



Table Mountain Masonic Lodge

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Website: <https://lodge124.freemason.org>

[Building and Room Rentals](#)

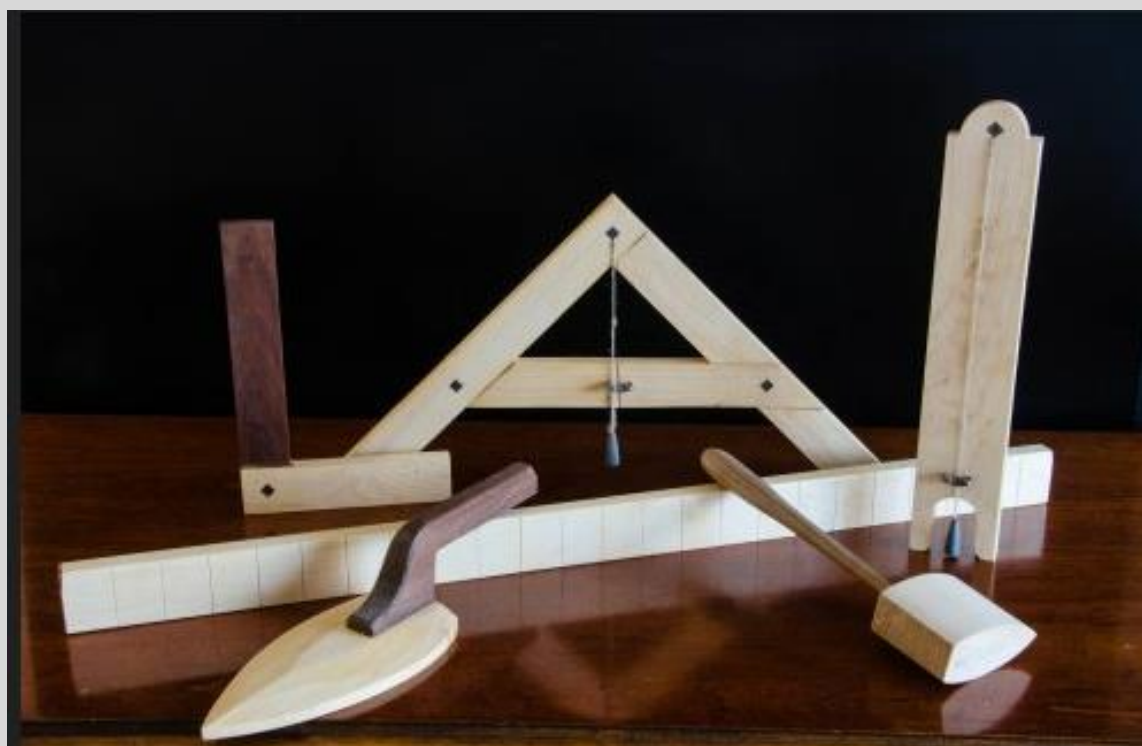
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June 2023 Journal and Trestleboard



Vol 3, Issue 6,



The Master's Thoughts

Back in April 2022, I attended a Grand Lodge leadership retreat where many Masonic leaders from throughout California, as well as some Grand Lodge officers, were quite surprised that Table Mountain Masonic Lodge still existed after the Camp fire. Some of them appeared amused by our insistence that we were growing our lodge even after such a devastating event. Well, we have not only survived, we are now known throughout California as an innovative and fast growing lodge. Because of this, Masons from other lodges have asked if we are doing anything differently. I reply, "yes, we are doing everything differently".

Inertia, defined as a tendency to do nothing or to remain unchanged, is the enemy of every organization, and it is certainly a killer of Masonic lodges. When a lodge is overcome with *inertia*, the morale of the membership decreases, boredom becomes the norm, participation then decreases, activities become fewer, and new members quickly lose interest. Actions counters inertia, but *change, in the form of innovation* can utterly defeat inertia. It requires a new organizational culture that nurtures new ideas and new ways of doing everything. At Table Mountain Masonic lodge # 124 we have overcome inertia by jettisoning the boring, and embracing new ideas and opportunities. We have reinvented our lodge, and as a result we have perhaps reinvented how to be a successful Masonic lodge. This Journal / Trestleboard is unlike anything any other lodge produces. Our outdoor and nighttime degree at our unique rustic outdoor lodge is unique. The interior of our lodge is now strikingly different and better represents us as a vibrant organization. Our well attended lunches, and our projects and activities are more varied and innovative. We have also introduced a 21st century approach to ceremonial music, a better approach to degree practices, a more respectful approach to coaching, and a more respectful attitude toward our members' schedules and family responsibilities. We have also built more and better relationships with other organizations, and we are utilizing all modern tools to more effectively communicate and coordinate. Additionally, we have strived to be more friendly, more inclusive, more democratic in decision making, more distributed in responsibilities, more financially responsible, more flexible and more responsive to opportunities. All this has been made possible by an extraordinary mix of brothers with a higher degree of commitment that would be the envy of any organization.

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Calendar of Events

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge

- June 3, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- June 17, Saturday, Tom Vandegrift Masonic Memorial at noon.
- June 23, Englebrite Masonic funeral service, 11 am near Lincoln California.
- June 24, Saturday, Tentative Degree, starting at 6 pm.
- July 1, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- July 2, Sunday, Grand Lodge Masonic Family Picnic, Cone Grove park, 24280 Cone Grove Rd, Red Bluff, 10am to 2pm. Barbecue served at Noon.
- July 8, Saturday, Tentative Degree, starting at 2 pm.
- August 5, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- August 19, Saturday, Tentative Degree, starting at 2 pm.

Important Future Date

- Sept 16, Saturday - Outdoor Evening 3rd Degree, - Performed by the Scottish Rite/Shriners Past Masters Team at our outdoor mountain top lodge.
- April 18, 2024, Thursday - Paradise Schools District Grand Lodge cornerstone laying.
- Sept 7, 2024, Saturday - Paradise Masonic building Grand Lodge rededication.

Other local area Masonic Events

- **DeMolay** – June 1 and 15 at 7 pm. Location to be announced.
- **Rainbow** – June 5 and 19 at 7 pm at the Chico Masonic center.
- **Ben Ali Shrine, Sacramento** – [Ben Ali Shrine - Ben Ali Shrine](#) .
- **Golden Feather Eastern Star** (Paradise and Oroville) - June 24, at 12:30 pm, in Paradise.
- **Scottish Rite** – June 20, Stated Meeting and Dinner at 6 pm, at Sacramento Scottish Rite.
- **Chico Leland Stanford lodge** – Stated Meeting, 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm.
- **Oroville Lodge** – Stated Meeting, 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.
- **Gridley Lodge** - Stated Meeting, 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm.
- **Forbestown lodge** - Stated Meeting, 1st Saturday of the month at 7 pm.
- **Orland Lodge** - Stated Meeting, 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.

Other Scheduled Community Events at the Table Mountain Masonic Center

- **Community Market at TMMC**, June 24, from 5pm to 8 pm.
- **Paradise Rod and Gun Club** – Executive meeting first Wednesday of every month at 6 pm.
General membership meeting third Thursday of every month 6:30 pm
- **Butte County Family Health classes and counseling** , Every Wed, 4:30 to 9 pm.
- **PG&E and contractors** are having regular work meetings in our facility.
- Intermittent use by various private parties. Check with Woody Nelson for available dates

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[Building and Room Rentals](#)

2023 Officers of Table Mountain Masonic Lodge

Master – Doug Campbell - Phone: 530-519-1695, dgcphd@gmail.com

Senior Warden and Officers coach – Juston Purcell (PM) - 530-845-405, ishiyahu1@gmail.com

Junior Warden – Ehren Hawkins - Phone: 530-801-1254, ehrenhawkins@gmail.com

Secretary - Brian Grandfield (PM) - Phone: 530-864-6323, bgrandfield@gmail.com

Treasurer – Rich Gingery - Phone: 530-519-6089, wppcrich@comcast.net

Chaplain - Bob McElroy - Phone: 530-487-8466, bobnpegchico@gmail.com

Senior Deacon - Cole Hamilton - Phone: 858-342-5031, oldkingcreations@att.net

Junior Deacon – Justin (Oso) Harju - Phone: 928-274-3301, jdharju53@gmail.com

Senior Steward - Phil Howard - Phone: 530-873-1979, howardphil69@gmail.com

Junior Steward - Steve Kane - Phone: 530-990-3641, steveransgroup@yahoo.com

Marshall – Matt Sutter – Phone: 530-23-8722, mcsutter@gmail.com

Tiler – Caleb Chinn (PM) - Phone: 530-877-2161, calebchinn@gmail.com

Committees and Liaisons

Investments Committee

Woody Nelson PM

Caleb Chinn PM

Steve Kane

Building Association

Phil Howard

Frank Beard

Justin (Oso) Harju

Woody Nelson (PM) - ex officio

Doug Campbell - ex officio

Relief Committee

Woody Nelson PM

Bob McElroy

Brian Grandfield PM

Liaisons to the Masonic Youth Groups

Cole Hamilton

Rich Gingery

Liaison to Butte College

Juston Purcell PM

Liaison to Behavioral Health

Woody Nelson PM

Liaison to the Arts and Crafts

Community (Community Market)

Cole Hamilton

Social Media representative

Cole Hamilton

Liaisons to Scouting

Charlie Haggarty PM

Justin (Oso) Harju

Liaisons to the Schools

Rich Gingery

Matt Sutter

Cole Hamilton

Woody Nelson PM

Liaisons to the Magalia Parks Association

Rich Gingery

Phil Howard

Liaison to Wildlife Sanctuary

Woody Nelson PM

Liaison to the Food Bank

Woody Nelson PM

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124

Announcing the Second Annual Outdoor Evening 3rd Degree



Plan on attending this unique Outdoor Evening 3rd Degree on Saturday, Sept 16, at a remote outdoor lodge site near Paradise California.

So that we can plan food and refreshments, please **RSVP** by calling Doug at **530-519-1695** or emailing ParadiseFreemasons@gmail.com . Since this is an evening event, some of you might want overnight lodging. We recommend the [Best Western in Paradise](#) where we have arranged a special room rate (\$124) for you. To get the special rate you must call 530-762-6051 and ask for the Masonic event rate.

Event Schedule – Saturday Sept 16

3 pm - Social Gathering at Table Mountain Masonic lodge. (see map: [from Chico](#), or [from Oroville](#))

4:30 to 6 pm - Dinner available to attendees at Table Mountain Masonic Lodge ([see map](#)). The dinner will be barbecued meats and accompaniments, and will be served by DeMolay. Cost is \$15.

6:30 pm - Degree begins. Please be at event location by this time. Travel to the location from the Table Mountain lodge takes approximately 30 minutes. The road is paved most of the way, then gravel for a short distance. ([see map and driving instructions from Table Mountain Lodge to the event location](#)). There will also be signs posted on the route. **The 3rd degree will be presented by the Scottish Rite / Shrine Past Masters degree team.** Since this is an outdoor evening event in a remote location, **we recommend that you dress comfortably, wear appropriate footwear and bring a jacket.** It is a very short walk from the parking area to the outdoor lodge.

May 6, 2023 – Stated Meeting

At 1 pm, just prior to our Saturday May 6 stated meeting, the brothers and guests met for a fabulous homemade Mexican themed lunch provided and prepared by Brother Cole Hamilton and his very supportive wife Lisa. Everyone raved about the food. There was great attendance and as normal for our lodge there was lively conversation and lots of good humor. Please note that family and friends are always invited to our monthly luncheons and there is no cost.

Then at 2 pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge opened on the 1st degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conducting the May 2023 stated meeting business. Worshipful Doug Campbell presided, and despite some absences, all positions were filled. During the opening ceremony Worshipful Campbell surprised the brethren by playing appropriate recorded music, for the officers



march, for the opening of the Holy Book and the national anthem prior to the pledge of allegiance. The additional music was exceptionally well received.

Our Secretary Brian Grandfield (PM) read the minutes of the previous meeting. Our Treasurer, brother Rich Gingery was not present, but had previously reported that the account total remained significant. However, the IRA gift that the lodge is to receive has not yet arrived from the investment firm.

Assured that sufficient funds were on hand Our Secretary Brian Grandfield (PM) presented the bills to be paid. All bills were paid. There was one new petition, and no pending reports of investigation.

Our Chaplain Brother Bob McElroy reported on those brothers and families that were ill, and those that were sent get well and thinking of you cards. Brother Bob also read the Sacred Scroll for our recently departed brother Tom Vandergrift, and then lead the brothers in 60 seconds of silence while Taps was played. The brothers were then reminded of the Masonic graveside memorial for brother Stan Englebright, on June 23, Thursday, 11 am, Manzanita Cemetery, Manzanita Road Lincoln, California. Also, the brothers were reminded that there will be a Masonic memorial in our lodge for brother Tom Vandegrift, in our lodge, but that the date has not yet been determined (*Now schedule for June 17, see calendar*).

The Master then took the opportunity to thank, by name, each of the brothers for specific contributions to work, progress and appearance of our lodge. Specifically recognized were

bothers Brian Grandfield (PM), Bob McElroy, Rich Gingery, Juston Purcell (PM), Caleb Chinn (PM), Frank Beard, Phil Howard, Oso Harju, Cole Hamilton, Steve Kane, Matt Sutter, Glenn Story (PM) and Woody Nelson (PM).

Then the status of each current Entered Apprentice's progress on their proficiency was discussed, and each coach reported on their progress and their efforts to facilitate the process. The brethren discussed and eventually proceeded with the 2nd degree conferral change to Thursday May 25 at 6 pm. The proposed positions for that conferral were reviewed, and thus confirmed. It was agreed that we would continue planning for our next lodge social event.

The brothers were then reminded that at our June stated meeting they would vote to finalize the 2024 dues increase. It was also noted that all brothers have been notified of the pending 2024 increase in dues, by at least two communications means. Also, that all but one lodge member seems to understand the reality of inflation and the financial challenges of running a lodge.

The lodge then proceeded to read the names of those members being suspended for significantly delinquent dues and who have failed to respond to our outreach efforts. After discussion, the suspensions process was completed. Additionally, two members that are no longer living in our region were granted demits. The brethren were also informed that remits for those brothers eligible were being submitted. Also, that the total process of suspensions, demits and remits should save the lodge over \$2300 in fees to Grand Lodge.

The Worshipful Master reminded the brothers that in two days there would be the May 8 Public Schools Employee and Student of the Year Award Ceremony in the downstairs lodge room. Preparations and arrangements for the event, food and refreshments, and the accompanying upstairs lodge open house were reviewed and finalized.

Due to time constraints, there were no other reports from committees. They will be presented at the June stated meeting. The calendar of events for the next 3 months was briefly reviewed, and there was also a brief discussion of other important events scheduled for later in the year.

Brother Steve Kane volunteered to provide our June stated meeting lunch, and Brother Frank Beard volunteered to provide our July stated meeting lunch. There being no further business, the lodge was then ritually closed in short form, brotherly love prevailing.



May 8 – School Awards and Community Open House

On May 8th at 7pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge #124 annual School Awards were presented in our downstairs big lodge room. Awards were given for the teacher of the year, administrator of the year, and district employee of the year. Then awards were presented for student of the year, at each of the schools in the Paradise Unified School District. Over 120 teachers, administrator and family members were present to cheer the winners. Afterward, our lodge provided a special cake, food and refreshments for everyone. Our upstairs lodge room was prepared for a unique open house. Perhaps most of the attendees toured our upstairs lodge and its many special displays. Below are some pictures of the award ceremony, and those are followed by many pictures showing how the lodge was prepared for the open house. The event was a huge success both for the school district and for our lodge.





Some of our brothers sitting in the east during the ceremony















Masonic Youth Activity

On May 21, the Masonic youth groups: Rainbow Girls and Paradise/Chico chapter of DeMolay held a yard sale and bake sale to fund their activities.



May 25 – 2nd Degree

On Thursday evening, May 25, at 6 pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124 opened on the 2nd degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conferring the Fellowcraft degree on brother Stephen James. Brother Juston Purcell (PM) served as the Master of the Lodge for the conferral, Ehren Hawkins was Senior Warren and Woody Nelson (PM) served as Junior Warden. Brian Grandfield (PM) was Secretary, Rich Gingery the Treasurer and delivery of the charge, and Bob McElroy was Chaplain. Cole Hamilton was Senior Deacon, Glenn Story (PM) was Junior Deacon, Marshal was Matt Sutter, Senior Steward was Phil Howard, Junior Steward was Steve Kane, and Frank Beard performed the duty of Tiler. After opening, the lodge was called down to the 1st degree for the purpose of examination. Brother James demonstrated his 1st degree proficiency with the assistance of his coach brother Steve Kane. It was an excellent proficiency. Then the lodge returned to 2nd degree and the Fellowcraft degree was conferred upon brother James. The ceremony was beautifully done and afterwards Brother Hamilton was highly complimented for his excellent presentation of the staircase lecture, and Brother Purcell (PM) was complimented for fine work as Master. Then the lodge was closed in long form, and the brothers gathered downstairs for refreshments, cream pies and great conversation. The evening ended with peace and harmony prevailing.







May 27 - Community Market at Table Mountain Lodge

The Table Mountain Lodge Community Market is an initiative to provide a low cost opportunity for local craft and product producers to sell their creations in a safe and reliable environment. This twice a month weekend market began a few months ago, and has been a growing success. The market has moved to Saturday evening from 5pm to 8 pm. Plans are in place to have more food vendors and musical performances as the weather improves.



Our Newest Lodge Decorations

On the south west wall of the upstairs lodge there is now a hanging reproduction of the 1794 work of William Blake, titled *The Ancient of Days*, which refers to a passage from the Book of Daniel and also refers to Proverbs 8:27 "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth". The picture depicts God (*The Ancient of Days*) as the Creator of Universe at the dawn of existence, holding a compass as his only tool. While not strictly a Masonic art work, it has long been considered a Masonic inspired artwork. A big thanks to Brother Frank Beard and his son Travis, and Brother Phil Howard for putting up our latest lodge wall decoration.



Table Mountain Masonic Lodges – Facebook Update

Our Lodge Facebook Group

Our lodge has a new Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/186319067527278>. We now up to 70 members and we are seeing regular visits to our group page. After the 2018 Camp fire we lost control of our previous Facebook group page, and it was severely hacked. We were unable to regain control of it so instead we initiated a new page. If you are a Facebook member, please join the group to receive news and photos about the lodge and its programs and activities.

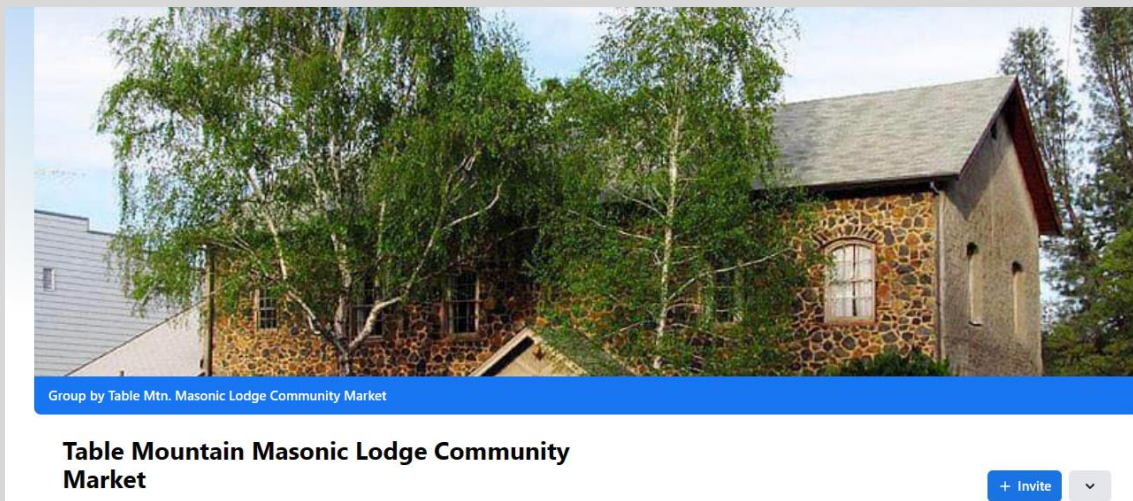


**Table Mountain Masonic Lodge
#124**

The participants have created a Facebook group page, to advertise the event and to update the public on dates and planned activities. There are currently 873 members of this Facebook group. The link to the group is below.

Table Mountain Lodge Community Market Facebook Page

[Table Mountain Masonic Lodge Community Market | Facebook](#)



Questions about Freemasonry that you might be asked: With answers

Is Freemasonry a religion?

No. Freemasonry is a fraternity of religious men of many denominations and faiths. However, Freemasonry is not a religion, does not function as a church, and is in fact supportive of its members' own religious development, whatever religion or church they belong to.

Freemasonry does not claim to be a replacement for religion. While each Masonic meeting is opened and closed with thanks to God, there are no worship services, no worship rituals, no wedding or baptismal rituals and no Masonic clergy. Freemasonry does not have its own holy scriptures and does not have a separate theological doctrine. No Freemason is required to jettison his own religion's doctrine to become a Freemason.

What is the philosophy or the teachings of Freemasonry?

While not a comprehensive short list, the following represent the foundations of Freemasonry: Faith and trust in God (by whatever name or term you wish to use to describe him). Brotherly love, relief, and truth. The virtues of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, Justice, Faith, Hope and Charity. Knowledge and respect of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences (Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Math, Geometry, Music and Astronomy). Knowledge and understanding of your Holy book (whatever it may be). Fidelity and Honor, and that a man has a responsibility to behave honorably in everything he does. Support for a quality public education. Care of the widows and orphans, public service, continuous intellectual growth and lifelong self-improvement, patriotism, good citizenship and the God given right of humans to be self-determining.

Are there differences between Masonic lodges?

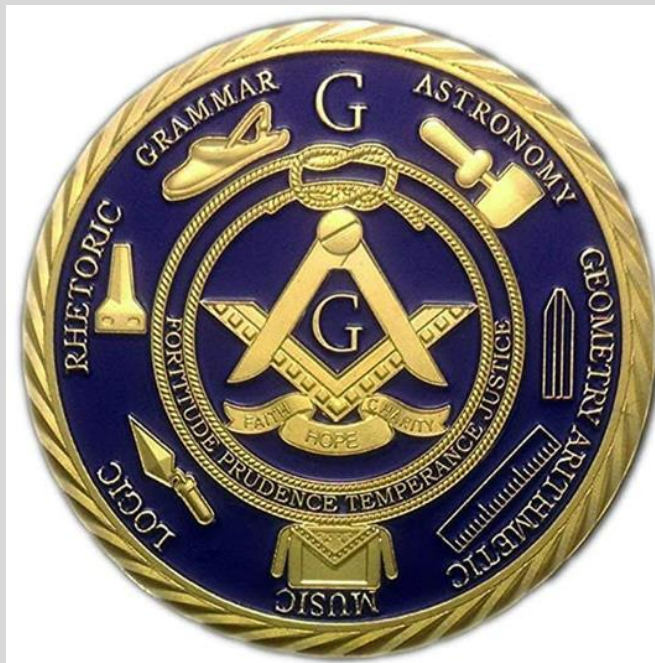
While there is a common philosophical thread within all regular Freemasonry around the world, there are differences in ceremonies, content and practices. Within the English speaking nations, the forms of Freemasonry are primarily derived from the Scottish/English model. Within the U.S., from state to state, there are mostly small differences in the ceremonies and practices. However, a Freemason from one nation or state is entirely welcome in a lodge anywhere. There are also some local cultural differences between lodges that reflect the uniqueness of their community and their circumstances. The demographics of a lodge will generally reflect the community where they are located. Some lodges are rather casual in dress, and in other lodges there is an informal dress code that encourages business dress. Additionally, the activities of any particular lodge reflect the interests of the members, the needs of the community and the resources available.

Masonic Formation

Logic and individuality are foundations of Freemasonry

Logic is one the seven liberal arts and science emphasized in our Masonic education, and specifically addressed in the 2nd degree. There is a surprising variety of definitions of logic. However, the one I prefer is “reasoning in accordance with strict principles of validity”. There is such a thing as invalid logic or false logic, but in this essay the word *logic* refers to reasoning in accordance with valid principles.

Logic is a scientific principle, aligns with all aspects of mathematics, and it is the foundation of all legitimate scientific research. The absence of a clear and valid logical thread of reasoning running unbroken from beginning to end renders invalid any research findings. **Logic is also one the foundations of Freemasonry.**



Being logical requires a person to put their *passions and emotions within due bounds*, to set aside their biases and preconceived notions, and to focus on the obtainment of truth, whatever that may be. To be logical, we must be knowledgeable of the world around us. We therefore must be aware of and fully use our *five senses*, which are also addressed in the second degree. Being logical requires the *basic skill of math*. Being logical, is made easier by practicing the virtues of *fortitude, prudence, temperance and justice*. *Rhetoric* based on logic is the most honest, most long lasting and effective from of persuasion with intelligent, knowledgeable and sane people.

The ancient Greek philosophers are generally credited with the first written explanations of logic. However, logic existed and was practiced long before the philosophers put a name to it. Consider the ancient builders, our inspiration. Their profession was by necessity based on logic. A building, a beam, or stone is straight, square, level or plumb, or it is not. No amount of wishing, emotions, confused rationalization can make something straight, square, level or plume. Accuracy in measurement was the key. Measurement could not be replaced by guessing or wishing. Lengths, angles and curves had to be calculated and measured. Amounts of materials, transportation, time and workers had to be calculated. Basic math was a necessary. The symmetry of beauty requires mathematical symmetry. The proper use of tools was necessary for effective outcomes so people had to be taught, and logical step by step instruction is the best form of teaching.

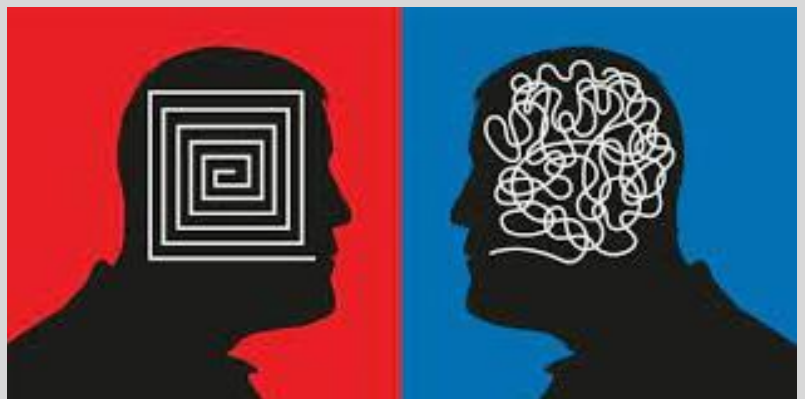
Effective construction outcomes required the Mason to have an ability to think through and visualize the entire process, and the desired outcomes. The construction process was logical, conducted in steps, with the validity of the construction work checked and measured by the Masters. What was right and wrong was clearly defined. Each step and level of the work was the foundation for the next step or level. The failure to have and follow a logical thread of thought resulted in delay or flawed construction that would not stand the test of time. The ancient crafts were by necessity, logic based. So are today's crafts and trades reality and logic based professions.

The free stone operative Masons of antiquity had, by necessity, to cooperate with other Masons and artisans to complete the structure. However, their individual work, their craft, was their responsibility. They measured, chipped, smoothed and polished the stones by themselves. They controlled their own individual pieces of work, they took responsibility for the quality of their work, and they judged when their work was ready for the Master's evaluation. They respected each Mason's responsibility for their work, and they respected the challenges inherent in every artisan's craft. They also respected the skills of each master artisan, regardless of their religion, nationality or language. This too has always been the essence of American individualism. Respect for self as a responsible individual, respect for the independence of others, and judging people only by their character and accomplishments.

There was a time when logic was emphasized and taught as part of proper education. I see little evidence of that today, even at the highest levels of schooling. Instead, in schools and within academia there is growing emphasis on reasoning by intuition, emotions, and slogans. The result is not true reasoning, but instead the rationalization of biases, ignoble desires and even hate. Some academics have even argued that logic and the resulting rational thinking is not necessary, too hard to teach, and even counterproductive to the evolution into what they call as social justice based society. However, I have observed that their long winded arguments are always confused because they lack a clear logical thread, and are instead mere rationalizations of the authors own inability to function logically.

In the graphic on the right, the person on the left (red background) is represented as having a clear logical thread of thinking, that which constitutes valid reasoning. The person on the right (blue background) is represented as randomly searching for some point or claim, that he can use to rationalize his belief or argument.

(please note that nothing political is implied by the left or right positioning, or the red and blue colors).



Today there appears to be a concerted effort among some pundits and so called educators to dismiss any trace of individuality, and instead glorify the idea that individuals should submit themselves to opinions of others and decisions of groups, even when they are ill-informed and obviously illogical.

Many researchers have noted that *stupidity* is the condition resulting from the failure to logically reason. The famed German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer argued that it was not evil people who were the greatest danger to society, instead it was stupid (illogical) people. In Bonhoeffer's theory of stupidity there are two types of people: those who logically reason and those who don't. According to Bonhoeffer, the latter are dangerous. According to Bonhoeffer, people are stupid when they fail to think critically and evaluate information, and as a result they are often content to blindly follow destructive mass social movements. Stupid people are not necessarily evil, but they can be used by those who are. Teaching people to respect logic, learn logic and to reason logically is the best defense against stupidity.

Herd behavior is among the pre-eminent causes of stupidity. Numerous scientific studies have shown how individual humans can be swayed by the crowd to adopt positions which go against all logic. The honored American philosopher Eric Hoffer, in his classic book *The Passionate State of Mind*, described how the minds and lives of people have been damaged or destroyed by their submission to ignoble emotions and passions, and to listening to the siren call of mass movements with questionable moral purposes. Hoffer documented the strong effort required by individuals to reason logically, and resist falling prey to emotional and bias based appeals.

In what often seems like a more illogical, divided, confused, oppressive and dysfunctional world, **Freemasonry is a key bastion of logic and individuality**. Freemasonry is a world where the individuality and the privacy of its members are respected, where logical reasoning is appreciated and learning is encouraged, without the use of political or social commentary. No member is defined by their position on a political or social issue, their profession, religion, race, ethnicity, age, or their social/economic condition. No member is expected to chant slogans or forced to join a crowd. Freemasonry is a world where emotions are kept within due bounds, and men address each other with respect and thoughtfulness. Freemasonry is a world where individual choices are respected. Freemasonry is a world where the virtues that support logic, respect, kindness and thoughtfulness are taught and lived. Freemasonry is a world where help and advice are always available, but never forced on anyone. Freemasonry is a world that provides shelter and safety against the divided, confused and dysfunctional sectors of society. Freemasonry is a world where truth, honor and logic resides in the heart of every member.

**THE TRUE MASTERY OF LOGIC, MEANS FREEDOM
FROM ANGER, ENVY, AND JEALOUSY**

Masonic Formation

Freemasonry and the Catholic Church.

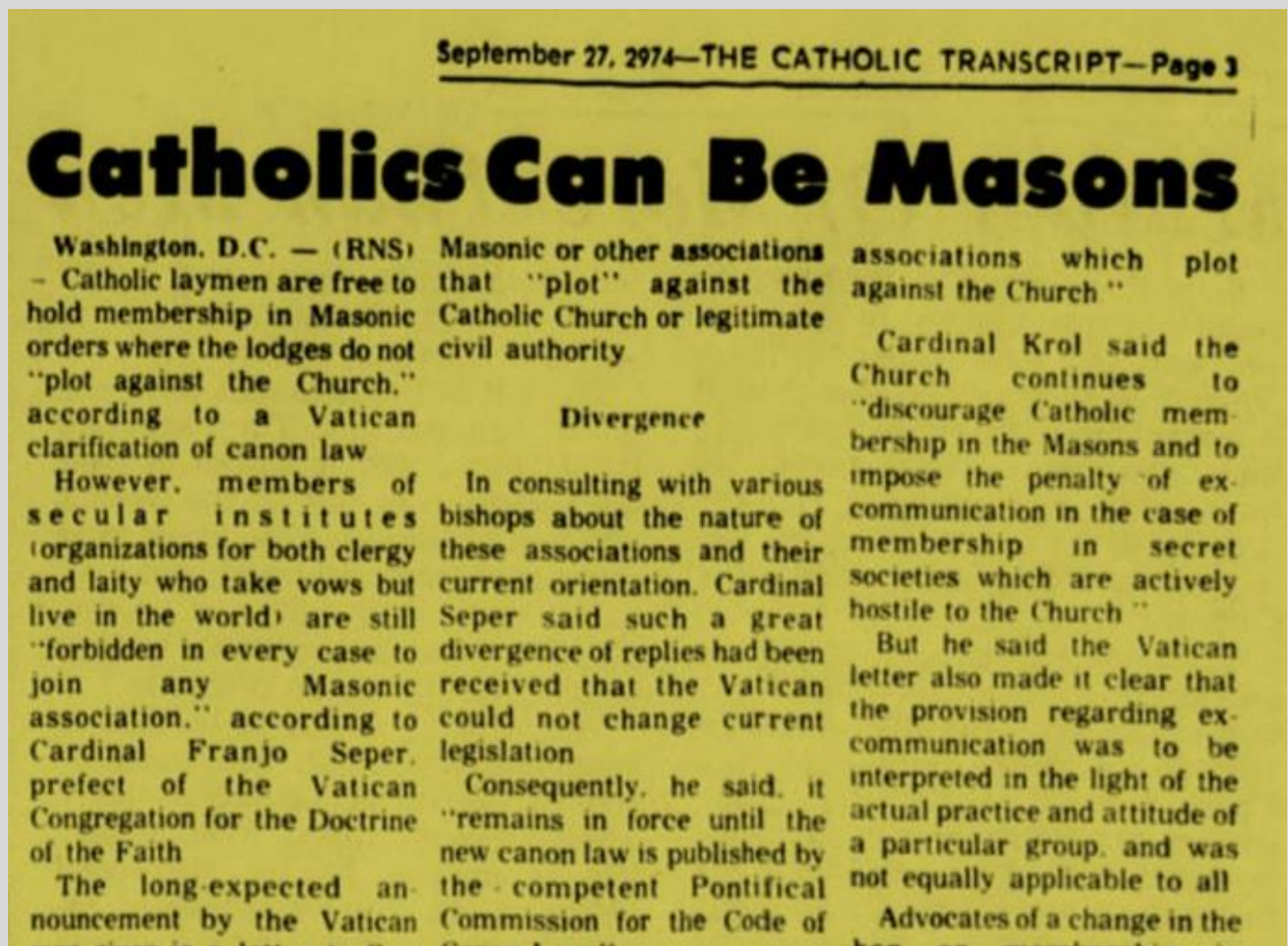
It is the general practice of those of us involved in what we know to be regular or true Freemasonry, to ignore or dismiss the existence or relevance of irregular Continental masonry, which in its many variations are derived from Masonry in France after many social and political revolutions, and corruptions of Masonic principles. However, much of the arguments against Freemasonry that are still espoused by the hierarchy of the Catholic church and some other churches, are directed at the doctrine and conduct of Continental masonry.

Here in the US, regular Freemasons often chuckle at those people that make the ridiculous claims that we are somehow atheists, deists, anti-religion, or involved in politics. However, Continental masonry Grand Lodges, generally named Grand Orients, often take political positions and exert significant political influence. Often they do it out of the sight of the public, thus feeding the suspicions of many people and church leaders. Additionally, in the past they have often targeted the privileges or power of religious organizations. Some of the Continental Grand Orients still celebrate their past victories against the power of the state churches and still promulgate a message that is anti-clerical. Some of these Orients have even removed the requirement to believe in God. The loss of power, wealth and influence during the 19th and 20th century social and political revolutions of France, Spain, South American and Italy are remembered by the Catholic church's highest officials. They note with suspicion that many of the leaders of those events were masonic. Additionally, church leaders are naturally suspicious, as are Regular Freemasons, of any group of atheists, deists, and anti-religious fanatics. Thus, the outright hostility of churches toward Continental freemasonry could be understandable.

"Why" might you ask, "are regular Freemasons subjected to the same attacks when we are so different from Continental masonry?" The answer might surprise you. While there are regular Freemasons almost everywhere, Continental masonry predominates in some areas of Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and South America. This is a result of historical regional connections to the Catholic church. In those regions Continental masonry had a historical role in opposing church privileges in those places where the Catholic church's or another official state church's power and wealth were a result of their support of oppressive regimes and policies. As a result, to the Catholic church, Continental masonry is the most obvious and visible manifestation of Masonry. In developing their opinions and policies the Catholic church, has for the most part, recognized no differences between regular Freemasonry, and Continental masonry.

However, there was a time when it looked like the Vatican had adjusted to regular Freemasonry. After the Second Vatican Council (1963 – 1966) many changes were taking place within Catholicism. Starting in 1973 many Catholics around the world were informed that it was permissible for Catholics to become Masons. This began with the English-speaking Catholics and spread to much of the rest of the world. Catholic bishops and Vatican

representatives said that, although it was not encouraged, it was in fact permitted to become a Mason, as long as certain conditions were met. See the below picture taken from *The Catholic Transcript* newspaper in 1974



However, seven years later, the same Catholic leaders suddenly announced that joining Freemasonry was still forbidden under pain of excommunication – and always had been. Today, relatively little is available about this historic event / period in history. Below is the story that we have pieced together.

In the early 1970's, work was underway on a significant revision to Catholic Canon Law. As a result of that and other efforts, there was a widespread anticipation that the Catholic church would soon change its teaching concerning Catholics and Freemasonry. In August 1971, the *National Catholic News Service* - the official news service of the U.S. bishops - issued a lengthy statement which predicted that the Catholic Church would soon modify its position on Freemasonry.

The headline was, "Catholic-Masonic Relations Enter Friendly New Era," the report included commentary from leading experts in Rome, including Fr. Jean Beyer, SJ – Dean of Faculty of

Canon Law at the Gregorian University in Rome and a consultant to the Vatican Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law. The syndicated story ran in official Catholic diocesan newspapers throughout the nation.

The Catholic Transcript — Friday, August 20, 1971

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Ban On Masonic Membership Flexible

By LEO E. McFADDEN

Rome — (NC) — Can a practicing Catholic join the Masons?

Given the right conditions, the answer seems to be "yes," according to experts here.

But this does not mean the Vatican is preparing to announce formally the end of the 273-year-old ban on Catholics enrolling in their local Masonic lodge, said one Vatican observer.

There is unanimous agreement around the Vatican that such a papal decree would be too dramatic and final. And it would not necessarily mean that the Masons would then give up any of their secrecy, a major reason for the Church's ban in the first place.

The ban of excommunication was enacted by Pope Clement XII in 1738, was strongly reemphasized by seven other popes, and was written into current Church law.

Canon lawyers revising book five of the current 1917 code, which deals with "offenses and penalties," are adhering to the general principle of keeping to a minimum the number of automatic excommunications left on the books of the revised code.

Accordingly, a Catholic who joined Masonry, assured that it was not an antireligious lodge, could continue to receive the sacraments.

has its own individualistic beliefs or "landmarks."

"We see many groups of Masons who intend to remain rigorously and sincerely faithful to their original inspiration based on their landmarks. That is to say: faith in a supreme being and the Bible; exclusion of any discussion in the lodge on arguments strictly political or religious; and sincere respect of the law of the state."

That is not to say the Popes were wrong for condemning the Masonry of their day. Pope Clement XII had reason to resent masonic "contempt for orthodoxy and Church authority."

Pope Gregory XVI laid the blame for all the calamities of the age on secret societies.

In his condemnation of 1884, Pope Leo XIII contended that the ultimate purpose of Freemasonry was "the overthrow of the entire religious, political and social order."

Perhaps the best-known expert in Rome on Masonry, Italian Jesuit Father Giovanni Caprile, speaking of extremely limited penalties envisioned for the new canon law code, observed:

"This new style of speaking, behaving and dealing with others is

gaining ground in the Church to the advantage of urbaneness and charity without detriment to the truth."

In a recent issue of *Civiltà Cattolica*, the Italian Jesuit periodical known to print Vatican-backed articles, Father Caprile cited some points on modern Masonry written by fellow Jesuit Father Jean Beyer, dean of canon law at the Gregorian University in Rome and a consultant to the commission revising the code.

Analyzing the excommunication placed on Catholics who join the Masons, Father Beyer said Masons should reveal themselves as believers in God and defenders of their government if they want Catholic members. According to him:

"Membership in such a lodge . . . need not imply any penalty (for a Catholic). There can be no excommunication except when this membership leads to unfaithfulness to God or alienation from Christ . . . any membership that does not lead to this cannot lead a Catholic to excommunication. Nothing prevents the (Catholic) freemason who finds himself in these conditions from receiving the sacraments."

Agreeing with many Vatican sources, Father Beyer said it was

"not probable" that the Church would come forth with a dramatic lifting of the excommunication. He pointed out that such a ban stood validly in its time as a bulwark against "deliberate and active sectarianism."

Rather, Father Beyer looks to the revision of the code as being a silent answer to the modern dilemma. "The new canon law will be a unique opportunity for adopting an attitude that takes facts more into account . . . Where condemnation is not renewed, the prohibition to join Masonry will also be removed."

Father Caprile suggested that Masons themselves make an examination of conscience and return to "their primary inspiration, ridding themselves, where it might exist, of an obsolete sectarianism, intolerance toward the Church and an anti-Christian attitude."

Thus, Masonic lodges in each country can make a major contribution toward ending the feud by being less secret, by publicly stating where they stand on "religious indifferentism, naturalism and a possible threat to church and state"—the central reasons for the Church's long efforts to keep Catholics out of Masonry.

NC NEWS SERVICE

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Wednesday, June 27, 1973

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CHURCH BAN ON FREEMASONRY EXPECTED TO BE RELAXED (190)

LONDON (NC)--Some relaxation on the Church's ban on Freemasonry is expected to be issued by the Vatican before the end of the year, according to letters sent all priests in England and Wales by their bishops.

The letters explained that excommunication will be lifted from all Catholics who have become Masons.

It seems probable, the letters said, that each national bishops' conference will be left to decide whether Masons will have to resign membership in being received into the Church, and also whether requests from laymen to join the Masons may be granted.

Two years later, in June 1973, *National Catholic News Service* again reported that Catholic Church officials were expecting and planning for a change in Catholic Church position on Freemasonry. The article, "Church ban on Freemasonry expected to be relaxed," explained that the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales had sent letters to all priests in their districts, saying that some "relaxation" in the ban on Freemasonry was expected soon. Additionally, the report said, "it seems probable that each national bishops' conference will be left to decide whether Masons will have to resign membership in being received into the Church, and also whether requests from laymen to join the Masons may be granted."

This news was widely printed in official diocesan newspapers throughout the English speaking world and continued to be discussed in newspapers and clerical journals between the summer of 1973 and spring 1974. The U.S. bishop's news service reported that the growing consensus was that the old prohibition against Freemasonry would soon be changed. This must have been very welcome news to the many Catholic Freemasons throughout the world.



On September 18, 1974, National Catholic News Service released a story with a startling headline: "CATHOLICS GIVEN QUALIFIED PERMISSION TO JOIN MASONS."

The article announced that Cardinal Franjo Šeper, prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (Vatican), had sent a letter regarding Freemasonry to Cardinal John Krol, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The American bishops released the full translation of the letter, along with commentary which emphasized that now "Catholic laymen may join Masonic lodges that do not plot against the Church."

The text of the cardinal's letter itself does not explicitly state that Catholics can be Masons. Instead, it states that Catholics are only forbidden from joining "associations which plot against the Church." But the U.S. bishops' commentary made it clear that they understood this to mean that Catholics could in fact join Masonic lodges in some cases - that the Masons were not intrinsically anti-Catholic.

Here we have what seemed like the first clear admission from Catholic church leaders in the English speaking world and from a high Vatican official, that our part of Freemasonry (regular Freemasons) were not anti-religious and not conspiring against the Catholic church. Here we see evidence of some common sense prevailing, and the hope of further understanding.

The full text of the Šeper's letter is as follows, as translated and released by the U.S. bishops:

Your Eminence,

Many bishops asked this Sacred Congregation about the force and significance of Canon 2335 of the Code of Canon Law which forbids Catholics under the pain of excommunication to join Masonic or other associations of the same kind.

During its long examination of this question, the Holy See frequently consulted interested episcopal conferences so it might be familiar with the nature of these associations and their present-day direction.

The great divergency of replies, however, reflecting the diverse situations of each nation, did not permit the Holy See to change the current general legislation, which therefore remains in force until the new canon law is published by the competent Pontifical Commission for the Code of Canon Law.

In considering particular cases it must be remembered that penal law is always subject to strict interpretation. Therefore, one may safely teach and apply the opinion of those authors who hold that Canon 2335 regards only those Catholics who join associations which plot against the Church.

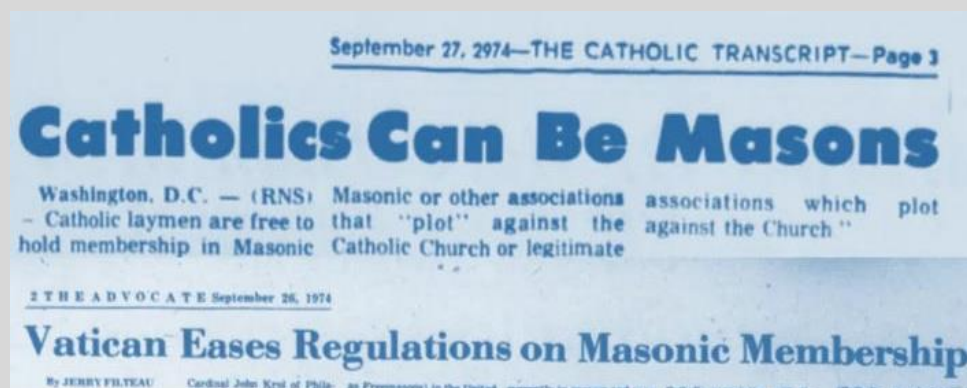
Clerics, Religious and members of secular institutes are still forbidden in every case to join any Masonic association.

F. Cardinal Šeper

Prefect

Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

This letter was a sensation, especially since this Cardinal was a leading conservative voice within the highest levels of the Vatican. Reports of about the letter were published in Catholic newspapers throughout the English speaking world. The story was also picked up by Reuters and the Associated Press and quickly circulated in secular newspapers throughout the United States and Canada.



Limited Approval Given To Laymen To Join Masons

After Ban of 200 Years Catholics Are Free to Join Freemasons

Church eases rule against joining Masons

WASHINGTON (NC) - Catholic laymen may join Masonic lodges that do not plot against the Church,

Most of the other two million Masons around the world live in other English-speaking countries.

Seper's letter also makes it clear that the canonical provision concerning excommunication is to be

demned it on grounds of naturalism, religious indifference, its demand for oaths, and possible

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The Texas Catholic September 27, 1974

Qualified permission given for Catholics to join Masons

by Jerry Filteau

WASHINGTON (NC) -- Catholic laymen may join Masonic lodges that do not plot against the Church,

The present code remains in force until the new, revised Code of Canon Law appears. The revision of the code is currently in process and may be completed in a few

Your Eminence:
Many bishops asked this Sacred Congregation about the force and significance of Canon 2335 of the Code of Canon Law which forbids

In November 1974, the *Catholic Information Office* (the official press office of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales) informed various news outlets of the change regarding Masonry, based on the same letter which Cardinal Šeper had sent to the English Catholic hierarchy.

The bishops also discussed the letter at their annual fall meeting and released a statement to explain how this would be applied in their country. In short, as they had previously described in their 1973 letter to the clergy, lay Catholics would be permitted to join the Masons with permission from their bishop. The official text from the English Hierarchy is as follows:

Canon 2335 of the Code of Canon Law forbade Catholics to join the Freemasons or any similar organization under pain of excommunication. The ban was imposed because in many countries Freemasonry was regarded as being a secret society plotting against Church and State. Times change.

The Holy See has reviewed the Church's present relationship with Freemasonry. Widespread consultations failed to produce a uniform response from the world's bishops, so the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has recently told bishops that universal legislation is to remain unchanged, at least until the revision of the whole Code of Canon Law. But the congregation has ruled that Canon 2335 no

longer automatically bars a Catholic from membership of Masonic groups. In particular cases it is to be subject to the restrictive interpretation applied to penal legislation, so a Catholic who joins the Freemasons is excommunicated only if the policy and actions of the Freemasons in his area are known to be hostile to the Church.

Bishops of England and Wales have taken note of this guidance. They wish to clarify procedure in their countries until such time as the universal law of the Church is reformulated. A Catholic should regard himself first and foremost a member of the Catholic Church, finding his inspiration for Christian living in the Church and his fellowship within that community; but if he sincerely believes that membership of Freemasonry does not conflict with this deeper loyalty he should approach his bishop through his parish priest to discuss the implications of such membership. Local conditions would of course have to be kept in mind.

A Catholic who has in the past left the Church to become a Freemason is urged to seek reconciliation. Priests, religious and members of secular institutes are still forbidden by the universal law of the Church to accept membership of the masonic order or similar organizations.

After these announcements there was a period of adjustment as the Catholic world came to grips with this change. Diocesan newspapers regularly featured articles and editorials which reiterated the new teaching: while not encouraged, lay Catholics could now be permitted to join the Masons.

In October 1974, Bishop Walter Curtis of Bridgeport, Connecticut, released a statement in which he recommended that Catholics join the Knights of Columbus instead of the Masons despite the new permissibility. National columnist and notable Vatican II peritus Fr. John Sheerin wrote an editorial praising the change.

implement a fundraising capital fund campaign with minimum goal of \$2.5 million.

Bishop: Masons OK, KC Better

Bridgeport — While noting that Catholics in the diocese are not prohibited by Church law from joining the Masons, Bishop Walter W. Curtis last week recommended that Catholic men who wish to join a fraternal association "join our own Knights of Columbus, which has its roots here in Connecticut."

The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith recently sent a message to this country's Catholic bishops clarifying the provisions of canon law concerning membership in the Masons.

existing between our Knights of Columbus and the Masonic Order."

He said that in present history in this country, the Masons cannot be classed "as an association which endeavors to undermine the Church."

Bishop Curtis said that while bishops in some areas feel "there is still a problem of hostility against the Church," in other areas there is no such hostility, "and this would be true in Connecticut."

In recommending membership in the Knights of Columbus, Bishop Curtis said: "The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic association which is widespread in our country and which unites men together to serve the interests of religion and morality, as well as fraternity."

"I would especially encourage young married men to join the Knights of Columbus so as to keep that fraternal organization strong in the interest of moral, religious and charitable works that it performs."

A new look at Masons

By FATHER JOHN B. SHEERIN CSP



The news of the latest Vatican pronouncement on the Freemasons was long overdue. The Masonic bugaboo in recent years became a false alarm. In my youth I used to hear of three perils. First there was "the yellow peril" concocted by the Hearst newspapers and conjuring up a vision of millions of Orientals overrunning our fair land. Then there was the Communist peril: In the days of McCarthyism, I heard rumors of Communist spies in our State Department and there was even talk about Communists in disguise in Catholic pulpits. Third, the true-blue Royal American bugaboo, the Masons, working day and night feverishly to destroy the Church.

of the Doctrinal Congregation in the Vatican, wrote Cardinal John Krol, head of the NCCB, recently in regard to Canon 2335 of the Code of Canon Law, which forbids Catholic membership in the Masons, under the pain of excommunication. Saper said the canon applies only in the strict, sense, that is, if the Mason group actively plots against the Catholic Church. Except perhaps for a few lodges in the South, American Masons are not actually plotting against the Church.

Like the Holy Roman Empire, which was neither holy nor Roman nor an empire, the Freemasons cannot be described as free or as masons. Where they picked up the

The topic was covered repeatedly in diocesan newspaper Q&A columns as readers regularly sought clarity. For example, in February 1975 and October 1976, Msgr. Raymond Bosler (also a conciliar peritus) addressed the question in his nationally syndicated feature "The Question Box."



The Question Box

Catholics as Masons?

Msgr. Raymond Bosler

Q. Your answer that Catholics are permitted to join the Rebekahs, now that Catholics are permitted to join the Masons, was astonishing for a Catholic priest. At least seven Popes have condemned Masonry. The only change the Church has made regarding Masonry is that in joining it you are no longer automatically excommunicated.

A. In the fall of 1974 Cardinal Franjo Seper, prefect of the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, sent the following letter to the U.S. bishops:

"Many bishops asked this Sacred Congregation about the force and significance of Canon 2335 of the Code of Canon Law which forbids Catholics under the pain of excommunication to join Masonic or other associations of the same kind. During its long examination of this question, the Holy See frequently consulted interested episcopal conferences so it might be familiar with the nature of these associations and their present-day direction. The great divergency of replies, however, reflecting the diverse situations of each nation did not permit the Holy See to change the current legislation which therefore remains in force until the new canon law is published by the competent Pontifical Commission for the Code of Canon Law.

"In considering particular cases, it must be remembered that penal law is always subject to strict interpretation. Therefore, one may safely teach and apply the opinion of those authors who hold that Canon 2335 regards only those Catholics who join associations which plot against the Church. Clerics religious and members of secular institutes are still forbidden in every case to join any Masonic association."

or in other institutions of the same kind, which plot against the Church or legitimate civil powers, incur ipso facto excommunication reserved simply to the Holy See."

Evidently, the cardinal's letter recognized the fact that today all Masons are not plotting against the Church or for the overthrow of governments. At one time that is precisely what Masons were doing in Catholic countries, and the Popes rightly condemned Masonry and excommunicated Catholics who embraced it. But times have changed. In 1971 Rev. Leo McFadden, then correspondent in Rome for the NC News Service, began an article: "Can a practicing Catholic join the Masons? Given the right conditions, the answer seems to be 'yes,' according to experts here (Rome)."

The experts were an Italian and a Spanish Jesuit — significant since both were from Latin nations in which Masons were once the great enemies of the Church. They argued that the ban against Masonry did not apply to those Masonic organizations where faith in a supreme being and the Bible were required and exclusion of any discussion in the lodge on arguments strictly political or religious and sincere respect for the law of the state were practiced.

In 1966, the Scandinavian bishops published a decision permitting Catholics to join Masonic lodges in their territory, for they found Masonry there to be unobjectionable. Before publishing the decision, the bishops submitted it to Rome. No Roman congregation criticized it.

The Catholic Church is not against Masonry.

Many of Msgr. Bosler's comments are significant. He wrote "... the fact that today all Masons are not plotting against the Church (Catholic church) or for the overthrow of governments". This was clearly an admission that regular Freemasonry and Continental masonry are different in important ways. He also shares with his readers that "an Italian and a Spanish Jesuit" were instrumental in the decision, and that the "Catholic ban did not apply to those Masonic organizations where faith in a supreme being and Bible were required and exclusion of any discussion in the lodge on arguments strictly political or religious and sincere respect for the law or state were practice". Obviously that statement was reference to our regular Freemasonry.

Msgr. Bosler also informed his readers that preceding this period, in 1966, Scandinavian bishops, after investigating, starting permitting Catholics to join Freemasonry (The Swedish Rite of Freemasonry). Also, that the Swedish bishops had consulted with the Vatican and there was no objection voiced. Essentially, he said that the allowance for Catholics to join some forms of Freemasonry had been in effect since 1966!

In March 1976, Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York addressed the 31st annual Dedication Breakfast for New York State Freemasons. The *U.S. bishops' news service* released coverage of what they called "a milestone in ecumenism" and it reminded readers that "in 1974 the Vatican's Doctrinal Congregation issued a letter saying that Catholics may join Masonic lodges that do not plot against the Church." Cooke told the Masons that the

"estrangement between the Church and the Masons in the past was partly due to a failure to communicate. Many of the problems of the modern world are due to such failures. In charity we must forgive such human error. Whatever happened in the past, it should not affect our future."

In 1978, Bishop Fulton Sheen wrote, "According to a letter sent to the presidents of the various National Conferences of Catholics Bishops by Cardinal Seper, membership by lay people in Masonic groups is acceptable, provided the groups are not actively hostile to the Church." The addition of the word "actively" is interesting, implying some element of actual proof is necessary before condemning a form of Freemasonry.

During this time, Catholics throughout the world were gradually coming to accept that things had changed, and Freemasonry was not necessarily bad or forbidden, according to the qualified permissions of the 1974 letter.

Then suddenly, and with little explanation, the hierarchy of the Catholic church stunningly reversed itself. In March of 1981, a strongly worded "clarification" was issued by the Vatican. Written by Cardinal Franjo Šeper. He said that the law of the Church forbidding all Catholics to participate in Masonry had not been changed by the 1974 letter. Warning against "erroneous and tendentious interpretations" of the 1974 letter, Šeper bluntly stated, "The present canonical discipline has not been modified in any way and remains in force. Therefore, neither excommunication nor the other penalties called for have been abrogated."

Just that quickly the old lies and fears about Freemasonry returned to official Catholic dogma. The reconciliation between Catholicism and regular Freemasonry was over. Cardinal Franjo Šeper claimed that it was all just a misunderstanding, that what was implied and later said outright said by high ranking Catholic officials was never correct. There was no explain why the supposed misunderstanding was allowed to go on for seven years, and be communicated around the world.

Vatican reaffirms ban on Masonic membership

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Saying that a 1974 ruling had been widely misinterpreted, the Vatican has reaffirmed its centuries-old ban on Catholic membership in the Freemasons.

A new statement by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Church's doctrinal watchdog, said there was no change in the Church law that bars Roman Catholics under penalty of excommunication from joining Masonic associations and other secret societies regarded as hostile to the Church.

The statement, signed by Cardinal Franjo Šeper, prefect of the congregation, was offered as a clarification of "mistaken and tendentious interpretations" given to a 1974 letter written by Cardinal Šeper.

The letter, dated July 29, 1974, was widely quoted at the time as

Terence Cooke addressed 3,000 Masons in New York City, praising the U.S. branch of the movement for its charitable works, its "firm belief in a Supreme Being" and its patriotic role in American history.

The 1974 document said that Catholic laymen were free to join Masonic lodges "which do not plot against the Church." The letter also said that Catholic clergy religious and members of secular institutes (organizations for both clergy and laity who take vows but live in the world) were "still forbidden in every case to join any Masonic association."

An aide at the U.S. Catholic Conference in Washington, where advance copies of the new ruling had been sent, said the Vatican may have felt provoked to act in the belief that the 1974 document was

force. Therefore, neither excommunication nor the other penalties called for have been abrogated."

Regarding Cardinal Šeper's letter of 1974, the statement says: "It refers to the interpretation that should be given to the canon in question (Canon 2335) and must be understood...only as a reminder of the general principles of interpretation of penal laws in the solution of cases of individual persons."

What this might mean was suggested by Cardinal Šeper in his 1974 letter, which said: "In considering particular cases, it must be remembered that penal law is always subject to strict interpretation. Therefore, one may safely teach and apply the opinion of those authors who hold that Canon 2335 regards only those Catholics who join associations which plot against

This 1981 communication seemed to have caught almost everyone by surprise and it caused considerable confusion. Despite being framed as a reminder that nothing had ever changed, it stands in clear contradiction to the content of the 1974 letter. Even the U.S. bishops' news service, in its article announcing the supposed clarification, stated that Cardinal Šeper had previously and explicitly given "qualified approval for Catholic laymen to join Masonic groups if circumstances allowed." Nevertheless, from March 1981 onward, the official line was once again that all Catholics were forbidden to participate in Freemasonry. It does not appear that any bishops' conference or any individual bishop or prominent Catholic leader ever publicly clarified what happened. In 1983, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (and later Pope), with the personal approval of Pope John Paul II,

issued a Declaration on Masonic Associations, which stated the Catholic church's objections to Freemasonry. The 1983 declaration states that "faithful who enroll in Masonic associations are in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion. Strangely, this came just after the 1983 update of canon law which removed all specific references to Masonry. The issue was addressed again in a 1985 letter, which made no mention of some previous objections to Masonry, yet introduced new objections.

We will never fully know what truly happened within the Vatican that re-energized a hostility to Freemasonry. However, we can look at what historically happened. Pope Paul VI died in August 1978. Pope John Paul I was elected and afterwards lived for only 33 days. Pope John Paul II was elected in October 1978, about 3 years prior to the Vatican's flip flop. The Vatican staff and leaders changed, and it appears that a more traditional group gained ascendancy and was favored by the new Pope. It appears they brought back the old suspicions and hostility, and skewed perceptions. Additionally, during the period of almost reconciliation, some bishops in Germany, Austria and Italy were compiling reports containing some new objections to Freemasonry, based on the practices of Continental masons.

There was also rumors spread that the death of Pope John Paul I was a murder and resulted from a Masonic conspiracy. Some pundits even claimed that Freemasons had infiltrated the Vatican, and was the source of most of its problems. About this time the general public learned of the existence of a rogue organization known as P2, which had once been a legitimate Continental lodge until it lost its charter in 1976 for non-Masonic conduct and activities. After that it became a secret club for powerful and influential people. It was accused in the news media, by politicians and the Catholic church of all sorts of terrible things, and was represented to the public as an architype Masonic lodge. It was completely vilified as a criminal organization, although no charges were ever brought. All this fed the conspiracy theories. Even now, many years later, the current Pope has spoken of Masonic conspiracies in the Vatican and against the Catholic church.

The opportunity for reconciliation was lost, but perhaps not forever. I do see some signs that in the future there is the potential for rapprochement between regular Freemasonry and the Catholic church. However, at this time the foundation for reconciliation is not being laid by the hierarchy of the Catholic church, but instead at the lower levels. Change generally has the best chance of success if it starts at the lower levels of any organization. All around the world there are many Catholic Freemasons and more joining Freemasonry, thus demonstrating that individual Catholic men are recognizing the disconnect between the regular Freemasonry really is, and what their church claims it to be. Even some priests are actively or passively accepting Regular Freemasonry as a positive force, and thus no longer speak against it. Some priests have even actively engaged with Regular Freemasonry, although at some personal risk. Let us hope for improved relations in the future.

International Freemasonry

Freemasonry in East Africa

In most of the world there is at least one Grand Lodge per nation, or per state within a nation. However, in East Africa that is not the case. The District Grand Lodge of East Africa has lodges in the independent nations of Kenya, Uganda, Seychelles Islands, and Tanzania.



The Seychelles Islands have a population of nearly 93,000, Kenya over 53 million, Uganda nearly 46 million, and Tanzania nearly 64 million. In this huge area of about 163 million people there are at least 48 active Masonic lodges operating under the District Grand Lodge of East Africa, which itself operates under the authority of the United Grand Lodge of England.

This region, being on or near major ports on the Indian ocean has become home to a wide variety of people from the Arabian peninsula, Indian, and Europe. Starting in 1880 this region was part of the British Empire, and from status it absorbed many of its diverse peoples, cultures and practices. Today there are prosperous Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Sikh populations in these countries.

It is not known when the first Freemasons arrived in the region, or when they first started to meet informally. However, by the mid 1800's the port Zanzibar in present day Tanzania had many foreign residents. Freemasonry likely arrived there with the presence of British military forces because the military regiments often had their own Masonic lodges.

In the 1890s railroad construction started, and with it came more foreign engineers, technicians and workers. Informal Masonic lodges were functioning during this construction period, but most believe that the native African population was excluded during this time.

The first official and permanent Masonic lodge in East Africa was established in Zanzibar in 1904. In 1904, in what is now Kenya, a group of Freemasons petitioned the UK Grand Lodge concerning the formation of a Masonic Lodge in Nairobi. The Lodge Harmony was authorized and opened January 1905. The first Lodge in Uganda was Victoria Nyanza Lodge No 3492. It was opened in Entebbe in 1911. Tanzania was a German colony until the end of the first world war, so the first Lodge under the United Grand Lodge of England was not consecrated there until 1922. Its was named Haven of Peace Lodge No 4385. Over the years many more lodges were added. Also, there are currently four lodges in the Seychelles Islands.



Annual Communication in April 2022

Freemasonry in East Africa maintains informative websites and Facebook pages. However, I still found it somewhat difficult to obtain information about their planned activities. This could be because in some of this areas of this region, some of the local Christian churches (founded by 19th and 20th century by missionaries) have shown a rather remarkable hostility toward Freemasonry and individual Freemasons. In Kenya specifically, some church leaders have openly claimed that Freemasons are devils, evils spirits, snakes in the grass, and even the kidnappers of children. Such claims play upon the local superstitions, and have resulted in violent confrontations. Those churches' advocacy of hate have resulted in some Masonic

lodges being attacked, and public *witch hunts* for individuals who are Freemasons or just associating with Freemasons. The Freemasons have fought back with information campaigns and increased transparency, and as a result the situation has somewhat improved. We should keep in mind that these are still developing countries, where part of the population has limited access to education and unbiased information. Still, Freemasonry is strong and still growing in East Africa.



Freemasons' Hall, Nairobi - Kenya



Annual Communication in April 2022

Quotes suitable for Masonic Reflection

You are unfortunate if you have never lived through misfortune. If you have not faced obstacles and disappointment, then you truly do not know what you are capable of.

Ask your, why is the particular situation or circumstance you are experiencing unbearable? You might be embarrassed by the answer.

You must build up your life action by action, and be content if you achieve each goal as far as possible.

No one can take your successes away from you.

In life you face obstacles. However, there no obstacle to you always acting with justice, self-control, and wisdom.

You can turn your disappointments, mistakes and even failures into a positive lesson, then those moments need not upset you.

To live a happy life, we must learn to be indifferent to that which makes no difference.

Make the best of what is within your power, and take the rest as it occurs.

We persevere by responding rationally to our hardships. We persevere by determining the most virtuous course of action.



Misc.

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Table Mountain Lodge Building is located at 5934 Clark Rd, Paradise,

A beautiful and historic venue for meetings, services, and special events. We have hosted weddings, anniversaries, parties, business meetings, memorials, church and funeral services and a wide variety of community fairs and events.

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To better serve the community our prices are kept very affordable and we are very accommodating.

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email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

The 150 History of Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124

Our 150 year history of Table Mountain Lodge, covering the years 1857 thru 2008, is still available to you. This book contains many rare historical pictures, is enjoyable reading and is well indexed for research purposes. It is professionally produced, spiral bound and available to you at our cost. Unfortunately, the price of paper has dramatically increased, so these copies cost \$30 each. To obtain a copy of this important Masonic historical record, please contact our Secretary - **Brian Grandfield PM, 530-864-6323**, email: bgrandfield@gmail.com

Printing your own Dues Card

To print your dues card. Using your computer, open your browser and go to <https://freemason.org/>. In the right corner, push “member sign in”

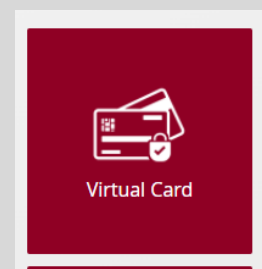
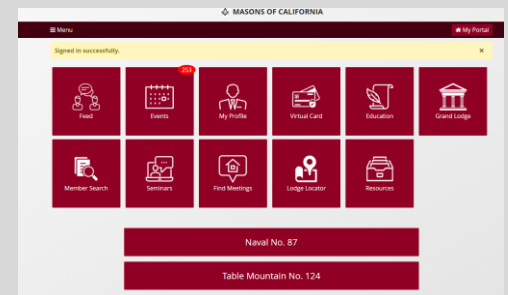
This is the “sign up” and the “sign in” page. If you have never been to this website before, then go to “Sign up” in the lower left. It will only take you a minute to create your password. You will need your member number which is on your dues card. After that you sign in using your email and password.

This will be the page you see after signing in.

There will be a notice posted on this page if you have not paid your dues. There will also be a link so that you can immediately pay your dues using a credit card.

To download and print your dues card, go to “Virtual Card”

Follow the very simple instructions to print your Dues card. The new dues card does not have to be signed by the lodge secretary.



There is also an I Member 2.0 app for your smart phone. Find out about it at: <https://masonichome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Intro.iMemberLOApp.pdf>

Contact Information

Table Mountain Building/Rooms Rentals - Woody Nelson, (530) 877-7852 or (916)202-6942

Table Mountain Building/Rooms Rentals email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

Table Mountain Lodge Worshipful Master - Doug Campbell, 530-519-1695,

email: dgcphd@gmail.com

Table Mountain Lodge Secretary - Brian Grandfield PM, 530-864-6323,

email: bgrandfield@gmail.com

Table Mountain Building Association President - Woody Nelson, (916)202-6942

email: woody@wolfranchfarm.com

Journal / Tresleboard - Doug Campbell, 530-519-1695 email: dgcphd@gmail.com

Table Mountain Lodge's website - <https://lodge124.freemason.org>

Doug Campbell, 530-519-1695,

email: dgcphd@gmail.com

DeMolay - Cole Hamilton, 858-342-5031, email: oldkingcreations@att.net

Rainbow Girls - (for all of Butte County) – Laura Ray, 530-828-4748.

Shrine / Shriners – Woody Nelson, 916-202-6942, email: woody@wolfranchfarm.com

<https://beashrinernow.com>

York Rite – <http://royalarch.org/locations.html>

Scottish Rite – David Anderson, Sacramento Valley Scottish Rite.

danders@sacramentoscottishrite.org

<https://www.sacramentoscottishrite.org>

Golden Feather Chapter Eastern Star – Peg McElroy, Secretary

emailbobnpegchico@gmail.com

THE MISSION OF TABLE MOUNTAIN MASONIC LODGE

1. To help good men become better men through the practice of Freemasonry's principles and ethics.
2. To assist and provide relief to our members, our members' family and those of the greater Masonic community in need of support and assistance.
3. To support our public schools and local charitable organizations, and in general contribute to efforts to alleviate the suffering of those in need.
4. We seek to advance and spread Masonic principles and ethics throughout our local communities by being examples worthy of emulation by the general public.