

The 4th Degree of the Knights of Columbus Oath

"I, _____, now in the presence of Almighty God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Blessed Michael the Archangel, the Blessed St. John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, sacred hosts of Heaven, and to you, my Ghostly Father, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, founded by St. Ignatius Loyola, in the Pontification of Paul the Third, and continued to the present, do by the womb of the Virgin, the matrix of God, and the rod of Jesus Christ, declare and swear that his Holiness, the Pope, is Christ's Vice-regent, and is the true and only head of the Catholic or Universal Church throughout the earth; and that by the virtue of the keys of binding and loosing, given to his Holiness by my Saviour, Jesus Christ, he hath power to depose heretical kings, princes, states, commonwealths and governments, all being illegal without his sacred confirmation, and that they may be safely destroyed.

"Therefore, to the utmost of my power, I shall and will defend this doctrine and his Holiness' right and customs against all usurpers of the heretical or Protestant authority whatever, especially the Lutheran Church of Germany, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and the now pretended authority of the Church of England and Scotland, the branches of the same now established in Ireland, and on the continent of America and elsewhere and all adherents in regard that they may usurped and heretical opposing the sacred Mother Church of Rome.

"I do now renounce and disown any allegiance due to any heretical king, prince or state named Protestant or Liberals, or obedience to any of their laws, magistrates or officers.

"I do further declare that the doctrine of the Churches of England and Scotland, of the Calvinists, Huguenots, and others of the name of Protestants or Masons to be damnable, and they themselves to be damned who will forsake the same.

"I do further declare that I will help, assist and advise all or any of his Holiness' agents in any place wherever I should be, in Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Ireland, or America, or in any other kingdom or territory I shall come to, and do my utmost to extirpate the heretical Protestant or Masonic doctrines and to destroy all their pretended powers, legal or otherwise.

"I do further promise and declare, that notwithstanding I am dispensed with to assume any religion heretical for the propagating of the Mother Church's interest to keep secret and private all her agents' counsels from time to time, as they may instruct me, and not to divulge, directly or indirectly, by word, writing, or circumstances whatever; but to execute all that shall be proposed, given in charge, or discovered unto me, by you, my Ghostly Father or any of this sacred order.

"I do further promise and declare that I will have no opinion or will of my own or any mental reservation whatsoever, even as a corpse or cadaver, but will unhesitatingly obey each and every command that I may receive from my superiors in the militia of the Pope and of Jesus Christ.

"That I will go to any part of the world withersoever I may be sent, to the frozen regions North, jungles of India, to the centers of civilization of Europe, or to the wild haunts of the barbarous savages of America without murmuring or repining, and will be submissive in all things whatsoever is communicated to me.

"I do further promise and declare that I will, when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly and openly, against all heretics, Protestants, and Masons, as I am directed to do, to extirpate them from the face of the whole earth; and that I will spare neither age, sex, nor condition, and that I will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle, and bury alive these infamous heretics; rip up the stomachs and wombs of their women, and crush their infants' heads against the walls in order to annihilate forever their execrable race.

"That when the same cannot be done openly, I will secretly use the poison cup, the strangulation cord, the steel of the poniard, or the leaden bullet, regardless of the honor, rank, dignity or authority of the person or persons whatever may be their condition in life, either public or private, as I at any time may be directed so to do by any agents of the Pope or superior of the Brotherhood of the Holy Father of the Society of Jesus.

"In confirmation of which I hereby dedicate my life, soul, and all corporal powers, and with the dagger which I now receive I will subscribe my name written in my blood in testimony thereof; and should I prove false or weaken in my determination, may my brethren and fellow soldiers of the militia of the Pope cut off my hands and feet and my throat from ear to ear, by belly opened and sulfur burn therein with all the punishment that can be inflicted upon me on earth and my soul shall be tortured by demons in eternal hell forever.

"That I will in voting always vote for a K. or C in preference to a Protestant, especially a Mason, and that I will leave my party so to do; that if two Catholics are on the ticket I will satisfy myself which is the better supporter of Mother church and vote accordingly.

"That I will not deal with or employ a Protestant if in my power to deal with or employ a Catholic. That I will place Catholic girls in Protestant families that a weekly report may be made of the inner movements of the heretics.

"That I will provide myself with arms and ammunition that I may be in readiness when the word is passed, or I am commanded to defend the church either as an individual or with the militia of the Pope.

"All of which, I _____, do swear by the blessed Trinity and blessed sacrament which I am now to receive to perform and on part to keep this, my oath.

"In testimony hereof, take this most holy and blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist and witness the same further with my name written with the point of this dagger dipped in my own blood and seal in the face of this holy sacrament."

Documented and copied verbatim as it appears in the United States Congressional Record, House Bill 1523, from the "Contested Election Case of Eugene C. Bonniwell against Thomas S. Butler" - Feb. 15, 1913, pp. 3215-3216. It was ordered written into the Congressional Record "by unanimous consent."