

Masonry and the Catholic Church

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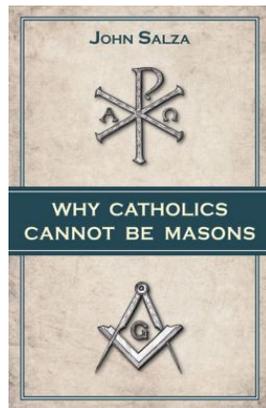
Bear not the yoke with unbelievers. For what participation hath justice with injustice? Or what fellowship hath light with darkness?

– 2 Corinthians 6:14

The Book

The following is my attempt at a summary of the major points that Catholic apologist and former 32nd degree Mason, John Salza, Esq. made in his book, *Why Catholics Cannot be Masons* (hereafter “WCCBM”, published by TAN, 2008, \$8, signed copies available at www.scripturecatholic.com).

This is the only book on Masonry available that has received an *Imprimatur*. It was granted by the well-respected and orthodox bishop, Thomas Doran, of Rockford, IL.



Confusion

Many folks, *some priests included*, don't understand the historical condemnations of Masonry or Freemasonry (the terms are interchangeable) over the centuries by the Catholic Church. They see it as a harmless fraternal organization, which has community activities and performs charitable work. In this sense, they see no real difference between the Masons and the **Knight's of Columbus**. What they don't know is that, it is what the Masons *teach*, which makes them very dangerous. Masonry is a **Deistic** faith, which has been condemned by no less than 12 popes since the 1700's. It is incompatible with the Catholic faith, and therefore anyone who joins their ranks is **committing mortal sin** and **cannot receive Holy Communion**. Also, according to the current 1983 Code of Canon Law, he incurs **automatic excommunication** from the Church, *latae sententiae* (CIC 1364 and 1374).

History

The Freemasons started as a group of stone masons who came together to share trade secrets in building the cathedrals of Europe. They were not indentured servants, so they were referred to as “free masons”. What began as a group of “operative masons”, who actually practiced masonry, became a group of “speculative freemasons”, who weren't masons by trade. **The stated goal of the Masons is to lead its**

members to Heaven; however, the means by which they do this is through the **Masonic religion**.

Condemned Heresies



Masonry denies principal truths of the Catholic faith. It teaches that a person can be saved in *any* religion he chooses. Therefore they reject the doctrines of Original Sin. It denies the need for Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church for salvation, and the revealed truth which flows from Christ and the Church and so they fall under the **condemnation of the First Vatican Council**. Masons have admitted that the reason why they use Christian terminology is to give it the flavor of Christianity, all the easier it is “to mislead those who only deserve to be misled,” as Albert Pike, who was the father of the Scottish Rite, once said. Masonry rejects what it calls “sectarianism”, that is, anything peculiar to any one religion or denominations which separates it from those who do not believe such things; *nothing is rejected, nothing is approved*. Masonry teaches the heresy of **Indifferentism**, condemned by Popes Pius IX, Leo XIII, Gregory XVI, and not the least of which is our Lord Himself, in **Apoc 3:15-16**, “...because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth.” Masonry is a religion of **Naturalism**. Pius XI wrote that Indifferentism leads to Naturalism, which ultimately leads to **Atheism**. Thus, anybody who holds to the principles of Naturalism, *abandons the divinely revealed religion*. And so, Masonry undermines God's plan of salvation for mankind, when it teaches that the revealed truths of Catholicism are not necessary and are sectarian. **Masonry is therefore diverting souls from Christ and toward perdition.**

Initiation Ceremonies

Each degree's ceremonies are called “exemplifications”. One can see the **anti-Christian** nature of Masonry in these initiation ceremonies into the first degree. The man is asked to strip down to his underwear, and to remove all “sectarian” articles such as crucifixes and scapulars, and even one's wedding ring. This is done so that one does not bring anything “**offensive**” into the Lodge. The candidate is referred to as one who has “**long been in darkness**”, and so this means the person, whether Christian or otherwise, has not been enlightened by the truth which Masonry reveals.

Masonry teaches that entrance into the Lodge is a “rebirth” out of the darkness, and into the light of truth. **It therefore rejects the true rebirth of Baptism.** Upon entrance into the Lodge, a sharp instrument is pressed into the bare breast of the candidate to remind him in the future of the consequences of revealing the secrets of Masonry.

Syncretism, Idolatry, and Blasphemy

Masonry prays to the **Grand Architect of the Universe**, which can be **any deity of every religious faith**. That is why the Masonic author Manly Hall can write, “Christ, Buddha, or Mohammed, the name means little.” A true **Catholic can never pray with non-Christians**, which would be an act of **syncretism**, and **idolatry**. Praying with Masons may tend towards believing like Masons, and this would put one’s soul in jeopardy indeed. Salza references Oliver Street, a Masonic author when he writes, “Masons could embrace not only ‘pantheism, nature religions and animism,’ but also nature worship, polytheism, fetishism, and sorcery” (WCCBM, p. 30). **The Masonic Bible** also says that “**Freemasonry reverences all titles by which God is known.**” The Masonic faith is an illogical faith, for one cannot hold two positions which are contrary to each other, at the same time. The oaths of Masonry are in violation of the Second Commandment, by using the Holy Name of God in vain. The candidate swears blood oaths at an altar, vowing never to reveal the secrets of Masonry. So, the oaths are acts of **blasphemy**.

Oaths versus Pledges

It is important to note that there is a difference between the *oaths* taken in Masonry, and the *pledges* taken by those who join fraternal organizations like the Knights of Columbus. The formula of the oath is “I swear to God”, calling on the Name of God to be witness to trivial matters, whereas the pledge uses the formula, “I give you my word.” In Masonry the oaths are not read to the candidate before hand as it is in the Knights of Columbus, so the candidate may not be given enough time to understand the oath he is taking in Masonry. Also, the Masonic oaths require **damnable self-curses**. Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, the Knights aim to draw the man into a closer relationship with our Lord, **Jesus Christ**, “For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Masonry teaches that the Bible is used only as a symbol, and that if the candidate were not a Christian, the Koran, the Vedas, or any other



religious book could be substituted as the symbol for the expressed will of God (WCCBM, p. 39). The Masons teach that we can **be saved by works alone**, that is, without the saving grace of God. This is a **heresy condemned by the Council of Trent**.

The Church Has Spoken

The Masons teach as a central tenet of its faith the resurrection of the body, but it is heretical because it divorces it from the equally true doctrine of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and His Church. The following are some notable quotes: “Remember that **Christianity and Masonry are essentially irreconcilable, such that to join one is to divorce the other**” -**Leo XIII**; **Clement XII** commanded Catholics never to be present among Masons; “...everyone should avoid familiarity or friendship with anyone suspected of belonging to Masonry or to affiliated groups” -**Leo XIII**. The **1983 Code of Canon Law**, while refraining from mentioning the Masons by name, as the 1917 Code did, it nevertheless applies to it, because it sought to broaden the applicability of its condemnation. This is confirmed by a clarification made by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, written by the then **Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger**, which says the following: “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**” (*Declaration on Masonic Associations*, 1983).



Infallible Conclusion

According to the teachings of the **First Vatican Council**, considering all that has been stated by the Councils and Popes, the Church’s teaching on Masonry is infallible because they are acts of the Ordinary and Universal Magisterium. Any Catholic who joins the ranks of Masonry is automatically excommunicated, commits grave mortal sin, and may not receive Holy Communion until he renounces his membership in the Masons.

Pope St. Pius X, pray for us!

Feast of St. Nicholas, Anno Domini 2010

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