cannot hear the divine office, he should say instead of matins thirteen paternosters; seven for each hour and nine for vespers. And together we all order him to do so. But those who are sent for such a reason and cannot come at the hours set to hear the divine office, if possible the set hours should not be omitted, in order to render to God his due.

*The Manner in which Brothers should be Received*

11. If any secular knight, or any other man, wishes to leave the mass of perdition and abandon that secular life and choose your communal life, do not consent to receive him immediately, for thus said my lord St Paul: *Probate spiritus si ex Deo sunt.* That is to say: 'Test the soul to see if it comes from God.' Rather, if the company of the brothers is to be granted to him, let the Rule be read to him, and if he wishes to studiously obey the commandments of the Rule, and if it pleases the Master and the brothers to receive him, let him reveal his wish and desire before all the brothers assembled in chapter and let him make his request with a pure heart.

*On Excommunicated Knights*

12. Where you know excommunicated knights to be gathered, there we command you to go; and if anyone there wishes to join the order of knighthood from regions overseas, you should not consider worldly gain so much as the eternal salvation of his soul. We order him to be received on condition that he come before the bishop of that province and make his intention known to him. And when the bishop has heard and absolved him, he should send him to the Master and brothers of the Temple, and if his life is honest and worthy of their company, if he seems good to the Master and brothers, let him be mercifully received; and if he should die in the meanwhile, through the anguish and torment he has suffered, let him be given all the benefits of the brotherhood due to one of the Poor Knights of the Temple.

13. Under no other circumstances should the brothers of the Temple share the company of an obviously-excommunicated man, nor take his own things; and this we prohibit strongly because it would be a fearful thing if they were excommunicated like him. But if he is only forbidden to hear the divine office, it is certainly possible to keep company with him and take his property for charity with the permission of their commander.

*On Not Receiving Children*

14. Although the rule of the holy fathers allows the receiving of children into a religious life, we do not advise you to do this. For he who wishes to give his child eternally to the order of knighthood should bring him up until such time as he is able to bear arms with vigour, and rid the land of
the enemies of Jesus Christ. Then let the mother and father lead him to the house and make his request known to the brothers; and it is much better if he does not take the vow when he is a child, but when he is older, and it is better if he does not regret it than if he regrets it. And henceforth let him be put to the test according to the wisdom of the Master and brothers and according to the honesty of the life of the one who asks to be admitted to the brotherhood.

On Brothers who Stand Too Long in Chapel

15. It has been made known to us and we heard it from true witnesses that immoderately and without restraint you hear the divine service whilst standing. We do not ordain that you behave in this manner, on the contrary we disapprove of it. But we command that the strong as well as the weak, to avoid a fuss, should sing the psalm which is called Venite, with the invitatory and the hymn sitting down, and say their prayers in silence, softly and not loudly, so that the proclaimer does not disturb the prayers of the other brothers.

16. But at the end of the psalms, when the Gloria patri is sung, through reverence for the Holy Trinity, you will rise and bow towards the altar, while the weak and ill will incline their heads. So we command; and when the explanation of the Gospels is read, and the Te deum laudamus is sung, and while all the lauds are sung, and the matins are finished, you will be on your feet. In such a manner we command you likewise to be on your feet at matins and at all the hours of Our Lady.

On the Brothers' Dress

17. We command that all the brothers' habits should always be of one colour, that is white or black or brown. And we grant to all knight brothers in winter and in summer if possible, white cloaks; and no-one who does not belong to the aforementioned Knights of Christ is allowed to have a white cloak, so that those who have abandoned the life of darkness will recognise each other as being reconciled to their creator by the sign of the white habits: which signifies purity and complete chastity. Chastity is certitude of heart and healthiness of body. For if any brother does not take the vow of chastity he cannot come to eternal rest nor see God, by the promise of the apostle who said: Pacem sectamini cum omnibus et castimoniam sine qua nemo Deum videbit. That is to say: 'Strive to bring peace to all, keep chaste, without which no-one can see God.'

18. But these robes should be without any finery and without any show of pride. And so we ordain that no brother will have a piece of fur on his clothes, nor anything else which belongs to the usages of the body, not even a blanket unless it is of lamb's wool or sheep's wool. We command
all to have the same, so that each can dress and undress, and put on and take off his boots easily. And the Draper or the one who is in his place should studiously reflect and take care to have the reward of God in all the above-mentioned things, so that the eyes of the envious and evil-tongued cannot observe that the robes are too long or too short; but he should distribute them so that they fit those who must wear them, according to the size of each one.

19. And if any brother out of a feeling of pride or arrogance wishes to have as his due a better and finer habit, let him be given the worst. And those who receive new robes must immediately return the old ones, to be given to the squires and sergeants and often to the poor, according to what seems good to the one who holds that office.

On Shirts

20. Among the other things, we mercifully rule that, because of the great intensity of the heat which exists in the East, from Easter to All Saints, through compassion and in no way as a right, a linen shirt shalt be given to any brother who wishes to wear it.

On Bed Linen

21. We command by common consent that each man shall have clothes and bed linen according to the discretion of the Master. It is our intention that apart from a mattress, one bolster and one blanket should be sufficient for each; and he who lacks one of these may have a rug, and he may use a linen blanket at all times, that is to say with a soft pile. And they will at all times sleep dressed in shirt and breeches and shoes and belts, and where they sleep shall be lit until morning. And the Draper should ensure that the brothers are so well tonsured that they may be examined from the front and from behind; and we command you to firmly adhere to this same conduct with respect to beards and moustaches, so that no excess may be noted on their bodies.

On Pointed Shoes' and Shoe-Laces

22. We prohibit pointed shoes and shoe-laces and forbid any brother to wear them; nor do we permit them to those who serve the house for a fixed term; rather we forbid them to have shoes with points or laces under any circumstances. For it is manifest and well known that these abominable things belong to pagans. Nor should they wear their hair or their habits too long. For those who serve the sovereign creator must of necessity be born within and without through the promise of God himself who said: 'Estate mundi quia ego mundus sum. That is to say: 'Be born as I am born.'
How They Should Eat

23. In the palace, or what should rather be called the refectory, they should eat together. But if you are in need of anything because you are not accustomed to the signs used by other men of religion, quietly and privately you should ask for what you need at table, with all humility and submission. For the apostle said: Manduca panem tuum cum silentio. That is to say: 'Eat your bread in silence.' And the psalmist: Posui ori meo custodiam. That is to say: 'I held my tongue.' That is, 'I thought my tongue would fail me.' That is, 'I held my tongue so that I should speak no ill.'

On the Reading of the Lesson

24. Always, at the convent's dinner and supper, let the Holy Scripture be read, if possible. If we love God and all His holy words and His holy commandments, we should desire to listen attentively; the reader of the lesson will tell you to keep silent before he begins to read.

On Bowls and Drinking Vessels

25. Because of the shortage of bowls, the brothers will eat in pairs, so that one may study the other more closely, and so that neither austerity nor secret abstinence is introduced into the communal meal. And it seems just to us that each brother should have the same ration of wine in his cup.

On the Eating of Meat

26. It should be sufficient for you to eat meat three times a week, except at Christmas, All Saints, the Assumption and the feast of the twelve apostles. For it is understood that the custom of eating flesh corrupts the body. But if a fast when meat must be forgone falls on a Tuesday, the next day let it be given to the brothers in plenty. And on Sundays all the brothers of the Temple, the chaplains and the clerks shall be given two meat meals in honour of the holy resurrection of Jesus Christ. And the rest of the household, that is to say the squires and sergeants, shall be content with one meal and shall be thankful to God for it.

On Weekday Meals

27. On the other days of the week, that is Mondays, Wednesdays and even Saturdays, the brothers shall have two or three meals of vegetables or other dishes eaten with bread; and we intend that this should be sufficient and command that it should be adhered to. For he who does not eat one meal shall eat the other.

On Friday Meals

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28. On Fridays, let lenten meat be given communally to the whole congregation, out of reverence for the passion of Jesus Christ; and you will fast from All Saints until Easter, except for Christmas Day, the Assumption and the feast of the twelve apostles. But weak and sick brothers shall not be kept to this. From Easter to All Saints they may eat twice, as long as there is no general fast.

On Saying Grace

29. Always after every dinner and supper all the brothers should give thanks to God in silence, if the church is near to the palace where they eat, and if it is not nearby, in the place itself. With a humble heart they should give thanks to Jesus Christ who is the Lord Provider. Let the remains of the broken bread be given to the poor and whole loaves be kept. Although the reward of the poor, which is the kingdom of heaven, should be given to the poor without hesitation, and the Christian faith doubtless recognises you among them, we ordain that a tenth part of the bread be given to your Almoner.

On Taking Collation

30. When daylight fades and night falls listen to the signal of the bell or the call to prayers, according to the customs of the country, and all go to compline. But we command you first to take collation; although we place this light meal under the arbitration and discretion of the Master. When he wants water and when he orders, out of mercy, diluted wine, let it be given sensibly. Truly, it should not be taken to excess, but in moderation. For Solomon said: Quia vinum facit apostatare sapientes. That is to say that wine corrupts the wise.

On Keeping Silence

31. When the brothers come out of compline they have no permission to speak openly except in an emergency. But let each go to his bed quietly and in silence, and if he needs to speak to his squire, he should say what he has to say softly and quietly. But if by chance, as they come out of compline, the knighthood or the house has a serious problem which must be solved before morning, we intend that the Master or a party of elder brothers who govern the Order under the Master, may speak appropriately. And for this reason we command that it should be done in such a manner.

32. For it is written: In multiloquio non effugies peccatum. That is to say that to talk too much is not without sin. And elsewhere: Mors et vita in manibus lingue. That is to say: 'Life and death are in the power of the tongue.' And during that conversation we altogether prohibit idle words and wicked bursts of laughter. And if anything is said during that
conversation that should not be said, when you go to bed we command you to say the paternoster prayer in all humility and pure devotion.

*On Ailing Brothers*

33. Brothers who suffer illness through the work of the house may be allowed to rise at matins with the agreement and permission of the Master or of those who are charged with that office. But they should say instead of matins thirteen paternosters, as is established above, in such a manner that the words reflect the heart. Thus said David: *Psallite sapienter.* That is to say: 'Sing wisely.' And elsewhere the same David said: *In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi.* That is to say: 'I will sing to you before the angels.' And let this thing be at all times at the discretion of the Master or of those who are charged with that office.

*On the Communal Life*

34. One reads in the Holy Scriptures: *Dividebatur singulis prout cuique opus erat.* That is to say that to each was given according to his need. For this reason we say that no-one should be elevated among you, but all should take care of the sick; and he who is less ill should thank God and not be troubled; and let whoever is worse humble himself through his infirmity and not become proud through pity. In this way all members will live in peace. And we forbid anyone to embrace excessive abstinence; but firmly keep the communal life.

*On the Master*

35. The Master may give to whomsoever he pleases the horse and armour and whatever he likes of another brother, and the brother to whom the given thing belongs should not become vexed or angry: for be certain that if he becomes angry he will go against God.

*On Giving Counsel*

36. Let only those brothers whom the Master knows will give wise and beneficial advice be called to the council; for this we command, and by no means everyone should be chosen. For when it happens that they wish to treat serious matters like the giving of communal land, or to speak of the affairs of the house, or receive a brother, then if the Master wishes, it is appropriate to assemble the entire congregation to hear the advice of the whole chapter; and what seems to the Master best and most beneficial, let him do it.

*On Brothers Sent Overseas*
37. Brothers who are sent throughout divers countries of the world should endeavour to keep the commandments of the Rule according to their ability and live without reproach with regard to meat and wine, etc. so that they may receive a good report from outsiders and not sully by deed or word the precepts of the Order, and so that they may set an example of good works and wisdom; above all so that those with whom they associate and those in whose inns they lodge may be bestowed with honour. And if possible, the house where they sleep and take lodging should not be without light at night, so that shadowy enemies may not lead them to wickedness, which God forbids them.

On Keeping the Peace

38. Each brother should ensure that he does not incite another brother to wrath or anger, for the sovereign mercy of God holds the strong and weak brother equal, in the name of charity.

How the Brothers Should Go About

39. In order to carry out their holy duties and gain the glory of the Lord’s joy and to escape the fear of hell-fire, it is fitting that all brothers who are professed strictly obey their Master. For nothing is dearer to Jesus Christ than obedience. For as soon as something is commanded by the Master or by him to whom the Master has given the authority, it should be done without delay as though Christ himself had commanded it. For thus said Jesus Christ through the mouth of David, and it is true: Ob auditu auris obedivit mihi. That is to say: ‘He obeyed me as soon as he heard me.’

40. For this reason we pray and firmly command the knight brothers who have abandoned their own wills and all the others who serve for a fixed term not to presume to go out into the town or city without the permission of the Master or of the one who is given that office; except at night to the Sepulchre and the places of prayer which lie within the walls of the city of Jerusalem.

41. There, brothers may go in pairs, but otherwise may not go out by day or night; and when they have stopped at an inn, neither brother nor squire nor sergeant may go to another’s lodging to see or speak to him without permission, as is said above. We command by common consent that in this Order which is ruled by God, no brother should fight or rest according to his own will, but according to the orders of the Master, to whom all should submit, that they may follow this pronouncement of Jesus Christ who said: Non veni facere voluntatem meam, sed ejus que misit me, patris. That is to say: 'I did not come to do my own will, but the will of my father who sent me.'
How they should Effect an Exchange

42. Without permission from the Master or from the one who holds that office, let no brother exchange one thing for another, nor ask to, unless it is a small or petty thing.

On Locks

43. Without permission from the Master or from the one who holds that office, let no brother have a lockable purse or bag; but commanders of houses or provinces and Masters shall not be held to this. Without the consent of the Master or of his commander, let no brother have letters from his relatives or any other person; but if he has permission, and if it please the Master or the commander, the letters may be read to him.

On Secular Gifts

44. If anything which cannot be conserved, like meat, is given to any brother by a secular person in thanks, he should present it to the Master or the Commander of Victuals. But if it happens that any of his friends or relatives has something that they wish to give only to him, let him not take it without the permission of the Master or of the one who holds that office. Moreover, if the brother is sent any other thing by his relatives, let him not take it without the permission of the Master or of the one who holds that office. We do not wish the commanders or baillis, who are especially charged to carry out this office, to be held to this aforementioned rule.

On Faults

45. If any brother, in speaking or soldiering, or in any other way commits a slight sin, he himself should willingly make known the fault to the Master, to make amends with a pure heart. And if he does not usually fail in this way let him be given a light penance, but if the fault is very serious let him go apart from the company of the brothers so that he does not eat or drink at any table with them, but all alone; and he should submit to the mercy and judgement of the Master and brothers, that he may be saved on the Day of Judgement.

On Serious Faults

46. Above all things, we should ensure that no brother, powerful or not powerful, strong or weak, who wishes to promote himself gradually and become proud and defend his crime, remain unpunished. But if he does not wish to atone for it let him be given a harsher punishment. And if by pious counsel prayers are said to God for him, and he does not wish to make amends, but wishes to boast more and more of it, let him be
uprooted from the pious flock; according to the apostle who says: *Auferte malum ex vobis*. That is to say: 'Remove the wicked from among you.' It is necessary for you to remove the wicked sheep from the company of faithful brothers.

47. Moreover the Master, who should hold in his hand the staff and rod—the staff with which to sustain the weaknesses and strengths of others; the rod with which to beat the vices of those who sin—for love of justice by counsel of the patriarch, should take care to do this. But also, as my lord St Maxime said: 'May the leniency be no greater than the fault; nor excessive punishment cause the sinner to return to evil deeds.'

*On Rumour*

48. We command you by divine counsel to avoid a plague: envy, rumour, spite, slander. So each one should zealously guard against what the apostle said: *Ne sis criminarius et susurro in populo*. That is to say: 'Do not accuse or malign the people of God.' But when a brother knows for certain that his fellow brother has sinned, quietly and with fraternal mercy let him be chastised privately between the two of them, and if he does not wish to listen, another brother should be called, and if he scorns them both he should recant openly before the whole chapter. Those who disparage others suffer from a terrible blindness and many are full of great sorrow that they do not guard against harbouring envy towards others; by which they shall be plunged into the ancient wickedness of the devil.

*Let None Take Pride in his Faults*

49. Although all idle words are generally known to be sinful, they will be spoken by those who take pride in their own sin before the strict judge Jesus Christ; which is demonstrated by what David said: *Obmutui et silui a bonis*. That is to say that one should refrain from speaking even good, and observe silence. Likewise one should guard against speaking evil, in order to escape the penalty of sin. We prohibit and firmly forbid any brother to recount to another brother nor to anyone else the brave deeds he has done in secular life, which should rather be called follies committed in the performance of knightly duties, and the pleasures of the flesh that he has had with immoral women; and if it happens that he hears them being told by another brother, he should immediately silence him; and if he cannot do this, he should straightaway leave that place and not give his heart's ear to the pedlar of filth.

*Let None Ask*

50. This custom among the others we command you to adhere to strictly and firmly: that no brother should explicitly ask for the horse or armour of
another. It will therefore be done in this manner: if the infirmity of the brother or the frailty of his animals or his armour is known to be such that the brother cannot go out to do the work of the house without harm, let him go to the Master, or to the one who is in his place in that office after the Master, and make the situation known to him in pure faith and true fraternity, and henceforth remain at the disposal of the Master or of the one who holds that office.

On Animals and Squires

51. Each knight brother may have three horses and no more without the permission of the Master, because of the great poverty which exists at the present time in the house of God and of the Temple of Solomon. To each knight brother we grant three horses and one squire, and if that squire willingly serves charity, the brother should not beat him for any sin he commits.

That No Brother May Have an Ornate Bridle

52. We utterly forbid any brother to have gold or silver on his bridle, nor on his stirrups, nor on his spurs. That is, if he buys them; but if it happens that a harness is given to him in charity which is so old that the gold or silver is tarnished, that the resplendent beauty is not seen by others nor pride taken in them: then he may have them. But if he is given new equipment let the Master deal with it as he sees fit.

On Lance Covers

53. Let no brother have a cover on his shield or his lance, for it is no advantage, on the contrary we understand that it would be very harmful.

On Food Bags

54. This command which is established by us it is beneficial for all to keep and for this reason we ordain that it be kept henceforth, and that no brother may make a food bag of linen or wool, principally, or anything else except a profine.

On Hunting

55. We collectively forbid any brother to hunt a bird with another bird. It is not fitting for a man of religion to succumb to pleasures, but to hear willingly the commandments of God, to be often at prayer and each day to confess tearfully to God in his prayers the sins he has committed. No brother may presume to go particularly with a man who hunts one bird with another. Rather it is fitting for every religious man to go simply and
humbly without laughing or talking too much, but reasonably and without raising his voice and for this reason we command especially all brothers not to go in the woods with longbow or crossbow to hunt animals or to accompany anyone who would do so, except out of love to save him from faithless pagans. Nor should you go after dogs, nor shout or chatter, nor spur on a horse out of a desire to capture a wild beast.

On the Lion

56. It is the truth that you especially are charged with the duty of giving your souls for your brothers, as did Jesus Christ, and of defending the land from the unbelieving pagans who are the enemies of the son of the Virgin Mary. This above-mentioned prohibition of hunting is by no means intended to include the lion, for he comes encircling and searching for what he can devour, his hands against every man and every man’s hand against him.

How They May Have Lands and Men

57. This kind of new order we believe was born out of the Holy Scriptures and divine providence in the Holy Land of the Fast. That is to say that this armed company of knights may kill the enemies of the cross without sinning. For this reason we judge you to be rightly called knights of the Temple, with the double merit and beauty of probity, and that you may have lands and keep men, villeins and fields and govern them justly, and take your right to them as it is specifically established.

On Tithes

58. You who have abandoned the pleasant riches of this world, we believe you to have willingly subjected yourselves to poverty; therefore we are resolved that you who live the communal life may receive tithes. If the bishop of the place, to whom the tithe should be rendered by right, wishes to give it to you out of charity, with the consent of his chapter he may give those tithes which the Church possesses. Moreover, if any layman keeps the tithes of his patrimony, to his detriment and against the Church, and wishes to leave them to you, he may do so with the permission of the prelate and his chapter.

On Giving Judgement

59. We know, because we have seen it, that persecutors and people who like quarrels and endeavour to cruelly torment those faithful to the Holy Church and their friends, are without number. By the clear judgement of our council, we command that if there is anyone in the parties of the East or anywhere else who asks anything of you, for faithful men and love of
truth you should judge the thing, if the other party wishes to allow it. This same commandment should be kept at all times when something is stolen from you.

On Elderly Brothers

60. We command by pious counsel that ageing and weak brothers be honoured with diligence and given consideration according to their frailty; and, kept well by the authority of the Rule in those things which are necessary to their physical welfare, should in no way be in distress.

On Sick Brothers

61. Let sick brothers be given consideration and care and be served according to the saying of the evangelist and Jesus Christ: *Infirmus fui et visitastis me*. That is to say: 'I was sick and you visited me'; and let this not be forgotten. For those brothers who are wretched should be treated quietly and with care, for which service, carried out without hesitation, you will gain the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore we command the Infirmarer to studiously and faithfully provide those things which are necessary to the various sick brothers, such as meat, flesh, birds and all other foods which bring good health, according to the means and the ability of the house.

On Deceased Brothers

62. When any brother passes from life to death, a thing from which no one is exempt, we command you to sing mass for his soul with a pure heart, and have the divine office performed by the priests who serve the sovereign king and you who serve charity for a fixed term and all the brothers who are present where the body lies and serve for a fixed term should say one hundred paternosters during the next seven days. And all the brothers who are under the command of that house where the brother has passed away should say the hundred paternosters, as is said above, after the death of the brother is known, by God's mercy. Also we pray and command by pastoral authority that a pauper be fed with meat and wine for forty days in memory of the dead brother, just as if he were alive. We expressly forbid all other offerings which used to be made at will and without discretion by the Poor Knights of the Temple on the death of brothers, at the feast of Easter and at other feasts.

63. Moreover, you should profess your faith with a pure heart night and day that you may be compared in this respect to the wisest of all the prophets, who said: *Calicem salutaris accipiam*. That is to say: 'I will take the cup of salvation.' Which means: 'I will avenge the death of Jesus Christ
by my death. For just as Jesus Christ gave his body for me, I am prepared in the same way to give my soul for my brothers." This is a suitable offering; a living sacrifice and very pleasing to God.

On the Priests and Clerks who Serve Charity

64. The whole of the common council commands you to render all offerings and all kinds of alms in whatever manner they may be given, to the chaplains and clerks and to others who remain in charity for a fixed term. According to the authority of the Lord God, the servants of the Church may have only food and clothing, and may not presume to have anything else unless the Master wishes to give them anything willingly out of charity.

On Secular Knights

65. Those who serve out of pity and remain with you for a fixed term are knights of the house of God and of the Temple of Solomon; therefore out of pity we pray and finally command that if during his stay the power of God takes any one of them, for love of God and out of brotherly mercy, one pauper be fed for seven days for the sake of his soul, and each brother in that house should say thirty paternosters.

On Secular Knights who Serve for a Fixed Term

66. We command all secular knights who desire with a pure heart to serve Jesus Christ and the house of the Temple of Solomon for a fixed term to faithfully buy a suitable horse and arms, and everything that will be necessary for such work. Furthermore, we command both parties to put a price on the horse and to put the price in writing so that it is not forgotten; and let everything that the knight, his squire and horse need, even horseshoes, be given out of fraternal charity according to the means of the house. If, during the fixed term, it happens by chance that the horse dies in the service of the house, if the house can afford to, the Master should replace it. If, at the end of his tenure, the knight wishes to return to his own country, he should leave to the house, out of charity, half the price of the horse, and the other half he may, if he wishes, receive from the alms of the house.

On the Commitment of Sergeants

67. As the squires and sergeants who wish to serve charity in the house of the Temple for the salvation of their souls and for a fixed term come from divers regions, it seems to us beneficial that their promises be received, so that the envious enemy does not put it in their hearts to repent of or renounce their good intentions.
On White Mantles

68. By common counsel of all the chapter we forbid and order expulsion, for common vice, of anyone who without discretion was in the house of God and of the Knights of the Temple; also that the sergeants and squires should not have white habits, from which custom great harm used to come to the house; for in the regions beyond the mountains false brothers, married men and others who said they were brothers of the Temple used to be sworn in; while they were of the world. They brought so much shame to us and harm to the Order of Knighthood that even their squires boasted of it; for this reason numerous scandals arose. Therefore let them assiduously be given black robes; but if these cannot be found, they should be given what is available in that province; or what is the least expensive, that is burell.

On Married Brothers

69. If married men ask to be admitted to the fraternity, benefice and devotions of the house, we permit you to receive them on the following conditions: that after their death they leave you a part of their estate and all that they have obtained henceforth. Meanwhile, they should lead honest lives and endeavour to act well towards the brothers. But they should not wear white habits or cloaks; moreover, if the lord should die before his lady, the brothers should take part of his estate and let the lady have the rest to support her during her lifetime; for it does not seem right to us that such confrères should live in a house with brothers who have promised chastity to God.

On Sisters

70. The company of women is a dangerous thing, for by it the old devil has led many from the straight path to Paradise. Henceforth, let not ladies be admitted as sisters into the house of the Temple; that is why, very dear brothers, henceforth it is not fitting to follow this custom, that the flower of chastity is always maintained among you.

Let Them Not Have Familiarity with Women

71. We believe it to be a dangerous thing for any religious to look too much upon the face of woman. For this reason none of you may presume to kiss a woman, be it widow, young girl, mother, sister, aunt or any other; and henceforth the Knighthood of Jesus Christ should avoid at all costs the embraces of women, by which men have perished many times, so that they may remain eternally before the face of God with a pure conscience and sure life.
Not Being Godfathers

72. We forbid all brothers henceforth to dare to raise children over the font and none should be ashamed to refuse to be godfathers or godmothers; this shame brings more glory than sin.

On the Commandments

73. All the commandments which are mentioned and written above in this present Rule are at the discretion and judgement of the Master.

These are the Feast Days and Fasts that all the Brothers should Celebrate and Observe

74. Let it be known to all present and future brothers of the Temple that they should fast at the vigils of the twelve apostles. That is to say: St Peter and St Paul; St Andrew; St James and St Philip; St Thomas; St Bartholomew; Sts. Simon and Jude St James; St Matthew. The vigil of St John the Baptist; the vigil of the Ascension and the two days before, the rogation days; the vigil of Pentecost; the ember days; the vigil of St Laurence; the vigil of Our Lady in mid-August; the vigil of All Saints; the vigil of Epiphany. And they should fast on all the above-mentioned days according to the commandments of Pope Innocent at the council which took place in the city of Pisa. And if any of the above-mentioned feast days fall on a Monday, they should fast on the preceding Saturday. If the nativity of Our Lord falls on a Friday, the brothers should eat meat in honour of the festival. But they should fast on the feast day of St Mark because of the Litany: for it is established by Rome for the mortality of men. However, if it falls during the octave of Easter, they should not fast.

These are the Feast Days which should be Observed in the House of the Temple

75. The nativity of Our Lord; the feast of St Stephen; St John the Evangelist; the Holy Innocents; the eighth day of Christmas, which is New Year's Day; Epiphany; St Mary Candlemas; St Mathias the Apostle; the Annunciation of Our Lady in March; Easter and the three days following; St George; Sts Philip and James, two apostles; the finding of the Holy Cross; the Ascension of Our Lord; Pentecost and the two days following; St John the Baptist; St Peter and St Paul, two apostles; St Mary Magdalene; St James the Apostle; St Laurence; the Assumption of Our Lady; the nativity of Our Lady; the Exaltation of the Holy Cross; St Matthew the Apostle; St Michael; St Simon and Jude; the feast of All Saints; St Martin in winter; St Catherine in winter; St Andrew; St Nicholas in winter; St Thomas the Apostle.
76. None of the lesser feasts should be kept by the house of the Temple. And we wish and advise that this be strictly kept and adhered to: that all the brothers of the Temple should fast from the Sunday before St Martin's to the nativity of Our Lord, unless illness prevents them. And if it happens that the feast of St Martin falls on a Sunday, the brothers should go without meat on the preceding Sunday.
The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

A.D. 1128. All this year was the King Henry in Normandy, on account of the hostility that was between him and his nephew, the Earl of Flanders. But the earl was wounded in a fight by a swain; and so wounded he went to the monastery of St. Bertin; where he soon became a monk, lived five days afterwards, then died, and was there buried. God honour his soul. That was on the sixth day before the calends of August. This same year died the Bishop Randulph Passeflambard of Durham; and was there buried on the nones of September. And this same year went the aforesaid Abbot Henry home to his own minster at Poitou by the king's leave. He gave the king to understand, that he would withal forgo that minster, and that land, and dwell with him in England, and in the monastery of Peterborough. But it was not so nevertheless. He did this because he would be there, through his crafty wiles, were it a twelvemonth or more, and come again afterwards. May God Almighty extend his mercy over that wretched place. This same year came from Jerusalem Hugh of the Temple to the king in Normandy; and the king received him with much honour, and gave him rich presents in gold and in silver. And afterwards he sent him into England; and there he was received by all good men, who all gave him presents, and in Scotland also: and by him they sent to Jerusalem much wealth withal in gold and in silver. And he invited folk out to Jerusalem; and there went with him and after him more people than ever did before, since that the first expedition was in the day of Pope Urban. Though it availed little; for he said, that a mighty war was begun between the Christians and the heathens; but when they came thither, then was it nought but leasing. (159) Thus pitifully was all that people swinked. (160)

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In Praise of the New Knighthood (Liber ad milites Templi: De laude novae militiae)

Editors' note: The following passage is taken from a treatise written in the early 12th century by the Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, on behalf of the fledgling Knights Templar. It might be viewed as a combination of exhortation to the Knights, and advertisement to the population in general. Officially it is an answer to a letter written to Bernard by his friend Hugh de Payens, one of the founders of the Templars.

We have reproduced the prologue and the first five chapters of this treatise here, using the translation of Conrad Greenia. These first sections deal directly with the Knights Templar and are of great importance to students of the early military orders. The remaining sections deal allegorically with holy sites in Palestine, and are equally interesting, if less directly relevant to the foundation of the Templars. The full text, along with comprehensive notes, may be found in The Cistercian Fathers Series: Number Nineteen, The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux: Volume Seven, Treatises III, translated by Conrad Greenia, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, Mich., 1977.

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Prologue

TO HUGH, KNIGHT OF CHRIST AND MASTER OF CHRIST'S MILITIA: BERNARD, IN NAME ONLY, ABBOT OF CLAIRVAUX, WISHES THAT HE MIGHT FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

If I am not mistaken, my dear Hugh, you have asked me not once or twice, but three times to write a few words of exhortation for you and your comrades. You say that if I am not permitted to wield the lance, at least I might direct my pen against the tyrannical foe, and that this moral, rather than material support of mine will be of no small help to you. I have put you off now for quite some time, not that I disdain your request, but rather lest I be blamed for taking it lightly and hastily. I feared I might botch a task which could be better done by a more qualified hand, and which would perhaps remain, because of me, just as necessary and all the more difficult.

Having waited thus for quite some time to no purpose, I have now done what I could, lest my inability should be mistaken for unwillingness. It is
for the reader to judge the result. If some perhaps find my work unsatisfactory or short of the mark, I shall be nonetheless content, since I have not failed to give you my best.

CHAPTER ONE

A WORD OF EXHORTATION FOR THE KNIGHTS OF THE TEMPLE

It seems that a new Knighthood has recently appeared on the earth, and precisely in that part of it which the Orient from on high visited in the flesh. As he then troubled the princes of darkness in the strength of his mighty hand, so there he now wipes out their followers, the children of disbelief, scattering them by the hands of his mighty ones. Even now he brings about the redemption of his people raising up again a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.

This is, I say, a new kind of knighthood and one unknown to the ages gone by. It ceaselessly wages a twofold war both against flesh and blood and against a spiritual army of evil in the heavens. When someone strongly resists a foe in the flesh, relying solely on the strength of the flesh, I would hardly remark it, since this is common enough. And when war is waged by spiritual strength against vices or demons, this, too, is nothing remarkable, praiseworthy as it is, for the world is full of monks. But when the one sees a man powerfully girding himself with both swords and nobly marking his belt, who would not consider it worthy of all wonder, the more so since it has been hitherto unknown? He is truly a fearless knight and secure on every side, for his soul is protected by the armor of faith just as his body is protected by armor of steel. He is thus doubly armed and need fear neither demons nor men. Not that he fears death--no, he desires it. Why should he fear to live or fear to die when for him to live is Christ, and to die is gain? Gladly and faithfully he stands for Christ, but he would prefer to be dissolved and to be with Christ, by far the better thing.

Go forth confidently then, you knights, and repel the foes of the cross of Christ with a stalwart heart. Know that neither death nor life can separate you from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ, and in every peril repeat, "Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." What a glory to return in victory from such a battle! How blessed to die there as a martyr! Rejoice, brave athlete, if you live and conquer in the Lord; but glory and exult even more if you die and join your Lord. Life indeed is a fruitful thing and victory is glorious, but a holy death is more important than either. If they are blessed who die in the Lord, how much more are they who die for the Lord!

2. To be sure, precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his holy ones, whether they die in battle or in bed, but death in battle is more
precious as it is the more glorious. How secure is life when the conscience is unsullied! How secure, I say, is life when death is anticipated without fear; or rather when it is desired with feeling and embraced with reverence! How holy and secure this knighthood and how entirely free of the double risk run by those men who fight not for Christ! Whenever you go forth, O worldly warrior, you must fear lest the bodily death of your foe should mean your own spiritual death, or lest perhaps your body and soul together should be slain by him.

Indeed, danger or victory for a Christian depends on the dispositions of his heart and not on the fortunes of war. If he fights for a good reason, the issue of his fight can never be evil; and likewise the results can never be considered good if the reason were evil and the intentions perverse. If you happen to be killed while you are seeking only to kill another, you die a murderer. If you succeed, and by your will to overcome and to conquer you perchance kill a man, you live a murderer. Now it will not do to be a murderer, living or dead, victorious or vanquished. What an unhappy victory--to have conquered a man while yielding to vice, and to indulge in an empty glory at his fall when wrath and pride have gotten the better of you!

But what of those who kill neither in the heat of revenge nor in the swelling of pride, but simply in order to save themselves? Even this sort of victory I would not call good, since bodily death is really a lesser evil than spiritual death. The soul need not die when the body does. No, it is the soul which sins that shall die.

CHAPTER TWO

ON WORLDLY KNIGHTHOOD

What, then is the end or fruit of this worldly knighthood, or rather knavery, as I should call it? What if not the mortal sin of the victor and the eternal death of the vanquished? Well then, let me borrow a word from the Apostle and exhort him who plows, to plow in hope, and him who threshes, to do so in view of some fruit.

What then, O knights, is this monstrous error and what this unbearable urge which bids you fight with such pomp and labor, and all to no purpose except death and sin? You cover your horses with silk, and plume your armor with I know not what sort of rags; you paint your shields and your saddles; you adorn your bits and spurs with gold and silver and precious stones, and then in all this glory you rush to your ruin with fearful wrath and fearless folly. Are these the trappings of a warrior or are they not rather the trinkets of a woman? Do you think the swords of your foes will
be turned back by your gold, spare your jewels or be unable to pierce your silks?

As you yourselves have often certainly experienced, a warrior especially needs these three things—he must guard his person with strength, shrewdness and care; he must be free in his movements, and he must be quick to draw his sword. Then why do you blind yourselves with effeminate locks and trip yourselves up with long and full tunics, burying your tender, delicate hands in big cumbersome sleeves? Above all, there is that terrible insecurity of conscience, in spite of all your armor, since you have dared to undertake such a dangerous business on such slight and frivolous grounds. What else is the cause of wars and the root of disputes among you, except unreasonable flashes of anger, the thirst for empty glory, or the hankering after some earthly possessions? It certainly is not safe to kill or to be killed for such causes as these.

CHAPTER THREE

ON THE NEW KNIGHTHOOD

But the Knights of Christ may safely fight the battles of their Lord, fearing neither sin if they smite the enemy, nor danger at their own death; since to inflict death or to die for Christ is no sin, but rather, an abundant claim to glory. In the first case one gains for Christ, and in the second one gains Christ himself. The Lord freely accepts the death of the foe who has offended him, and yet more freely gives himself for the consolation of his fallen knight.

The knight of Christ, I say, may strike with confidence and die yet more confidently, for he serves Christ when he strikes, and serves himself when he falls. Neither does he bear the sword in vain, for he is God's minister, for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of the good. If he kills an evildoer, he is not a mankiller, but, if I may so put it, a killer of evil. He is evidently the avenger of Christ towards evildoers and he is rightly considered a defender of Christians. Should he be killed himself, we know that he has not perished, but has come safely into port. When he inflicts death it is to Christ's profit, and when he suffers death, it is for his own gain. The Christian glories in the death of the pagan, because Christ is glorified; while the death of the Christian gives occasion for the King to show his liberality in the rewarding of his knight. In the one case the just shall rejoice when he sees justice done, and in the other man shall say, truly there is a reward for the just; truly it is God who judges the earth.

I do not mean to say that the pagans are to be slaughtered when there is any other way to prevent them from harassing and persecuting the faithful, but only that it now seems better to destroy them than that the rod of
sinner be lifted over the lot of the just, and the righteous perhaps put forth their hands unto iniquity.

5. What then? If it is never permissible for a Christian to strike with the sword, why did the Savior's precursor bid the soldiers to be content with their pay, and not rather forbid them to follow this calling? But if it is permitted to all those so destined by God, as is indeed the case provided they have not embraced a higher calling, to whom, I ask, may it be allowed more rightly than to those whose hands and hearts hold for us Sion, the city of our strength?

Thus when the transgressors of divine law have been expelled, the righteous nation that keeps the truth may enter in security. Certainly it is proper that the nations who love war should be scattered, that those who trouble us should be cut off, and that all the workers of iniquity should be dispersed from the city of the Lord. They busy themselves to carry away the incalculable riches placed in Jerusalem by the Christian peoples, to profane the holy things and to possess the sanctuary of God as their heritage. Let both swords of the faithful fall upon the necks of the foe, in order to destroy every high thing exalting itself against the knowledge of God, which is the Christian faith, lest the Gentiles should then say, "Where is their God?"

6. Once they have been cast out, he shall return to his heritage and to his house, which aroused his anger in the Gospel, "Behold," he said, "your house is left to you desolate." He had complained through the Prophet: "I have left my house, I have forsaken my heritage," and he will fulfill that other prophecy: "The Lord has ransomed his people and delivered them. They shall come and exult on Mount Sion, and rejoice in the good things of the Lord."

Rejoice Jerusalem, and recognize now the time in which you are visited! Be glad and give praise together, wastes of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people. He has ransomed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm in the sight of all peoples. O virgin of Israel, you were fallen and there was none to raise you up. Arise now and shake off the dust, O virgin, captive daughter of Sion. Arise, I say, and stand on high. See the happiness which comes to you from your God. You will no longer be referred to as the forsaken one, nor your land any more termed a wilderness; for the Lord takes his delight in you, and your land shall be peopled. Raise your eyes, look about you and see; all these are gathered together and come to you. Here is the help sent to you from the Holy One! Through them is already fulfilled the ancient promise, "I will make you the pride of the ages, a joy from generation to generation. You will suck the milk of the nations and be nourished at the breasts of their
sovereignty." And again, "As a mother consoles her children, so will I console you, and in Jerusalem you will be comforted."

Do you not see how frequently these ancient witnesses foreshadowed the new knighthood? Truly, as we have heard, so we have now seen in the city of the Lord of armies. Of course we must not let these literal fulfillments blind us to the spiritual meaning of the texts, for we must live in eternal hope in spite of such temporal realizations of prophetic utterances. Otherwise the tangible would supplant the intangible, material poverty would threaten spiritual wealth and present possessions would forestall future fulfillment. Furthermore, the temporal glory of the earthly city does not eclipse the glory of its heavenly counterpart, but rather prepares for it, at least so long as we remember that the one is the figure of the other, and that it is the heavenly one which is our mother.

CHAPTER FOUR

ON THE LIFE STYLE OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE TEMPLE

And now as a role model, or at least for the shame of those knights of ours who are fighting for the devil rather than for God, we will briefly set forth the life and virtues of these cavaliers of Christ. Let us see how they conduct themselves at home as well as in battle, how they appear in public, and in what way the knight of God differs from the knight of the world.

In the first place, discipline is in no way lacking and obedience is never despised. As Scripture testifies, the undisciplined son shall perish and rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, to refuse obedience is like the crime of idolatry. Therefore they come and go at the bidding of their superior. They wear what he gives them, and do not presume to wear or to eat anything from another source. Thus they shun every excess in clothing and food and content themselves with what is necessary. They live as brothers in joyful and sober company, without wives or children. So that their evangelical perfection will lack nothing, they dwell united in one family with no personal property whatever, careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. You may say that the whole multitude has but one heart and one soul to the point that nobody follows his own will, but rather seeks to follow the commander.

They never sit in idleness or wander about aimlessly, but on the rare occasions when they are not on duty, they are always careful to earn their bread by repairing their worn armor and torn clothing, or simply by setting things to order. For the rest, they are guided by the common needs and by the orders of their master.
There is no distinction of persons among them, and deference is shown to merit rather than to noble blood. They rival one another in mutual consideration, and they carry one another's burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ. No inappropriate word, idle deed, unrestrained laugh, not even the slightest whisper or murmur is left uncorrected once it has been detected. They foreshow dice and chess, and abhor the chase; they take no delight in the ridiculous cruelty of falconry, as is the custom. As for jesters, magicians, bards, troubadours and jousters, they despise and reject them as so many vanities and unsound deceptions. Their hair is worn short, in conformity with the Apostle's saying, that it is shameful for a man to cultivate flowing locks. Indeed, they seldom wash and never set their hair—content to appear tousled and dusty, bearing the marks of the sun and of their armor.

8. When the battle is at hand, they arm themselves interiorly with faith and exteriorly with steel rather than decorate themselves with gold, since their business is to strike fear in the enemy rather than to incite his cupidity. They seek out horses which are strong and swift, rather than those which are brilliant and well-plumed, they set their minds on fighting to win rather than on parading for show. They think not of glory and seek to be formidable rather than flamboyant. At the same time, they are not quarrelsome, rash, or unduly hasty, but soberly, prudently and providently drawn up into orderly ranks, as we read of the fathers. Indeed, the true Israelite is a man of peace, even when he goes forth to battle.

Once he finds himself in the thick of battle, this knight sets aside his previous gentleness, as if to say, "Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord; am I not disgusted with your enemies?" These men at once fall violently upon the foe, regarding them as so many sheep. No matter how outnumbered they are, they never regard these as fierce barbarians or as awe-inspiring hordes. Nor do they presume on their own strength, but trust in the Lord of armies to grant them the victory. They are mindful of the words of Maccabees, "It is simple enough for a multitude to be vanquished by a handful. It makes no difference to the God of heaven whether he grants deliverance by the hands of few or many; for victory in war is not dependent on a big army, and bravery is the gift of heaven." On numerous occasions they had seen one man pursue a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.

Thus in a wonderous and unique manner they appear gentler than lambs, yet fiercer than lions. I do not know if it would be more appropriate to refer to them as monks or as soldiers, unless perhaps it would be better to recognize them as being both. Indeed they lack neither monastic meekness nor military might. What can we say of this, except that this has been done by the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes. These are the picked troops of God, whom he has recruited from the ends of the earth; the valiant men of
Israel chosen to guard well and faithfully that tomb which is the bed of the true Solomon, each man sword in hand, and superbly trained to war.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM

Their quarters indeed are in the very temple of Jerusalem, which is not as vast as the ancient masterpiece of Solomon, but is no less glorious. Truly all the magnificence of the first temple lay in perishable gold and silver, in polished stones and precious woods; whereas all the beauty and gracious charming adornment of its present counterpart is the religious fervor of its occupants and by their well-disciplined behavior. In the former, one could contemplate all sorts of beautiful colors, while in the latter one is able to venerate all sorts of virtues and good works. Indeed holiness is the fitting ornament for God's house. One is able to delight there in splendid merits rather than in shining marble, and to be captivated by pure hearts rather than by gilded paneling.

Of course the facade of this temple is adorned, but with weapons rather than with jewels, and in place of the ancient golden crowns, its walls are hung round about with shields. In place of candlesticks, censers and ewers, this house is well furnished with saddles, bits and lances. By all these signs our knights clearly show that they are animated by the same zeal for the house of God which of old passionately inflamed their leader himself when he armed his most holy hands, not indeed with a sword, but with a whip. Having fashioned this from some lengths of cord, he entered the temple and ejected the merchants, scattered the coins of the money changers, and overturned the chairs of the pigeon venders, considering it most unfitting to defile this house of prayer by such traffic.

Moved therefore by their King's example, his devoted soldiers consider that it is even more shameful and infinitely more intolerable for a holy place to be polluted by pagans than to be crowded with merchants. Once they have installed themselves in this holy house with their horses and their weapons, cleansed it and the other holy places of every un-Christian stain, and cast out the tyrannical horde, they occupy themselves day and night in both pious exercises and practical work. They are especially careful to honor the temple of God with zealous and sincere reverence, offering by their devout service, not the flesh of animals according to the ancient rites, but true peace offerings of brotherly love, devoted obedience and voluntary poverty.

10. These events at Jerusalem have shaken the world. The islands hearken, and the people from afar give ear. They swarm forth from East and West, as a flood stream bringing glory to the nations and a rushing river.
gladdening the city of God. What could be more profitable and pleasant to
behold than seeing such a multitude coming to reinforce the few? What, if
not the twofold joy of seeing the conversion of these former impious
rogues, sacrilegious thieves, murderers, perjurers and adulterers? A
twofold joy and a twofold benefit, since their countrymen are as glad to be
rid of them as their new comrades are to receive them. Both sides have
profited from this exchange, since the latter are strengthened and the
former are now left in peace. Thus Egypt rejoices in their conversion and
deptarture while Mount Sion rejoices and the daughters of Juda are glad to
acquire these new protectors. The former glory in being delivered from
their hands, while the latter have every reason to expect deliverance by
means of these same hands. The former gladly see their cruel despilers
depart, while the latter gladly welcome their faithful defenders; so that the
one is agreeably heartened, while the other is profitably abandoned.

This is the revenge which Christ contrives against his enemies, to triumph
powerfully and gloriously over them by their own means. Indeed, it is both
a happy and fitting thing that those who have so long fought against him
should at last fight for him. Thus he recruits his soldiers among his foes,
just as he once turned Saul the persecutor into Paul the preacher.
Therefore I am not surprised that, as our Savior himself has affirmed, the
court of heaven takes more joy in the conversion of one sinner than in the
virtues of many just men who have no need of conversion. Certainly the
conversion of so many sinners and evil doers will now do as much good as
their former misdeeds did harm.

11. Hail then, holy city, sanctified by the Most High for his own
tabernacle in order that such a generation might be saved in and through
you! Hail, city of the great King, source of so many joyous and unheard-of
marvels! Hail mistress of nations and queen of provinces, heritage of
patriarchs, mother of apostles and prophets, source of the faith and glory
of the Christian people! If God has permitted you to be so often besieged,
it has only been to furnish brave men an occasion for valor and
immortality.

Hail promised land, source of milk and honey for your ancient inhabitants,
now become the source of healing grace and vital sustenance for the whole
earth! Yes, I say, you are that good and excellent soil which received into
its fruitful depths the heavenly seed from the heart of the eternal Father.
What a rich harvest of martyrs you have produced from that heavenly
seed! Your fertile soil has not failed to furnish splendid examples of every
Christian virtue for the whole earth--some bearing fruit thirtyfold, some
sixty, and some a hundredfold. Therefore those who have seen you are
most happily filled with the great abundance of your sweetness and are
well nourished on your munificent bounty. Everywhere they go they
publish the fame of your great goodness and relate the splendors of your
glory to those who have never seen it, proclaiming the marvels accomplished in you even to the ends of the earth.

Indeed, glorious things are told of you, city of God! Now then we will set forth something of the delights in which you abound, for the praise and glory of your name.
William of Tyre: The Foundation of the Order of Knights Templar

In this same year, [1118] certain noble men of knightly rank, religious men, devoted to God and fearing him, bound themselves to Christ's service in the hands of the Lord Patriarch. They promised to live in perpetuity as regular canons, without possessions, under vows of chastity and obedience. Their foremost leaders were the venerable Hugh of Payens and Geoffrey of St. Omer. Since they had no church nor any fixed abode, the king, gave them for a time a dwelling place in the south wing of the palace, near the Lord's Temple. The canons of the Lord's Temple gave them, under certain conditions, a square near the palace which the canons possessed. This the knights used as a drill field. The Lord King and his noblemen and also the Lord Patriarch and the prelates of the church gave them benefices from their domains, some for a limited time and some in perpetuity. These were to provide the knights with food and clothing. Their primary duty, one which was enjoined upon them by the Lord Patriarch and the other bishops for the remission of sins, was that of protecting the roads and routes against the attacks of robbers and brigands. This they did especially in order to safeguard pilgrims.

For nine years after their founding, the knights wore secular clothing. They used such garments as the people, for their soul's salvation, gave them. In their ninth year there was held in France, at Troyes, a council at which the Lord Archbishops of Reims and Sens and their suffragans were present, as well as the Bishop of Albano, who was the legate of the apostolic see, and the Abbots of Citeaux, Clairvaux, Pontigny, with many others. This council, by command of the Lord Pope Honorius and the Lord Stephen, Patriarch of Jerusalem, established a rule for the knights and assigned them a white habit.

Although the knights now had been established for nine years, there were still only nine of them. From this time onward their numbers began to grow and their possessions began to multiply. Later, in Pope Eugene's time, it is said that both the knights and their humbler servants, called sergeants, began to affix crosses made of red cloth to their mantles, so as to distinguish themselves from others. They have now grown so great that there are in this Order today [William was writing c. 1170-74] about 300 knights who wear white mantles, in addition to the brothers, who are almost countless. They are said to have immense possessions both here and overseas, so that there is now not a province in the Christian world which has not bestowed upon the aforesaid brothers a portion of its goods. It is said today that their wealth is equal to the treasures of kings. Because they have a headquarters in the royal palace next to the Temple of the Lord, as we have said before, they are called the Brothers of the Militia of the Temple. Although they maintained their establishment honorably for a long time and fulfilled their vocation with sufficient prudence, later, because of the neglect of humility (which is known as the guardian of all virtues and which, since it sits in the lowest place, cannot fall), they with drew from the Patriarch of Jerusalem, by whom their Order was founded and from whom they received their first benefices and to whom they denied the obedience which their predecessors rendered. They have also taken away tithes and first fruits from God's churches, have disturbed their possessions, and have made themselves exceedingly troublesome.
Source:

After having told of the glories and beauties of Acre, I will now shortly tell you of its fall and ruin, and the cause of its loss, even as I heard the tale told by right truthful men, who well remembered it. While, then, the grand doings of which I have spoken were going on in Acre, at the instigation of the devil these arose a violent and hateful quarrel in Lombardy between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, which brought all evil upon the Christians. Those Lombards who dwelt at Acre took sides in this same quarrel, especially the Pisans and Genoese, both of whom had an exceedingly strong party in Acre. These men made treaties and truces with the Saracens, to the end that they might the better fight against one another within the city. When Pope Urban [note; Some confusion here - perhaps Pope Nicholas IV, 1288-92 is meant?] heard of this, he grieved for Christendom and for the Holy Land, and sent twelve thousand mercenary troops across the sea to help the Holy Land and Christendom. When these men came across the sea to Acre they did no good, but abode by day and by night in taverns and places of illrepute, took and plundered merchants and pilgrims in the public street, broke the treaty, and did much evil. Melot Sapheraph, Sultan of Babylon, an exceedingly wise man, most potent in arms and bold in action, when he heard of this, and knew of the hateful quarrels of the people of Acre, called together his counselors and held a parliament in Babylon, wherein he complained that the truces had frequently been broken and violated, to the prejudice of himself and his people. After a debate had been held upon this matter, he gathered together a mighty host, and reached the city of Acre without any resistance, because of their quarrels with one another, cutting down and wasting all the vineyards and fruit trees and all the gardens and orchards, which are most lovely thereabout. When the Master of the Templars, [William of Beaujeu] a very wise and brave knight, saw this, he feared that the fall of the city was at hand, because of the quarrels of the citizens. He took counsel with his brethren about how peace could be restored, and then went out to meet the Sultan, who was his own very especial friend, to ask him whether they could by any means repair the broken truce. He obtained these terms from the Sultan, to wit, that because of his love for the Sultan and the honor in which the Sultan held him, the broken truce might be restored by every man in Acre paying one Venetian penny. So the Master of the Templars was glad, and, departing from the Sultan, called together all the people and preached a sermon to them in the Church of St. Cross, setting forth how, by his prayers, he had prevailed upon the Sultan to grant that the broken treaty might be restored by a payment of one Venetian penny by each man, that therewith everything might be settled and quieted. He advised them by all means so to do, declaring that the quarrels of the citizens might bring a worse evil upon the city than this as indeed they did. But when the people heard this, they cried out with one voice that he was the betrayer of the city, and was guilty of death. The Master, when he heard this, left the church, hardly escaped alive from the hands of the people, and took back their
answer to the Sultan. When the Sultan heard this, knowing that, owing to the quarrels of the people, none of them would make any resistance, he pitched his tents, set up sixty machines, dug many mines beneath the city walls, and for forty days and nights, without any respite, assailed the city with fire, stones, and arrows, so that [the air] seemed to be stiff with arrows. I have heard a very honorable knight say that a lance which he was about to hurl from a tower among the Saracens was all notched with arrows before it left his hand. There were at that time in the Sultan's army six hundred thousand armed, divided into three companies; so one hundred thousand continually besieged the city, and when they were weary another hundred thousand took their place before the same, two hundred thousand stood before the gates of the city ready for battle, and the duty of the remaining two hundred thousand was to supply them with everything that they needed. The gates were never closed, nor was there an hour of the day without some hard fight being fought against the Saracens by the Templars or other brethren dwelling therein. But the numbers of the Saracens grew so fast that after one hundred thousand of them had been slain two hundred thousand came back. Yet, even against all this host, they would not have lost the city had they but helped one another faithfully; but when they were fighting without the city, one party would run away and leave the other to be slain, while within the city one party would not defend the castle or palace belonging to the other, but purposely let the other party's castles, palaces, and strong places be stormed and taken by the enemy, and each one knew and believed his own castle and place to be so strong that he cared not for any other's castle or strong place. During this confusion the masters and brethren of the Orders alone defended themselves, and fought unceasingly against the Saracens, until they were nearly all slain; indeed, the Master and brethren of the house of the Teutonic Order, together with their followers and friends, all fell dead at one and the same time. As this went on with many battles and thousands slain on either side, at last the fulfillment of their sins and the time of the fall of the city drew near; when the fortieth day of its siege was come, in the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and ninety-two, on the twelfth day of the month of May, the most noble and glorious city of Acre, the flower, chief and pride of all the cities of the East, was taken. The people of the other cities, to wit, Jaffa, Tyre, Sidon and Ascalon, when they heard this, left all their property behind and went to Cyprus. When first the Saracens took Acre they got in through a breach in the wall near the King of Jerusalem's castle, and when they were among the people of the city within, one party still would not help the other, but each defended his own castle and palace, and the Saracens had a much longer siege, and fought at much less advantage when they were within the city than when they were without, for it was wondrously fortified. Indeed, we read in the stories of the loss of Acre that because of the sins of the people thereof the four elements fought on the side of the Saracens. First the air became so thick, dark, and cloudy that, while one castle, palace, or strong place was being stormed or burned, men could hardly see in the other castles and palaces, until their castles and palaces were attacked, and then for the first time they would have willingly defended themselves, could they have come together. Fire fought against the city, for it consumed it. Earth fought against the city, for it drank up its blood. Water
also fought against the city, for it being the month of May, wherein the sea is
wont to be very calm, when the people of Acre plainly saw that because of their
sins and the darkening of the air they could not see their enemies, they fled to the
sea, desiring to sail to Cyprus, and whereas at first there was no wind at all at sea,
of a sudden so great a storm arose that no other ship, either great or small, could
come near the shore, and many who essayed to swim off to the ships were
drowned. Howbeit, more than one hundred thousand men escaped to Cyprus. I
have heard from a most honorable Lord, and from other truthful men who were
present, that more than five hundred most noble ladies and maidens, the daughters
of kings and princes, came down to the seashore, when the city was about to fall,
carrying with them all their jewels and ornaments of gold and precious stones, of
priceless value, in their bosoms, and cried aloud, whether there were any sailor
there who would take all their jewels and take whichever of them he chose to
wife, if only he would take them, even naked, to some safe land or island. A sailor
received them all into his ship, took them across to Cyprus, with all their goods,
for nothing, and went his way. But who he was, whence he came, or whither he
went, no man knows to this day. Very many other noble ladies and damsels were
drowned or slain. It would take long to tell what grief and anguish was there.

While the Saracens were within the city, but before they had taken it, fighting
from castle to castle, from one palace and strong place to another, so many men
perished on either side that they walked over their corpses as it were over a
bridge. When all the inner city was lost, all who still remained alive fled into the
exceeding strong castle of the Templars, which was straightway invested on all
sides by the Saracens; yet the Christians bravely defended it for two months, and
before it almost all the nobles and chiefs of the Sultan's army fell dead. For when
the city inside the walls was burned, yet the towers of the city, and the Templars'
castle, which was in the city, remained, and with these the people of the city kept
the Saracens within the city from getting out, as before they had hindered their
coming in, until of all the Saracens who had entered the city not one remained
alive, but all fell by fire or by the sword. When the Saracen nobles saw the others
lying dead, and themselves unable to escape from the city, they fled for refuge
into the mines which they had dug under the great tower, that they might make
their way through the wall and so get out. But the Templars and others who were
in the castle, seeing that they could not hurt the Saracens with stones and the like,
because of the mines wherein they were, undermined the great tower of the castle,
and flung it down upon the mines and the Saracens therein, and all perished alike.
When the other Saracens without the city saw that they had thus, as it were, failed
utterly, they treacherously made a truce with the Templars and Christians on the
condition that they should yield up the castle, taking all their goods with them,
and should destroy it, but should rebuild the city on certain terms, and dwell
therein in peace as heretofore. The Templars and Christians, believing this, gave
up the castle and marched out of it, and came down from the city towers. When
the Saracens had by this means got possession both of the castle and of the city
towers, they slew all the Christians alike, and led away the captives to Babylon.
Thus Acre has remained empty and deserted even to this day. In Acre and the
other places Dearly a hundred and six thousand men were slain or taken, and
more than two hundred thousand escaped from thence. Of the Saracens more than three hundred thousand were slain, as is well known even to this day. The Saracens spent forty days over the siege of the city, fifty days within the city before it was taken, and two months over the siege of the Templars' castle. When the glorious city of Acre thus fell, all the Eastern people sung of its fall in hymns of lamentation, such as they are wont to sing over the tombs of their dead, bewailing the beauty, the grandeur, and the glory of Acre even to this day. Since that day all Christian women, whether gentle or simple, who dwell along the eastern shore [of the Mediterranean] dress in black garments of mourning and woe for the lost grandeur of Acre, even to this day.

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THE BULL CLERICIS LAICOS, 1296

Bishop Boniface, servant of the servants of God, in perpetual memory of this matter. Antiquity teaches us that laymen are in a high degree hostile to the clergy, a fact which is also made clear by the experiences of the present times; in as much as, not content within their own bounds, they strive after what is forbidden and loose the reins in pursuit of what is unlawful. Nor have they the prudence to consider that all jurisdiction is denied to them over the clergy - over both the persons and goods of ecclesiastics. On the prelates of the churches and on ecclesiastical persons, monastic and secular, they impose heavy burdens, tax them and declare levies upon them. They exact and extort from them the half, the tenth or twentieth or some other portion or quota of their revenues or of their goods; and they attempt in many ways to subject them to slavery and reduce them to their goods; and they attempt in many ways to subject them to slavery and reduce them to their sway. And with grief do we mention it, some prelates of the churches and ecclesiastical persons, fearing where they ought not to fear, seeking a transitory peace, dreading more to offend the temporal than the eternal majesty, without obtaining the authority or permission the Apostolic chair, do acquiesce, not so much rashly as improvidently, in the abuses of such persons. We, therefore, wishing to put a stop to such iniquitous acts, by the counsel of our brothers, of the apostolic authority, have decreed: that whatever prelates, or ecclesiastical persons, monastic or secular, of whatever grade, condition or standing, shall pay, or promise, or agree to pay as levies or talliages to laymen the tenth, twentieth or hundredth part of their own and their churches' revenues or goods - or any other quantity, portion or quota of those same revenues or goods, of their estimated or of their real value—under the name of an aid, loan, subvention, subsidy or gift, or under any other name, manner or clever pretense, without the authority of that same chair.

Likewise emperors, kings, or princes, dukes, counts or barons, podestas, captains or officials or rectors - by whatever name they are called, whether of cities, castles, or any places whatever, wherever situated; and any other persons, of whatever pre-eminence, condition or standing who shall impose, exact or receive such payments, or shall any where arrest, seize or presume to take possession of the belongings of churches or ecclesiastical persons which are deposited in the sacred buildings, or shall order them to be arrested, seized or taken possession of, or shall receive them when taken possession of, seized or arrested—also all who shall knowingly give aid, counsel or favour in the aforesaid things, whether publicly or secretly:-shall incur, by the act itself the sentence of excommunication. Corporations, moreover, which shall be guilty in these matters, we place under the ecclesiastical interdict.
The prelates and above mentioned ecclesiastical persons we strictly command, by virtue of their obedience and under penalty of deposition, that they by no means acquiesce in such demands, with out express permission of the aforesaid chair; and that they pay nothing under pretext of any obligation, promise and confession made hitherto, or to be made hereafter before such constitution, notice or decree shall come to their notice; nor shall the aforesaid secular persons in any way receive anything. And if they shall-pay, or if the aforesaid persons shall receive, they shall be, by the act itself, under sentence of excommunication. From the aforesaid sentences of excommunication and interdict. moreover, no one shall be able to be absolved, except in the throes of death, without the authority and special permission of the apostolic chair; since it is our intention by no means to pass over with dissimulation so horrid an abuse of the secular powers. Notwithstanding any privileges whatever - under whatever tenor, form, or manner or conception of words that have been granted to emperors, kings, and other persons mentioned above; as to which privileges we will that, against what we have here laid down, they in no wise avail any person or persons. Let no man at all, then, infringe this page of our constitution, prohibition or decree, or, with rash daring, act counter to it; but if any one shall presume to act shall know that he is about to incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's on the sixth day before the Calends of March (Feb 25), in the second year of our pontificate.


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Clement, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. A voice was heard from on high, of lamentation and bitter weeping, for the time is coming, indeed has come, when the Lord shall complain through his prophet: This house has aroused my anger and wrath, so that I will remove it from my sight because of the evil of its sons, for they have provoked me to anger turning their backs to me, not their faces, and setting up their idols in the house in which my name is invoked, to defile it. They have built the high places of Baal in order to consecrate their sons to idols and demons. They have sinned deeply as in the days of Gibeah. When I learnt of such deeds of horror, at the dread of such notorious scandal -- for who ever heard of such infamy? who ever saw the like? -- I fell down at hearing it, I was dismayed at seeing it, my heart grew embittered and darkness overwhelmed me. Hark, a voice of the people from the city! a voice of the Lord rendering recompense to his enemies. The prophet is compelled to exclaim: Give them, Lord, a barren womb and dry breasts. Their worthlessness has been revealed because of their malice. Throw them out of your house, and let their roots dry up; let them not bear fruit, and let not this house be any more a stumbling block of bitterness or a thorn to hurt.

Not slight is the fornication of this house, immolating its sons, giving them up and consecrating them to demons and not to God, to gods whom they did not know. Therefore this house will be desolate and in disgrace, cursed and uninhabited, thrown into confusion and levelled to the dust, lowly, forsaken, inaccessible, spurned by the anger of the Lord, whom it has despised; let it not be lived in but reduced to a wilderness. Let everyone be astonished at it and hiss at all its wounds. For the Lord did not choose the people on account of the place, but the place on account of the people. Therefore the very place of the temple was made to share in the punishment of the people, as the Lord proclaimed openly to Solomon when he built the temple for him, to Solomon who was filled with wisdom like a river: But if your sons turn aside from me, not following and honouring me but going instead after strange gods and worshipping them, then I will cut them off from before me and expel them from the land which I have given to them; and the temple which I have consecrated to my name I will cast out of my sight, and it will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and shall hiss, and shall say, "Why has the Lord done thus to this temple and to this house?" And they will say: "Because they forsook the Lord their God who bought and redeemed them, and followed instead Baal and other gods, worshipping and serving them. Therefore the Lord has brought all this evil upon them".

Indeed a little while ago, about the time of our election as supreme pontiff before we came to Lyons for our coronation, and afterwards, both there and elsewhere, we received secret intimations against the master, preceptors and other brothers of the order of Knights Templar of Jerusalem and also against the order itself. These men had been posted in lands overseas for the defence of the patrimony of our lord Jesus Christ, and as
special warriors of the Catholic faith and outstanding defenders of the holy Land seemed to carry the chief burden of the said holy Land. For this reason the holy Roman church honoured these brothers and the order with her special support, armed them with the sign of the cross against Christ's enemies, paid them the highest tributes of her respect, and strengthened them with various exemptions and privileges; and they experienced in many and various ways her help and that of all faithful Christians with repeated gifts of property. Therefore it was against the lord Jesus Christ himself that they fell into the sin of impious apostasy, the abominable vice of idolatry, the deadly crime of the Sodomites, and various heresies. Yet it was not to be expected nor seemed credible that men so devout, who were outstanding often to the shedding of their blood for Christ and were seen repeatedly to expose their persons to the danger of death, who even more frequently gave great signs of their devotion both in divine worship and in fasting and other observances, should be so unmindful of their salvation as to commit such crimes. The order, moreover, had a good and holy beginning; it won the approval of the apostolic see. The rule, which is holy, reasonable and just, had the deserved sanction of this see. For all these reasons we were unwilling to lend our ears to insinuation and accusation against the Templars; we had been taught by our Lord's example and the words of canonical scripture.

Then came the intervention of our dear son in Christ, Philip, the illustrious king of France. The same crimes had been reported to him. He was not moved by greed. He had no intention of claiming or appropriating for himself anything from the Templars' property; rather, in his own kingdom he abandoned such claim and thereafter released entirely his hold on their goods. He was on fire with zeal for the orthodox faith, following in the well marked footsteps of his ancestors. He obtained as much information as he lawfully could. Then, in order to give us greater light on the subject, he sent us much valuable information through his envoys and letters. The scandal against the Templars themselves and their order in reference to the crimes already mentioned increased. There was even one of the knights, a man of noble blood and of no small reputation in the order, who testified secretly under oath in our presence, that at his reception the knight who received him suggested that he deny Christ, which he did, in the presence of certain other knights of the Temple, he furthermore spat on the cross held out to him by this knight who received him. He also said that he had seen the grand master, who is still alive, receive a certain knight in a chapter of the order held overseas. The reception took place in the same way, namely with the denial of Christ and the spitting on the cross, with quite two hundred brothers of the order being present. The witness also affirmed that he heard it said that this was the customary manner of receiving new members: at the suggestion of the person receiving the profession or his delegate, the person making profession denied Jesus Christ, and in abuse of Christ crucified spat upon the cross held out to him, and the two committed other unlawful acts contrary to Christian morality, as the witness himself then confessed in our presence.

We were duty-bound by our office to pay heed to the din of such grave and repeated accusations. When at last there came a general hue and cry with the clamorous
denunciations of the said king and of the dukes, counts, barons, other nobles, clergy and people of the kingdom of France, reaching us both directly and through agents and officials, we heard a doleful tale: that the master, preceptors and other brothers of the order as well as the order itself had been involved in these and other crimes. This seemed to be proved by many confessions, attestations and depositions of the master, of the visitor of France, and of many preceptors and brothers of the order, in the presence of many prelates and the inquisitor of heresy. These depositions were made in the kingdom of France with our authorisation, edited as public documents and shown to us and our brothers. Besides, the rumour and clamour had grown to such insistence that the hostility against both the order itself and the individual members of it could not be ignored without grave scandal nor be tolerated without imminent danger to the faith. Since we though unworthy, represent Christ on earth, we considered that we ought, following in his footsteps, to hold an inquiry. We called to our presence many of the preceptors, priests, knights and other brothers of the order who were of no small reputation. They took an oath, they were adjured urgently by the Father, Son and holy Spirit; we demanded, in virtue of holy obedience, invoking the divine judgment with the menace of an eternal malediction, that they tell the pure and simple truth. We pointed out that they were now in a safe and suitable place where they had nothing to fear in spite of the confessions they had made before others. We wished those confessions to be without prejudice to them. In this way we made our interrogation and examined as many as seventy-two, many of our brothers being present and following the proceedings attentively. We had the confessions taken down by notary and recorded as authentic documents in our presence and that of our brothers. After some days we had these confessions read in consistory in the presence of the knights concerned. Each was read a version in his own language; they stood by their confessions, expressly and spontaneously approving them as they had been read out.

After this, intending to make a personal inquiry with the grand master, the visitor of France and the principal preceptors of the order, we commanded that the grand master, the visitor of France and the chief preceptors of Outremer, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou be presented to us while we were at Poitiers. Some of them, however, were ill at the time and could not ride a horse nor conveniently be brought to our presence. We wished to know the truth of the whole matter and whether their confessions and depositions, which were said to have been made in the presence of the inquisitor of heresy in the kingdom of France and witnessed by certain public notaries and many other good men, and which were produced in public and shown to us and our brothers by the inquisitor, were true. We empowered and commanded our beloved sons Berengar, cardinal, then with the title of Nereus and Achilleus, now bishop of Frascati, and Stephen, cardinal priest with the title of saint Cyriacus at the Baths, and Landulf, cardinal deacon with the title of saint Angelo, in whose prudence, experience and loyalty we have the fullest confidence, to make a careful investigation with the grand master, visitor and preceptors, concerning the truth of the accusations against them and individual persons of the order and against the order itself. If there was evidence, it was to be brought to us; the confessions and depositions were to be taken down in writing by a public notary and presented to us. The cardinals were to grant absolution from the sentence of excommunication, according to the form of the church, to the master, visitor and
preceptors -- a sentence incurred if the accusations were true -- provided the accused humbly and devoutly requested absolution, as they ought to do.

The cardinals went to see the grand master, the visitor and the preceptors personally and explained the reason for their visit. Since these men and other Templars resident in the kingdom of France had been handed over to us because they would freely and without fear of anyone reveal the truth sincerely to the cardinals, the cardinals by our apostolic authority enjoined on them this duty of telling the truth. The master, the visitor and the preceptors of Normandy, Outremer, Aquitaine and Poitou, in the presence of the three cardinals, four notaries and many other men of good repute, took an oath on the holy gospels that they would tell the truth, plainly and fully. They deposed one by one, in the cardinals' presence, freely and spontaneously, without any compulsion or fear. They confessed among other things that they had denied Christ and spat upon the cross at their reception into the order of the Temple. Some of them added that they themselves had received many brothers using the same rite, namely with the denial of Christ and the spitting on the cross. There were even some who confessed certain other horrible crimes and immoral deeds, we say nothing more of these at present. The knights confessed also that the content of their confessions and depositions made a little while ago before the inquisitor was true. These confessions and depositions of the grand master, visitor and preceptors were edited as a public document by four notaries, the master and the others being present and also certain men of good repute. After some days, the confessions were read to the accused on the orders and in the presence of the cardinals; each knight received an account in his own language. They persisted in their confessions and approved them, expressly and spontaneously, as they had been read out to them. After these confessions and depositions, they asked from the cardinals absolution from the excommunication incurred by the above crimes; humbly and devoutly, on bended knee, with hands joined, they made their petition with many tears. Since the church never shuts her heart to the sinner who returns, the cardinals granted absolution by our authority in the customary form of the church to the master, visitor and preceptors on abjuration of their heresy. On their return to our presence, the cardinals presented to us the confessions and depositions of the master, visitor and preceptors in the form of a public document, as has been said. They also gave us a report on their dealings with these knights.

From these confessions, depositions and report we find that the master, the visitor and the preceptors of Outremer, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou have often committed grave offences, although some have erred less frequently than others. We considered that such dreadful crimes could not and should not go unpunished without insult to almighty God and to every Catholic. We decided on the advice of our brothers to hold an enquiry into the above crimes and transgressions. This would be carried out through the local ordinaries and other wise, trustworthy men delegated by us in the case of individual members of the order; and through certain prudent persons of our considered choice in the case of the order as a whole. After this, investigations were made both by the ordinaries and by our delegates into the allegations against individual members, and by the inquisitors appointed by us into those against the order itself, in every part of the
world where the brothers of the order have usually lived. Once made and sent to us for examination, these investigations were very carefully read and examined, some by us and our brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church others by many very learned, prudent, trustworthy and God-fearing men, zealous for and well-trained in the catholic faith, some being prelates and others not. This took place at Malaucene in the diocese of Vaison.

Later we came to Vienne where there were assembled already very many patriarchs, archbishops, selected bishops, exempt and non-exempt abbots, other prelates of churches, and procurators of absent prelates and of chapters, all present for the council we had summoned. In the first session we explained to them our reasons for calling the council. After this, because it was difficult indeed almost impossible, for the cardinals and all the prelates and procurators gathered for the council to meet in our presence in order to discuss how to proceed in the matter of the Templars, we gave orders as follows. Certain patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, exempt and non-exempt abbots, other prelates of churches, and procurators from all parts of Christendom, of every language nation and region, were concordantly chosen out of all the prelates and procurators at the council. The choice was made from those believed to be among the more skilful, discreet and apt for consultation on such an important affair and for discussing it with us and the above-mentioned cardinals. After this we had the attestations received during the inquiry read publicly in the presence of the prelates and procurators. This reading went on during several days, for as long as they wished to listen, in the place assigned for the council, namely the cathedral church. Afterwards the said attestations and the summaries made from them were considered and examined, not in a perfunctory manner but with great care, by many of our venerable brethren, by the patriarch of Aquileia, by archbishops and bishops of the present sacred council who were specially chosen and delegated for the purpose, and by those whom the whole council had chosen very carefully and earnestly.

We convoked therefore the said cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, the exempt and non-exempt abbots, and the other prelates and procurators elected by the council to consider this affair, and we asked them, in the course of a secret consultation in our presence, how we should proceed, taking special account of the fact that certain Templars were presenting themselves in defence of their order. The greater part of the cardinals and nearly the whole council, that is those who were elected by the whole council and were representing the whole council on this question, in short the great majority, indeed four-fifths among every nation taking part, were firmly convinced, and the said prelates and procurators advised accordingly, that the order should be given an opportunity to defend itself and that it could not be condemned, on the basis of the proof provided thus far, for the heresies that had been the subject of the inquiry, without offence to God and injustice. Certain others on the contrary said that the brothers should not be allowed to make a defence of their order and that we should not give permission for such a defence, for if a defence were allowed or given there would be danger to a settlement of the affair and no small prejudice to the interests of the holy Land. There would be dispute, delay and putting off a decision, many different reasons were mentioned. Indeed although legal process against the order up to now does not permit its
canonical condemnation as heretical by definitive sentence, the good name of the order has been largely taken away by the heresies attributed to it. Moreover, an almost indefinite number of individual members, among whom are the grand master the visitor of France and the chief preceptors, have been convicted of such heresies, errors and crimes through their spontaneous confessions. These confessions render the order very suspect, and the infamy and suspicion render it detestable to the holy church of God, to her prelates, to kings and other rulers, and to Catholics in general. It is also believed in all probability that from now on there will be found no good person who wishes to enter the order, and so it will be made useless to the church of God and the carrying on of the undertaking to the holy Land, for which service the knights had been destined. Furthermore, the putting off of a settlement or arrangement of this affair of the Templars, for which we had set ourselves a final decision or sentence to be promulgated in the present council, would lead in all probability to the total loss, destruction and dilapidation of the Templars' property. This has for long been given, bequeathed and granted by the faithful for the aid of the holy Land and to oppose the enemies of the christian faith.

There were therefore two opinions: some said that sentence should immediately be pronounced, condemning the order for the alleged crimes, and others objected that from the proceedings taken up to now the sentence of condemnation against the order could not justly be passed. After long and mature deliberation, having in mind God alone and the good of the holy Land without turning aside to right or to left, we elected to proceed by way of provision and ordinance, in this way scandal will be removed, perils avoided and property saved for the help of the holy Land. We have taken into account the disgrace, suspicion, vociferous reports and other attacks mentioned above against the order, also the secret reception into the order, and the divergence of many of the brothers from the general behaviour, way of life and morals of other Christians. We have noted here especially that when new members are received, they are made to swear not to reveal the manner of their reception to anyone and not to leave the order; this creates an unfavourable presumption. We observe in addition that the above have given rise to grave scandal against the order, scandal impossible to allay as long as the order continues to exist. We note also the danger to faith and to souls, the many horrible misdeeds of so many brothers of the order, and many other just reasons and causes, moving us to the following decision.

The majority of the cardinals and of those elected by the council, a proportion of more than four-fifths, have thought it better, more expedient and advantageous for God's honour and for the preservation of the christian faith, also for the aid of the holy Land and many other valid reasons, to suppress the order by way of ordinance and provision of the apostolic see, assigning the property to the use for which it was intended. Provision is also to be made for the members of the order who are still alive. This way has been found preferable to that of safeguarding the right of defence with the consequent postponement of judgment on the order. We observe also that in other cases the Roman church has suppressed other important orders for reasons of far less gravity than those mentioned above, with no fault on the part of the brethren. Therefore, with a sad heart, not by
definitive sentence, but by apostolic provision or ordinance, we suppress, with the approval of the sacred council, the order of Templars, and its rule, habit and name, by an inviolable and perpetual decree, and we entirely forbid that anyone from now on enter the order, or receive or wear its habit, or presume to behave as a Templar. If anyone acts otherwise, he incurs automatic excommunication. Furthermore, we reserve the persons and property for our disposition and that of the apostolic see. We intend with divine grace, before the end of the present sacred council, to make this disposition to the honour of God the exaltation of the christian faith and the welfare of the holy Land. We strictly forbid anyone, of whatever state or condition, to interfere in any way in this matter of the persons and property of the Templars. We forbid any action concerning them which would prejudice our arrangements and dispositions, or any innovation or tampering. We decree that from now on any attempt of this kind is null and void, whether it be made knowingly or in ignorance. Through this decree, however, we do not wish to derogate from any processes made or to be made concerning individual Templars by diocesan bishops and provincial councils, in conformity with what we have ordained at other times.

Given at Vienne on 22 March in the seventh year of our pontificate

Bibliography


Note on Primary Sources

The original source for each primary source is documented at the end of each document.

*In Praise of the New Knighthood, The Fall of Acre, The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, The Primitive Rule of the Templar, The Foundation of the Order of Knights Templar, Forgiveness of Sins for Those Who Dies in Battle with the Heathen, and Indulgence for Fighting the Heathen* were all located at:

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