

The War
of the
Antichrist
with the Church
and Christian Civilization

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Edited by Joshua Charles

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*Dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of
Victory, Queen of the Rosary, Seat of Wisdom,
Holy Theotokos, Ark of the New Covenant.
Pray for us, for the defeat of Freemasonry, and for the
conversion of Freemasons around the world!*

-Joshua Charles

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Editor's Introduction

IT SEEMS STRANGE to republish a book that was first published in 1885. But the times call for it.

In 1884, Pope Leo XIII promulgated his iconic encyclical on Freemasonry, *Humanum Genus*. In that document, he asked the Catholic clergy that it “be your first rule of all to tear away the mask from Freemasonry, and let it be seen as it really is.”

Later that year, an Irish priest, Monsignor George F. Dillon, answered this call by delivering a series of lectures on Freemasonry which were made into a book, originally published in 1885, entitled *War of Antichrist with the Church and Christian Civilization*. Leo XIII thanked him for his efforts in a letter included in this book. He even paid for the Italian translation and the printing of several thousand copies.

It is this book which is now republished in its entirety,¹ with footnotes and explanations, and, to our knowledge, for the first time since its original publication.

Why are we republishing this work now? Put simply, because its “prophecies” about Freemasonry and its designs on the world have come true. Many of them had already been articulated by numerous sovereign pontiffs of the Catholic Church throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

¹ There was a previous version published in 1965 under the title *Grand Orient Freemasonry Unmasked*. But this version did not include everything Monsignor Dillon wrote, nor the various explanatory footnotes we have provided.

But Monsignor Dillon's work shows how they were being brought to pass—the dark harvest of which seems to be near completion in our own times. As such, this work sheds invaluable light on the nature of the times in which we live.

At the same time, by republishing this work, we are not thereby claiming every assertion made by Monsignor Dillon is true. Many, if not all of them, likely are. Our interest in this text, and thus our desire to republish it for the consideration of Catholics in the twenty-first century, was twofold: the endorsement of Pope Leo XIII, who more than any other pontiff raised his apostolic voice against the wolves of Freemasonry; and the by now obvious and undeniable extent to which the Masonic program as described by Pope Leo and Monsignor Dillon has been realized across the world, and especially the post-Christian West. Is this by design? Many popes, and Monsignor Dillon, believed such a design was afoot. We are content to leave readers to their own conclusions.

So, what is the Masonic program? According to Pope Leo XIII, it is nothing less than the destruction of Christian civilization, and the resurrection of pre-Christian civilization on its ruins according to the principles of naturalism, in which man's unaided reason and will are supreme, and divine grace plays no role. Freemasonry believes itself to be the custodian of the "original" primeval revelation to mankind—a "revelation" that can unite all mankind regardless of their particular religions. This "revelation" is the religion of nature and the unfolding of its secrets, the knowledge of which can be attained by reason alone and "redeem" mankind from its delusions, among which are the idea that any particular religion is true or salvific.

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, has always taught that mankind lives under the weight of original sin inherited from our first parents. Those parents deliberately chose to disobey God, and thereby fell from a state in which divine grace inhabited their souls, and empowered their reason, appetites, and wills to conform to their final end, namely, eternal life with God, which the Church calls the “beatific vision,” and teaches is the reward for obedience. With their fall, their reason, appetites, and wills became weakened, and thereby rendered them incapable of attaining the end for which God created them. Not only that, but they were also rendered incapable of even fully obeying the natural law, which even in their damaged state, they could still know by reason. We have inherited that fallen human nature. But God, in His mercy, reconciled human nature to Himself through the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, making it possible for divine grace to inhabit human souls once again, empowering them to obey God and attain their final end in heaven by being united to Christ in the sacraments.

Thus, the Church teaches that human nature, on its own, is incapable of saving itself, of growing in perfection, and thus attaining its final end. It must receive God’s assistance—His grace—to do so.

Freemasonry is based on the exact opposite principle. Nature is capable of saving itself. It is capable of its own perfection. Divine power need not be received from the outside, for it is already within everyone and everything, waiting to be uncovered through the *gnosis* (secret knowledge)

of Freemasonry. As such, and as Pope Leo XIII warned, it invariably ends in nature worship and pantheism.

It is for this reason we describe what Pope Leo XIII called “naturalism” as *sola natura*, or “nature alone.” Upon this basis, Freemasonry not only denies the reality of original sin but also declares that man’s reason is all-powerful and nature is capable of its own perfection apart from divine grace. Whereas the Church has always declared that the salvation of mankind is achieved within Christ, the second Adam, Freemasonry contends that the first Adam, without divine grace, is sufficient. Man does not require something from God in order to be united with his fellows. They are their own source of salvation. This is the “fraternity” so often proposed by Freemasonry—a “fraternity” of nature bereft of divine grace, united in the first Adam that shall be confined to the flames of hell, and ignoring entirely, if not outright hostile to, the second Adam, in whom alone man may find eternal life.

It is upon the basis of the first Adam that Freemasonry seeks to build not only individuals but also societies, and ultimately a global civilization—a civilization built on the power of human reason alone, indifferent at best, and hostile at worst, to the very divine grace that has been gifted to it in Christ, the second Adam, in whose name alone it can be saved.

The Two Swords

What we will call the “Masonic program” detailed by Pope Leo XIII and Monsignor Dillon cannot be adequately understood apart from the Church’s doctrine of the Two

Swords. While the doctrine of the “Two Swords” reached the height of its development in the Middle Ages, its origins are ancient, and most famously articulated by Pope Saint Gelasius I in a letter to Emperor Anastasius I in AD 494, in which he writes as follows:

For there are, Your Imperial Majesty, two principles by which this world is principally governed: the sacred authority of the pontiffs and the royal power; between the two, the burden of priests is all the heavier, as they are obliged to give an accounting before the divine justice even for those very kings of men.

For you are, most merciful son, aware that through your dignity, you indeed preside over mankind, but nevertheless, you bow devoutly to those who are the leaders in divine matters, and from them you seek the source of your salvation; and you understand that, in receiving the sacraments of heaven and in administering them (as appropriate), you must be a follower, according to the rule of religion, rather than the leader. And so you realize that in these matters you are dependent upon their judgment and must not want them to be subject to your will.

If, then, religious leaders themselves recognize, in what concerns the order of public discipline, that authority has been bestowed upon you by a dispensation from above, and therefore obey your laws, so that in worldly things they may not even appear to oppose . . . an impossible decision, with what feelings, I ask you, is it fitting and proper for you to obey those

who have been assigned to the administration of the venerable mysteries?

Hence, just as no small risk impends for pontiffs if they remained silent about what pertains to the worship of the Deity, so there is no trivial danger for persons who—perish the thought!—show disrespect when they ought to show obedience. And if it is appropriate for the hearts of the faithful to be submissive to all priests in general when they are properly attending to godly concerns, how much the more is compliance to be accorded the leader of that See which the most high Godhead has wished to give preeminence over all priests and which the subsequent devotion of the universal Church also has continually exalted?

In this regard Your Charity has obviously noticed that no one has ever been able to lift himself up by any merely human devising to the privilege or the acknowledged position of the person whom the voice of Christ has put before all the rest, whom the venerable Church has always acknowledged and devoutly regards as primate. That which has been decided by God's judgment can be attacked by human presumptuousness, but it cannot be vanquished by any power whatsoever.²

² Pope Gelasius I, "Letter to Emperor Anastasius I" (AD 494), in Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum: Compendium of Creeds, Definitions and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, eds. Peter Hünermann, Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash, 43rd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 347.

The root of the doctrine of the Two Swords is Christ's words delivered just prior to His ascension: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Mt 28:18). Christ explicitly delegated authority to His Church, and Scripture is clear that the authority of states also comes from God. As such, all humanity—including civil government—has a duty to submit to the second Adam, Christ the King. The Church can never impose such submission on non-believers by violence. But the duty remains, nonetheless.

Under the doctrine of the Two Swords, the Church has consistently taught that God established two authorities by which man is enabled to meet his end, both natural and supernatural: the Temporal Sword for his natural end and the Spiritual Sword for his supernatural end; the one for earthly matters, the other for heavenly matters; the one for the common good of all, the other for the supernatural good of all; the one constituted by nature, the other by grace.

Under this doctrine, the purpose of the Temporal Sword is to uphold the common good, and the purpose of the Spiritual Sword is to enable man to reach his supernatural end—namely, eternal salvation. The ultimate "common good," that good shared by men in virtue of their being bearers of God's image, is to see God face to face forever—the beatific vision. The Temporal Sword cannot achieve this. But it can, in its role as provider of the common temporal good, help create a society in which all are genuinely free to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12), rightly worship God, obey His commandments, and thus achieve the beatific vision. As such, the Temporal Sword submitted to Christ the King recognizes it can never effect eternal salvation (hence

the Church's consistent teaching against obtaining converts by violence), and as such must submit to the Spiritual Sword on matters of faith and morals. In its merely natural capacity, it must encourage and protect a society in which human law accords with natural law, the pursuit of eternal salvation is unobstructed, and where, ideally, the Church herself is provided various aids by which to carry out her mission. The state saves no one. But as an authority established by God, it must never interfere with, and, to the extent possible, should positively assist men in their pursuit of eternal salvation.

The Temporal Sword has its own proper jurisdiction, derived from nature, which the Church cannot infringe upon. But it does not have jurisdiction over matters of religion and morals, of which the Church is the authoritative and infallible teacher. As such, the state, regardless of its form, cannot be auto-defining. As an authority derived from the same nature which has been damaged by original sin, the Temporal Sword requires grace to properly discern the moral law established by God. The moral law can be known by reason. But since reason itself has been damaged by original sin, the aid of grace is required for it to be known with certainty. Therefore, the Temporal requires the aid of the Spiritual Sword, whose infallible teaching of the moral law is absolutely binding. No autocrat dictating from on high or vote bubbling up from the people below can presume to contradict it, for its source is God, who is the source of all authority.

Likewise, as the supernatural society created by God in order to dispense the divine grace required for salvation to the world, the Church has an absolute right from God Himself to engage in its mission—at the very minimum—unhindered by

any earthly power, which is itself established by God. Therefore, the Temporal Sword must not interfere with or obstruct the Spiritual Sword in the execution of its mission.

The reason the Temporal Power must ultimately be submitted in matters of faith and morals to the Spiritual Power is because human nature is incapable of keeping the natural law, given the damage done to it by original sin. Thus, only the grace provided by the supernatural society of the Church can enable human beings to keep the natural law, and the Temporal Power to uphold it. This is why the naturalism of Freemasonry is so pernicious, for it claims that nature can reach its end without the assistance of divine grace, and that the Temporal Power can effect the common good without the Spiritual Power. Our nature, such as it is, may be compared to a swimmer in an ocean who cannot keep his head above water because his limbs are paralyzed, or otherwise incapacitated. He must have a flotation device to help him do so. That "flotation" device, that thing which enables human nature to keep even the natural law (keeping one's head above water, in our analogy) is divine grace.

Therefore, because of original sin, the Temporal Power that has formally separated itself from the Spiritual Power will thereby render itself incapable of even legislating in accord with the natural law. One need only observe the current status of post-Christian societies to see that this is true. The masonic principle of *sola natura*, as such, implicitly rejects the reign of Christ the King, and any religion that would claim divine authority to teach on matters of faith and morals. Hence the essential incompatibility of Freemasonry and Catholicism.

With this understanding in place, the Masonic program laid out by Pope Leo XIII and Monsignor Dillon begins to make sense in light of the doctrine of the Two Swords. In short, the fullness of Christendom (imperfect and subject to corruption prior to Our Lord's return) existed wherever both swords were submitted to Christ the King. As such, they acted in concert. They remained separate entities—one constituted by nature, the other by grace; one for the purpose of man's temporal good, the other for his supernatural good. But in Christendom, the Temporal Sword, though constituted by nature, nonetheless recognized the voice of Christ its King, and His presence among His people by virtue of their baptism, and therefore recognized the authority of the Spiritual Sword in all religious and moral matters.

Therefore, the destruction of Christendom envisioned by Freemasonry necessarily involves not only a direct attack on the Church herself but an apostasy of the Temporal Sword from the Spiritual Sword, and therefore from Christ the King. Christendom is destroyed when its temporal powers believe the lie that they may reach their end without divine grace—that their nature may become godlike without God. In so doing, it is falling for the lie of the serpent in the Garden: "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gn 3:4–5). But this is precisely the point—that our damaged human nature *cannot* perfectly know what is good and evil, let alone will the good without divine grace.

Thus, the Masonic program seeks to destroy Christendom, and in its place inaugurate a "world republic" inspired by what Pope Leo XIII called "naturalism," and we describe

as *sola natura*, “nature alone.” These are not the ravings of a “conspiracy theorist” but the consistent warnings of many supreme pontiffs throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—preeminently Pope Leo XIII. That program primarily consists of the following pillars, each of which was intended to sever the state from the Church, to secularize the Temporal Sword and society, to undermine the Church from within, and thereby destroy both powers established by God to rightly govern the world:

1. the complete separation of the state from the Church;
2. the idea of “popular sovereignty” as the only basis for any government authority;
3. religious indifferentism;
4. placing marriage under the jurisdiction of the state, making it “civil,” and encouraging easy divorce laws that reduce marriage to nothing more than a civil contract like any other;
5. the secularizing of education;
6. the encouragement of moral decay among the populace as a means to secure their obedience to the Masonic program once it reaches its global climax; and finally,
7. the destruction of the temporal and spiritual authority of the pope.

Of portentous significance in light of the revelations of Our Lady of Fatima three decades later concerning the “errors of Russia,” Pope Leo XIII and Monsignor Dillon both contend that Freemasonry was the prime mover behind the cause of worldwide Socialism and Communism, with which it

intended to establish its envisioned world republic on the basis of the ideals of *Liberté, égalité, fraternité*. They declared this decades before the birth of the Soviet Union and other socialist and communist states.

Given that this book was written by Monsignor Dillon, a brief survey of the warnings of Pope Leo XIII himself which inspired Monsignor Dillon's lectures are in order. The italicized words are those we wish to emphasize.

Freemasonry's Ultimate Goal: The Destruction of Christendom

First, the pontiff made clear that Freemasonry intended nothing less than the destruction of Christian civilization.

For example, in *Humanum Genus*, he observes as follows:

No longer making any secret of their purposes, they [the Freemasons] are now *boldly rising up against God Himself*. They are *planning the destruction of holy Church publicly and openly*, and this with the set purpose of *utterly despoiling the nations of Christendom*, if it were possible, of the blessings obtained for us through Jesus Christ our Savior. . . .

. . . From what We have above most clearly shown, that which is *their ultimate purpose forces itself 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. . . .*

. . . To wish to destroy the religion and the Church which God Himself has established, and whose perpetuity He insures by His protection, and *to bring back after a lapse of eighteen centuries the manners and customs of the pagans*, is signal folly and audacious impiety. . . . In this insane and wicked endeavor we may almost see *the implacable hatred and spirit of revenge with which Satan himself is inflamed against Jesus Christ*.³

In an 1890 encyclical on Freemasonry in Italy, *Dall'alto dell'Apostolico Seggio*, Pope Leo XIII repeated the same assertion: "It is the plan of the sects [all secret societies, preeminently Freemasons] that is now unfolding itself in Italy, especially in what relates to the Catholic religion and the Church, *with the final and avowed purpose, if it were possible, of reducing it to nothing*."⁴ The goal of the "Masonic sect," Leo stated, was "to destroy the religion of Christ."⁵

Likewise, in 1892, in another encyclical on Freemasonry delivered to the Italian people, *Custodi di Quella Fede*, Leo declared, "This war [against Catholicism] is directed at the same time against the heavenly and the earthly kingdoms, against the faith of our ancestors, and the culture which they handed on to us." The "chief source" of this war, he declared, is the "masonic sect."⁶ The pope decried the fact that "a people redeemed by divine blood have thus returned to . . . the shames of paganism."⁷ He continued: "After nineteen

³ Pope Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus* (1884), nos. 2, 10, 24.

⁴ Pope Leo XIII, *Dall'alto dell'Apostolico Seggio* (1890), no. 2.

⁵ Pope Leo XIII, *Dall'alto* (1890), no. 11.

⁶ Pope Leo XIII, *Custodi di Quella Fede* (1892), no. 2.

⁷ Pope Leo XIII, *Custodi* (1892), no. 8.

centuries of Christian civilization, this sect [Freemasonry] tries to *overthrow the Catholic Church and to cut off its divine sources*. It absolutely denies the supernatural, repudiating every revelation and all the means of salvation which revelation shows us.”⁸ He declared Freemasonry to be “an enemy of God, Church, and country.”⁹

That same year, in another encyclical on Freemasonry, this time addressed to the Italian bishops, *Inimica Vis*, in a manner similar to Pope Saint Pius X’s declaration that modernism was the synthesis of all heresies, Pope Leo declared that Freemasonry was the embodiment of *every* enemy that had ever sought the destruction of the Catholic Church:

The spirit of all previous groups hostile to Catholic institutions has come to life again in that group called the Masonic sect, which, strong in manpower and resources, *is the leader in a war against anything sacred*.

. . . We have deliberately endeavored to reveal the secrets of this pernicious sect and the means by which *it labors for the destruction of the Catholic enterprise*.¹⁰

He repeats elsewhere that it is “the impious aspiration of the sects to overthrow the Catholic religion and the papacy.”¹¹ In Italy, they sought “to establish the new settlement of the Italian Peninsula upon the ruins of the Catholic Religion”¹²—a project they ultimately intended to be global in scope.

⁸ Pope Leo XIII, *Custodi* (1892), no. 9.

⁹ Pope Leo XIII, *Custodi* (1892), no. 10.

¹⁰ Pope Leo XIII, *Inimica Vis* (1892), nos. 1, 2.

¹¹ Pope Leo XIII, *Dall’alto* (1890), no. 16.

¹² Pope Leo XIII, *Dall’alto* (1890), no. 18.