



VEGAS LODGE #32

Agnus Dei



The Agnus Dei, meaning the Lamb of God, also called the Paschal Lamb, or the Lamb offered in the Pascal Sacrifice, is one of the jewels of a Commandery of Knights Templar in America, and is worn by the Generalissimo.

The lamb is one of the earliest symbols of Christ in the iconography of the Church, and as such was a representation of the Savior, derived from that expression of Saint John the Baptist (John 1, 29), who, on beholding Christ, exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God."

"Christ," says Didron (Christian Iconography 1, page 318), "shedding his blood for our redemption, is the Lamb slain by the children of Israel, and with the blood of which the houses to be preserved from the wrath of God were marked with the celestial tau."

The Paschal Lamb eaten by the Israelites on the night preceding their departure from Egypt is the type of that other divine Lamb of whom Christians are to partake at Easter, in order thereby to free themselves from the bondage in which they are held by vice."

The earliest representation that is found in Didron of the Agnus Dei is of the sixth century, and consists of a lamb supporting in his right foot a cross. In the eleventh century we find a banneret attached to this cross, and the lamb is then said to support "the banner of the resurrection." This is the modern form in which the Agnus Dei is represented.

- Source: Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry

THE FIRST DEGREE

The first degree in Masonry inculcates a knowledge of himself, and rightly understood, teaches the Initiate how he may "in the beginning" re-create himself. Man becomes king of the brutes by subduing or taming them. Brutes are fit types of our passions and are the instinctive forces of nature. Physical laws are millstones; if you are not the miller, you must be the grain. To attain the sanctum sanctorum, you must possess four indispensable capacities: an intelligence illuminated by study; an intrepidity which nothing can check; a will which nothing can break; and a discretion which nothing can corrupt and nothing intoxicate. "To know, to dare, to will, and to keep silence" were the four indispensable conditions for gaining admission into the ancient mysteries and are true today for real initiates. Have you really studied yourself? Are you insensible to temptation? Have you overcome the vortices of vague thoughts? Are you without indecision? Do you consent to pleasure when you will or when you should? To be able and to forbear is to be twice able. To learn self-conquest is to learn life. The intelligence and will of man are instruments of incalculable power and capacity. Properly directed imagination is a helpmeet, coupled with intelligence and will, that will make man almost omnipotent. Who would be a slave to his senses when he may be a king and reign with power and intelligence?

- Source: The Builder - July 1918

FELLOW CRAFT

The Second Degree of Freemasonry in all the Pites is that of the Fellow Craft. In French it is called Compagnon; in Spanish, Compañero; in Italian, Compagno; and in German, Gesell: in all of which the radical meaning of the word is a fellow workman, thus showing the origin of the title from an operative institution. Like the Degree of Apprentice, it is only preparatory in the higher initiation of the Master; and yet it differs essentially from it in its symbolism.

For, as the First Degree was typical of youth, the Second is supposed to represent the stage of manhood, and hence the acquisition of science is made its prominent characteristic.

While the former is directed in all its symbols and allegorical ceremonies to the purification of the heart, the latter is intended by its lessons to train the reasoning faculties and improve the intellectual powers.

Before the eighteenth century, the great Body of the Fraternity consisted of Fellow Crafts, who are designated in all the old manuscripts as Fellows. After the revival in 1717, the Fellow Crafts, who then began to be called by that name, lost their prominent position, and the great body of the brotherhood was, for a long time, made up altogether of Apprentices, while the government of the institution was committed to the Masters and Fellows, both of whom were made only in the Grand Lodge until 1725, when the regulation was repealed, and subordinate Lodges were permitted to confer these two Degrees.

- Source: Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry

TILER

Also spelled "tyler." In the Latin tegere (from which came "thatch") meant cover, roof; tegulae were the tiles, pieces, slabs, used for roof-coverings. A tiler, therefore, is one who makes, or fastens on, tiles. Since in Operative Masonry the tiler was the workman who closed the building in, and hid its interior from outside view, the guardian of the entrance to the Lodge was figuratively called by this name. It was once supposed that "tiler" came from the French tailleur, a cutter, a hewer (from whence we have "tailor"), and it was accordingly spelled "tyler;" that, however, is incorrect, "tiler" being the correct spelling.

- Source: 100 Words in Masonry

FORM OF THE LODGE

The form of a Freemason's Lodge is said to be an oblong square, having its greatest length from east to west, and its greatest breadth from north to south. This oblong form of the Lodge, has, as Brother Mackey thought, a symbolic illusion that has not been adverted to by any other writer. If, on a map of the world, we draw lines which shall circumscribe just that portion which was known and inhabited at the time of the building of Solomon's Temple, these lines, running a short distance north and south of the Mediterranean Sea, and extending from Spain to Asia Minor, will form an oblong square, whose greatest length will be from east to west, and whose greatest breadth will be from north to south, as is shown in the annexed diagram.

There is a peculiar fitness in this theory, which is really only making the Masonic Lodge a symbol of the world. It must be remembered that, at the era of the Temple, the earth was supposed to have the form of a parallelogram, or oblong square. Such a figure inscribed upon a map of the world, and including only that part of it which was known in the days of Solomon, would present just such a square, embracing the Mediterranean Sea and the countries lying immediately on its northern, southern, and eastern borders. Beyond, far in the north, would be Cimmerian deserts as a place of darkness, while the pillars of Hercules in the west, on each side of the Straits of Gades now Gibraltar might appropriately be referred to the two pillars that stood at the porch of the Temple. Thus the world itself would be the true Freemason's Lodge, in which he was to live and labor. Again: the solid contents of the earth below, "from the surface to the centre," and the profound expanse above, "from the earth to the highest heavens," would give to this parallelogram definition which says that "the form of the Lodge ought to be a double cube, as an expressive emblem of the powers of light and darkness in the creation."

- Source: Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry

GRIP

Grip, grope, grab, grasp, gripe came the same roots. The Anglo Saxon gripe meant to clutch, to lay hold of, to seize, to grasp strongly. A grip means to clasp another's hand firmly; it differs from a mere hand clasp, which may be a meaningless formality, in that it is done earnestly, and for a purpose—for what purpose in our fraternal system every Mason knows. A grip should be given, as if one meant it; half of its meaning lies in the way it is done. In early Masonic works this is called the gripe. German Freemasons call it der Griff, and the French ones, l'Attouchement.

- Source: 100 Words in Masonry