

Investigation carried out by the fathers commissioned by Pope Clement V in the town of Chinon, diocese of Tours.

Chinon, August 17-20, 1308

In the name of the Lord, amen. We, Berengar, by the mercy of God cardinal presbyter of SS. Nereus and Achileus, and Stephanus, cardinal presbyter of St. Ciriacus in Therminis, and Landolf, cardinal deacon of St. Angel, declare through this official statement directed to all who will read it that since our most holy father and lord Clement, by divine providence the supreme pontific of the holy Roman and universal church, after receiving the word of mouth and also clamorous reports from the illustrious king of France and prelates, dukes, counts, barons and other subjects of the said kingdom, both noblemen and commoners, along with some brothers, presbyters, knights, preceptors and servants of the Templar order, had initiated an inquiry into matters concerning the brothers, [questions of Catholic faith] and the Rule of the said Order, because of which it suffered public infamy, the very same lord Pope wishing and intending to know the pure, complete and uncompromised truth from the leaders of the said Order, namely brother Jacques de Molay, grandmaster of the Order of Knights Tempar, brother Raymbaud de Caron, preceptor the commandaries of Templar Knights in Outremer, brother Hugo de Pérraud, preceptor of France, brother Geoffroy de Gonneville, preceptor of Aquitania and Poitou, and Geoffroy of Charny, preceptor of Normandy, ordered and commissioned us specifically and by his verbally expressed will in order that we might with diligence examine the truth by questioning the grandmaster and the aforementioned preceptors – one by one and individually, having summoned notaries public and trustworthy witnesses.

And having acted according to the mandate and commissioned by the said Lord Supreme Pontific, we questioned the aforementioned grandmaster and the preceptors and examined them concerning the matters described above. Their words and confessions were written down exactly the way they are included here by the notaries whose names are listed below in the presence of witnesses listed below. We also ordered these things drawn up in this official form and validated by the protection of our seals.

In the year of our Lord 1308, the 6th indiction, on the 17th day of August, in the 3d year of the pontificate of the said Pope Clement V, brother

Raymbaud de Caron, preceptor the commandaries of Templar Knights in Outremer, was brought in front of us, the aforementioned fathers, to the town of Chinon of the Tours diocese. With his hand on the Holy Gospel of the Lord he took an oath that he would speak pure and complete truth about himself as well individuals and brothers of the Order, and about the Order itself, concerning questions of Catholic faith and the Rule of the said Order, and also about five particular individuals and brothers of the Order. Diligently interrogated by us about the time and circumstances of his initiation in the order he said that it was been forty-three years or thereabouts since he had been knighted and admitted into the Templar Order by brother Roncelin de Fos, at the time preceptor of Provence, in the town of Richarenchess, in the diocese of Carpentras or Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, in the chapel of the local Templar commandery. During the ceremony the patron said nothing to the novice that was not proper, but after the admittance a servant-brother came up to him whose name he does not recall, for he has been dead for a long time. He took him aside holding a small cross under his cloak, and when all the brothers exited and they remained alone, that is this brother-servant and the speaker, this brother-servant showed this cross to the speaker who does not recall whether it bore the effigy of the crucifix or not, but believes however, that there was a crucifix either painted or carved. And this brother-servant told the speaker: "You must denounce this one." And the speaker, not believing himself to be committing a sin, said: "And so, I denounce." That brother-servant also told the speaker that he should preserve purity and chastity, but if he could not do so, it was better to be done secretly than publicly. The speaker also said that his denunciation did not come from the heart, but from the mouth. Then he said that the next day he revealed this to the bishop of Carpentras, his blood relative, who was present in the said place, and the bishop told him that he had acted wrongly and committed a sin. Then the interrogated confessed on this account to the same bishop and was assigned penances with he completed, according to him. When asked about the sin of sodomy, he said that he never was a part of it neither performing or enduring, and that he never heard that knights Templar engaged in this sin, apart from those three knights who had been punished by perpetual incarceration in Castle Pilgrim. When asked whether the brothers of the said Order were received into the order in the same manner he was received into it, he replied that he did not know that, because he never initiated anyone himself and did not see anyone being accepted in the Order other than two or three brothers. Regarding them he did not know whether they denounced Christ or not. When he was asked

about the names of these brothers he said that one had the name of Peter, but that he did not remember his family name. When he was asked how old he was when he was made brother of the said Order he replied that he was seventeen years of age or thereabouts. When he was asked about the spitting on the cross and about the worshipped head, he said that he knew nothing, adding that he had never heard any mention of that head until he heard the lord Pope Clement speak of it this past year. When he was asked about the practice of kissing, he replied that the aforementioned brother Roncelin kissed him on the mouth when he received him as a brother; he said that he knew nothing about other kisses. When he was asked whether he wanted to maintain what he had said during the confession, whether it was done according to the truth, and whether he had added anything untruthful or withheld anything that is truthful, he replied that he wanted to maintain what he had previously said in his confession, that it was truthful and that he neither added anything that was untruthful nor omitted anything that was truthful. When he was asked whether he had confessed due to a request, reward, gratitude, favor, fear, hatred or persuasion by someone else, or the use of force, or fear of impending torture, he replied that he did not.

Afterwards, this very brother Raymbaud standing on his knees with his hands folded asked for our forgiveness and mercy regarding the abovementioned deeds. And as he pleaded so, brother Raymbaud denounced in our presence the abovementioned heresy, as well as any other heresy. For the second time he took an oath with his hand upon the Holy Gospel of our Lord in that he will obey the teachings of the Church, that he will maintain, uphold and observe the Catholic faith which the Roman Church maintains, upholds and proclaims, as well as teaches and requires of others to observe it, and that he will live and die as a faithful Christian. After this oath, by the authority of lord Pope specifically granted to us for that purpose, we extended to this humbly asking brother Raymbaud, in a form accepted by the Church the mercy of absolution from the verdict of excommunication that had been incurred by the aforementioned deeds, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him for communion of the faithful and sacraments of the Church. Also, on the same day, brother knight Geoffroy of Charny, preceptor of commanderies of the Templar Order in Normandy, appearing personally in the previously described manner and form, in our presence, and in the presence of notaries, as well as witnesses, modestly swore with his hand on the Gospel of the Lord and was questioned about the manner of his reception into the said Order. He testified that it has well been forty years or

thereabouts since he was accepted into the Order of Knights Templar by brother Amaury de la Roche, the preceptor of France in Étamps of the diocese of Sens, in the chapel of the local Templar commandery. Present at the ceremony were brother Jean le Franceys, preceptor of Pédenac, and nine, ten or so brothers of the said Order whom he all believed to be dead now. And then, once he had been accepted in the order and the cloak of the order had been placed on his shoulders, the brother who performed the ceremony took him aside within the same chapel and showed him a crucifix with an effigy of Christ, and told him that he should not believe in the Crucified, but should in fact denounce Him. Then the newly accepted brother at the demand of the said recipient denounced Him verbally, but not in his heart. Also, he said that at the time of his induction, the novice kissed the recipient on the mouth and in his chest through the garment as a sign of reverence.

When asked whether brothers of the Templar Order while being initiated into the order were accepted in the same manner that he was, he said that he did not know. He also said that he himself received one brother into the said Order through the same ceremony through which he himself was accepted. Afterwards he accepted many others without the denunciation described earlier and in good manner. He also said that he confessed about the denunciation of the cross which he had done during the ceremony of induction and about being forced to do so by the brother performing the ceremony, to the Patriarch of Jerusalem of the time, and was absolved by him.

When diligently questioned regarding the spitting on the cross, the practice of kissing, the vice of sodomy and the worshipped head, he replied that he knew nothing of it. Further interrogated, he said that he believed that other brothers had been accepted into the Order in the same manner that he was. He said however that he did not know that for sure since when these things took place the newly received were taken aside so that other brothers who were present in the building would neither see nor hear what went on with them. Asked about the age that he was in when accepted into the said Order, he replied that he was sixteen, seventeen or thereabouts. When he was asked whether he had said these things due to a request, reward, gratitude, favor, fear, hatred or persuasion by someone else, or the use of force, or fear of impending torture, he replied that he did not. When he was asked whether he wanted to maintain what he had said during the confession, whether it was done according to the truth, and whether he had added anything untruthful or withheld anything that is truthful, he replied that he wanted to maintain what he had previously said in his confession

during which he had only said what was true, that what he said was according to the truth and that he neither added anything that was untruthful nor omitted anything that was truthful.

After this, we concluded to extend the mercy of absolution for these acts to brother Geoffroy, who in the form and manner described above had denounced in our presence the described and any other heresy, and swore in person on the Lord's Holy Gospel, and humbly asked for the mercy of absolution, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him for communion of the faithful and sacraments of the Church.

On the same day, in our presence and the presence of notaries, as well as the witnesses listed below, brother Geoffroy de Gonneville personally appeared and was diligently questioned about the time and circumstances of his reception and about other matters described above. He replied that it has been twenty eight years or thereabouts since he was received as a brother of the Order of the Knights Templar by brother-knight Robert de Torville, preceptor of the commandaries of the Templar order in England , in the city of London , at the chapel of the local commandery. And this receptor, after bestowing the cloak of the Knights Templar upon the this newly received member, showed him the cross depicted in some book and said that he should denounce the one whose image was depicted on that cross. When the newly received did not want to do so, the receptor told him multiple times that he should do so. And since he completely refused to do it, the receptor, seeing his resistance, said to him: "Will you swear to me that if asked by any of the brothers you would say that you had made this denouncement, provided that I allow you not to make it?" And the newly received answered "yes", and promised that if he was questioned by any of the brother of the said Order he would say that he had performed the said denouncement. And, as he said, he made no denouncement otherwise. He also said that the said receptor told him that she should spit on the described cross. When the newly received did not wish to do so, the receptor placed his own hand over the depiction of the cross and said: "At least spit on my hand!" And since the received feared that the receptor would remove his hand and some of this spit would get on the cross, he did not want to spit on the hand with the cross being near.

When diligently questioned regarding the sin of sodomy, the worshipped head, about the practice of kissing and other things for which the brothers of the said order received a bad reputation, he said that he knew nothing. When asked whether other brothers of the Order were accepted into the Order in the same way as he was, he said that he believed that the same

was done to others as it was done to him at the time of his described initiation.

When he was asked whether he had said these things due to a request, reward, gratitude, favor, fear, hatred or persuasion by someone else, or the use of force, or fear of impending torture, he replied that he did not. After this, we concluded to extend the mercy of absolution for these acts to brother Geoffroy de Goneville, who in the form and manner described above had denounced in our presence the described and any other heresy, and swore in person on the Lord's Holy Gospel, and humbly asked for the mercy of absolution, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him for communion of the faithful and sacraments of the Church.

Then on the nineteenth day of the month, in our presence, and in the presence of notaries and the same witnesses, brother Hugo de Pérraud, preceptor of Templar commanderies in France appeared personally and took an oath on the Holy Gospel of the Lord, placing his hand upon it in the manner described above. This brother Hugo, having sworn as indicated, and being diligently questioned said about the manner of his initiation that he was received in London at local Templar commandary, in its church. It was forty six years ago this past feast of St. Magdalene. He was inducted as a brother of the Order by brother Hubet de Perraud, his own father, a Visitor of the Templar commanderies in France and Poitou , who placed upon his shoulders the cloak of the said Order. This having been done, some brother of the said Order, by the name of John, who afterwards became preceptor of de La Muce, took him to a certain part of that chapel, showed him a cross with an effigy of Christ, and ordered him to denounce the One whose image was depicted there. He refused, as much as he could, according to him. Eventually, however, overcome by fear and menaces of brother John, he denounced the One whose image was depicted there only once. And although brother John multiple times demanded that he spit on that cross, he refused to do so.

When asked whether he had to kiss the receptor, he said that he did, only on the mouth.

When asked about the sin of sodomy, he replied that it was never imposed on him and he never committed it.

When asked whether he accepted others into the Order, he replied that he did many times, and that he accepted more people than any other living member of the Order.

When asked about the ceremony through which he accepted them, he said that after they were received and given the cloaks of the Order, he ordered them to denounce the crucifix and to kiss him at the bottom of the back, in

the navel and then on the mouth. He also said that he imposed on them to abstain from partnership with women, and, if they were unable to restrain their lust, to join themselves with brothers of the Order.

He also said under oath that the aforementioned denunciation, which he performed during initiation, as well as other things described that he demanded from those received by him, was done in word only, and not in spirit. When asked why he felt pained and did not perform in spirit the things that he did, he replied that such were the statutes or rather traditions of the Order and that he always hoped that this error would be removed from the said Order.

When asked whether any of the members newly received by him refused to perform the described spitting and other dishonest things listed above, he replied that only few, and eventually all did as ordered. He also said that although he himself instructed brothers of the order whom he initiated to join with other brothers, nevertheless he never did that, nor heard that anyone else commit this sin, except for the two or three brothers in Outremer who were incarcerated for this in Castle Pilgrim.

When asked whether he knew if all brothers of the said Order were initiated in the same manner as he initiated others, he said that he did not know for sure about others, only about himself and those whom he initiated, because brothers are initiated in such secrecy that nothing can be known other than through those who are present. When asked whether he believed that they were all initiated in this manner, he said that he believed that the same ritual is used while initiating others as it was used in his case and as he himself administered when he received others.

When asked about the head of an idol that was reportedly worshiped by the Templars, he said that it was shown to him in Montpellier by brother Peter Alemandin, preceptor of that place, and that this head remained in possession of brother Peter.

When asked how old he was when accepted into the said Order, he replied that he heard his mother say that he was eighteen. He also said that previously he had confessed about these things in the presence of brother Guillaume of Paris, inquisitor of heretical actions, or his deputy. This confession was written down in the hand of the undersigning Amise d'Orleans and some other notaries public. He wishes to maintain that confession, just as it is, as well as maintain in the present confession that which is in concord with the previous one. And if there is anything additional in this confession in front of the Inquisitor or his deputy, as has been said above, he ratifies, approves and confirms it.

When he was asked whether he had confessed to these things due to a

request, reward, gratitude, favor, fear, hatred or persuasion by someone else, or the use of force, or fear of impending torture, he replied that he did not. When he was asked whether he, after being apprehended, was submitted to any questioning or torture, he replied that he did not.

After this, we concluded to extend the mercy of absolution for these acts to brother Hugo, who in the form and manner described above had denounced in our presence the described and any other heresy, and swore in person on the Lord's Holy Gospel, and humbly asked for the mercy of absolution, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him to communion of the faithful and sacraments of the Church.

Then on the twentieth day of the month, in our presence, and in the presence of notaries and the same witnesses, brother-knight Jacques de Molay, grandmaster of the Order of Knights Templar appeared personally and having sworn in the form and manner indicated above, and having been diligently questioned, said it has been forty-two years or thereabouts since he was received as a brother of the said Order by brother-knight Hubert de Pérraud, at the time Visitor of France and Poitou, in Beune, diocese of Autun, in the chapel of the local Templar commandery of that place.

Concerning the way of his initiation into the Order, he said that having given him the cloak the receptor showed to him <the cross> and told him that he should denounce the God whose image was depicted on that cross, and that he should spit on the cross. Which he did, although he did not spit on the cross, by near it, according to his words. He also said that performed this denunciation in words, not in spirit. Regarding the sin of sodomy, the worshipped head and the practice of illicit kisses, he, diligently questioned, said that he knew nothing of that.

When he was asked whether he had confessed to these things due to a request, reward, gratitude, favor, fear, hatred or persuasion by someone else, or the use of force, or fear of impending torture, he replied that he did not. When he was asked whether he, after being apprehended, was submitted to any questioning or torture, he replied that he did not.

After this, we concluded to extend the mercy of absolution for these acts to brother Jaques de Molay, the grandmaster of the said order, who in the form and manner described above had denounced in our presence the described and any other heresy, and swore in person on the Lord's Holy Gospel, and humbly asked for the mercy of absolution, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him to communion of the faithful and sacraments of the Church.

On the same twentieth day of the month, in our presence, and in the

presence of notaries and the same witnesses, brother Geoffroy de Gonneville freely and willingly ratified, approved and confirmed his signed confession that was read to him in his native tongue, and gave assurances that he intended to stand by and maintain both this confession and the confession he made on a different occasion in front of the Inquisitor or inquisitors regarding the aforementioned heretic transgressions, in as much as it was in concordance with the confession made in front of us, the notaries and the aforementioned witnesses; and that if there is something extra contained in the confession made in front of the Inquisitor and inquisitors, as it was said earlier, he ratifies, approves and confirms that. On the same twentieth day of the month, in our presence, and in the presence of notaries and the same witnesses, brother-preceptor Hugo de Perraud in a similar way freely and willingly ratified, approved and confirmed his signed confession that was read to him in his native tongue. We ordered Robert de Condet, cleric of the diocese of Soissons, a notary by apostolic power, who was among us together with notaries and witnesses listed below, to record and make public as evidence these confessions, as well as each and every thing described above that occurred in front of us, the notaries and the witnesses, and also everything done by us, exactly as it is shown above, and to validate it by attaching our seal.

This was done on the year, indiction, month, day, pontificate and the place indicated above, in our presence and the presence of Umberto Vercellani, Nicolo Nicolai de Benvenuto and the aforementioned Robert de Condet, and also master Amise d'Orleans le Ratif, notaries public by the apostolic power, as well as pious and distinguished brother Raymond, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St. Theofred, Annecy diocese, master Berard de Boiano, archdeacon of Troia, Raoul de Boset, confessor and canon from Paris, and Pierre de Soire, overseer of Saint-Gaugery in Cambresis, who were gathered specifically as witnesses.

And I, Robert de Condet, cleric of the diocese of Soissons, notary by apostolic power, observed with other notaries and witnesses each and every thing described above that occurred in the presence of the aforementioned reverend fathers lords cardinal presbyters, myself and other notaries and witnesses, as well as what was done by their lordships. On the orders from their lordships the cardinal presbyters, I made this record, and put in the official form, and sealed it with my seal, having been asked to do so.

And also I, Umberto Vercellani, cleric of Béziers, notary by apostolic power, observed with other notaries and witnesses each and every thing described

above that occurred in the presence of the aforementioned lords cardinal presbyters, as well as what was done by their lordships cardinal presbyters just as it is shown above in fuller detail. On the orders from these cardinal presbyters, for further assurance, I wrote underneath this record and sealed it with my seal.

And also I, Nicolo Nicolai di Benevento, notary by apostolic decree, observed with other aforementioned notaries and witnesses each and every thing described above that occurred in the presence of the aforementioned lords cardinal presbyters, as well as what was done by their lordships just as it is shown above in fuller detail. On the orders from these cardinal presbyters, for further assurance, I wrote underneath this record and sealed it with my seal.

And also I, Arnulphe d'Orléans called le Ratif, notary by the power of the Holy Roman Church, observed with other aforementioned notaries and witnesses confessions, depositions and other each and every thing described above that occurred in the presence of the aforementioned reverend fathers lords cardinal presbyters, as well as what was done by their lordships just as it is shown above in fuller detail. On the orders from these cardinal presbyters, as a testimony of truth, I wrote underneath this record and sealed it with my seal, having been asked to do so.