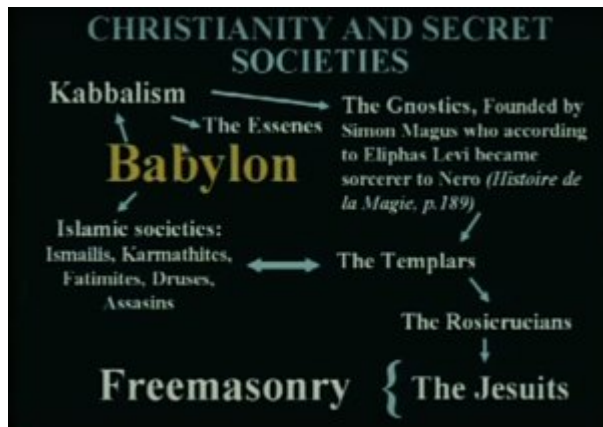


The Papal System – XXVIII. Secret Societies



Continued from [XXVII. Intention in the Priest Necessary to the Validity of a Sacrament](#).

Note: The official policy of the Roman Catholic Church is to forbid Catholics to join a secret society such as the Freemasons. However, other documentation on this website tells me the Jesuit Order now has control of many secret societies and uses them as proxy agents to do its bidding. If any of the readers of this website have more information on this subject, please share it.

The Church of Rome has manifested a very violent antipathy to secret societies; and makes it an offense of no common magnitude for one of her members to unite with such organizations. And this opposition is strongest against Freemasons and Odd-fellows.

Clement XII.,

In 1738, published the bull "In Eminenti" against the Freemasons, in which he solemnly excommunicates them from his Church. This bull is binding on the whole Papal Church still. Clement was an unusually enlightened and liberal man for a bishop of Rome, but even he could tolerate nothing in papal countries which he could not control.

M. Tournan is thrown into the Inquisition, at Madrid, in 1757.

On the charge of being a Freemason he is cast into the dungeons of the Holy Office; and in due time solemnly tried. The following is a portion of his examination:

Q. You are then a Freemason? A. Yes. Q. How long have you been so? A. For twenty years. Q. Have you attended the assemblies of Freemasons? A. Yes, in Paris. Q. Have you attended them in Spain? A. No, I do not know that there are any lodges in Spain. Q. Are you a Christian, a Roman Catholic? A. Yes, I

was baptized in the parish of St. Paul at Paris. Q. How as a Christian dare you attend Masonic assemblies, knowing them to be contrary to religion? A. I did not know that; I never saw or heard there anything contrary to religion. Q. The Freemasons are an anti-religious body? A. Their object is not to combat or deny the necessity or utility of any religion, but for the exercise of charity towards the unfortunate of any sect, particularly if he is a member of the society. Q. What passes in these lodges which it might be inconvenient to publish? A. Nothing, if it is viewed without prejudice. Q. Is it true that the festival of St. John is celebrated in the lodges, and if so, what worship is given in such celebration? A. His festival is celebrated by a repast, after which there is a discourse exhorting the brethren to beneficence to their fellow creatures in honor of God. There is no worship given to St. John. Q. Is it true that the sun, moon, and stars are honored in the lodges? A. No.

He was then assured that "He was a dogmatizing heretic, and that he should acknowledge this with humility, and ask pardon, for if he persisted in his obstinacy he would destroy both soul and body." He confessed that he was wrong, and demanded absolution, and hoped that his punishment would be moderate. He was condemned to imprisonment for one year with a heavy batch of spiritual exercises during that period. He appeared with the infamous mantle, the sanbenito, at a private *auto da fe* celebrated in the hall of the Inquisition, where he promised never to meet with a Masonic assembly again. At the-expiration of his imprisonment, he was expelled from Spain, and ordered never to return without the permission of the king or of the Holy Office.

Archbishop Cullen of Dublin,

A few years since, wished to admonish the Irish to renounce Fenian organizations, and in his published pastoral, he began this work by denouncing Masonic and all secret societies generally, and then reached the object he had chiefly in view, the political clubs of his countrymen, whose secret meetings and schemes filled Great Britain and Ireland with apprehension and anxiety.

The Mission Book on Masons and Odd-fellows.

This manual of prayer, recommended by Archbishop Hughes, and a work of great popularity, advises the penitent going to make a "general confession" to question himself beforehand on the ten commandments with a view to recall his sins, and to be ready to tell them to the priest. Under the first commandment he is to ask himself this question: "Have you exposed your faith to danger by evil associations? HAVE YOU UNITED YOURSELF TO THE FREEMASONS, OR ODD-FELLOWS, OR ANY SIMILAR SOCIETY FORBIDDEN BY THE CHURCH?"

It is known that not a few Catholics become members of various secret societies, notwithstanding the menaces of the Church; but it is generally understood that in any serious sickness, or when desiring the use of the confessional, all such relations must be renounced. Rome must be mistress in everything, and mistress in all places; and if not, she will drag her children away where the tiara is not sovereign.

Continued in [XXIX. The Family and Public Worship, and the Books of Protestants](#)

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