

# A Letter for the Pope

June 29, 1959

Mons. Alfredo Poledrini  
Extraordinary Affairs Section  
Secretary of State of His Holiness  
Vatican City Italy

My dear Mons. Poledrini,

This is to record the conversation which I had with you on 8 June 1959.

First, permit me to thank you for the kind and gracious way you received the ideas which I advanced and for your suggestion that I write this letter. Second, I have complied with your request that I pass on your greetings to our many mutual friends here in Manila. They all recall your warm friendship and your deep affection for the Philippines.

My purpose in seeking an audience with His Holiness, as I indicated in my letter to His Excellency, Jose Ma. Delgado, the Philippine Ambassador to the Holy See, was to discuss the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and Freemasonry in the Philippines. There were several compelling reasons why I was prompted to seek this audience:

One, His Holiness has indicated his great desire for a union of Christians. There has been a spontaneous reciprocal reaction which bodes well for the future. My own high regard and love for His Holiness is shared by many other Christians who are not Roman Catholics.

Two, as far as I can see, there is no cause for discord between the Roman Catholic Church and Freemasonry insofar as doctrine is concerned. Both believe in the brotherhood-of-man under the Fatherhood-of-God and in the principle that all men should love each other and practice charity.

Three, although there may have been in the past some basis for disagreement between the Roman Catholic Church and Freemasonry, the *raison d'être* behind that dispute no longer exists. On the contrary, the reasons for seeking an understanding at this time are numerous; primarily such a step would provide a tremendous impetus towards the desired union of all Christians.

Four, both the Roman Catholic Church and the Freemasons are committed to a struggle against Communism, an organization which denies the existence of man in society. It would seem that it would not be difficult for us to find a *modus vivendi* whereby we could more effectively channel our efforts towards fighting Communism instead of dissipating our energies in defending ourselves against each other.

I mentioned that certain parish priests in the Philippines had been responsible for the persecution of Masons and their families and had issued pamphlets which were derogatory towards Masonry and which accused the Masons of being Communists and of being in league with the Devil. You regretted these incidents and said that since Catholics believe in charity, they should

practice it, a sentiment I wholeheartedly share with you.

You indicated that one of our prominent Masons had stated that he regarded the Roman Catholic Church as a greater enemy than Communism. I thought that this remark was probably the result of the fact that the Mason had been offended by the statements made by certain parish priests. To demonstrate that this was not the official position of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Republic of the Philippines, I mentioned three facts:

One, approximately three years ago, I wrote an article for a masonic publication on the subject of the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and Masonry in the Philippines in which article I had emphasized the need for our joining hands to battle Communism, a common and mutual enemy.

Two, immediately prior to my departure on the trip which brought me to Rome, I was elected to the position of Junior Grand Warden in the Grand Lodge of the Republic of the Philippines, at which time my viewpoint on this subject was well known to Masons in the Philippines. My election was indicative of the fact that Philippine Masons want to see an end to the present cleavage.

Three, I had not come to the Vatican as a lone voice, as a romanticist or as adventurer. I had been duly authorized by the Grand Master of Masons in the Republic of the Philippines to extend the warm hand of friendship and to express the hope that all possible efforts would be exerted towards the elimination of friction between the Roman Catholic Church and Freemasonry. Clothed with this authority, I had no hesitancy in stating that I spoke for Freemasonry in the Philippines.

I ventured the suggestion that although the time might not be ripe for His Holiness to withdraw the Encyclical against Masonry, I did hope that perhaps some Catholic organization would be authorized to meet with Masonic representatives to discuss ways and means to solve our mutual problems. This might be a committee patterned after the Interfaith Committee in the United States.

The very existence of such a committee would be indicative of our mutual desire to dispose of old problems and to seek new ways to prevent the continued deceptions by the Communists of the minds and the hearts of men. It would be my fervent hope that between many Roman Catholics and Masons as individuals the understanding might become more general and that His Holiness would eventually cause the issuance of the Papal Encyclical to desist from attacking Masonry.

As I have indicated, I am very much encouraged by the actions of His Holiness and feel that nothing but good can come from the suggestions which I have made.

Once again, please let me thank you for the kind reception which you granted me and join you in your hope that some day you will be able to return to our beloved Philippines.

Sincerely and respectfully yours,  
WILLIAM H. QUASHA