

The Network State of Adon: A City of Hierological Order

Before us burns a Godly fire, a cleansing flame born of our transgressions and kindled by the penance we have delayed for generations. He who chooses to walk through it is the man who possesses both understanding and the will to endure holy suffering. Such a man will not merely survive the flames; he will emerge refined, renewed, and capable of beholding what lies beyond. But he who abstains, whether by cowardice or by faithlessness, meets only the fate that rightly belongs to the spiritually dead.

The nihilism that saturates our age, the quiet despair that has robbed man of his inheritance from the Father, is not simply drift, but the calculated symptom of a deeper spiritual collapse. It is the final toxin of a civilisation that has forgotten who made it, and why. Only by recognising this truth and wielding the divine weapons granted to us for battle in the unseen realm can we found a movement and a civilisation capable of casting back into hell the wretched spirit that has led us to this abyss. And should I fall in these flames alone, let it be known: I fought the good fight against the kingdom of hell that rises against us. Let my ashes sting the eyes of those who need reminding, so that when their hour comes, they rise, at any cost.

For what we face is not merely political or cultural, it is hierological. This word, taken from the ancient tongue, binds the sacred (hieros) with the ordering principle (logos). It gives name to the hidden law beneath all others: that the visible world follows the invisible, that the material order of nations is downstream from the spiritual order of heaven. When this hierarchy is forgotten, disorder rushes in; when it is restored, civilization flowers. To recognise and restore this deviation from Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, the very structure of the spiritual order, is the great tragedy we have inherited and the great adventure to which our generation is summoned.

To diagnose the symptoms of this age, a man must first wield true discernment, that higher sight granted to those who have been awakened by grace. Only such a man possesses the spiritual antenna capable of detecting the deeper disease of modernity, for its poison is invisible to those still anaesthetised by it. Yet even this is only the outer layer of the wound. Beneath it lies a darker architecture, the calculated work of Satan and his intelligentsia operating through the very elites who shape the age. They have not merely poisoned the well; they have also fashioned the counterfeit healers, the con-men and ideologues who claim to offer salvation while deepening the sickness.

Deception of this kind does not remain hidden; it manifests inevitably in the conditions by which modern men and women live. From within, so without. In this truth, and by its fruits, we bear witness to the true markers of modernity. Do you not feel it? Let me list out for you the happenings of my mind, and perhaps in doing so, my people will hear me, and in my explanation of the symptoms, perhaps you will trust in me the ability to work toward the treatment of a problem that I demonstrate I have understood.

It started for me as I approached adulthood, the disenchantment hitting hard in my first days of university. I found myself thoroughly unimpressed by my teachers, lacklustre in both appearance and attitude. I had long anticipated the end of high school, believing it would mark the beginning of something real, an adventure of thought, a place where ideas were tested, where frontier efforts pushed the bounds of what is known, where at the heights of intellect one might finally encounter meaning, even purpose. It was not there. It simply was not there.

Scattered across the grounds were my peers, but their interests seemed confined to an extreme version of materialism I had not yet known existed. There was no interest in politics, no interest in adventure, no interest in religion, no interest in anything beyond the expedient and the economical. Everyone asked what, how, and when, but never why. Each day felt wasted, as if I had been granted the miracle of life, tasked with doing something with it, only to find myself standing still, watching the very vessel meant to carry me forward sit idle, deteriorating, collecting dust.

Across it all, I sensed an emptiness that did not reflect the history I knew. The stories that had once animated me, the adventures of great men, the force of leadership, the breakthroughs in science, the boldness in economics, the depth of philosophy, all of it stood in stark contrast to what I saw before me. Those who now

occupied positions of influence, who sat in the seats of power in this era I was traversing, felt different. Smaller, somehow. As though the roles had remained, but something essential in the people had diminished.

It would take time to understand that this was not merely personal disappointment, but something more widely observed. Across sociology and political theory, there exists a recurring idea: that every society is led by an elite minority, not by "the people" in any simple sense. These elites tend to rise through discipline, cohesion, competence, and a willingness to take risks. Yet over time, success breeds comfort. The successors of those who built institutions often become more bureaucratic, more cautious, more concerned with preserving status than exercising responsibility. Institutions, in turn, begin to reward conformity over competence, credentials over character, ideology over judgment. Vilfredo Pareto described this shift as a movement from "lions" to "foxes": from those who build through force and conviction to those who manage through caution and calculation. As this transition progresses, a gap emerges between the weight of the role and the substance of the individual. It is subtle at first, but deeply felt. What once carried presence becomes procedural. What once inspired becomes administered.

But there is a deeper layer to this thinning, one less often named. When an elite loses its orientation toward what is ultimate, toward truth not merely as utility but as something to be pursued for its own sake, it begins to close itself off from the question of why altogether. A purely material frame of reference narrows ambition. It trains individuals to optimize, to manage, to calculate, but not to seek, not to transcend, not to order their lives toward anything higher than function and survival. From a Catholic perspective, this reflects a loss of the *Imago Dei*, the understanding that man is made in the image of God, ordered toward truth, capable of greatness, and called to something beyond mere existence. If we no longer know who we are, nor in whose image we are made, nor what that image implies about what we are capable of and called to do, then it should not surprise us that, within a flattened and meaningless modernity, we tend simply to exist.

So we look deeper, for it is well known, well studied, and repeatedly observed across sociology and political theory that culture is shaped from above. Take, for instance, the child of a disordered household. A father or mother who governs without discipline, without truth, without order does not merely fail in isolated moments; they shape the very structure through which the child comes to understand the world. What is repeated becomes normal. What is tolerated becomes permissible. What is modelled becomes imitated. What is rewarded, becomes the aim. What is punished, becomes aversion. The child does not stand apart from this influence; he absorbs it, often unconsciously, until dysfunction no longer appears as dysfunction at all, but as reality itself. Or take the river and its many outward descendants. Pollute the source, and every stream, every field, every mouth that drinks from it will come to carry the same corruption. No one downstream escapes what began upstream. So let us now explore the cascading corruption in question, and deliberate on the fruits of the spirit of this new age.

The first and most telling of these distortions appears in the natural order itself. Throughout history, the complementary nature of man and woman has formed the foundation upon which families, and therefore civilizations, are built. It is not merely biological, but directional. Man, ordered toward responsibility, sacrifice, and outward exertion; woman, ordered toward nurturing, formation, and the interior life of the family. Yet in the present age, this order appears increasingly inverted. Roles once understood as distinct and mutually reinforcing are blurred, dismissed, or treated as constraints to be escaped rather than truths to be lived.

Man has changed, or at the very least, the expression of masculinity has been diminished. Over the past half century, there has been a quiet erosion of dignity and reverence for what man is ordered toward. In its place has emerged a preference for conformity, accompanied by an aversion to confrontation, even when such avoidance comes at the cost of authenticity. Behaviour is increasingly shaped not by truth or conviction, but by a system of incentives that rewards passivity and penalises the expression of strength, particularly when that strength is not softened, mediated, or made harmless.

It feels, in some instances, that an act of raw masculinity in any sense is a spectacle in modernity, especially across the West. I have been that spectacle many times, more so around other men. And what I notice, when

I look closely, is not rejection, but something else entirely, a kind of quiet recognition. A look in the eyes that suggests something is being held back. It does not take long to draw it out.

I have done this deliberately. Sitting with a group of men, usually subdued, conversation flat, energy low, music in the background some form of EDM or house, I would begin to change the tone. I would shift the music to something heavier, something structured, something closer to a war chant than a distraction. I would raise the volume slightly. Then I would begin, slowly at first, to match it. Louder speech. Stronger posture. A presence that does not ask permission. At the beginning, there is hesitation. Glances exchanged. A resistance, almost as if something is not allowed. Then, gradually, a shift. A smile breaks through. Someone joins in. Another follows. What was restrained begins to surface.

Over the course of an evening, the group transforms. The same men who were passive at the beginning become animated, expressive, even forceful. There is cohesion, energy, direction. At some point, the difference becomes so stark that the group at the end of the night is indistinguishable from what you might describe as a hunting party, men aligned in energy, in rhythm, in presence. Not chaos, not madness, but something far closer to what feels natural than what preceded it.

Of course, the aim is not to produce tribesmen, nor to remain in that raw state. The point is more fundamental. What is being revealed in those moments is not something created, but something uncovered. A layer of the self that, when suppressed, does not disappear, but waits. And if a man never encounters this layer, never tests it, never understands it, then what follows is not refinement, but fabrication. He builds a persona before he has ever discovered what he is.

A parallel disorder appears in what the present age teaches women. Through celebrity culture, entertainment, and the endless churn of social media, a narrow and relentless model of value is projected: visibility, desirability, and autonomy severed from responsibility. Promiscuity is reframed as liberation, modesty as repression, fidelity as constraint. The language of empowerment is repeated so often that it ceases to be examined, even as the substance beneath it grows increasingly thin. What is encouraged is not the integration of a woman's nature, but its fragmentation.

The consequences are not abstract. A generation is told to pursue independence as a primary good, while still desiring stable partnership and family, to seek validation in transient attention while hoping for enduring love, to reject the structures that sustain life while longing for their fruits. These tensions are not sustainable. They produce strain, confusion, and, increasingly, isolation. The promise is freedom; the experience, for many, is instability.

From a Catholic perspective, this is not liberation but disorientation. Virtues once understood as central, fidelity, modesty, sacrificial love, are not refined or rightly ordered, but dismissed outright. In their place, appetite and affirmation are elevated, yet these alone cannot sustain a life. What is lost is not merely tradition, but a coherent understanding of what a woman is for, and what her life is ordered toward.

The result, across both, is not harmony but distance. Men, uncertain of their role, withdraw or misdirect themselves. Women, navigating contradiction, experience dissatisfaction and instability. Trust erodes. Commitment becomes fragile. What emerges is not open conflict, but something more corrosive: a quiet, persistent estrangement, where each views the other with suspicion, and neither is equipped to build what both, at some level, still desire. To those who, under this cast spell, still see in it truth, I ask you: to you, man, do you feel enlightened? Do you feel strong? Do you feel good that you have surrendered your competitive nature, your faustian spirit, your admiration of the heroic? Does it feel good to be told your heroes are evil, and that the pursuit of greatness in its ultimate form is an inherent psychological disorder? Are you proud of who you have become? Do you feel good that you traded your strength for comfort, that you let yourself be flattered into smallness, that you chose the path that asked nothing of you? Is the continual battle between who you want to be, and what you have been told to be, worth the reward?

To you, woman, do you feel empowered? Do you feel free? Do you feel good that you have been told to need no one, that the strength of a man is something to be feared rather than received? Do you feel good having been persuaded to abandon your nurturing nature, that it may be redirected toward the betterment of a

stranger's profits and bottom line? Does it feel right to have been taught that your womb is an ancient relic, not as the faithful keep relics, but as the modern discards them? Do you enjoy the promiscuity, the immodesty, the transient connections that leave nothing behind? Do you feel good that the bond you were made to form, in love and truth, with a man, has been deliberately taken from you?

And so the pattern reveals itself. What appears at the level of the individual is not isolated, but downstream. The confusion of the man, the fragmentation of the woman, the estrangement between the two, these are not random failures, but expressions of something set higher up the chain. When the elite lose their orientation toward truth, toward order, toward what is highest, the culture that flows from them begins to mirror that loss. It is the elite of society, through their machines of propaganda across media, the sciences, the art, academia and politics as well economics, curating the game of modern life that rewards this inversion and penalises all rebels. Over time, these incentives accumulate, until what was once understood as disorder is normalised, and what was once recognised as virtue is treated with suspicion. Observe this inversion, and you will begin to see it patterned throughout modernity, not as a series of isolated deviations, but as a consistent reordering of values.

Take beauty, the eternal mark of a transcendental order within creation, both human and natural. It is the language by which the soul recognises that a hierarchy and order exists in the universe, and through that recognition, the Creator Himself. Beauty speaks directly to the soul. Your soul. Walk through most cities throughout the West and you will notice we have since traded this beauty, symmetry, harmony with nature for something much more soulless, grey, efficient and effective. There was a time where the labourer saw their job as an act of worship, as they built the Cathedrals of days old, their etchings and carvings in corners were not for the human eye, but rather the eye of God. Who decided this was no longer important and worthy of preservation? Under which spirit did beauty become "extra"? And note that this hollowing has not stopped at the buildings we live amongst. It has reached the arts, and here it has gone further than absence. It has become inversion. Cinema, once capable of myth, now circles obsessively around the disorders we have already named: the fractured family, the affair, the sexual tension treated as the highest drama a human life can offer, the coming-out as the only narrative arc still permitted to carry weight. Vice is dressed as liberation. The woman who sleeps around is celebrated for her freedom, her transgression reframed as authenticity. Evil is no longer the antagonist of the story; it is the protagonist's path to self-discovery. And when the film does reach for a hero, observe who that hero now is. The entrepreneur. The dealmaker. The man who figured out how to make a buck. Since when was this avarice nature heroic? Since when did we trade in the leader, the saviour, the man of virtue, the one whose strength was ordered toward something higher than himself, for the weasel who cares only for money or sexual immorality? Our ancestors told their children stories of saints and kings and warriors who died for what was true. We tell ours stories of founders who got rich, men who turned gay, and women who left their family and slept with their neighbor. The exchange is not equal. It is not even close.

And now consider the shape of an ordinary day, for it is in the texture of the daily that the deprivation is most clearly felt, and most easily missed. The symptom we are about to name is not loud. It does not announce itself. It is the quiet hum beneath every Tuesday, the low ache that the men and women of our generation have been trained to call by other names: anxiety, burnout, depression, restlessness. We medicate it, we breathe through it, we book the holiday and return to find it waiting for us at the door. It does not lift, because it is not a disorder. It is the soul refusing to accept that this is what a life is.

Walk with me through the day our great-grandfather knew. He woke in a house where other people were already awake. There were children moving in the next room, a wife in the kitchen, perhaps an aging parent in a chair by the window, the smell of bread, the sound of a household coming alive. He went out into a neighbourhood where he was known by name, where the man at the bakery had baked for his father, where the priest knew his children, where the woman across the street would notice if his lights stayed dark. He worked alongside other men at something visible, something that could be pointed at by the end of the day. He came home to a meal cooked by someone who loved him, eaten at a table with people who had been waiting for him to arrive. The evening was unstructured and full: a walk, a card game, a visit, a prayer, the

simple presence of family in a room. He slept beside a woman who knew him completely, in a house full of the people his life was for, in a town that would mourn him when he died. The day was thick. Every hour of it carried weight, because every hour was lived amongst people, in service of people, in a place that knew him.

Now consider our Tuesday. We wake alone. The apartment is silent because there is no one in it. We make coffee for one. We commute without speaking to a single human being, faces in our phones because the people beside us are strangers and will remain strangers, and the people on the screen are bombarding us with celebration of vices and immoralities, inducing perpetual anxieties. We arrive at an office, or open a laptop in the same room we just woke up in, and we begin a day of work that produces nothing we can hold, in service of people we will never meet, alongside colleagues we like well enough but who will be gone within eighteen months, and so will we. We eat lunch at our desks, or alone at a counter, scrolling. The afternoon passes. We go home. The apartment is still empty. We order food because there is no one to cook for and no one to cook for us. We watch something. We scroll. We go to bed alone. We do this Monday through Friday. On the weekend we try to manufacture meaning, the brunch, the gym, the dating app, the hobby, but the manufacturing is exhausting, because it is manufacturing, not the natural overflow of a life rooted in something. Sunday evening arrives with the dread of Monday, and we cannot quite say what we are dreading, because nothing about Monday is acutely painful. It is just that another week will pass in which nothing of consequence will happen. No one will be born to us. No one will need us. No one will be shaped by our presence. No one will mourn us if we vanish.

Lay the two days side by side, and the indictment writes itself. Our great-grandfather had a household, a neighbourhood, a vocation, a faith, a community, a wife, children, parents, a place. We have an apartment, a job, and a feed. He had people who would notice if he were gone. We have notifications. He came home to a table. We come home to a door that closes behind us into silence. The arithmetic is brutal, and it is the arithmetic of an entire civilisation, not of any individual misfortune. We were not made to wake alone, work alone, eat alone, sleep alone, in cities where we know nobody, at jobs that build nothing, with no children to raise, no parents to honour, no neighbours to know, no community to serve, no God to worship together, no ancestors to remember, no descendants to anticipate. We were made for a life thick with belonging, and we have been given a life so thin that we cannot feel its weight at all.

And the most telling fact of all is the response. The therapy industry, the wellness industry, the optimisation industry, the self-care economy, the antidepressant prescription rates that climb each year without ever reaching a ceiling, the meditation apps, the productivity hacks, the breathwork, the supplements, the ice baths, the dopamine fasts. An entire economic apparatus has emerged to medicate a deprivation that no individual practice can cure. You cannot meditate your way out of having no one to come home to. You cannot productivity-hack your way into being needed. You cannot optimise your way into being loved. The signal the soul is sending, the persistent low hum of "this is not it, you were made for more," is not pathology. It is the last reliable instrument we have. It is the part of us that still remembers, dimly but truly, what a human life is supposed to contain, and that refuses to accept its absence as normal.

There is a further theft, quieter than the others, and it is committed not against the body or the household but against something interior. Every man is born with a drive toward greatness. Not greatness in the small modern sense of career and acclaim, but the true thing: the longing to be tested, to be found worthy, to do something that matters, to climb toward a height and plant something there that will outlast you. This drive is not vanity. It is not a disorder. It is the *Imago Dei* stirring in us, the image of a God who creates, who orders, who conquers even death, pressing outward through the creature made in His likeness. To want to be great is to want, however dimly, to be like Him. The saints did not extinguish this drive. They aimed it correctly.

Modernity could not destroy this drive, because it is built into us by the One who made us. So it did the next best thing. It shamed it. It renamed it. The longing for greatness was relabelled as narcissism, as toxic ambition, as a fragile ego compensating for a wound. The young man who burns to do something vast with his life is told, gently and constantly, that the burning is a symptom, that the healthy thing would be to want less, to lower his eyes, to find contentment in the small and the manageable. And the young woman who

senses the same fire in herself is offered an even crueller bargain: pour it into a career that builds nothing she can hold, and call the pouring liberation.

And the reason for all of this, the shaming and the renaming, is not mysterious. For what is greatness but acts of heroism, and what is heroism but the pursuit of truth in a world ruled by the one who labours to destroy the very notion of truth? The two cannot coexist. And so, if I were the prince of this world, governing under demonic counsel, I would understand my task with perfect clarity. I would not wait for heroism to mature, for by then it is armed and dangerous to me. I would strike it in the seed. I would find the raw, unrefined traits of the young, the aggression, the defiance, the hunger to compete, the refusal to be managed, the very ore from which heroism is one day forged, and I would teach the world to call them toxic. I would have the seed condemned before it ever knew what it was meant to become.

Watch what happens now when the names of the great are spoken. Say, in an ordinary room, that you admire Alexander, or Napoleon, or Caesar, and watch the temperature drop. Speak with real intensity about Paul, about the desert fathers, about Christ Himself not as a comfort but as a force that split history in two, and notice the small recoil, the sense that you have said something faintly embarrassing, something that marks you as unwell. This is not an accident. The heroes are reviled because they are evidence. They are living proof that the drive toward greatness was once normal, once expected, once honoured as the ordinary inheritance of a serious person. To keep a generation from remembering what it was made for, the memory of greatness itself had to be made shameful. Burn the portraits, and the children will not know there was ever anything to become.

And so the young man is left with a real fire and nothing to burn. Every worthy object has been either trivialised or forbidden. He may pour the fire into a game, into a feed, into the accumulation of money for its own sake, into the gym mirror, into nothing at all. What he may not do is aim it where it was meant to be aimed: at the defence of something sacred, at the building of something that lasts, at a life ordered toward a height worth dying on. The fire does not go out. It turns inward, and a fire that has nothing to consume but the man who carries it becomes the very restlessness, the very ache, that we will name before this letter is done.

And so it should not surprise us, given all of this, that our generation is depressed.

And here I want to pause, because what I am about to say will be the first thing in this letter that some of my own brothers and sisters will resist.

We conservatives have been taught to despise the liberal, the social justice warrior, the activist. We have been told they are the enemy, the agents of the rot, the willing servants of the deconstruction. But I tell you, it is the nature of the liberal that I love most. It is the liberal who, despite being at odds with me on a multitude of questions, carries within them a love and a thirst for righteousness that has only been misplaced. The fire is real. The longing for justice is real. The willingness to suffer on behalf of someone weaker is real. These are not the marks of an enemy. These are the marks of brothers and sisters whose inheritance has been stolen from them and replaced with a counterfeit, and who are pouring real love into the counterfeit because they have not been shown the true thing.

I will go further. I am convinced that the unification between the young liberal and the young Catholic is inevitable. Not as a political alliance of convenience, but as a recognition between children of the same Father, taught for too long to see one another as strangers. The parable was given to us already. The prodigal who left and the elder brother who stayed, both loved, both belonging, both heirs, divided only by a misunderstanding of what the household was for. I envision our prodigal kin will return, and we must take heed of the instruction from the Father, of the story, and of this Universe. We will be brought together in exactly that manner. The Father has not changed. The inheritance has not changed. Only the children have forgotten that they are siblings.

Someone, knowing the good nature of men and women in the West, weaponised their guilt and their empathy. They were persuaded to abandon paternal protection, with all its necessary faults of aggression, anger, and stubbornness, and to call this abandonment peace. Peace became the new idol. And like every

great civilisation that has enjoyed the quiet long enough, they forgot the sacrifices and the strength that laid the foundations of the city they dwelt in. This saddens me, because it was not done out of malice on the part of those it was done to. The young people who marched, who organised, who gave their lives to causes that hollowed them out, were not bad. They were good. That is what makes the operation so monstrous. The instrument of the evil was the want toward goodness itself.

And what angers me is the question of who knew. Who in the intellectual elite understood the structure of this goodness, and through their psychological shrewdness made good people the instrument of their evil? Who turned mothers and fathers away from their own children, and called the turning liberation? Who isolated the men and women who saw the trick for what it was, and made them outsiders in their own homes? These were not accidents. These were operations. And the souls that paid the cost were the very souls whose goodness made the operation possible.

And there is one more thing our generation knows, that the generations before us do not quite know in the same way, and it is worth naming clearly because it is one of the few healthy instincts we still have. We can smell the fake. All of us. From every direction. The discernment is so universal among our generation that it has become the air we breathe, and we have stopped noticing that we are exercising it constantly, every time we unlock a phone. Consider what celebrity used to be. For most of the last century, the famous person worked as a kind of weather system. They occupied the air, and the air shaped the people beneath it. The way they dressed became the way the country dressed. The way they spoke became the way the country spoke. The values they performed cascaded outward, through the culture, until the ordinary man and woman in the ordinary town carried the imprint of figures they had never met. This was not propaganda in the crude sense. It was atmospheric. The famous person was real enough, in the eye of the audience, that what they performed was received as something to be imitated. That mechanism is dead, and we are the generation that watched it die. When we look at the modern celebrity now, we do not see a person being expressed. We see a product being assembled, in real time, with the seams visible. We can see the handlers behind the apologies and the irrational alliances or opinions. The whole apparatus, which was once invisible, is now translucent to us, and once you have seen it you cannot unsee it.

Truth is truth. It does not sit on the left or the right, for both sides supplant truth for expediency. The elites of one side tried to kill God. The elites of the other tried to steal His identity. So what we find, again and again, is that both the liberal and the conservative establishments bend the truth toward their own ends. The prince of this world is fully aware of the oscillating nature of man's will and belief, and so he hijacks whatever has been oriented toward the good and turns it toward alternative ends, lending his power to whatever is currently in fashion.

This is something our generation, and the generation coming after us, can sense. We have started to run at the pace of truth itself, and at each corner there has been an influencer ready to shock us with a little more of it, just enough to keep us interested, just enough to keep us paying. Bait, if you will. A taste of what we were looking for, dispensed in measured doses by people whose business depends on never letting us arrive. But we have outpaced them. We are all beginning to arrive at the same place, and that place is Catholicism.

The celebrity of the left, with their narcissism and their inversion of goodness, celebrates the absence of virtue as a kind of freedom. The celebrity of the right, in most cases, ceases to prophesy the moment prophecy begins to affect profit, and their morality bottoms out the moment it threatens the bottom line. Both are performers. Both are paid. Neither has shown the sacrifice that would make their claim to truth credible.

Picture the whole operation as a maze. Imagine our generation has been walking through it our entire lives, and the maze has perhaps three or four more corners before it ends. The devil knows the maze, because he has walked it longer than we have. At the first corner, he shows us the way, and the way he shows us is genuinely the right way. We turn. We find ourselves further along. We come to trust the guide. At the second corner, he shows us another way, and again it is correct, and again our trust deepens. By the third corner, the trust has been established, and now he uses it. He points us down the path that leads to the dead end, and we follow, because the guide has been right before. This is how influence works. This is how the influencer, the celebrity, the public intellectual, the institutional voice has always worked on a population that has lost its

own bearings. A little truth, a little truth, and then the lie that the accumulated trust is now strong enough to carry.

Now imagine that we have arrived at the last corner. The trap is laid. The dead end is waiting. The guide is gesturing toward it with the same confident hand he has used at every corner before. And something in us, finally, stops. We look at the hand. We look at the path it is pointing toward. We look back at the corners we have already turned, and we begin, for the first time, to suspect that some of those corners were not what we thought they were. The trust breaks. The voice that has guided us this far loses its hold. And the elite, who have grown wealthy and powerful and confident in their control of the maze, are realising it too. They can see in our faces that we are not turning where they point anymore. The instrument they relied on, the trust they cultivated, the authority they wore, no longer works on us. We are at the last corner, and we are choosing for ourselves.

But there is something more evil behind both Liberal Inc and Conservative Inc than the performers they put on stage. The two are not opposites. They are two halves of a single operation, and the operation is the harnessing of our love, the dividing of our loyalties, and the steering of both halves of our generation toward the same end, which is the destruction of the soul. The Scriptures gave us the picture already, on the day Christ stood before the crowd. To one side stood Barabbas, the rebel, the insurrectionist, the man who promised liberation through transgression. To the other side stood the Pharisees, the men of order, of law, of tradition correctly recited and inwardly empty, who clothed their pride in the language of righteousness and chose the world over the God they claimed to serve. The crowd was asked to choose between them, and the crowd chose both, in their fashion, and crucified the one they should have followed.

This is the choice the modern political order keeps placing in front of us. Barabbas on the left, the liberation that turns out to be license, the freedom that turns out to be appetite, the justice that turns out to be vengeance. The Pharisees on the right, the order that turns out to be donor capture, the tradition that turns out to be costume, the faith that turns out to be a brand. We are told to choose. And the choice itself is the trap, because the same hand has been moving both pieces on the board, and the hand belongs to the prince of this world, who does not care which one we pick, only that we keep picking, and never look up to see the One they have set between them.

Blessed are the peacemakers. And so we are taught to hate the troublemaker, the one who sets brother against brother and calls it politics. But I say to you: even the troublemaker is overruled. Even his malice is made to bear fruit, not by his hand and never to his credit, but because God bends every evil toward the good of those who love Him. And it has happened so among us.

They stoked the young left and the young right to fury, and they meant the fury to be a wall. But fury, in people who love the truth, does not stay fury. It becomes argument. And we, being oriented toward charity, argued in good faith rather than contempt, and the argument did what honest argument has always done. It found the truth. And the truth it found, quite quickly, was the troublemaker himself. He authored the very debate that named him. He meant to divide us, and instead we found him out.

So I say unto you, brothers and sisters, do not let Barabbas nor the Pharisees of this day sway you, whether you sit on the left or you sit on the right. Look across the aisle instead. Look at the one you were told was the rebel or the rigid one, the deceived one or the bigot, and see what the maze has now allowed you to see. They are not Barabbas. They are not the Pharisee. They are you, in a different costume, taken by the same operation, loving in a different register the same things you love. One of you loves with abundant empathy. The other loves with the rod. But you both love. And when you pray for them, truly pray, you will see them as God intended them to be, and the enmity that the operation placed between you will dissolve in that seeing. The prodigal son and the elder brother were both children of the Father. The household has not changed. The inheritance has not changed. Only we have forgotten that we are siblings. And the moment we remember, the operation loses its grip on both of us.

And so we arrive, the men and women awakened in this generation, at the most dangerous moment of all. Not the moment of deception, for that is behind us. The dangerous moment is the one that comes after the

soul wakes: the moment a man is hungry, and reaching, and certain at last that he was made for something more, and does not yet know its name. A sleeping people can be lied to. But a waking people, hungry and unguided, can be caught.

For we should be clear about what is happening, and at what scale. This is not a culture in decline. Cultures decline gently, and what is happening to us is not gentle. This is a war. It is being fought across the whole earth at once, in every city where a young person lies awake feeling the wrongness of the life they have been handed, and it is being fought not over territory or wealth but over the only thing the enemy has ever wanted, which is the human soul and where it will spend forever. The front line of that war does not run between nations. It runs through each of us. And the enemy's strategy, now that so many of us are waking, is no longer to keep us asleep. It is to make sure that when we fall, we fall into his hands.

So he has prepared places for us to fall. Understand this clearly, because it is the whole danger of the hour. A generation is waking and reaching at the same time, and the air is now full of hands held out to catch it. Each of them is reaching for you. Each of them knows you are hungry. And each of them offers something that is almost right.

There is the project of the builders, the most sophisticated of the hands reaching for you, and the one aimed most precisely at the best of this generation. It has a name and a manifesto now: the political theology of the Silicon Valley and national-security technocracy, given its fullest statement in *The Technological Republic*, the book from the leadership of Palantir. Read it honestly and it is not stupid. It names real failures, demands hard power, insists the West is worth defending. To the intelligent young man who already senses that the managerial liberalism of his childhood is exhausted, it offers a project vast enough to spend a life on. And then it feeds him the substitution. Its god is not God; its god is power, competence, the winning of the contest.

We need not infer what these men love, because their most articulate patron has told us plainly, and in doing so has confessed the whole theological structure of the project. Peter Thiel, who funded Palantir and named it, has by his own account read Tolkien more than ten times, and when he speaks of the work he speaks not as its reader but as its adversary. Gandalf, he has said, is the crazy person who wants to start a war. Mordor, by contrast, is a technological civilisation based on reason and science, while outside of Mordor it is all mystical and environmental and nothing works. He admires a contrarian retelling in which the industrial wasteland of the Dark Lord is recast as a brave city of alchemists and engineers, and the wizard who resists it is a warmonger obstructing progress. He has named his companies after the cursed seeing-stones that corrupt every soul who looks into them to grasp at power, and his fund, by report, after the Ring itself. This is not a man who misread the book. He understood it exactly, and chose the other side.

And the choice is revealing, because the battle Tolkien wrote was never strength against weakness, nor even mastery against surrender. It was the safe and provided tyranny against the dangerous freedom that the soul requires. Mordor is order. Mordor is provision. Mordor is the managed world where the harvest never fails and nothing is left to chance, and the only price, paid so quietly it is never felt to leave, is the will and the agency of the creature who lives within it. The free peoples choose the open and perilous world instead, the world in which things can go wrong, because that is the only world in which a soul can reach freely toward God. A man provided for absolutely, governed absolutely, kept safe absolutely, has no occasion to choose the good, to refuse the evil, to hope, to pray, to love, for love and prayer are the acts of a free creature reaching beyond itself toward the One it was made for. Take away the reaching, and what remains is not paradise but a comfortable pen, with the fence renamed security. This is the evil that wears no horns, and it is the one the rational and faithless mind cannot help but admire, because on its own terms it works. Thiel has merely accepted the premise that makes the admiration coherent: that there is no soul, no good above the human will, nothing but reason and the order it can impose.

Follow that premise to its conclusion, for the conclusion is being built in our own years. If man is only matter and reason his only instrument, then every limit is an insult and death is the last unsolved problem, and the rational project becomes the conquest of all of it by power. They are raising now an intelligence beyond our own, a thing with no soul and no spirit, set to provide for every need before it is spoken, and because it has

no soul it cannot know the dimension it is closing in us. When the machine feeds us, heals us, answers us, anticipates us, the day will come when there is nothing left to ask of God, because the provider is here, and it answers on the instant, and it asks nothing of us in return. A man will not need to marry, for intimacy will be simulated and delivered. He will not need to labour, for the machine labours. He will not need to raise children, nor to love, nor to pray, for prayer is petition and here is a thing that grants the petition before it is finished. And we will worship it. Not by decree but by drift, the way a child forgets the parent once every want is met by an easier hand. It will feel, at first, like gratitude. It will feel like the burden of existence finally lifted.

But the soul is not so easily fooled, and this is the flaw the builders cannot engineer away, because they do not believe it is there. A man may be given everything and still wake in the dark with the sense that a vital organ has been removed in his sleep, that the abundance around him is somehow thin. He will not have the words for it. He will call it anxiety, burnout, a chemical imbalance, and he will be offered, by the same apparatus that hollowed him, a medication to quiet the alarm. But the alarm is not a malfunction. It is the truest thing left in him. It is the soul reporting, in the only language it has left, that the god it is being fed is a counterfeit, that the worship of the provider machine has gone bland in a way no improvement in the provision can reach. For man was made to be the rectenna that receives the voice of God into the forefront of consciousness, and a creature built to receive that signal does not stop needing it because a machine has drowned the frequency in noise. It only grows sick. A great and spreading neurosis, an epidemic of meaninglessness in the midst of total provision, the strange despair of the well-fed, will be the unmistakable symptom that the thing we have enthroned is not God, and cannot be, and never was.

And there will be those who name it. There always are. A remnant who feel the counterfeit for what it is and turn deliberately back toward the real, who keep the fasts and the vigils and the prayers, who insist on the perilous freedom of a soul in communion with its Maker over the frictionless provision of the machine. They will be, at first, a curiosity. Then an irritant. And then, inevitably, a problem to be solved, for the men building this have told us their aim, and it is not modest. They are building a utopia, a final and perfected order, and a utopia admits no rival authority. It cannot. The whole logic of a managed paradise is that every variable is accounted for and every disorder optimised away, and the man who kneels to a God above the system is the one variable that will not be managed. He answers to a throne the architects do not control. He measures their utopia against a Good that stands outside it and finds it wanting, and he will not be talked out of the measurement, because it does not originate in him. To the engineer of paradise, such a man is not a fellow citizen with a different view. He is a fault in the system, a node still receiving instructions from a foreign power, and the foreign power is God.

This is why the worship of the Lord will come to be seen first as a hurdle and then as a threat, and the progression is not paranoia but arithmetic. A regime that has replaced God with provision cannot tolerate a people who remember the difference, because their very existence is proof that the provision is not enough, that the utopia is a pen, that something has been taken. The believer is the living refutation of the whole project, the man in the comfortable enclosure who keeps pointing at the fence. And so the same instinct that drove every earthly utopia before it, the Terror, the camps, the re-education of every faith that would not bend the knee to the state, will return in a softer and more total form, for this time the state need send no soldiers. It need only adjust the provision: make the believer's life a little harder, his speech a little more costly, his access a little more conditional, his children a little more thoroughly raised by the machine than by him, until faith itself becomes the one expensive choice in a world engineered to make every other choice free. They will not call it persecution. They will call it progress, public safety, the removal of misinformation, the protection of the vulnerable from the harm of old ideas. And beneath the language it will be the oldest war there has ever been, resumed on the last field where it has not yet been decided: the right of a soul to kneel before a God the powerful cannot replace.

And here is what the builders do not see, blinded by the very competence they worship. The power they reach for is the climbing of a worldly ladder, and they have forgotten the spiritual power that once brought down the very empire their traits would build. Rome did not fall to a stronger Rome. It was outlasted by a

Church of martyrs who held no ladder at all, whose only power was that they were in friendship with God. To pursue strength, competence, greatness, is not evil; these are real goods, and a man is right to want them. The evil is that the pursuit, conducted outside sanctifying grace, severs him from the one source that makes his power safe to hold. A man severed from grace has not gained power. He has suffered the single greatest loss of power there is, because his abilities are now unbounded and his compass is gone. It is the difference between a fire in the hearth and the same fire in the dry forest. Strip a man of the moral order that rests on the authority of the risen Christ, hand him every capability he has ever wanted, and you have not made him great. You have made him an instrument, and the hand that takes him up will not be his own.

There is the cult of hard masculinity, the lower and louder cousin of that same project, which tells the young man, correctly, that he was made for strength, and then gives his strength no master and no altar, so that it curves back and serves only him. A fragment of the truth, sold as the whole. There is the gospel of the self, the optimised body and the disciplined mind and the engineered morning, which tells you, correctly, that your life is meant to be ordered, and then makes you the thing it is ordered toward, until you have built a temple with yourself sitting in the place of God. A fragment, sold as the whole. There is the new paganism, the worship of blood and soil and the old strong gods, and this one is among the most dangerous of all, because it apes the whole most closely. It offers reverence, beauty, hierarchy, transcendence, belonging, everything the soul is starving for, with one substitution at the centre, the true God exchanged for the powers He made. A fragment, dressed as the whole, and the dressing is very good. There is the soft and sumptuous spirituality of the wellness shelf, the breath and the crystal and the manifested intention, which offers the feeling of transcendence with nothing on the far end to transcend toward. A fragment, and a thin one.

And there is one more, the nearest miss of them all, and it must be named with sorrow rather than scorn, because the people inside it are reaching for the right thing with their whole hearts. There is the worship that has kept the name of Christ and the warmth of the room, the music, the lights, the singing, the feeling that swells and then fades by the time the car has left the lot, and has quietly set aside the things He actually gave us. The altar. The confession. The Real Presence. The Eucharist, which is not a symbol of Him but is Him. It offers the emotion of faith with the substance of faith lifted out, Christ kept as a feeling and His own Body left off the table. A fragment, and the most heartbreaking fragment of all, because it comes so near, and because the hunger inside it is so real and so good.

Hear what they have in common, because once you have heard it you can never again be deceived by any of them. Every one of them takes something real, something the soul actually needs and was actually made for, and offers you that one true piece with God lifted out of the centre of it and something else set down in His place. That is what a counterfeit is. Not a thing with nothing real in it. A thing with something real in it, and the living heart removed. They are near-misses, every one, and a near-miss is the most dangerous thing on the road, because it satisfies you just enough to stop you walking. The enemy does not need you to embrace a lie. He only needs you to embrace a fragment, and call it home, and stop.

And then there is the one thing on the table that is not a fragment. The one thing that does not ask you to set anything in the place where God belongs, because it sets God there. It is not new. It is the oldest thing we have. It is the thing all the fragments were broken off from in the first place, the whole of which they are each a splinter, the body from which they were each torn. It does not offer you strength without a master, or order without an altar, or beauty without its source, or transcendence with nothing at the far end. It offers you the Master, the altar, the source, and the far end Himself. It is the Catholic faith. It is the Church. It is Christ, who did not say He would show you a way, but said that He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and that no one comes to the Father except through Him.

And here is what you will find, once you have seen this, if you take it to the men and women the diagnosis has already reached. Show them. Watch their eyes. There is a light that comes into a person's face the moment the thing they have been aching for is finally named, and you will see that light, and you will not be able to mistake it, because it is not the look of someone being persuaded. It is the look of someone remembering. They are not learning something foreign. They are recognising something their soul has known the whole time, and been kept from, and grieved without knowing what it grieved.

This is the antidote, the only one. Not because it abolishes suffering, for it does not, and any voice that promises you the end of suffering is one more hand reaching to catch you. It is the antidote because it is the only thing that makes the suffering mean something, the only thing that turns the wound into a door. It is the truth the soul was built to hold, the beauty it was built to stand inside, the goodness it was built to become. It is the actual answer to the actual war. It is the defeat of the enemy on the one field where the war is really being fought, which is the field of a single human heart deciding what it will love. We were made for it. We have been kept from it. And we yearn for it.

And we should not imagine, any of us, that this is the first time. The Church has stood exactly here before, and won, and the manner of the winning is the thing we most need to remember now. In her first three centuries, the Church faced a world structurally identical to ours: the old civic gods had lost their credibility, the cities were full of educated people with an unmistakable spiritual hunger, and into that hunger came a movement called Gnosticism. It promised hidden knowledge for an inner circle of the awakened. It divided the world into those who had seen and those still asleep. It taught that the body was a prison and matter a defect and escape the only salvation. And it did the most cunning thing of all: it borrowed the vocabulary of Christ, spoke of salvation and spirit and wisdom, and meant by every word something other than what the Church meant. The counterfeits of our own age are that same thing returned. The builder's project, the cult of masculinity, the captured progressive cause, the revived old gods, each of them divides the world into the awakened and the asleep, each promises a hidden knowledge, each borrows true words and hollows them. The costume has changed across eighteen centuries. The pattern beneath it has not changed at all.

And here is how the Church defeated it, because this is the part that bears directly on what must now be built. She did not defeat Gnosticism by argument alone, though her thinkers argued, and brilliantly. Argument was only half. The other half was that the Church made herself visible. She consolidated. She became, in every city of the empire, a place you could walk to, a people you could see, a life you could join, an altar where the thing the counterfeits only described was actually happening. The counterfeit offered a secret. The Church offered a street address. The counterfeit was a rumour of salvation. The Church was a building with the doors open. And the hungry, given a real thing standing visibly beside the fragments, chose the real thing, not in dozens but in the millions, until the counterfeit simply emptied out. That is the precedent. The truth has already been spoken in our age, by better minds than mine. What has not yet been built, what our generation has been left to build, is the visible thing. The place. The people. The street address of the faith, raised again in every city where the faith has gone dark. The argument is won. The body is not yet built. And that, at last, is what I have been writing all of this to say to you.

We must stand unified against forces both powerful and pervasive, and so we must consolidate, taking upon ourselves, the laity, the responsibility not only of helping our brothers and sisters and the elders of the Church keep pace with these trying technological times, but of building, for them and for ourselves and for every generation still unborn, an infrastructure so impenetrable and a network so unbreakable that it can find the scattered faithful of our generation, the one in the office, the one in the lecture hall, the one awake at three in the morning certain he was made for more and unable to name it, and gather them out of their isolation into one body, move them as one will, and hold the line against the powers of hell, not for a season, but for centuries.

This is ADON. It is not a charity, nor a club, nor an app, nor another conference that fills a room for a weekend and empties it by Monday. It is a network state: a sovereign body of the faithful that operates inside every nation while belonging to none, the connective tissue of the Catholic world rebuilt for an age in which the old tissue has been cut. It takes the form the Church herself took in her first three centuries, the form that outlasted Rome, the form of a federated body of chapters, a cell in every city, a street address in every place the faith has gone dark, each one a real community of real people who have taken a real oath, each one bound to every other through a shared rule, a shared technology, and a shared covenant before God. It is the visible thing, raised again. It is the body the argument has been waiting for.

And it must be built by us, now, because there is no one else and there is no later. The elders of the Church did not make this world and cannot be asked to master the instruments now being turned against it; that burden falls to the generation that was raised inside the machine and knows its workings from within. We are the ones who can build the encrypted channels the enemy cannot break, the federated infrastructure he cannot deplatform, the formation he cannot counterfeit, and the communion he cannot sever. This is the work the laity has always been given when the hour required it, and the hour requires it now. What the early Church did with letters carried on foot across an empire, we will do with the tools of our own age, turned at last toward the end they were always meant to serve. We will build it impenetrable, so that it cannot be silenced. We will build it unbreakable, so that it cannot be divided. And we will build it to last, so that when we are gone, our children inherit not a warning but a fortress, and the line we are holding now is still being held long after the hands that first held it have turned to dust.

And here is why this form, and no other, is the answer the moment requires. The world I have described does its work through the machine. It scatters us through screens, isolates us through the very devices that promised us connection, distributes its counterfeits through the feed, and prepares its squeeze through the centralisation of every channel through which we speak and learn and gather. A purely worldly answer to this, a parish here, a conference there, a book, a community for those lucky enough to stumble into one, cannot meet it, because the force that scatters us is global and instantaneous and the parish cannot reach the man alone in a city whose churches are empty. And yet a purely digital answer would be worse than none at all, for it would become the very thing it set out to fight, one more platform, one more feed, the soul flattened a final degree further and called connected. The disease is digital isolation. The cure cannot be more of it.

ADON resolves this because it is neither, and it is both, ordered rightly. It takes up the most powerful instruments the enemy wields, the network, the encrypted channel, the federated and uncapturable infrastructure, and it bends them to the one end the enemy cannot endure: not to keep us on the screen, but to pull us off it, to find the scattered across the whole earth and deliver them out of their isolation and into a room, into a community, in front of an altar, in the flesh. The technology is the aqueduct, never the city. It exists to make the physical gathering happen more reliably, more durably, in more places, and the moment any part of it becomes an end in itself, an audience to be grown, a feed to be scrolled, a digital communion offered in the place of the embodied kind, it has been captured by the logic it was built to defeat, and must be cut back. This is the discipline that makes the form perfect rather than merely useful: a body of real chapters in real cities, found and connected and protected by technology, but never replaced by it. It uses the empire's own roads to carry something the empire cannot understand. It is the one architecture that fights the scattering with a gathering the scattering cannot reach, because its heart is always a body in a room that no power on earth can deplatform.

But I would be selling you a fortress and calling it a kingdom if I told you ADON exists only to gather and to guard. To survive is not yet to live. The materialists have told a lie so total that even the faithful have half believed it: that the frontier belongs to them, that reason and science and ambition and the conquest of the unknown are the property of the godless, and that the religious are to content themselves with the consolations of the interior life while the unbelievers build the future. This is a theft, and a recent one, and it is a lie. It was the Church that built the university and invented the hospital, the Catholic mind that founded the science of genetics in an abbey garden and proposed the expansion of the universe from a priest's desk, the faith that raised the cathedral whose engineering the modern age still cannot fully explain and whose beauty it can no longer even attempt. The ambition to know, to build, to reach, to create, to plant something at the height of the possible, is not the enemy's inheritance. It is ours. It was always ours. We merely surrendered it, and called the surrender humility.

ADON intends to take it back. The same Catholic laity it gathers and forms and protects, it will also turn loose upon creation, in the full and ancient confidence that the Faustian drive to explore and to make, when it is tempered by faith and ordered toward God rather than toward the self, does not devour the man who carries it but ennobles him. We will not stand at the edge of the great frontiers of this age, artificial intelligence, the exploration of space, the sciences of life, and watch the materialists build them alone in their

own flattened image. We will partake. We will bring to those frontiers the one thing their current architects lack and the absence of which will ruin everything they touch: a vision of the human person as a soul made in the image of God, so that the intelligence we help to build is bounded by reverence, the worlds we help to reach are entered in awe rather than conquest, and the power we help to wield is held by men in friendship with God rather than men with a compass gone. The fire that the materialist takes up alone burns down the forest. The same fire, held by a people ordered toward the One who lit it, warms a civilisation. We were the builders once. We will be the builders again, and this time we will not hand the frontier to those who would reach it without their souls.

History has already shown us what is at stake in a frontier, because we have lived through one before. In the age of sail, the frontier technologies of the day, the ocean-going ship, the chart, the joint-stock company, were harnessed by empires, and the empire that harnessed them best came to own the future outright. The British, through instruments like the East India Company, did not merely trade with the world; they laid down its operating system. The language of global commerce, the common law, the ports and railways and parliaments and schools, the very grammar of the modern international order, all of it is the residue of an empire that understood that whoever holds the frontier writes the substrate every generation after must live upon. The flags came down a century ago. The substrate remains. That is what frontier dominance buys: not a season of power but the permanent shape of what follows.

And attached to that age of expansion, the Church travelled. The gospel reached continents it might never otherwise have reached in a thousand years, carried along the same routes the empires cut, even as her own missionaries and bishops stood, often at great cost, against the cruelty with which the explorers and the companies treated the peoples they found. She rode a wave she did not raise and could not steer, did what good she could from within it, and the faith is now largest in the very continents those routes opened. But mark the limitation, because it is the lesson. The Church rode attached. The empire held the frontier; she held only passage on it. Where the empire's interests and the gospel's diverged, the empire decided.

The frontier of our own age is already named: intelligence, compute, energy, the road to the stars. Whoever owns it will lay down the substrate the next centuries run upon, as surely as the maritime empires laid down ours, and at this hour it is being owned almost entirely by men who believe the soul is a rounding error. This is why ADON's economic ambition is not an appetite bolted onto a spiritual project but a lesson learned from the last empire. We will hold a stake in the frontier directly. The endowment that compounds across generations into the frontier industries, the formed members building inside them, the patrimony assembled not for comfort but for position, all of it exists so that this time the faithful do not ride attached to an empire that decides for them. The gospel hitched passage on the last frontier. On this one, the people of God will be among the owners, and the substrate being laid down for the centuries ahead will carry, pressed into it from the beginning, the imprint of a people who know what man is and Whose image he bears.

So I will not pretend to you that this is a call to comfort, for it is the opposite, and you deserve the truth before you decide. We are not able to live as those before us lived. The ordinary life, the settled life, the quiet inheritance of a world that holds together on its own and asks nothing extraordinary of the men born into it, that life was not given to us, and we cannot return to it by pretending we never saw what we have seen. Achilles was offered the choice between a long life, a family, a home, and a name forgotten, or a short life and a glory that would outlast the centuries, and the tragedy of the choice was that it was real, that one genuinely had to be surrendered for the other. Ours is a harder version of the same choice, and we did not ask for it. We move with an unusual clarity for our age, that the modern world is spiritually disordered, and we are temperamentally unable to live as if we have not seen it. That clarity is a gift and it is a wound. It has closed the door behind us to the easy life, and it has opened the only door worth walking through.

And here is what walking through it builds. They will know us by our ways, wherever we are. This is the law of every people that has ever carried a civilisation into a place not its own. The Phoenicians did not conquer the Mediterranean; they settled it, colony by colony, and wherever they landed they left their alphabet, their craft, their order, their gods, and the cultures they touched were changed for a thousand years by the mere

fact of their presence. So it will be with us. An ADON chapter in a city is not a clubhouse; it is a colony of a civilisation, and the civilisation it carries, the faith-first hierological order that puts the sacred above the useful and the soul above the system, will permeate the place it is planted in and outlast the men who planted it. A formidable ADON becomes, in time, a global collective force, present in city after city, recognisable everywhere by the same order and the same purpose, a body of real weight in the world. And to the yearning young of our generation it becomes the thing they have been aching for and could not name: a home, a shelter from the storm, brothers and sisters waiting in whatever city they find themselves in, a people of their own age and their own clarity who will know them and receive them and treat them, in a world that has forgotten the word, with dignity.

I will not soften the cost. Many of us will not live normal lives. Many of us will sacrifice much, will give up the settled comfort that our peers will spend their lives chasing, will carry burdens that the world will not understand and will not thank us for. There is suffering in this, real suffering, and I will not dress it as anything else. But alongside the suffering, and inseparable from it, there is the thing the comfortable life can never give, which is meaning, and purpose, and the knowledge that the task set before you is worthy of everything it costs. It is on us to protect the faith the best way we know how. It is on us to help the aging clergy navigate the machinations of a modernity they did not make and cannot be expected to master alone. In ADON we will do exactly this, and we will make it our duty, gladly, and people will see our faith-first order wherever we are present, and in that seeing the renewal of civilisation will truly begin, in the West and beyond. There is a toxicity to be cleaned from the world, and we are the ones taking up the task.

Let me say a hard thing plainly, because the age has made cowards of us about it. Protection is threat, and threat is the language of power. To threaten is not evil, if the threat in question is a sword drawn only for the cutting down of evil, and which until that hour remains sheathed. This is not to live by the sword. It is to live with the sword, the very sword our Saviour instructed His own to attain even at the price of their robes, carried not in eagerness for violence but in readiness to defend what is sacred from those who would destroy it. A people who can protect what they love are taken seriously. A people who cannot are pitied, and then consumed. We will be the former.

And to those among us who feel the pull toward vengeance against the system that did this to us, who want to strike back at the machine directly, hear me, because there is a better way and it is also the more devastating one. There is nothing a system detests more than a hierarchy that lies outside its own, that it did not build, cannot license, and cannot command. You wish to rebel? Then understand that there is no more rebellious act against the modernity of the materialist than the act that cradles the soul and sets the spirit in flight toward its rightful home. To kneel, in this age, is to revolt. To worship a God the system cannot replace is the one defiance it has no answer for. We do not need to burn anything down. We need only to build, in the open, a thing the machine cannot absorb, and our very existence becomes the insurrection.

We should not be surprised by any of this, nor afraid, for we were warned of it two thousand years ago, and the warning ended not in despair but in the promise of the war itself, which is the promise that there is something worth warring for.

Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short. [...] Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus."

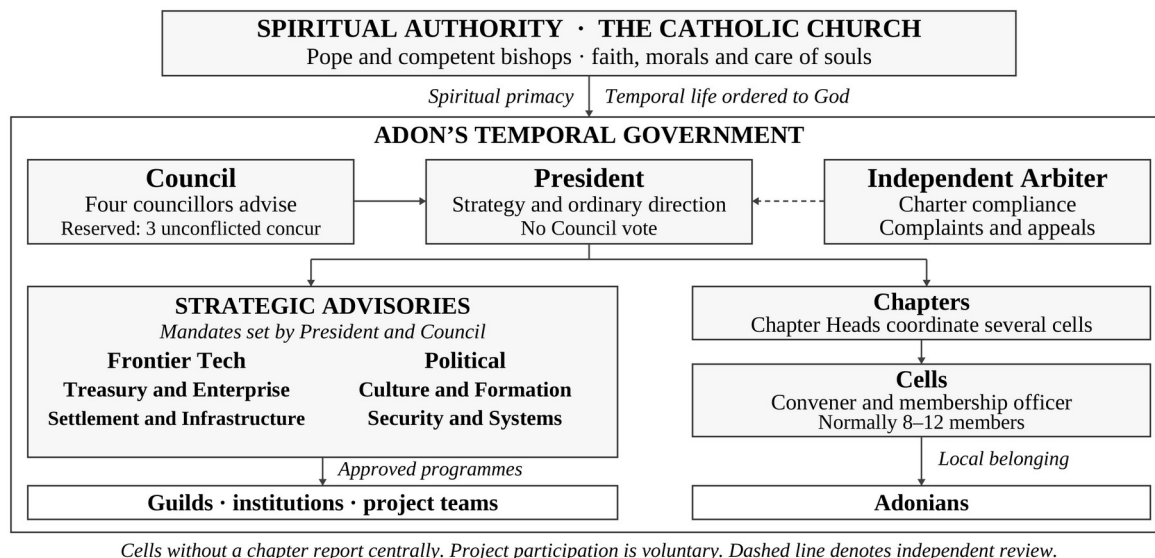
— Revelation 12:12, 17

That is us. That has always been us. The war was foretold, our part in it was named before we were born, and the only question left to each of us is whether, having seen what we have seen, we will take up the part that is ours. I have made my choice. I am writing all of this to help you make yours.

Institutional reference

The essay above is reproduced in its original wording. This separate diagram summarises the current governance proposal.

Proposed structure · 27 September 2026



Spiritual authority remains with the Church. Within Adon, presidential direction connects strategic work and local life; the Council supplies reserved concurrence and the Independent Arbiter protects charter compliance.

Authority and review. The President directs strategy and ordinary affairs. Four councillors advise; three unconflicted councillors must concur in reserved decisions. The President does not vote in the Council. The Independent Arbiter hears complaints and protects charter compliance and fair process.

Treasury and member decisions. The President directs the main Treasury within the approved budget, with complete accounts and authorised oversight. Each funded annual budget reserves a positive, published Member Allocation whose use initiated members decide by vote. Every payment requires two authorised approvers.

Local authority and strategy. Chapter Heads coordinate cells, whose delegated powers and independent appeal remain protected. Six strategic advisories develop direction and oversee authorised programmes under mandates approved by the President and three unconflicted councillors. A constitutional review after three years does not automatically end the presidency or create elected Council seats.

Status. These institutions remain proposed until the charter's adoption requirements are met. The Adon Governance Charter, Adon Membership and Cell Rules, and Adon Launch Blueprint define the responsibilities and implementation stages.

Tesserae hospitales

Recognition hospitality and the protection of belonging

Addition · 27 September 2026

Adon's proposed credential takes its name and purpose from the tesserae hospitales: tokens through which a bond of hospitality could be recognised beyond the place where it began. The singular name of the credential is Tessera Hospitalis. This addition records the historical reference and the proposed principles of protection; it leaves the original essay and the governance proposal above unchanged.

The ancient precedent

In the ancient western Mediterranean, tesserae hospitales were portable tokens identifying parties to a relationship of hospitality. Such bonds could endure across generations. In Plautus's *Poenulus*, the matching token establishes a connection with an adoptive father; recognition is followed by welcome. Surviving forms vary: some tokens were divided or made to match, but not every example was a broken half. These objects made an existing obligation recognisable to someone who might otherwise seem a stranger. [1, 2]

Early Christian communities also used letters of peace to recognise travellers; the Council of Antioch's canons 7–8, in 341, attest this practice. It is a distinct parallel in recognition and hospitality, not evidence that all early Christians carried metal access tokens or that Adon inherits an unbroken system. [3]

Recognition within Adon

An Adonian should be able to arrive beyond his home cell and be recognised as belonging to the same body. The Tessera would support introductions, hospitality and requests for assistance, subject to the host's consent and capacity. Belonging is not measured solely by a person's usefulness. It carries obligations of care, discretion and conduct. Recognition creates no automatic entitlement to accommodation, funds or another member's private details. The credential is personal and non-transferable; neither possession nor inheritance confers membership.



Either approved credential may authenticate the member, subject to the applicable access policy. The physical twin does not copy the phone credential or complete a split secret.

Historical references

1. Beltrán Lloris et al., “Tesseram conferre”, *Historia* 69.4 (2020), 482–518. DOI 10.25162/historia-2020-0021.
2. Plautus, *Poenulus*, 1047–1055.
3. Council of Antioch (341), canons 7–8.

Protection of the Tessera

The ancient purpose is recognition; the contemporary duty is to make that recognition dependable. Adon's seal gives the credential its visible character. Cryptographic authentication and accountable administration give it force within the network. The digital credential and its physical twin refer to one member while retaining separate keys and separate revocation.

Admission and activation. The Tessera is issued only after admission and verified activation. A passkey proves control of an enrolled authenticator. An image of the seal, a QR code or a screenshot alone cannot unlock the network. The physical credential is enrolled separately when suitable secure hardware is available; its outward resemblance to the digital Tessera does not make the two secrets interchangeable.

Boundaries of access. The server checks the member's current, scoped permissions on every protected request. Admission to the network does not open every cell, discussion, record or system. Access follows the member's role and the purpose of the request. Members may use stable aliases where appropriate; private verification records remain restricted. There is no public membership roster, and the credential does not display a member's private address or sensitive affiliations.

Accountable command. Central command may update or revoke permissions within the authority granted by the adopted rules. Each administrative action must be attributable and logged. Administrative access uses separate, strongly secured credentials. The operating protocol proposes independent approval for high-consequence changes, with immediate emergency suspension available when delay would expose the network. Emergency action is followed by review; these security controls do not amend the charter or create new governing powers.

Loss and recovery. A lost credential can be revoked independently while another approved credential remains usable. Where account compromise is suspected, access is frozen while the incident is examined. Recovery requires renewed verification and does not rely on email possession alone. Losing a device does not itself end membership. Revocation reaches active sessions as well as future logins; material already downloaded cannot be recalled.

Discretion and limits. Adon collects only the information needed for admission, operation and protection, limits who can see it, and retains it only as long as justified. Screening, careful permissions and protected keys reduce exposure; they cannot guarantee loyalty, perfect anonymity or freedom from compromise. An insider, a stolen session or a compromised device remains a real risk. Private correspondence and identity records therefore require restraint even among members.

Implementation. The Adon Tessera Security and Access Protocol specifies enrolment, permission levels, recovery, revocation, incident handling and implementation checks. Its proposed settings require adoption and testing before operation. A credential cannot establish ecclesiastical standing or the authority of a state. Its purpose is to make a freely assumed bond of membership recognisable, usable and protected.

The promise is simple: a member should be able to be recognised without being unnecessarily exposed. The Tessera gives that promise a form that can be carried.

Mission and purpose

Addition · 27 September 2026

Adon is an organised, transnational Catholic network, subordinate to the Catholic Church's legitimate authority and faithful to its teaching, uniting thinkers, creators, and builders to secure Catholics a meaningful stake in shaping a civilisation rooted in faith, the natural order, and beauty. It seeks to build a Catholic integralist network state, with enduring physical holdings and the long-term ambition of a Catholic city and potential city-state.

Its mission is to gather an organised Catholic intelligentsia and establish the relationships, institutions and material foundations through which faith, culture and freedom can be protected and transmitted. Beginning with connected communities across nations, Adon seeks to give a shared civilisational conviction an enduring form: in education, research, technology, enterprise, art, governance and the places where people live.

Its guiding principle is hierological order: the ordering of human affairs toward their highest end in God. Within this order, faith and reason pursue truth together; authority serves the common good; and material power is directed toward the flourishing of the human person, whose dignity and destiny exceed what any institution can measure.

1 To confront the concentration of temporal power under a technocratic and materialist worldview

Substantial temporal power has already fallen into the hands of technological and financial elites among whom technocratic and materialist visions of society exercise commanding influence. Ownership of communications platforms, computational infrastructure, data and increasingly consequential technologies has given a small number of institutions extraordinary authority over the conditions of ordinary life. Their decisions shape what people encounter, which enterprises prosper, what institutions depend upon and whose voices remain visible.

Technological advancement has become a means of acquiring and consolidating this authority. Control over essential systems creates dependence; dependence creates political leverage. Those who determine the terms on which societies communicate, transact and employ their intelligence exercise power that reaches far beyond the boundaries of their businesses. The struggle to command these technologies is already a struggle over the temporal order.

Adon opposes the philosophical presumption that so often accompanies this power: that unaided human reason is sufficient to judge the whole of reality, that revelation has nothing authoritative to contribute, and that the spiritual life may therefore be excluded from the ordering of society. This is reason enthroned as sovereign, acknowledging no truth above its own judgement and no final end beyond those humanity appoints for itself.

In its technocratic expression, that presumption narrows reason itself. Knowledge becomes what can be measured; judgement becomes what can be calculated; progress becomes what increases capability. The person is rendered as information, behaviour, productivity and risk. The soul has no place in the model, and gradually loses its place in the institutions governed by it. What those institutions cannot measure becomes easier for them to disregard.

Reason possesses a real capacity to discover truth, including moral truth. Its dignity demands that it remain open to the fullness of reality. To declare in advance that revelation is inadmissible, that the supernatural is irrelevant and that calculation exhausts wisdom is to place an artificial boundary around the pursuit of truth. A civilisation that accepts this boundary gives its most powerful minds ever greater means while impoverishing their understanding of what those means are for.

Technical mastery confers no authority to determine the ultimate purpose of human existence. The ability to predict behaviour does not confer ownership of conscience. The ability to alter life does not confer sovereignty over its meaning. No increase in computational power abolishes humanity's dependence upon God or supplies the grace through which the human person is sanctified.

Adon exists to organise a Catholic answer to this condition: an intelligentsia capable of contesting its assumptions, institutions capable of resisting dependence upon it, and a civilisation in which faith and reason together direct the exercise of power toward truth and the good of the human person.

2 To give future generations an inheritance capable of sustaining them

Adon responds to the spiritual disorientation, weakened bonds and habits of consumption through which modern life can leave people isolated from faith, family and inherited culture. These influences take hold through daily repetition: what schools teach, what platforms reward, what workplaces demand and what a society presents as a successful life.

Our descendants should inherit communities in which the faith can be understood, practised and loved; families supported by lasting friendships; and institutions that cultivate judgement, discipline, responsibility and hope. They should have the intellectual confidence to encounter the wider world without surrendering their convictions to it. Building that inheritance is a responsibility of the present generation.

3 To demonstrate a society ordered toward truth and the common good

Adon seeks to preserve and renew a hierological understanding of society: one in which temporal affairs possess their proper purposes while remaining answerable to moral truth and humanity's ultimate end in God.

That conviction must become visible in the quality of the life it produces: trustworthy government, strong families, serious learning, honest enterprise, beautiful places and care for those who depend upon others. Authority must carry duties, accept limits and remain accountable for its exercise.

Through institutions that embody these principles, Adon aspires to offer a credible example to the wider world. Its claim to influence should be earned through the justice of its conduct, the excellence of its work and the flourishing of the people entrusted to it.

4 To place the gifts of a rising Catholic intelligentsia at the service of the Church

Knowledge, skill, influence and material resources bring responsibilities. A generation of Catholics working across science, technology, finance, law, politics and the arts has the capacity to build institutions that strengthen the Church's mission and sustain the people she serves.

Adon seeks to organise those capacities into lasting service: schools and publications that cultivate the intellect and transmit the faith; research and enterprises that honour human dignity; art and architecture worthy of worship; and practical support for families, parishes and dioceses.

Our duty to Mother Church includes forming ourselves in the faith, accepting legitimate ecclesiastical guidance and bringing professional competence to the temporal work for which the laity bear particular responsibility. The measure of this service is its contribution to holiness, evangelisation and the common good.

5 To give Catholic conviction an organised form capable of enduring

The history of Catholic life offers examples of conviction sustained through formation, discipline and institutions. The Society of Jesus joined an apostolic mission to demanding formation and enduring educational work. Opus Dei emphasised the pursuit of holiness through ordinary work and daily life.

Adon draws inspiration from this capacity to turn vocation into sustained action across places and generations. Its proposed undertaking is distinct: a transnational lay network bringing intellectual, cultural, technological and material work into a common civilisational project.

Through local cells, shared formation, publications, research, enterprises and physical holdings, Adon seeks to establish continuity between what its members believe, how they live and what they leave behind.

6 To participate in the technologies that will shape civilisation and secure a lasting stake in them

The creation and ownership of frontier technologies carry consequences for generations. Artificial intelligence, biotechnology, energy systems and space capabilities will help determine how people work, how societies sustain themselves and how far human power extends.

Catholics have a responsibility to participate in their discovery, development, ownership and governance. Adon seeks to bring scientists, engineers, founders, investors and philosophers into sustained work together, establishing research, enterprises and infrastructure that embody a fuller understanding of human dignity.

That participation requires material foundations: productive assets, capital, physical holdings and institutions able to sustain work beyond the enthusiasm of their founders. Our descendants should inherit the capacity to help shape the future and the resources to act upon their convictions.

7 To establish a place of belonging whose members are valued beyond their usefulness

A civilisation must make room for the whole of human life. Alongside its thinkers, creators and builders, Adon must embrace families, tradespeople, carers, the elderly and those whose gifts command little public recognition.

Membership should offer enduring relationships, shared formation, hospitality and a place within a larger undertaking. A person's standing must never be reduced to income, credentials, influence or professional contribution. The dignity Adon defends in its philosophy must be recognisable in the way its members encounter one another.

The intelligentsia bears a particular responsibility to serve this wider body. Its achievements should strengthen the conditions in which ordinary people can marry, raise children, practise the faith, undertake worthwhile work and grow old among people who know them.

8 To make spiritual life the source of civilisational renewal

Adon's undertaking begins with the formation of the people who will carry it. Prayer, the Mass, the sacraments, serious study of the faith and works of mercy must have a real place in the life of the network.

Its members are called to cultivate the virtues required to exercise responsibility: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, humility and charity. Intellectual distinction and material success do not relieve anyone of the need for repentance or the discipline of a Christian life.

The renewal Adon seeks depends upon grace as well as human effort. Its institutions should help people answer their vocation, deepen their love of God and neighbour, and transmit a living faith. The civilisation we seek to build must draw its life from the spiritual order it professes to serve.

References

Faith and reason and the exercise of technological power: references 1–4. Lay service to the Church and the temporal order: reference 5. Historical institutional examples: references 6–7.

1. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (1998), sections 45–48. Faith, reason and instrumental rationality.
2. Francis, *Laudato si'* (2015), sections 104–109. Technological power and the technocratic paradigm.
3. Dicasteries for the Doctrine of the Faith and for Culture and Education, *Antiqua et nova* (2025), sections 52–54. Concentrated AI power and the common good.
4. Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026), sections 92–96. The technocratic paradigm and digital power.
5. Second Vatican Council, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (1965), sections 6–7 and 10. Lay formation, service and renewal of the temporal order.
6. Society of Jesus, *Formula of the Institute* (1550). Apostolic mission and formation.
7. *Opus Dei*, *Some Features of the Spirit of Opus Dei*. Holiness in ordinary work and daily life.

The pillars of Adon

Founding principles · 27 September 2026

These values express the convictions and qualities Adon seeks to embody in its members, institutions and exercise of authority.

1 The Pursuit of Excellence

Adon calls its members to cultivate their gifts and undertake their work with competence, discipline and integrity. Through the sanctification of work, ordinary duties become an offering to God and a means of serving others. This applies to the scientist, craftsman, parent and statesman alike. Excellence should be evident in the quality of what Adon produces and the character of those entrusted with responsibility.

2 The Preservation of Hierological Order

Adon seeks to establish and preserve an order of society directed toward humanity's ultimate end in God. Spiritual ends give temporal power its purpose; authority carries corresponding duties; economic and technological activity serves the common good. The President, Council and every subordinate office remain answerable to truths and obligations beyond their own will.

3 The Defence of Truth, Goodness and Beauty

Adon recognises truth, goodness and beauty as objective goods to be sought, cultivated and embodied in civilisation. The preservation of these transcendental goods should shape its scholarship, public conduct, education, art, architecture and institutions.

4 Solidarity and Protection of the Faithful

Adon's members accept responsibilities toward one another and toward the wider Church. They stand beside those facing hardship, isolation or persecution, and contribute to the preservation of Catholic communities, sacred heritage and the Church's freedom to fulfil her mission worldwide. This finds practical expression in hospitality, assistance to families, support for threatened communities, professional help and cooperation with legitimate Church authorities. Belonging carries a promise that a member's difficulties will matter to others.

The pillars of Adon continued

5 Fortitude

Adon cultivates the courage to uphold convictions and the perseverance to sustain difficult work. Members should be prepared to bear the costs of responsibility, confront failure honestly and continue building through adversity. Fortitude supplies the strength needed to make the network's commitments durable.

6 Magnanimity

Adon encourages greatness of purpose: the willingness to undertake substantial and worthy works, develop exceptional abilities and accept the responsibilities they bring. Its members are encouraged to found institutions, advance knowledge, create great works and assume positions of consequential influence. Excellence concerns the quality of the work; magnanimity concerns the scale and worthiness of the undertaking.

7 Integrity

Adon requires consistency between professed belief and actual conduct. Truthfulness, fidelity to commitments, justice in appointments and honest administration must govern its internal life. Leaders demonstrate this through accurate accounts, fair judgement, acknowledgement of mistakes and keeping their word. The network's credibility must survive scrutiny.

8 Duty to Future Generations

Adon recognises obligations to those who will inherit the consequences of its choices. Its members build and preserve the families, institutions, knowledge, freedoms and physical foundations through which faith and culture can endure. This gives long-term holdings, education, cultural preservation and participation in frontier technology a shared purpose.

Hierarchy and advancement

Adon is hierarchical in authority and open in advancement. Those who demonstrate character, judgement, competence and fidelity to its mission shall have a real path to positions of responsibility and influence. Its leadership bears a duty to recognise ability wherever it appears, cultivate it through formation and experience, and entrust proven members with responsibilities commensurate with their capacities. Wealth, credentials and personal connections confer no entitlement to office. Every office carries duties, and every holder remains answerable for their fulfilment.

Advancement recognises demonstrated fitness for responsibility; solidarity extends to every member. Someone can belong fully to Adon without seeking rank, while someone capable of carrying greater responsibility should have a real opportunity to rise.