

Is There a Time Limit to Encyclical Teaching?

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In July 1570, during a period of widespread attacks on the Mass, Pope St. Pius V issued the solemn decree, *Quo Primum*, ordering that the Tridentine Mass was to be used throughout the Catholic world in perpetuity. The decree was placed in front of every altar missal printed from 1570 to 1964.

The following excerpts will shed light on the nature, scope and binding force of *Quo Primum*:

“From the very first on Our election to the chief Apostleship we willingly set Our mind and energies and directed all Our thoughts to those matters which concerned the preserving of a pure Church worship, and We strove, with God’s help by every means in our power to accomplish this purpose....to re-edit the missal as soon as possible. Wherefore, We decided to entrust this to learned men We selected.... Besides this they consulted the works of ancient and approved authors concerning the same sacred rites and have thus restored the missal to the original form and rite of the holy Fathers.

“Furthermore, by these presents in virtue of our Apostolic authority We grant and concede in perpetuity that for chanting or reading of the Mass in any Church this missal is hereafter to be followed absolutely without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment or censure, and may freely and lawfully be used We likewise declare and ordain, that no one whatever is to be forced or coerced to alter the missal and that this present document cannot be revised or modified, but remain always valid.”

Quo Primum ends with these words:

“Therefore no one whatsoever is permitted to alter this letter, or heedlessly to go contrary to this notice of Our permission, statute, ordination, command, precept, grant, indult, declaration, will, decree and prohibition. Should anyone, however, presume to commit such an act, he should know he would incur the Indignation of Almighty God and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.”

In spite of what appears to have been a most definite and binding decree against any future changes in the Mass of St. Pius V, and against anyone prohibiting the use of the Tridentine Mass in the future — “henceforth valid in perpetuity” — yet, in spite of this, we know that the Mass has been changed.

Another Holy Father, Pope Clement XII, who reigned from 1730 to 1740, was under the impression that he too would be supported by his successors in the papacy when he issued his historical decree against Freemasonry; but this decree was likewise revised by the Church under the same Pontiff (i.e., Paul VI) who reversed the decree of Pope St. Pius V relative to the Mass.

The Masonic Order, while founded in 1717, took form with the publication in 1723 of the “Constitutions” drawn up by a Protestant clergyman by the name of Anderson. On April 28, 1738, Pope Clement XII issued a Pontifical Constitution, *In Eminenti*, in which he condemned Freemasonry as being anti-Church and anti-State. The information gathered by those who watched the growth of Masonry, in its secrecy, its naturalistic trends and in its hostility to the Church and papacy, made Pope Clement feel bound to issue his *In Eminenti* in which we read these words . . .

“In order to close the widely open road to iniquities: which might be considered with impunity and also for other reasons just and reasonable that have come to Our knowledge ... We condemn and forbid them by this, but present Constitution, which is to be considered valid forever.”

Not only was membership in such secret Masonic Societies forbidden, but the prohibition extended to those laity who favored them in anyway:

“We command the faithful to abstain from intercourse with those Societies ... in order to avoid excommunication, which will be imposed upon all those contravening Our order. None, except at the point of death, could be absolved of this sin except by Us or the then existing Roman Pontiff.”

While it is difficult to see how a decree such as that of St. Pius V (relative to further changes in the Mass could be reversed, and reversed radically, it is a hundred times more difficult to comprehend the lifting of the ban against membership by Catholics in the Masonic Order as occurred in September **1974**. What is very confusing and disturbing is that, in the lifting of the ban on membership in the Masonic Order by Catholics, the formal decrees and Papal teachings of not only one pope had to be reversed, but the decrees of every pope from Clement XII to John XXIII; the nine Constitutions, the six Encyclicals and two Allocutions by eight popes, along with some two hundred documents, all had to be reversed. It is mysterious.

The timing of the lifting of the ban on Catholics being members of the Masonic Order and other secret societies could not have been worse. It came after rumors had been floating around for several years about high-placed persons in the Vatican service being members of the Masonic Order. One wonders why those whose names have been mentioned in foreign publications have not sued the authors and publishers, or why these individuals have not denied membership in any Masonic lodge.

We have already seen what Pope Clement XII, said in his Constitution, *In Eminenti*, issued April 26, **1738** about the dangers from Masonic organizations and the reasons for the sanctions against them. Let us see what his Pontifical successors thought of Masonry.

Benedict XIV (1740-1758) issued a Constitution, *Providas*, on May 18, **1751**, in which he denounced Masonry as a counter morality. He listed the reasons which caused Clement XII to issue *In Eminenti* against the Masonic Order . . .

1. religious indifferentism ;
2. their secretiveness;
3. the oath;
4. opposition to the Church.

Clement XIII (1758-1769) published his Constitution, *Ut Primum*, on September 3, **1759**, and an Encyclical, *Christianae Republicae Salus*, on November 25, **1766**, in which he denounced the ideas leading to the ‘universal religion’ promised in Anderson’s “Constitutions”.

Pius VI (1795-1799) in his first Encyclical, *Nostrarum Vim Lachry Marum Exquirat*, issued December 25, **1795**, explained that it drew its name from the tears he shed over the plight of the Church because of “sects of perdition which even invaded the Lord’s sanctuary”, a reference

made to the number of clergy whose names could be found on lists in Masonic lodges. Pope Pius VI died in exile.

Pius VII (1800-1823) in his Encyclical *Ecclesiam*, issued September 13, 1821, condemned Masonry for the spread of religious indifferentism which he declared pernicious.

Leo XII (1823-1829) issued his Encyclical, *Quo Graviora*, dated May 21, 1829, in which he condemned Masonry and other secret societies; warned the bishops against infiltrations into the schools and reprinted the decrees of his predecessors: Clement XII, Benedict XIV and Pius VII.

Pius VIII (1829-1830) in his Encyclical, *Traditi*, published May 21, 1829, renewed all the condemnations of his predecessors against Freemasonry, which he, in turn thought a danger to the schools.

Gregory XVI (1831-1846) wrote an Encyclical, *Mirari Vos*, August 15, 1832, in which he tells the bishops of the world that **“evil comes out of the secret societies, bottomless abyss of misery, which the societies have dug.”**

Pius IX (1846-1878) was one of the greatest antagonists against Masonry and kindred societies. In his Encyclical, *Qui Pluribus*, issued November 9, 1846, he denounced **“their merciless attacks against the Catholic religion, the Divine authority of the Church and its laws”** and renewed the anathematization of such societies by his predecessors in their Apostolic Letters.

In an Allocution, *Quibus Quantisque Malis*, delivered on April 20, 1849, from his place of exile in Gaetz, Pope Pius IX lashed out at **“those abominable sects of perdition”**, saying of them: **“We once again forbid .., condemn and anathematize them.”**

Another Encyclical, *Quanta Cura*, was issued December 8, 1864, again enforcing all the condemnations of the popes before him. In an Allocution delivered September 25, 1865, entitled *Multiplices Inter*, he expressly exhorted **“those who might have associated themselves to sects of this kind, to obey wiser inspirations and leave those evil assemblies so as to avoid being dragged into the abyss of eternal ruin.”**

Seemingly, Pope Pius IX never wearied of warning the bishops and the faithful of the dangers of Masonry. In his Constitution, *Apostolicae Sedis*, of October 12, 1869, he uttered a complaint about the failure of the previous condemnations to stop the spread of Masonry. He laid the blame on the **“indifference of those whose function and sacerdotal duty should have made them ultra vigilant.”** Determined to do all he could, Pope Pius issued another Encyclical, *Etsi Multa*, dated November 21, 1873. The theme was the same and the conclusion predictable. In part, the Encyclical said . . .

“Fearing that injudicious people and, above all, youth, might be led astray and in order that silence on Our part might not induce anyone to lend protection to error, We have resolved, Venerable Brethren, to raise Our voice. Therefore, we hereby confirm before you, the Constitutions of Our predecessors and in virtue of Our Apostolic Authority, We hold up to reprobation and We condemn this Masonic Society and all other societies of the same order. . . . It is Our order that all Christians of any standing whatsoever, of any rank or high appointment, and all over the earth should be informed that the said societies are forbidden and reprobated by Us, and incur the same sentences and condemnations as those specified in the Constitutions of Our predecessors.”

Pope Pius said that the condemnation extended not only to Masonry in Europe **“but also to the lodges in America.”**

Leo XIII (1878-1903) followed Pope Pius IX to the throne and he was no less a force against Masonry than was his predecessor. He directed two Encyclicals against it: *Etsi Nos*, February 15, 1882, and *Humanum Genus*, issued April 20, 1884. There were two Constitutions: *Ab Apostolici*, October 15, 1890; *Praeclara*, June 20, 1894, both containing general condemnations of Masonry. In March 1902, Leo XIII issued a Constitution, *Annum Ingressi*, in which a special warning against Italian Freemasonry was issued.

Let us return now to Pope Leo XIII's greatest Encyclical, *Humanum Genus*. No one can ever understand the evil that the Church has seen in Freemasonry until or unless he has read the complete text of this Encyclical. The popes before him condemned the naturalism in Freemasonry. Leo XIII speaks of the danger flowing from this:

“The fundamental doctrine of the Naturalists is that human nature and human reason must be in all things mistress and guide. This decided, they either ignore man's duties toward God or pervert them by vague and erroneous opinions. For they deny that anything has been revealed by God; they do not admit any religious dogmas or any truths that cannot be understood by human intelligence; they deny the existence of any teacher who ought to be believed by reason of the authority of his office. Since, however, it is the special and exclusive function of the Catholic Church to preserve from any trace of corruption and to set forth in their integrity the truths divinely entrusted to her keeping, including her own authority to teach them to the world, and the other heavenly aids to salvation, it is against the Church that the rage of the enemies of the supernatural, and their most ferocious attacks are principally directed.”

Looking back on the teachings of the popes from Clement XII, in 1738, to Pope Pius IX, 1848-1878, and yes, from Pius IX to John XXIII, all of them saw dangers to the Faith from membership of Catholics in Freemasonry. If the Sovereign Pontiffs in the last two hundred thirty-nine years were convinced that Freemasonry systematically promotes religious indifferentism, undermines Christian and Catholic faith and life, and is opposed to all supernaturalism, one wonders why the membership in the Masonic Order and the sanctions against it were lifted in 1976 ? What proofs are there that the Masonic Order has changed its Constitutions, including its degrees, so as to make it acceptable to the Catholic Church?

I strongly doubt that there are any real changes in the aims of Freemasonry other than to have abandoned all hope of destroying the Church from outside, but rather to work from within by infiltrating it. Before I can believe that there is no longer any danger to the Faith of Catholic members, I would need some explanation of this quotation from *La Massoneria*, Florence, Italy, 1945:

“Free-masonry alone possesses the true religion, which is **Gnosticism**. All other religions, and especially Catholicism, have taken what is true in their doctrines from Freemasonry.”

But I hear you say, “Well, that was in 1945.” True, that did appear in 1945, but how about this quotation from *La Politique des France-Macons*, (p.163) by J. Mitterand, former Grand Master of the Grand Orient, published in 1972 or 1973: “Man is the future of man (the future of Man is Man). He should be set up upon the altar in place of God.”

In No. 37 of the Bulletin of the *Documentation Centre of the French Grand Orient* there is this remarkable quotation . . .

“Do not let it be said, Brothers, that Freemasonry is anti-Church: this used to be no more than a circumstantial statement. Basically, Freemasonry proposes to be a super-church, the church that will unite all churches.”

I am told that one of the conditions now, on permission for membership by Catholics in the Masonic Order or other kindred societies, is “that the lodges do not plot against the Church”, but that, to my way of thinking, is like putting the fox in the chicken coop under the condition that it will not attack the chickens. While it is true that Masonry professes benevolent and charitable objectives, nevertheless the Holy See on September 21, 1850 declared:

“Those associations which profess not to be plotting against the Church ... but form nevertheless an occult society confirmed by oath ... are comprised in all these Bulls ... All occult societies are affected by the prohibitions of the Church, whether or not they demand an oath, because such societies are contrary to the Natural Law.”

A question arises out of the reversal of Encyclical teachings: Whether or not popes exercise the supreme teaching authority when they expound in Encyclical Letters? In his Encyclical, *Humani Generis* (Aug 12, 1950), Pope Pius XII declared that . . .

“... such matters as treated in Encyclicals are taught with the ordinary teaching authority, of which, it is true to say: ‘He that heareth you heareth Me’. Generally what is expounded and inculcated in Encyclical Letters, already for other reasons, appertains to Catholic doctrine. But if the Supreme Pontiffs purposely pass Judgment on a matter up to that time under dispute, it is obvious that that matter, according to the mind and will of the same pontiffs, cannot be any longer considered open to discussion among theologians.”

So, Encyclicals, Bulls, Decrees, Constitutions, etc., all come under the mantle of the Magisterium, the teaching authority, guided and protected by the Holy Ghost from teaching anything of faith-and-morals harmful to the faithful. What does puzzle one is, how could every pope for more than two hundred thirty-nine years, denounce Freemasonry as dangerous to the Faith, and then, have another pope approve the lifting of the ban against membership and the excommunication heretofore imposed on those Catholics who disobeyed this law of the Church? Could it be that the odious parody of the Holy Eucharist, and the oaths required in the rites of the *Eighteenth Rose Croix Degree*, and the toppling of the papal *tiara* in the ritual of the *Thirtieth Degree of Knight Kadosh* — could it be, I say, that these no longer form part of the Masonic rites of initiation? Rome has the duty to assure us.

Granted that changes might have been made in Freemasonry — changes that would make Encyclical teachings of the past two hundred thirty-nine years obsolete. What about Encyclical teachings that are reversed in a relatively few years? I call attention to the Encyclical of Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, issued November 20, 1947, dealing specifically with liturgical matters. This saintly Pontiff of happy memory asserts that . . .

“We are sorely grieved to note that on the one hand, there are places where the spirit, understanding or practice of the sacred liturgy is defective, or all but non-existent; We observe with considerable anxiety and some misgivings, that elsewhere certain enthusiasts, overly eager in their search for novelty, are straying beyond the path of sound doctrine and prudence. Not seldom, in fact, they interlard their plans and hope for a revival of the sacred liturgy with principles which compromise and sometimes even taint it with errors touching Catholic faith and ascetical doctrine.”

Pope Pius XII singled out for severe reproof “those who introduce novel liturgical practices or call for the revival of obsolete rites out of harmony with prevailing rituals and rubrics.” The Holy Father said that he was particularly grieved to see the vernacular replace Latin, since Latin “customary in a considerable portion of the Church, is a manifest and beautiful sign of unity”. He had little use for those bent on the restoration of all ancient rites and ceremonies indiscriminately, saying “that it is neither wise nor laudable to reduce everything to antiquity by every possible device.”

One has only to read the following excerpt from *Mediator Dei* to grasp the full meaning of this article. Pope Pius said . . .

“Thus, to cite some instances, one would be straying from the straight path were he to wish the altar restored to its primitive table form; were he to want black excluded as a color for the liturgical vestments; were he to forbid the use of sacred images and statues in churches; were he to order the crucifix so designed that the Divine Redeemer’s Body shows no trace of His cruel sufferings; and, lastly, were he to disdain and reject polyphonic music and singing in parts, even where it conforms to regulations issued by the Holy See.”

What is puzzling is that Pope Pius XII wrote *Mediator Dei* in 1947, yet, within less than eighteen years, the very things he officially deplored have since been officially embraced by the “Church”. What really happens to the Magisterium in such cases? Such vacillation could never be attributed to the Holy Ghost. Scripture says: “For I am the Lord and I change not.” (*Matt 3:6.*) The problem is compounded by the words of the Encyclical, *Humani Generis*, of Pope Pius XII when he declares: “... that such matters that are treated in Encyclicals are taught with the ordinary teaching authority,” of which it is true to say: “He that heareth you heareth Me.” (*Luke 10:16*)

A reversal of any Encyclical teaching, therefore, leaves us on the horns of a dilemma. The infallible Magisterium of the Church cannot contradict itself. Yet, as has been shown above, the Church of the Second Vatican Council has contradicted the infallible pronouncements made by the Church prior to 1962.

Which of these Churches is right? I have raised a question to which, seemingly there is no answer. But answer there must be. Both Churches cannot be right when their pronouncements are in contradiction to each other. As I have shown in previous writings, the Church has been infiltrated for decades by Freemasons, Communists and Jews and therefore, the Church — of the Second Vatican Council with its false popes and traitorous bishops and clergy — is under enemy occupation, and so cannot be the true Church of Christ. The True Church is once again in the catacombs as She was in the days of the Caesars; She is again in exile with St. Athanasius as She was during the Arian heresy in the fourth century; She is “at the present time a remnant left, selected out of grace.” (*Rom.11:15*) — a handful of faithful bishops, priests and laymen steadfastly adhering to St. Paul’s admonition to “hold fast to the traditions you have received.” (*2 Thessalonians, 2:15*)

It is infallibly certain that, as He promised, Christ will be with His Catholic Church until the end of the world: that Church: “a remnant left, selected out of grace,”

Originally written in about 1975 — scanned into electronic format in 2009