

# The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

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Lecture Series on Freemasonry Through the Light of Catholicism

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# The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

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## Session 3.2 Philosophy of the Second Degree

The second sacrament of Freemasonry is the Fellow Craft Degree through which the initiate is brought into more light and advances to his goal of being raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

# CATHOLIC CATECHISM ON FREEMASONRY LESSON THREE - RELIGION

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Naturalism, Indifferentism, and Oaths

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The Second Degree of Freemasonry

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Indifferentism

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Naturalism

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Oaths

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## - *Overall Points of Conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree*

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The Fellow Craft Degree is a continuation of sacramental system of Freemasonry. In this degree, the initiate, having proved himself proficient as an Entered Apprenticed is now 'passed' to the degree of Fellow Craft. In this sacrament he receives new working tools, he is walked into the middle chamber of King Solomon's Temple (which is the Lodge of Master Masons), studies the architecture of the temple and begins his study in the seven liberal arts and sciences. He also learns what the G in the center of the square and compass alludes to.



# **In Eminenti apostolatus specula (The High Watch) Pope Clement XII - 1738**

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“Now it 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 Massons 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 virtue, are associated with one another in a union, 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 grave penalties, to an inviolable silence about all that they do in secret together.”



# Humanum Genus (The Human Race) Pope Leo XIII - 1884

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“Now, the masonic sect produces fruits that are pernicious and of the bitterest savor. For, from what We have above most clearly shown, that which is their ultimate purpose forces it-self into view - namely, the 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.”



# The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

## - *The Three Irreconcilable Conflicts*

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- Indifferentism
- Naturalism
- Oaths

# The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

## - *The Three Irreconcilable Conflicts*

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- Non-Guild
- Jurisdictional Variation
- Catholic Objection



# The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

## - *The Three Irreconcilable Conflicts*

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- **Indifferentism**

- The Catholic Church believes and teaches and that there is no salvation outside of the Church and, therefore, that the Catholic Church is the fullness of truth. This belief does not limit God who saves, but proclaims that Christ and His Church are God's given path to that gift of salvation. Therefore, the idea that one religion is as good as another, and that all religions are equally valid paths to salvation is antithetical to what Christ Jesus revealed and to Catholic soteriology.

# INDIFFERENTISM IN THE FC DEGREE

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- What elements remain from the Entered Apprentice Degree
  - Still blindfolded, partially clothed (left arm and left breast exposed), cable-tow now twice around arm/neck, right foot is bare, but left foot now has shoe/slipper.
  - Rather than a sharp point, the candidate is now received on the angle of a square, meant to teach that virtue should be the rule and guide of your conscience in all future transactions with mankind. Note that this conscience is not being formed by anything other than naturalism.
  - The Holy Bible still have a square and compass set on it, but now one point of the compass is now elevated above the square, to symbolize the candidate has received light in Masonry by points.
  - Taught to wear apron now as a Fellow Craft
- These changes meant to symbolize advancement and matriculation into more light (Gnosticism) and secret mysteries.

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## - *The Three Irreconcilable Conflicts*

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- # Naturalism

- The Catholic Church believes and teaches that God is the source of our life and all that is good, and that we are on a pilgrimage to return to Him. The sacraments, the signs that Christ Jesus left on earth, order us to the Eternal Father through His grace, and help us to order all that is good back to Him. Naturalism looks to nature as the one original and fundamental source of all that exists and attempts to use it to explain causes and to order life back to nature.

# NATURALISM IN THE FC DEGREE

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- Self-determination is a central teaching in Freemasonry; that the initiate is to use the tools of an operative Mason to apply the philosophical meaning of that tool to his life and, thereby, become a better man.
  - Earns wages as a Fellow Crafts, corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment, and the oil of joy = peace, harmony and strength
  - Learns that the Jewels of a Fellowcraft are an attentive ear, an instructive tongue, and a faithful breast.
  - Learns that the letter G alluded to Geometry, the fifth science; but more particularly to the sacred name of the Deity, to whom all, from the Youngest Entered Apprentice who stands in the northeast corner, to the Worshipful Master who presides in the east, with reverence most devoutly and humbly bow.
  - The new working tool of a Fellow Craft is a plumb-line (Amos 7:7-8), square, level. A. The plumb is an instrument made use of, by operative masons, to raise perpendiculars; the square, to square their work; and the level, to lay horizontals, but Free and Accepted Masons are taught to make use of them for more noble and glorious purposes: the plumb admonishes to walk upright, in one's several stations, before God and man; squaring actions by the square of virtue; and remembering that one is travelling, upon the level of time, to "that undiscovered country from whose birth no traveler returns."
  - Introduced first time to King Solomon's Temple and an introduction to the myth that unfolds in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree. There are elements at the Temple that the Freemason should regard as aids in naturalism and self-determination, such as the two large columns or pillars on the porch of the temple (Boaz and Jachin – strength and establishment) – the adornment, height, width, depth, and composition all teach naturalism.
  - There is also a winding staircase of three, five and seven steps; each step of which teaches a point for self-determinationism and naturalism. Wisdom, Strength, Beauty / Youth, Manhood, Old age === Five Orders of Architecture, Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite / Five Humans Senses ===== The seven Sabbatical years, seven years of famine, seven years of war, seven years in building the Temple, seven golden candlesticks, seven wonders of the world, seven planets; but, more especially, the seven liberal arts and sciences, which are grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. For these and many other reasons the number seven has ever been held in high estimation among Masons.



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## - *The Three Irreconcilable Conflicts*

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- # Oaths

- I, (name of candidate), of my own free-will and accord, in the presence of Almighty God, and this worshipful Lodge, erected to Him, and dedicated to the holy STS. JOHN, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear that I will always hail, and ever conceal, and never reveal any of the secret arts, parts, or points of the Fellow Craft Degree to any person whomsoever, except it be to a true and lawful brother of this degree, or in a regularly constituted Lodge of Fellow Crafts; nor unto him or them until, by strict trial, due examination, or lawful information, I shall find him, or them, as lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself. I furthermore promise and swear that I will stand to, and abide by, all the laws, rules, and regulations of the Fellow Craft Degree, as far as the same shall come to my knowledge. Further. I will acknowledge and obey all due signs and summons sent to me from a Lodge of Fellow Crafts, or given me by a brother of that degree, if within the length of my cable-tow. Further, that I will aid and assist all poor, distressed, worthy Fellow Crafts, knowing them to be such, as far as their necessities may require, and my ability permit, without any injury to myself. Further, that I will not cheat, wrong, nor defraud a brother of this degree, knowingly, nor supplant him in any of his laudable undertakings. All this I most solemnly promise and swear with a firm and steadfast resolution to perform the same, without any hesitation, mental reservation, or self-evasion of mind whatever, binding myself under no less penalty than of having my breast torn open my heart plucked out, and placed on the highest pinnacle of the temple (some say, My heart and vitals taken from thence, and thrown over my left shoulder, and carried into the valley of Jehoshaphat, &c., &c.), there to be devoured by the vultures of the air, should I ever knowingly violate the Fellow Craft obligation. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the due performance of the same.

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## Session 3.3 Philosophy of the Third Degree

The third sacrament of Freemasonry is the Master Mason Degree through which the initiate is raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason and participates in the death and raising of Hiram Abiff.