



# ORDER, DISORDER, AND THE WISDOM OF GOD

*Posted on January 1, 2024 by Brother André Marie*



*Ordo ab chao*—“order out of chaos”—is a motto used in various permutations of Freemasonry. It refers to the “new world order” that the revolutionary Masons will bring out of the chaos they create in their revolutions bent on first *separating* and then *destroying* “throne and altar.” At its heart, Freemasonry is diabolical, even if many of its adherents call themselves Christians. The devil being the *simia Dei* — “the ape of God” — many of the trappings of Freemasonry have been pilfered from that Christendom the Masons so hate: their degrees, their symbols, and even their name, that of the Catholic guild of the stone masons — all are stolen Catholic goods.

The concept of *ordo ab chao*, while it is a revolutionary motto put at the service of evil, is actually quite Catholic if we understand it correctly. How might we do that? When we Christians look at the world and see so much disorder, we can assure ourselves, by our divine and Catholic faith, that the Providence of the all-wise God is serenely seated above this madness and will bring an order out of it that will astonish us all — His friends and foes alike. We have good reason to believe this. “And we know,” Saint Paul tells us, “that to them that love God, *all things* work together unto good, to such as, according to his purpose, are called to be saints” (Rom. 8:28). There is nothing omitted from those “all things”; Saint Augustine assures us that even our past sins are included.

## **Biblical Examples**

Consider the revolutionary rejection of Jesus Christ by the official representatives of the true religion of the Old Testament. As wicked revolutionaries, they stirred up a mob and accomplished the mad crime of deicide. Yet, in God's providence, that horrible crime was the very occasion of our salvation. (See this idea developed further in [What Nobody Can Take from You](#), where I consider the patristic figure of Our Lord's sacred humanity being a sort of “bait” or “trap” set by God for the devil.) Moreover, many members of that mob “had compunction in their heart” when they heard the preaching of Saint Peter (Acts 2:37); they did penance and were baptized. Later, as the nascent Church expanded, even “a great multitude *also of the priests* obeyed the faith” (Acts 6:7).

The revolutionaries became loyalists.

We can see a Christianized *ordo ab chao* even in the Old Testament. Consider the much beloved story of Joseph of the Old Testament, the son of Jacob who prefigured both his namesake, Saint Joseph, and Our Lord Himself. As literature, the true history of this amazing figure is a “comedy” in the sense that

Dante and Shakespeare used the word, because, after all sorts of horrible things take place, it ends happily. These words of Joseph to his brothers are the revelation of just how happy an ending it is: "You thought evil against me: but God turned it into good, that he might exalt me, as at present you see, *and might save many people*" (Gen. 50:20).

God transformed the evil of Joseph's treacherous brothers into good. Not only that, but the evil occasioned Joseph being exalted and turned into a savior of "many people"—clearly prefigurative of Jesus, *the Savior*.

## **Harmony out of Dissonance**

Dom Augustin Guillerand, the Carthusian spiritual writer, wrote thus in his wonderful volume, *The Prayer of the Presence of God*:

My God, You are infinite order. Now, such vestiges of Your order that we can find and perceive here below are marvelous and dazzle us — and we see so little!

You are so essentially "order" that even what we call disorder is made to serve Your designs. You possess the amazing power of making harmony out of dissonance. It is true: to recognize that supreme order, we must pass beyond the duration of time and present circumstances — in short, of what is not — and wait until the passing and superficial moment has produced what Your eternal gaze sees and Your immense love wills.

Your wisdom is this gaze, seeing far beyond time and distance. It emerges from a mind that creates order and a love that gives itself. The order is the outcome of the mind that loves, the proper name for which is Wisdom.

"You are so essentially 'order' that even what we call disorder is made to serve Your designs," wrote the Carthusian. That sentence is worth savoring, reflecting upon, turning over in our minds and hearts, and discussing with Our Lord.

The sentence that follows gives us a glimpse the monk's sensitivity to music. It is worth pondering: "You

[God] possess the amazing power of making harmony out of dissonance." Those who have elementary knowledge of music theory will know that it is the dissonances which provide much of the harmonic "motion" in music. For a trite example of this, the dissonant [tritone](#) at the word "two" in "shave and a haircut, **two** bits" resolves into the consonant major sixth at the word "bits." While contemporary serious music often revels in the dissonant with no resolution to consonance — making most of it cacophonous claptrap — serious music of a bygone era, like Bach, used dissonances resolving to consonances all over the place to move the harmonic structure while supporting a beautiful melody. In the context of Dom Guillerand's book, we can imagine that, if our life has occasional *dissonances* in it (troubles, crosses, contradictions), Our Lord can and will resolve them into harmonious sounding consonances. If we cooperate with His grace, we are making beautiful music with God.

Perhaps it is the idea of "life as music" that led [Père Jacques Marquette](#) to beg of his Immaculate Mother that she, "make clean my heart *and my song*."

## **Picturing Divine Order**

Another artistic allegory that we might consider in connection with this theme of order and disorder, though not employed by our Carthusian writer, is life *as a painting*. Imagine, if you will, an enormous canvas upon which an exquisite work of art is painted by the skilled hand of a master. If we look through a magnifying glass at a tiny segment of the work, but are, at the same time, prevented from seeing the whole, we might only see what is dark or even ugly. Extrapolating from the tiny part we are allowed at that moment to set our gaze upon, we might reason that we are beholding something hideous, only to discover that we have been pondering a small section of the eyeball of the serpent in Peter Paul Rubens' exquisite masterpiece, [The Immaculate Conception](#).

We even have an expression for this in our common parlance; we call it, "seeing the big picture." But here and now, as Dom Augustin says, "we see so little!"

God is an artist; and, more than any other artist, He loves the work of His craft. We are that craft, not only as individuals, but as a Mystical Body. If at times there are dark spots in our lives, let us strive to practice the Christian virtues, prayerfully calling upon the Divine Artist with confidence that when His full canvas is revealed — when we "pass beyond the duration of time and present circumstances," in Dom Augustin's words — what we thought were hopeless blots and spills were but the dark contrasts of His masterful [chiaroscuro](#).

It behooves us to consecrate ourselves totally to Jesus through Mary, generously and penitentially accepting all the chaos that circumstances impose upon us, asking God only that this disorder be made to serve His loving designs. Then we can work with God, in our own small way, to bring order out of chaos.

As a "coda," I present Brother Francis' meditations on order from his wonderful book of meditations, [\*The Challenge of Faith\*](#):

1. The heart of wisdom is the appreciation of order: putting first things first.
2. The mission of religious life is the restoration of order.
3. God created the world for man, and man for salvation: all order serves this one end, the salvation of man.
4. St. Teresa of Avila commenting on the text, "Thou hast set him over the works of thy hands: Thou has subjected all things under his feet" (Ps. 8: 7-9), says that this is true principally of the saints, because most men subject themselves to the things of this world. Only the saints are truly the lords of creation.
5. Peace is the tranquility of order; beauty is its splendor.
6. Order is the perfect disposition of means to the end. Only those who know the true end can work for order. He who knows not the true doctrines of salvation is like a captain of a ship who does not know the destination of his journey.
7. The only first principle of order is the Apostles' Creed; the best prayer for order is the "Our Father"; the best grasp of the means for order is the "Hail Mary"; the triumphant shout of order is the "Hail Holy Queen".

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the [Veritas Radio Network's Crusade Channel](#). This article appears courtesy of [Catholicism.org](#).

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**Featured:** *Fiant luminaria in firmamento cæli* (Let there be light), mosaic, Monreale Cathedral, created ca. 12th and 13th centuries.

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