

The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

Lecture Series on Freemasonry Through the Light of Catholicism

– Instructor David L. Gray, M.A.T.

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Session Eleven – *Inimica Vis*

The objective of this eleventh lecture is to ground the student in the focus of Pope Leo XIII's *Inimica Vis*, where, post a successful election for the political right in Italy, Pope Leo XIII seized upon the small victory to publish two encyclicals on the same day that repeated his similar themes. *Custodi Di Quella Fede* was addressed "To the Italian People," and *Inimica Vis* was addressed "To the Bishops of Italy."

CATHOLIC
CATECHISM ON
FREEMASONRY
LESSON ELEVEN
- ENEMY FORCES

Inimica Vis

Historical Background of Encyclical

Areas of Major Contribution & Legacy

INIMICA VIS - FAST FACTS & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- **Author:** Pope Leo XIII (1878 – 1903)
- **Promulgated:** December 8, 1892, from Saint Peter's
- **Audience:** To the Bishops of Italy
- **Purpose:** Sister encyclical document of *Custodi di Quella Fede*. Written as a letter of triumph and encouragement after the political right gave the socialists a major defeat on the November 6, 1892, General Election.
- Of all of Pope Leo XIII's works against Freemasonry, this document was the briefest of all.

INIMICA VIS - AREAS OF CONCERN

- Paragraphs 1 – 2: Pope Leo XIII opens his encyclical to the Bishops up with a brief recapitulation on the nineteen centuries of warfare against the Catholic Church that was “inspired by the evil spirit.” Leo XIII, without going through the labor again of citing the names of the documents of his predecessors, summarily states that over the past century and a half, the Roman Pontificate has repeatedly outlawed Freemasonry and its appendant bodies.
- Paragraphs 3 – 9: Because the people of Italy refused to see Freemasonry for what it is, it is costing them their Christian culture and has allowed Freemasonry to infiltrate every institution in their society. Freemasons are using local parish priest to teach people that Vatican teaching is distant from reality. Urges brother bishops to never lose their zeal in fighting for the salvation of souls. Calls the bishops to heal those who have been drawn into supporting the Masonic enterprise because they were fainthearted, weak in spirit, and lacked discretion. Says two simple principles that have strengthened and preserved the Catholic Church in our country’s war against Freemasonry; that is, 1) Inflame souls by persuasion, exhortation, and example; and 2) Nourish in the clergy and the people with an undying and active zeal for religion and for their salvation.

INIMICA VIS - AREAS OF CONCERN

- Paragraphs 10 – 11: In closing, Pope Leo XIII asks the Italian Bishops to disseminate Custodi di Quella Fede “widely as possible” so that, “with the blessing of God, we can hope that spirits may be aroused through the contemplation of the threatening evils and betake themselves without delay to the remedies which We have pointed out.”

INIMICA VIS - CONTRIBUTION & LEGACY

- Similar to Custodi di Quella Fede, there was not any new information added about the Masonic sects or their activities that were not already presented in his early encyclicals on the subject. What is new here is that Inimica Vis was addressed to the Italian bishops as more of a letter of exhortation than as an encyclical.

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Session Twelve – *Praeclara Gratulationis Pone fois encorepublicae*

The objective of this twelfth lecture is to ground the student in the focus of Pope Leo XIII's *Praeclara Gratulationis Pone fois encorepublicae*, which is primarily an Apostolic letter to call for the unity of all Christians, but also includes a direct reference about Freemasonry; calling it a great danger and threat to their unity.