculcated through Masonic teaching, are part of the Church's infallible Ordinary Magisterium and thus are binding on all Catholics. Catholics must adhere to these teachings in order to remain Catholics and in order to maintain communion with the Catholic Church.

"Catholic" Masons and The Church's Canon Law

Although Freemasonry is one of the errors that has been most frequently condemned by the Church, some Catholics have become confused by changes in the Church's Code of Canon Law. Under the old 1917 Code (Canon 2335), any Catholic who enrolled in a Masonic sect or similar organization that plotted against the Church was automatically excommunicated.

Can. 2335 (1917 code): "Those who have themselves enrolled in a Masonic sect or other associations of the same kind which plot against the Church or the legitimate civil powers incur *ipso facto* excommunication reserved simply to the Apostolic See."

The corresponding canon of the current 1983 Code, Canon 1374, does not mention Masonry specifically and has changed the sanction from excommunication to a "just penalty" or an "interdict."

Can. 1374 (1983 code) "One who joins an association which plots against the Church is to be punished with a just penalty; one who promotes or moderates such an association is to be punished with an interdict."⁵⁹

Because of this change, some Catholics erroneously concluded that the Church had changed her position on Freemasonry.

The reason the Church did not mention Masonry explicitly in Canon 1374 was to *broaden* the application of the law to cover *any* associations which plot against the Church. The penalty for joining such organizations was changed from excommunication to "a just penalty" or "an interdict"—and, under this Canon, it is no longer incurred "automatically" but must be imposed by Church authority.

Note also that an interdict may have the same deleterious effects as an excommunication (i.e., those under interdict are forbidden to receive certain Sacraments). For example, apostates, heretics and schismatics incur an excommunication *latae sententiae*—"automatically"—under Canon 1364.⁶⁰

The acts of apostasy, heresy, or schism must be externally manifested and perceived (not only committed in the sinner's mind and will) in order to result in automatic excommunication. (See Canon 1330.) If a "Catholic" Mason **knowingly and obstinately** embraced the theology of the Lodge (Indifferentism, Naturalism), he would be guilty of heresy and automatically excommunicated. Similarly, if a Catholic **knowingly and obstinately** refused to acknowledge the Pope's authority to prohibit Masonic membership for Catholics (this is more than simple disobedience), he would automatically excommunicate himself from the Church as a schismatic. Catholics are subject to these penalties only if they obstinately persist in their sin. This means that the Catholic

⁵⁹ Canon Law Society of America, *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000), p. 1583.

⁶⁰ CCC, No. 2089 and CIC, Can. 751 define apostasy as "the total repudiation of the Christian faith." Most "Catholic" Masons would not fulfill this definition.

is aware of the Church's teaching (in the case of heresy) or of the authority of the Pope (in the case of schism) but persistently refuses to submit to it. **If the Catholic did not act with full knowledge and consent, the penalty of excommunication or interdict would be mitigated or eliminated.**⁶¹

The Church's 1983 "Declaration on Masonic Associations"

Because of the potential erroneous interpretations of the 1983 Code regarding Catholic membership in Freemasonry, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a "Declaration on Masonic Associations" on the day before the Code became effective. The document, which was written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (the future Pope Benedict XVI) and approved by Pope John Paul II, reaffirms that Masonic principles are irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church and that Catholic membership in Masonry remains forbidden. Following is the complete text of the declaration:

It has been asked whether there has been any change in the Church's decision in regard to Masonic associations since the new Code of Canon Law does not mention them expressly, unlike the previous Code.

This Sacred Congregation is in a position to reply that this circumstance is due to an editorial criterion which was followed also in the case of other associations likewise unmentioned, inasmuch as they are contained in wider categories.

Therefore, **the Church's negative judgment in regard to Masonic associations remains unchanged since their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church and therefore membership in them remains forbidden. The faithful who enroll in Masonic associations are in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion.** It is not within the competence of local ecclesiastical authorities to give a judgment on the nature of Masonic associations which would imply a derogation from what has been decided above, and this in line with the Declaration of this Sacred Congregation issued on 17 February 1981 (cf. AAS 73 (1981), pp. 240-241).

In an audience granted to Cardinal Ratzinger, the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II approved and ordered the publication of this Declaration which had been decided in an ordinary meeting of the Sacred Congregation. Rome, from the Office of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, November 26, 1983.

On March 1, 2007, Bishop Gianfranco Girotti, the regent of the Apostolic Penitentiary, presided over a conference on the topic of Freemasonry at the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty. At the conference, Bishop Girotti reiterated the Church's 1983 condemnation of Freemasonry, stating that the concepts and philosophy of Masonry are incompatible with the Catholic Faith.

The 1983 Declaration restates the Church's constant opposition to Freemasonry and makes clear that Catholics who join a Masonic Lodge are in a state of grave sin (mortal sin) and may not receive Holy Communion. Those Catholics who are aware of their sin must receive absolution in Confession—the Sacrament of Penance—before being able to receive Holy Communion again. In order for his Confession to be valid, the "Catholic" Mason must renounce his Masonic membership.

⁶¹ Can. 1321, §1. For example, if a Catholic were invincibly ignorant of the Church's opposition to Freemasonry, he would not be subject to a penalty (Canon 1323, °2).

By choosing the Masonic Lodge over the Eucharist, “Catholic” Masons rupture their personal relationship with Jesus Christ and expel Sanctifying Grace from their souls. The Council of Trent infallibly declared that the Sacraments are not superfluous but are “necessary for salvation.” The Mason who continues to receive the Eucharist in a state of mortal sin “eats and drinks judgment (*eternal condemnation*) to himself.” (1 Corinthians 11:29).

Catholics must avoid not only joining the Masonic Lodge, but associating with Masons in any way. In his condemnation of Freemasonry, which he declared “valid forever,” Pope Clement XII strictly commanded Catholics never to “be present” among Masons but to “stay completely clear” of any kind of association with them.⁶² Pope Leo XIII also warned that “everyone should avoid familiarity or friendship with anyone suspected of belonging to Masonry or to affiliated groups.”⁶³ Pope Pius XI further reminds us that the Apostle John, who ceaselessly taught us to “love one another,” forbade any intercourse with those who professed a corrupt version of Christ’s teaching. (2 John 1:9-11).⁶⁴

Some Catholic groups such as the Knights of Columbus hold joint gatherings with Shriners and other Masons. Masons deliberately seek out these gatherings with Catholics in order to convince the public of Freemasonry’s legitimacy.

Other denominations that condemn membership as a Freemason:

- Assemblies of God
- Church of the Brethren
- Church of the Nazarene
- Evangelical Lutheran Synod
- Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
- The Methodist Church (UK)⁶⁵
- Orthodox Presbyterian Church
- Presbyterian Church in America
- Society of Friends (Quakers)

Knights of Columbus cancels Mass scheduled for Masonic auditorium

[LifeSite](#) Wed Jul 5, 2023 - 8:57 pm EDT



([LifeSiteNews](#)) — The Knights of Columbus in North Dakota and the Canadian province of Manitoba have canceled a Mass that had been scheduled to be held in a Masonic lodge.

The annual Mass of solidarity and friendship held at the International Peace Garden was scheduled this year for [the Masonic auditorium](#) on the grounds of the park. The building functions as the annual meeting place for the Peace Garden Lodge of the Freemasons. The announcement of the location raised serious questions among concerned Catholics about the appropriateness of holding a Mass there.

⁶² Pope Clement XII, In Eminenti (1738). The Masonic Bible describes Pope Clement by stating that “a more bitter persecutor of masonry has not lived” (p. 26) and declares the Pope’s condemnations to be “blasphemous and libelous to the utmost degree, preposterous and utterly false to the tenets and practices of the Order.” (p. 13).

Pope Leo XIII, Praeclara Gratulationis Publicae (1894).

⁶³ Pope Leo XIII, Custodi di Quella Fede (1892), No. 15.

⁶⁴ Pope Pius XI, Mortalium Animos (1928), No. 9.

⁶⁵ A condemnatory report was issued in 1985, though no prohibition exists within the denomination.