

The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

Lecture Series on Freemasonry Through the Light of Catholicism

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The Catholic Catechism on Freemasonry

Session Ten – Custodi De Quella Fede

The objective of this tenth lecture is to ground the student in the focus of Pope Leo XIII's *Custodi De Quella Fede*, 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 TEN -
GUARDIANS OF THE FAITH

Custodi Di Quella Fede

Historical Background of Papal Encyclical

Areas of Major Contribution & Legacy

CUSTODI DI QUELLA FEDE - FAST FACTS & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- **Author:** Pope Leo XIII (1878 – 1903)
- **Promulgated:** December 8, 1892, W from Saint Peter's
- **Audience:** To the Italian People
- **Purpose:** Sister encyclical document of *Inimica Vis*. 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.

CUSTODI DI QUELLA FEDE - AREAS OF CONCERN

- Paragraphs 1 – 2: Leo XIII maintains that the Masonic sect is the chief source of this war against the Catholic Church and the historic Catholic culture of Italy, and states that in *Humanum Genus* and *Dall’alto dell’Apostolico Seggio*, “We tore from the face of masonry the mask which it used to hide itself and We showed it in its crude deformity and dark fatal activity.”
- Paragraphs 3 – 5: In this section, Leo XIII repeats his knowledge of the Masonic program’s effort to convince people that Freemasonry is just a philanthropic society that is interested in helping people. Yet, all that it has offered Italy is “conspiracies, corruptions, and violence” with the intent to dominate it. As for a litany of the evils that have over overcome Italy in such a short span of time, Leo XIII presents:
 1. The substitution of Christianity for naturalism.
 2. Substituting the worship of faith with the worship of reason.
 3. The substitution of Catholic morality for independent morality.
 4. Substituting spiritual progress with material progress.

CUSTODI DI QUELLA FEDE - AREAS OF CONCERN

5. The seizing of Church property, money, and goods that have been squandered.
6. The substitution of holy maxims and laws from the Gospel with a code of revolution.
7. The insertion of atheistic doctrines and a vile realism in schools, science, and the Christian arts.
8. Reducing the number of priests by forcing an unnecessary number of clerics to serve in the military.
9. Substituting of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and the Funeral Mass with civil marriages and funerals.
10. An overall effort to laicize everything; thereby, replacing the role of the Church in society.

CUSTODI DI QUELLA FEDE - AREAS OF CONCERN

11. Attempting to silence and discredit the Catholic press.
12. Closed monasteries and convents but allowed Masonic lodges and sectarian dens to multiply.
13. Gave rights of association to all kinds of organizations but denied the same legal rights to religious societies.
14. Proclaimed freedom of religion but exercised intolerance towards Catholicism.
15. Promised protection, dignity, and independence of the Pope, but exercised a daily contempt of him.
16. Allowances for public demonstrations against the Pope, but denied the same rights for Catholic demonstrations.
17. The encouragement of “schisms, apostasies, and revolts against legitimate superiors in the Church.”
18. Allowed for oaths in impious associations, but vows made for religious obedience are rebuked for being “contrary to human dignity and freedom.”

CUSTODI DI QUELLA FEDE - AREAS OF CONCERN

- Paragraph 6: Leo XIII states that Freemasonry has been the chief instigator of evil for the past thirty years.
- Paragraphs 7 – 8: In this section, Leo XIII returns to an argument he first made in *Dall'alto dell'Apostolico Seggio* about the value and contribution of the Catholic religion and how the loss of it undermines moral and social progress and stability.
- Paragraphs 9 – 12: Returns to *Humanum Genus* argument; that Freemasonry denies the supernatural in favor of relying on naturalism. Calls Freemasonry “an enemy of God, Church, and country,” and a society of perdition.
- Paragraph 13 – 22: Returns to *Humanum Genus* to state that Catholics should push back against Freemasonry by establishing guilds and associations and groups of mutual aid in society that are inspired by a good moral and religious spirit. Catholics must also push Freemasons out of everything they have infiltrated, pervaded, and taken control of by offering truth to their lies. Catholics should be plotting against Freemasonry as intently as Freemasonry plots against Christ and His Church. States that this is a battlefield and Catholics will not win this battle by staying on defense.

CUSTODI DI QUELLA FEDE - CONTRIBUTION & LEGACY

- There was not any new information about Freemasonry or any new condemnation against the Masonic sects offered in this encyclical that was not already presented in *Humanum Genus* and *Dall'alto dell'Apostolico Seggio*. In fact, rather than being an encyclical, it presented itself more like an Apostolic Charge or an Apostolic Exhortation. This document is, primarily, a letter of encouragement to the Italian people from their Pope to maintain vigilance in the war against Freemasonry and to redouble their efforts because the fate of their country is at risk.

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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."