



**Healing the Shadow Within,  
Exposing the Shadow Without**  
*A Templar Perspective on Defamation*



by Michael Henry Dunn



In the Academy Award-winning film, “Gladiator,” there is a scene about the power in a great name – and the compelling need to destroy that name in order to cripple the good work of the one who has earned that name. The loyal general Maximus – whose wife and son were brutally murdered on the orders of the usurping emperor Commodus – has returned to become the greatest gladiator Rome has ever seen, openly defying his mortal enemy the emperor, who could easily order him killed out of hand. But Maximus has won the love of the crowd – and the emperor dare not defy the mob...not even by simply poisoning his food.

As his fellow gladiators jest about this grim possibility, the beautiful and brave Nubian gladiator befriended by Maximus observes solemnly, “You have a great name. He must kill your name before he kills you.”

So it was with the original Templars, who suffered one of history's most infamous defamations. So it has always been for those who dare to expose the work of conscious evil in the world – those who dare to openly uphold the Code of Chivalry as their standard. The medieval Templar initiation ceremony warned the initiate that persecution rather than glory awaits those who swear the Oath of Chivalry. Those who undertake the path of Sacred Activism in earnest must be prepared to face this inevitable consequence of doing one's best to serve Spirit and humanity.

As Edgar Allan Poe observed, "To vilify a great man is the readiest way in which a little man can himself attain greatness."



Or as Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, "If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Do good anyway. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway. The greatest men and women with the greatest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway....Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway. It was never between you and them anyway. It is between you and God."

And yet there is always the risk of spiritual pride, of considering oneself a holy warrior who is superior to "the evil-doers." The path of Sacred Activism requires us to walk along a knife's edge, ever striving for balance between humility and impassioned service, between self-purification and the urgent need to defend the innocent.

### **Healing the Inner Shadow**

Such work is on-going and will last as long as we draw breath. The path of training in the restored Templar Order gives us a means of exposing our own inner shadows – even to the extent of revealing (and releasing) those sub-conscious blocks which can prevent us from embodying the ideals which inspire us and which we have sworn to uphold. Although cleansing introspection must be a daily lifelong habit, still we can find, even in the early stages, a place of balance from which to do our work.

And let us not take ourselves - or even our sacred quest – too seriously. None of us is indispensable in the cosmic play, which is, after all (on one level), merely the Great Game of the Divine. A sense of

irony goes a long way toward developing humility – and a finely sharpened sense of humor (especially about one’s own foibles) is a soul-saving grace. Thus the wisdom of Monty Python -



<https://youtu.be/xOrgLj9lOwk>

### **Why We Are Here – to Live a Meaningful Life**



A woman who worked for years in a hospice setting recorded the last regrets of those who were dying. They did not regret promotions not achieved, or fine houses not bought, or failure to be famous. They regretted being untrue to themselves in order to meet the expectations of others. They regretted not expressing their true feelings to those they loved. And they regretted not spending time with their real friends.

As Templars we have the rare opportunity to ensure that we do not draw our last breath in painful regret of a life unlived. We have the rare chance to joyfully realize our true soul destiny, regardless of scoffers and cynics. We can find the courage to express our love – to Spirit as well as to our loved ones. And we can choose to spend our lives in the company of true friends – those who believe in the best in us (even when we ourselves may not), and who share our sacred values and our determination to leave this world knowing in our hearts that we were true to the divine spark within us.

To do this, we will need to hold true to ourselves and our cause when we are slandered and mocked and falsely accused.

Our revered Grand Master, Prince Matthew of Thebes, has given us a deeply researched and inspired exploration of the pernicious nature of defamation. I earnestly recommend that we all familiarize ourselves with the tactics of those who choose this sadly destructive path, and especially with the core teachings of the Templar Code which encourage us all to purify (as much as possible) our own words and thoughts and deeds so that we may find that place of balance from which we can avoid gossip and defamation at all costs – while still standing bravely for truth, and acting boldly to protect the innocent.

<http://www.knightstemplarorder.org/exposing-defamation/>



May we all be blessed with the grace to find inner strength through daily meditation and prayer.

I look forward to warm fellowship with you all as soon as may be, and ask for your kind and continued prayers.

Sincerely yours in Spirit,

***Viscount Michael Henry Dunn***

***Grand Commander KTS***