



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

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Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Council of Vienne

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## INTRODUCTION



## Council of Vienne: 1311-1312 AD

The Council of Vienne was the fifteenth ecumenical council of the Catholic Church that met between 1311 and 1312 in Vienne. Its principal act was to withdraw papal support for the Knights Templar on the instigation of Philip IV of France, after the French monarch attacked Rome and killed Pope Boniface VIII (Attack at Agnani).

Pope Clement V caused the Council to meet by issuing the bulls *Faciens misericordiam* and *Regnans in coelis* in August 1308. The city chosen was Vienne, which is on the Rhône River in the south of modern France and at the time was outside the direct control of Philip IV. The neutral setting was intended to give the impression of independent action.

The main item on the agenda of the Council not only cited the Order of Knights Templar itself, but also "its lands", which indicated that further seizures of property were proposed. The agenda also invited archbishops and prelates to bring proposals for improvements in the life of the Church.

Clement was forced to adopt the expedient of suppressing the Order of Knights Templar, not by legal method (*de jure*), but on the grounds of the general welfare of the Church and by Apostolic ordinance (*per modum provisionis seu ordinationis apostolicae*). The Pope gave to the commission of cardinals for approval the bull to suppress the Templars in *Vox in excelso* (*A voice from on high*), dated March 22, 1312. This bull was approved by the Council on 3 April 1312 and the Pope announced a future crusade. Subsequent bulls confiscated Templar property. The fate of the Templars themselves was decided by the bull *Considerantes dudum* of May 6.



**Pope Clement V** (c. 1264 – April 20, 1314)

was born Raymond Bertrand de Got in Villandraut, Aquitaine. As the son of Bérard, Lord of Villandraut, Bertrand became canon and sacristan of the Cathedral of Saint-André in Bordeaux, then vicar-general to his brother Bérard de Got, the Archbishop of Lyon, who in 1294 was created Cardinal-Bishop of Albano. He was then made Bishop of St-Bertrand-de-Comminges, the cathedral church of which he was responsible for greatly enlarging and embellishing, and chaplain to Pope Boniface VIII, who made him Archbishop of Bordeaux in 1297.

Following the death of Benedict XI in 1304, there was a year's interregnum occasioned by disputes between the French and Italian cardinals, who were nearly equally balanced in the conclave, which had to be held at Perugia. Bertrand was elected Pope Clement V in June 1305 and crowned on November 14. Bertrand was neither Italian nor a cardinal, and his election might have been considered a gesture towards neutrality. The contemporary chronicler Giovanni Villani reports gossip that he had bound himself to King Philip IV of France by a formal agreement before his elevation, made at St. Jean d'Angély in Saintonge. Whether this was true or not, it is likely that the future pope had conditions laid down for him by the conclave of cardinals.

At Bordeaux, Bertrand was formally notified of his election and urged to come to Italy, but he selected Lyon for his coronation on November 14 1305, which was celebrated with magnificence and attended by Philip IV. Among his first acts was the creation of nine French cardinals. At Clement's coronation, the Duke of Brittany, John II, was leading the Pope's horse through the crowd during the celebrations. So many spectators had piled atop the walls that one of the walls crumbled and collapsed on top of the Duke, who died four days later.

Almost at once King Philip demanded from the new pope a formal condemnation of the memory of Boniface VIII; only thus could the royal hate be placated. The king wished the name of Boniface stricken from the list of popes as a heretic, his bones disinterred, burned, and the ashes scattered to the winds. This odious and disgraceful step Clement sought to avert, partly by delay, partly by new favors to the king; he renewed the absolution granted the king by Benedict XI, created nine French cardinals out of a group of ten, restored to the Colonna cardinals their places in the Sacred College, and accorded the king titles of church property for five years.

Finally, he withdrew the Bull "Clericis Laicos", though not the earlier legislation on which it was based, and declared that the doctrinal Bull "Unam Sanctam" affected in no disadvantageous manner the meritorious French king, and implied for him and his kingdom no greater degree of subjection to the papal see than formerly existed.

The pope was also helpful to Charles of Valois, the king's brother, and pretender to the imperial throne of Constantinople, by granting him a two years' tithe of church revenues; Clement hoped that a crusade operating from a reconquered Constantinople would be successful. In May, 1307, at Poitiers, where peace was made between England and France, Philip again insisted on a canonical process for condemnation of the memory of Boniface VIII, as a heretic, a blasphemer, an immoral priest, etc. Eventually, the pope made answer that so grave a matter could

not be settled outside of a general council, and the king for a while seemed satisfied with this solution. Nevertheless, he returned frequently and urgently to his proposition. It was in vain that the pope exhibited a willingness to sacrifice the Templars (see below); the merciless king, sure of his power, pressed for the opening of this unique trial, unheard of since the time of Pope Formosus. Clement had to yield, and designated 2 February, 1309, as the date, and Avignon as the place for the trial of his dead predecessor on the shameful charges so long comported about Europe by the Colonna cardinals and their faction.

In the document (citation) that called (September 13, 1309) for the witnesses, Clement expressed his personal conviction of the innocence of Boniface, at the same time his resolution to satisfy the king. Though the pope had soon (February 2, 1310) to protest against a false interpretation of his own words, the process was really begun in a consistory of March 16, 1310, at Avignon. Much delay followed, on one side and the other, apropos chiefly of methods of procedure. Early in 1311, witnesses were examined outside of Avignon, in France, and in Italy, but by French commissaries and mostly on the above-mentioned charges of the Colonna.

Finally, in February, 1311, the king wrote to Clement abandoning the process to the future council (of Vienne) or to the pope's own action, and promising to cause the withdrawal of the charges; at the same time he protested that his intentions had been pure. One price of these welcome concessions was a formal declaration by Pope Clement (April 27, 1311) of the king's innocence and that of his friends; these representatives of France, the "Israel of the New Alliance", had acted, said the pope, in good faith and with a pure zeal, nor should they fear in the future any canonical detriment from the events of Anagni. William Nogaret was accepted, but on his protestation of innocence, and at the intercession of Philip, a penance was imposed on him and he too received absolution. Only those who detained ecclesiastical property were finally excluded from pardon.

The religious zeal of Philip was again acknowledged; all papal acts detrimental to him and his kingdom since November, 1302, were rescinded; the erasures are yet visible in the "Regesta" of Boniface VIII, in the Vatican Archives. This painful situation was closed for Clement V by the Council of Vienne (October 16, 1311), most of whose members were personally favorable to Boniface. It is not certain that the council took up formally the question of the guilt or innocence of Boniface. In their present shape the official Acts of the council are silent, nor do all contemporary writers mention it as a fact. It is true that Giovanni Villani describes Philip and his counsellors as urgent for the condemnation of Boniface by the council, but, he says, the memory of the pope was formally purged from all adverse charges by three cardinals and several jurists; moreover, three Catalonian knights offered to defend with their swords the good name of the Gaetani pope against all comers, whereupon the king yielded, and demanded only that he be declared guiltless of any responsibility for the turn affairs had taken.

With the death of his personal enemies, opposition to Boniface diminished, and his legitimacy was no longer denied even in France.

## **Clement V and the Templars**

Since the final expulsion (1291) of the crusading forces from the Holy Land, the ecclesiastico-military orders in Europe had aroused much adverse criticism, partly because to their jealousies (Templars, Hospitallers or Knights of St. John, Teutonic Order) was attributed the humiliating defeat, partly because of the vast wealth they had acquired in their short existence. The Templars were the richest. Their fortress-like monasteries, known as Temples, arose in every European land, and by the end of the thirteenth century sheltered the chief banking-system of Europe; the knights were trusted by popes and kings and by persons of wealth because of their uprightness, the good management of their affairs, and their solid credit based on the countless estates of the order and its widespread financial relations.

Already before the accession of Pope Clement, their status was growing perilous; apart from the envy aroused by their riches, accusations of pride, exclusiveness, usurpation of episcopal rights, etc. were raised against them. They had resisted several attempts to unite their order with the Hospitallers, and while it is no longer easy to fix the degree of their popularity with the common people, it is certain that in many quarters of Europe they had aroused the cupidity of princes and the jealousy of many higher ecclesiastics, especially in France; without the co-operation of the latter they could never have fallen in so tragic a manner.

In the first year of the pontificate of Clement V the French king began to demand from the pope the suppression of this ecclesiastical order and to set afoot a campaign of violence and calumny such as had so far succeeded in the case of Boniface VIII. If the pope, as was naturally to be feared, refused finally to yield in the matter of the process against his predecessor's memory, he would surely be glad to buy relief with the sacrifice of the Templars.

Owing to the weakness and irresolution of Pope Clement, the royal plan succeeded. After an unsuccessful attempt of the pope (in August, 1307) to unite the Templars and the Hospitallers, he yielded to the demands of King Philip and ordered an investigation of the order, against which the king brought charges of heresy (renunciation of Christ, immorality, idolatry, contempt of the Mass, denial of the sacraments, etc.).

Philip, however, did not wait for the ordinary operation of the Inquisition, but, with the aid of his confessor, Guillaume de Paris (the inquisitor of France), and his clever, unscrupulous jurists (Nogaret, de Plaisians, Enguerrand de Marigny) struck suddenly at the whole order, October 12, 1307, by the arrest at Paris of Jacques de Molay, the Grand Commander, and one hundred and forty knights, followed by the inquisitor's mandate to arrest all other members throughout France, and by royal sequestration of the property of the order. Public opinion was cunningly and

successfully forestalled by the aforesaid jurists. It was also falsely made to appear that the pope approved, or was consentingly aware, of the royal action, while the co-operation of French inquisitors and bishops put the seal of ecclesiastical approval on an act that was certainly so far one of gross injustice.

While Philip invited the other princes of Europe to follow his example, Clement V protested (October 27) against the royal usurpation of the papal authority, demanded the transfer to his own custody of the prisoners and their property, and suspended the inquisitorial authority of the king's ecclesiastic and the French bishops.

Philip made an apparent submission, but in the meantime Clement had issued another Bull (November 22) commanding an investigation of the anti-Templar charges in all European countries. (It may be said at once that the results were generally favorable to the order; nowhere, given the lack of torture, were confessions obtained like those secured in France.) The feeble efforts of Clement to obtain for the order strict canonical justice (he was himself an excellent canonist) were counteracted by the new Bull that dignified and seemed to confirm the charges of the French king, neither then nor later supported by any material evidence or documents outside of his own suborned witnesses and the confessions of the prisoners, obtained by torture or by other dubious methods of their jailers, none of whom dared resist the well-known will of Philip.

The alleged secret Rule of the Templars, authorizing the aforesaid charges, was never produced. In the meantime William Nogaret had been busy defaming Pope Clement, threatening him with charges not unlike those pending against Boniface VIII, and working up successfully an anti-Templar public opinion against the next meeting (May, 1308) of the States-General. In July of that year it was agreed between the pope and the king that the guilt or innocence of the order itself should be separated from that of its individual (French) members. The former was reserved to a general council, soon to be

convoked at Vienne in Southern France, and to prepare evidence for which, apart from the examinations now going on through Europe, and a hearing before the pope of seventy-two members of the order brought from the prisons of Philip (all of whom confessed themselves guilty of heresy and prayed for absolution), there were appointed various special commissions, the most important of which began its sessions at Paris in August, 1309. Its members, acting in the name and with the authority of the pope, were opposed to the use of torture, hence before them hundreds of knights maintained freely the innocence of the order, while many of those who had formerly yielded to the diocesan inquisitors now retracted their avowals as contrary to truth.

When Nogaret and de Plaisians saw the probable outcome of the hearings before the papal commissions, they precipitated matters, caused the Archbishop of Sens (brother of Enguerrand de Marigny) to call a provincial council (Sens was then metropolitan of Paris and seat of the local inquisition tribunal), at which were condemned, as relapsed heretics, fifty-four knights who had recently withdrawn before the papal commissioners their former confessions on the plea that they had been given under torture and were quite false. That same day (May 12, 1310), all these knights were publicly burned at Paris outside the Porte St. Antoine. To the end all protested their innocence.

There could no longer be any question of liberty of defense; the papal commission at Paris suspended its sessions for six months, and when it met again found before it only knights who had confessed the crimes they were charged with and had been reconciled by the local inquisitors. The fate of the Templars was finally sealed at the Council of Vienne (opened October 16, 1311). The majority of its three hundred members were opposed to the abolition of the order, believing the alleged crimes unproven, but the king was urgent, appeared in person at the council, and finally obtained from Clement V the practical execution of his will.

At the second session of the council, in presence of the king and his three sons, was read the Bull "Vox in excelsis", dated March 22, 1312, in which the pope said that though he had no sufficient reasons for a formal condemnation of the order, nevertheless, because of the common weal, the hatred borne them by the King of France, the scandalous nature of their trial, and the probable dilapidation of the order's property in every Christian land, he suppressed it by virtue of his sovereign power, and not by any definitive sentence.

By another Bull of May 2 he vested in the Hospitallers the title to the property of the suppressed order. In one way or another, however, Philip managed to become the chief legate of its great wealth in France. As to the Templars themselves, those who continued to maintain their confessions were set free; those who withdrew them were considered relapsed heretics and were dealt with as such by the tribunals of the Inquisition.

It was only in 1314 that the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay and Geoffroy de Charnay, Grand Preceptor of Normandy, reserved to the judgment of the pope, were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Thereupon they proclaimed the falsity of their confessions, and accused themselves of cowardice in betraying their order to save their lives. They were at once declared relapsed heretics, turned over to the secular arm by the ecclesiastical authority, and were burned that same day (March 18, 1314).

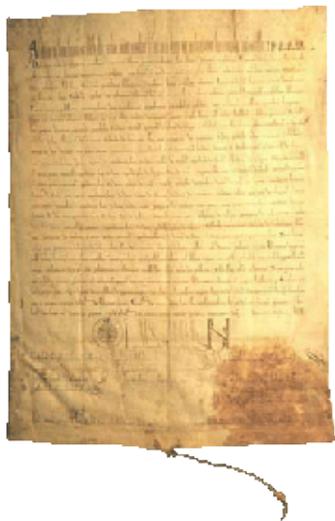
Of Pope Clement it may be said that the few measures of equity that appear in the course of this great crime were owing to him; unfortunately his sense of justice and his respect for the law were counterbalanced by a weak and vacillating character, to which perhaps his feeble and uncertain health contributed.

Some think he was convinced of the Templars' guilt, especially after so many of the chief members had admitted it to himself; they explain thus his recommendation of the use of torture,

also his toleration of the king's suppression of all proper liberty of defense on the part of the accused. Others believe that he feared for himself the fate of Boniface VIII, whose cruel enemy, William Nogaret, still lived, attorney-general of Philip, skilled in legal violence, and emboldened by a long career of successful infamy.

His strongest motive was, in all probability, anxiety to save the memory of Boniface VIII from the injustice of a formal condemnation which the malice of Nogaret and the cold vindictiveness of Philip would have insisted on, had not the rich prey of the Temple been thrown to them; to stand for both with Apostolic courage might have meant intolerable consequences, not only personal indignities, but in the end the graver evil of schism under conditions peculiarly unfavorable for the papacy.

Clement died on April 20, 1314. According to one account, while his body was lying in state, a thunderstorm arose during the night and lightning struck the church where his body lay, setting it on fire. The fire was so intense that by the time it was extinguished, the Pope's body had been all but destroyed. He was buried at the collegiate church in Uzeste close to his birthplace in Villandraut as laid down in his will.



### *Vox in excelso* (Voice from on high)

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 from the temple! The 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 honoring 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 defense 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 honored 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 authorization, edited as public documents and shown to us and our brothers. Besides, the rumor and clamor 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 skillful, 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 defense 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 defense of their order and that we should not give permission for such a defense, for if a defense 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 behavior, 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 unfavorable 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 honor 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 defense 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 honor 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. Let nobody therefore ... If anyone ...

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



### ***Ad providam*** (To provide)

At the council of Vienne, Clement V ruled in the bull *Ad providam* (1312) that only the pope could reassign the order of the Temple's lands because it was an exempt order. Therefore, in accordance with canon law, Clement gave all the properties the Templars had at the time of their arrest to the order of the Hospital, because the original donors had given the property to the Templars to subsidize their work in the Holy Land. Now that the Templars were unable to fulfil the wishes of the donors, these gifts had to be returned or reallocated to an equivalent order. The Hospitallers' recent capture of Rhodes, Clement stated, demonstrated that they continued to fight across the seas in defense of the faith. Therefore the Hospitallers would use the former Templar lands for recuperation of the Holy Land do the work of the Templars in these possessions. Clement only exempted the Templar properties in the kingdoms of Castile, Aragon, Portugal, and Majorca, because their rulers had petitioned the pope to give the lands to the native military religious orders or to establish new ones. Although Clement acknowledged the assertions of Iberian rulers that they fought the Muslims within the peninsula, at the same time *Ad providam* ignored Philip the Fair's similar request to create a new military religious order in France.

For an everlasting record. It belongs to Christ's vicar, exercising his vigilant care from the apostolic watch-tower, to judge the changing conditions of the times, to examine the causes of the affairs which crop up and to observe the characters of the people concerned. In this way he can give due consideration to each affair and act opportunely; he can tear out the thistles of vice from the field of the Lord so that virtue may increase; and he can remove the thorns of false dealing so as to plant rather than to destroy. He transfers slips dedicated to God into the places left empty by the eradication of the harmful thistles. By thus transferring and uniting in a provident and profitable way, he brings a joy greater than the harm he has caused to the people uprooted; true justice has compassion for sorrow. By enduring the harm and replacing it profitably, he increases the growth of the virtues and rebuilds what has been destroyed with something better.

A little while ago we suppressed definitively and perpetually the order of the Knights Templar of Jerusalem because of the abominable, even unspeakable, deeds of its master, brothers and other persons of the order in all parts of the world. These men were spattered with indecent errors and crimes, with depravity- they were blemished and stained. We are silent here as to detail because the memory is so sad and unclean. With the approval of the sacred council we abolished the constitution of the order, its habit and name, not without bitterness of heart. We did this not by definitive sentence, since this would be unlawful according to the inquiries and processes carried out, but by apostolic provision or ordinance. We issued a strict prohibition that nobody might henceforth enter the order or wear its habit or presume to behave as a Templar. Anyone doing otherwise incurred automatic excommunication. We commanded, by our apostolic authority, that all the property of the order be left to the judgment and disposition of the apostolic see. We strictly forbade anyone, of whatever state or condition, to interfere in any way regarding the persons or property of the order or to act in prejudice of the direction or disposition of the apostolic see in this matter, or to alter or even to tamper; we decreed all attempts of this kind to be henceforth null and void, whether made knowingly or in ignorance.

Afterwards we took care lest the said property, which over a long period had been given, bequeathed, granted and acquired from the worshippers of Christ for the help of the holy Land and to assail the enemies of the Christian faith, should be left without management and perish as belonging to nobody or be used in ways other than those intended by the pious devotion of the faithful. There was the further danger that tardiness in our arrangements and dispositions might lead to destruction or dilapidation. We therefore held difficult, lengthy and varied consultations and discussions with our brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, with patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and prelates, with certain outstanding and distinguished persons, and with the procurators at the council of the chapters, convents, churches and monasteries, and of the remaining absent prelates, in order that, through this painstaking deliberation, a wholesome and beneficial disposal of the said property might be made to the honor of God, the increase of the faith, the exaltation of the church, the help of the holy Land, and the salvation and peace of the faithful. After especially long carefully thought out, deliberate and complete consultations, for many just reasons, we and the said fathers and patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, other prelates, and the outstanding and distinguished persons, then present at the council, finally came to a conclusion. The property should become forever that of the order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, of the Hospital itself and of our beloved sons the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital and order of these same men, who as athletes of the Lord expose themselves to the danger of death for the defiance of the faith, bearing heavy and perilous losses in lands overseas.

We have observed with the fullness of sincere charity that this order of the Hospital and the Hospital itself is one of the bodies in which religious observance flourishes. Factual evidence tells us that divine worship is fervent, works of piety and mercy are practiced with great earnestness, the brothers of the Hospital despise the attractions of the world and are devoted servants of the most High. As fearless warriors of Christ they are ardent in their efforts to recover the holy Land, despising all human perils. We bear in mind also that the more plentifully they are

supplied with means, the more will the energy of the master and brothers of the order and Hospital grow, their ardor increase and their bravery be strengthened to repel the insults offered to our Redeemer and to crush the enemies of the faith. They will be able to carry more lightly and easily the burdens demanded in the execution of such an enterprise. They will therefore, not unworthily, be made more watchful and apply themselves with greater zeal.

In order that we may grant them increased support, we bestow on them, with the approval of the sacred council, the house itself of the Knights Templar and the other houses, churches, chapels, oratories, cities, castles, towns, lands, granges, places, possessions, jurisdictions, revenues, rights, all the other property, whether immovable, movable or self-moving, and all the members together with their rights and belongings, both beyond and on this side of the sea, in each and every part of the world, at the time when the master himself and some brothers of the order were arrested as a body in the kingdom of France, namely in October 1308. The gift is to include everything which the Templars had, held or possessed of themselves or through others, or which belonged to the said house and order of Knights Templar, or to the master and brothers of the order as also the titles, actions and rights which at the time of their arrest belonged in any way to the house, order or persons of the order of Knights Templar, or could belong to them, against whomsoever of whatever dignity, state or condition, with all the privileges, indults, immunities and liberties with which the said master and brothers of the house and order of Knights Templar, and the house and order itself, had been legitimately endowed by the apostolic see or by catholic emperors, kings and princes, or by other members of the faithful, or in any other way. All this we present, grant, unite, incorporate, apply and annex in perpetuity, by the fullness of our apostolic power, to the said order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem and to the Hospital itself.

We exempt the property of the said former order of Knights Templar in the kingdoms and lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings of Castile, Aragon, Portugal and Majorca, outside the kingdom of France. We reserve this property,

from the said gift, grant, union, application, incorporation and annexation, to the disposal and regulation of the apostolic see. We wish the prohibition made a little while ago by other proceedings of ours to remain in full force. Nobody of any state or condition may intervene in any way as regards these persons and property in prejudice to the regulation or disposition of the apostolic see. We wish that our decree concerning these persons and property in the kingdoms and lands of the above kings should remain in full force until the apostolic see makes another arrangement.

Occupiers and unlawful detainers of the property, irrespective of state, condition, eminence or dignity, even if this is pontifical, imperial or royal, unless they abandon the property within a month after it is called for by the master and brothers of the Hospital, or by any of them, or by their procurators [ . . . ]. The property must be fully and freely restored to the order of Hospitallers and to the said Hospital, or to the master, priors, preceptors or brothers of the said Hospital, in any regions or provinces, or to any of them individually, or to their procurator or procurators, in the name of the said order of Hospitallers, even if the priors, preceptors and brothers and their procurators or any one of them have no special mandate from the master of the Hospital, provided that the procurators hold or show a special commission from the priors and preceptors or from any one of them, in the provinces or regions in which these priors and preceptors have been delegated. The priors, preceptors and brothers are obliged to give a full reckoning to the master concerning everything: conduct, actions, receipts and negotiations. The procurators are to render a similar account to the priors and preceptors, and to each one of them, by whom they were delegated. All who have knowingly given counsel, aid or favor to the occupiers and detainers mentioned above concerning such occupation or detention, publicly or secretly, lie under excommunication. Chapters, colleges or governing bodies of churches and monasteries, and the corporations of cities, castles, towns and other places, as well as the cities, castles, towns and other places themselves which were at fault in this, and the cities, castles and places in which the detainers and occupiers hold temporal lordship, if such temporal lords place

obstacles to the giving up of the property and its restoration to the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital, not desisting from such conduct within a month after the property is called for, are automatically laid under interdict. They cannot be absolved from this until they offer full satisfaction. Moreover the occupiers and detainers and those who have given them counsel, aid or favor, whether individuals or the chapters, colleges or governing bodies of churches or monasteries, as also the corporations of cities, castles, lands or other places, incur, in addition to the above-mentioned penalties, automatic deprivation of everything they hold as fiefs from the Roman or other churches. These fiefs are to revert freely without opposition to the churches concerned, and the prelates or rulers of those churches may dispose of the fiefs at will, as they judge will be to the advantage of the churches. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone . . .

**Given at Vienne on 2 May in the seventh year of our pontificate.**

## *Considerantes dudum*

(Considering time)

This bull repeats the reasons for suppression of the Templar and outlines the disposition for members of the Knights Templar by decreeing that those Templars who have been legally acquitted, or will be acquitted in the future, shall be supplied with the goods that had belonged to the Templar Order. It also stated that any fugitive member should appear in person within a year or face excommunication and be condemned as heretics.

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Clement, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for assurance in the present and for future record. The inquiries and various processes commissioned not long ago by the apostolic see through all parts of Christendom against the former order of Knights Templar and its individual members, concerning accusation of heresies, brought them into grave disrepute. In particular there was the accusation that the brothers of the former order at, and sometimes after, their reception denied Christ and spat in his dishonor on a cross held out to them, and sometimes trampled it underfoot. The master of the order, the visitor of France, the chief preceptors and many brothers of the order confessed at their trial to these heresies. The confessions cast grave suspicion on the order. In addition, the widespread disgrace, the strong suspicion, and the clamorous charges of the prelates, dukes, communes, barons and counts of the kingdom of France also gave grave scandal which could hardly be allayed without suppression of the order. There were many other just reasons mentioned in the legal process which influenced us. We therefore, with the approval of the sacred council, our heart filled with great bitterness and sorrow, suppressed and abolished the said former order of the Temple and its constitution, habit and name and we forbade its restoration. We did this, not by definitive sentence since we could not

legally do this according to the inquiries and processes mentioned above, but by apostolic provision and ordinance. We reserved the persons and property of the order to the decision and disposal of the apostolic see. In doing so, however, we had no intention of derogating from the processes made or to be made concerning individual persons or brothers of the said former order by diocesan bishops and provincial councils, as we have ordained elsewhere.

Now therefore we wish to provide more suitably for individual persons or brothers. We reserved lately for our own disposition the master of the former order, the visitor of France and the chief preceptors of the holy Land, Normandy, Aquitaine, Poitou and the province of Provence, as well as brother Oliver de Penne, a knight of the said former order, whom henceforth we reserve to the disposition of the apostolic see. We have decided that all the other brothers should be left to the judgment and disposition of provincial councils, as we have indeed done until now. We wish judgment to be given by these councils in accordance with the different cases of individuals. Thus those who have been legally acquitted, or will be acquitted in the future, shall be supplied with the goods of the former order whereby they can live as becomes their state. With those who have confessed concerning the above errors, we wish the provincial councils prudently to temper justice with mercy: the situation of these men and the extent of their confessions are to be duly weighed. With regard to those who are impenitent and have relapsed, if any — which God forbid — be found among them, justice and canonical censure are to be observed. As for those who even when questioned have denied their involvement in the above errors, the councils are to observe justice and equity according to the canons. With the approval of the sacred council, we hereby cite those who have not yet been questioned and who are not held by the power or authority of the church but are perhaps fugitives, to appear in

person before their diocesans within a year from today. This we assign them as a precise and final limit. They are to undergo an examination by their diocesans, receiving a just judgment from the said councils according to their deserts. Great mercy however is to be shown and observed both to these last and to those previously mentioned, except the relapsed and impenitent. They should also be provided from the property of the order with the necessities of life; all the brothers of the former order, whenever they return to the obedience of the church and as long as they persist in that obedience, shall be maintained as becomes the circumstances of their state. All of them shall be placed in houses of the former order or in monasteries of other religious, at the expense however of the former order itself according to the judgment of the said provincial councils; but many of them shall not be placed together at the same time in one house or monastery.

We order also and strictly command all those with whom and by whom the brothers of the former order are detained, to surrender them freely whenever required to do so by the metropolitans and the ordinaries of the brothers. If within the year those cited do not appear before the diocesans, as stated above, they incur automatically sentence of excommunication; and because in a case especially concerning the faith, contumacy adds strong presumption to suspicion, the contumacious who stubbornly remain excommunicate for a year are henceforth to be condemned as heretics. This citation of ours is made of set purpose and we wish the brothers to be obliged by it as if they had received a special citation personally, for as vagabonds they can in no way be found or at least not easily. In order, then, to prevent all subterfuge, we publish our edict in the present sacred council. And in order to bring this citation more assuredly to the knowledge of the brothers themselves and to the general knowledge of all, we shall have papers or parchments containing the citation and sealed

with our bull hung or fastened to the doors of the principal church of Vienne. This will secure a loud and widespread publication of this citation, so that the brothers whom the citation concerns can claim no excuse that the citation has not reached them or that they were ignorant of it, since it is improbable that what is so openly made public to all can remain unknown or hidden to them. Furthermore, in order to observe greater precaution, we order the local diocesans to make public this edict of our citation, as soon as conveniently possible, in their cathedrals and in the churches at the most conspicuous places in their dioceses.

**Given at Vienne on 6 May 1312 in the seventh year.**

## *Nuper in concilio*

(Recently in council)

When the Templars were first suppressed, *Pastoralis praeeminentiae* ordered that the Templar property should be confiscated and this bull was the order of the Papacy to turn that property over to the Hospitallers. This bull also continued to give some property back to the Templars who were acquitted.

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To all the administrators and guardians of the property of the former house and order of the Knights Templar, delegated by apostolic and any other authority. Recently we held, as the Lord so disposed, a general council at Vienne. There we gave long and careful consideration to the disposal of the former house and order of the Knights Templar. We thought it more acceptable to the most High, more honorable to those who worship in the true faith, and more useful for the aid of the holy Land, to grant this property to the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, rather than to give it or even attach it to a new order to be created. There were some, however, who asserted that it would be better to confer the property on an order to be newly created than to attach it to the order of the Hospital, and so we were unable to obtain the result we hoped for. At last, however, by God's favor, on 2 May of this present month, with the approval of the sacred council, we judged that the property should be granted and attached and even united to the said Hospital or order. We made an exception, for certain reasons, of the Templars' property in the kingdoms and lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings . . . of Castile, . . . of Aragon, . . . of Portugal, and . . . of Majorca', outside the kingdom of France. We reserved this property for our disposition and that of the apostolic see, until some other arrangement be made by us and the apostolic see for its use to aid the holy Land.

We therefore strictly command all of you, by apostolic ordinance, to restore in full, in the name of the said Hospital and order, this property with the revenue gathered from it, after all expenses have been paid, to the master and brothers of the

Hospital, or to restore individual items to the said Hospital's individual priors or preceptors of the provinces or cities or dioceses or places in which the property lies, or to the procurator or procurators of one or more of them, according to the terms of your commission, within a month of being so required. For this the master, brothers, priors and preceptors, or their procurator or procurators, shall fittingly commend you, and we shall rightly acknowledge your prompt and devoted obedience.

**Given at Livron in the diocese of Valence on  
16 May in the seventh year.**

## *Licet dudum* (Granted lately)

This bull set up the system for the disposition of the confiscated Templar property permanently. This also settled some disputes that had arisen between the French episcopate and the Holy See.

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For future record. Not long ago, in the general council at Vienne, we transferred, with the approval of the sacred council, the property, rights, privileges, indulgences, immunities and liberties of the former order of the Temple to the order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem. For the sake of greater peace and concord between prelates of churches and other clergy on the one hand, and the brothers of the order of the Hospital on the other, as also for other justifiable reasons, we suspended, in the last session of the council, all the privileges granted to the Hospital by the apostolic see, and with them as a necessary consequence the privileges of the former Temple, which should be thought of as belonging to the said Hospital and transferred to it. We exempted the privilege of exemption, if they had any. We wished these privileges to be suspended at our good pleasure. There are some, however, who assert on insufficient grounds that the suspension of these privileges of the Hospital does not extend to the privileges of the former order of the Temple. Although there is not the faintest reason for such an assertion, we wish to remove from their minds the slightest doubt that it was our intention, by the said suspension of the privileges of the order of the Hospital, to suspend the privileges of the former Temple, which have become by the transference those of the Hospital itself. We declare therefore by our apostolic authority and decree that these, like the other privileges of the Hospital, are and remain suspended.

Indeed, before the suspension, it was said in general by some of our brothers cardinals of the holy Roman church, to many of the prelates assembled at the general council, that there would be a suspension of the Hospital's privileges until everything that was still uncertain among the said prelates and other clergy, with regard to concord, lawsuits and disputes, had been completely settled.

We observed, however, that if it was necessary to await the end of all these lawsuits and disputes, one little case might generate grave prejudice against the Hospitallers, and great loss might result from the continuing suspension of their privileges. We reflected that this might provide material for many misrepresentations. In the last session of the council, therefore, wishing to obviate such greater dangers, we judged it fitting to make known orally, clearly and openly, even for a third time, so that each and all might clearly understand, that we wished the said suspension of the privileges of the order of the Hospital to continue until we willed otherwise. We intend with the Lord's help to consider what is good for both sides and to make provision for both prelates and other clergy on the one hand, and the Hospitallers on the other, so that neither will have reason for complaint but both will receive due satisfaction. Let nobody therefore ...

**Given at Avignon on 18 December in the eighth year.**

## ***Licet pridem*** (Formerly Lawful)

This was the last bull issued by Clement V and surrounded further considerations as to the question of the Templars' property.

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For an everlasting record. Some time ago, in the general council held at Vienne under the Lord's inspiration, we suppressed the former order of the Temple for certain good reasons as explained in the letter of suppression. After long and careful deliberations with our brothers and the whole council, we bestowed on the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, on the Hospital itself and on our beloved sons, the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital and of the order of these men, who as the Lord's athletes expose themselves unflinching to the danger of death in defense of the faith and have borne and still bear heavy loss overseas, the house of the Knights Templar and their other houses, churches, chapels, oratories, cities, castles, towns, lands, granges and all their other movable, immovable and self-moving property, together with all the members and rights and all that belongs to them, beyond and on this side of the sea and in all parts of the world, which the former order and its master and brothers had and comprised at the time when the master himself and some of the brothers were arrested as a body in the kingdom of France, namely in October 1308.

The property includes that which the Templars had of themselves or through others, and anything belonging to them in any way, with all their rights, privileges, indulgences, immunities, liberties, honors and charges. We donated and united all this forever to the Hospital and incorporated it into the Hospital, with the approval of the sacred council and from the fullness of our apostolic power, for the help of the holy Land. However, whatever rights belonged to kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and any other Catholics, before the arrest of the master of the former order of the Temple and of some other brothers, were to remain. We excepted from the said donation, union and incorporation the property of the former order of the Temple in the kingdoms and

lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings ... of Castile, ... of Aragon, ... of Portugal, and ... of Majorca, lying outside the kingdom of France, which we reserved with good reason for the disposal of the apostolic see.

In the letter of donation, union and incorporation, however, through the carelessness, neglect or engagements of the scribe or secretary, mention was omitted of the non-violation of the rights of kings, princes, prelates and other persons concerned. Lest therefore any doubt arises in the future from such an omission concerning these charges and rights, and any prejudice be generated against the said kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and other persons, we, who desire that everyone retains his rights unimpaired, wishing to provide a suitable remedy in the matter for the said kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and any other Catholics, declare that we have made the above donation, union and incorporation to the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, and to the Hospital itself and its master and brothers, in the name of the said Hospital and order, in the way expressed above. We determine and decree of our certain knowledge that, without violation of the property of the former order of the Temple donated to the order of the Hospital, together with all its privileges, indulgences, immunities, liberties, rights, honors and charges, for the help of the holy Land, nevertheless whatever rights belonged to kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and any other Catholics, at the time of the said arrest of the master and some brothers of the Temple, remain intact, unimpaired and exactly as they would be in everything as if they had been distinctly and expressly mentioned in the said letter of donation, union and incorporation. Let nobody therefore . . .

**Given at Avignon on 13 January in the eighth year.**



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

# Council of Vienne

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