

= Thelema =

Thelema (/ ˈθɛləmə /) is a religion based on a philosophical law of the same name , adopted as a central tenet by some religious organizations . The law of Thelema is " Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law . Love is the law , love under will . " The law of Thelema was developed in the early 1900s by Aleister Crowley , an English writer and ceremonial magician . He believed himself to be the prophet of a new age , the Æon of Horus , based upon a spiritual experience that he and his wife , Rose Edith , had in Egypt in 1904 . By his account , a possibly non @-@ corporeal or " praeterhuman " being that called itself Aiwass contacted him and dictated a text known as The Book of the Law or Liber AL vel Legis , which outlined the principles of Thelema . An adherent of Thelema is a Thelemite .

The Thelemic pantheon includes a number of deities , primarily a trio adapted from ancient Egyptian religion , who are the three speakers of The Book of the Law : Nuit , Hadit and Ra @-@ Hoor @-@ Khuit . Crowley described these deities as a " literary convenience " . The religion is founded upon the idea that the 20th century marked the beginning of the Aeon of Horus , in which a new ethical code would be followed ; " Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law " . This statement indicates that adherents , who are known as Thelemites , should seek out and follow their own true path in life , known as their True Will . The philosophy also emphasizes the ritual practice of Magick .

The word thelema is the English transliteration of the Koine Greek noun ?????? (pronounced [ˈθélɪma]) " will " , from the verb ????? " to will , wish , want or purpose . " As Crowley developed the religion , he wrote widely on the topic , as well as producing more ' inspired ' writing that he collectively termed The Holy Books of Thelema . He also included ideas from occultism , yoga and both Eastern and Western mysticism , especially the Qabalah .

= = Historical precedents = =

The word ?????? (thelema) is rare in classical Greek , where it " signifies the appetitive will : desire , sometimes even sexual " , but it is frequent in the Septuagint . Early Christian writings occasionally use the word to refer to the human will , and even the will of God 's opponent , the Devil , but it usually refers to the will of God . One well @-@ known example is in the " Lord 's Prayer " (Matthew 6 : 10) , ? Thy kingdom come . Thy will (??????) be done , On earth as it is in heaven . ? It is used later in the same gospel (26 : 42) , " He went away again a second time and prayed , saying , " My Father , if this cannot pass away unless I drink it , Thy will be done . " In his 5th @-@ century Sermon on 1 John 4 : 4 @-@ 12 , Augustine of Hippo gave a similar instruction : " Love , and what thou wilt , do . " (Dilige et quod vis fac) .

In the Renaissance , a character named " Thelemia " represents will or desire in the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili of the Dominican monk Francesco Colonna . The protagonist Poliphilo has two allegorical guides , Logistica (reason) and Thelemia (will or desire) . When forced to choose , he chooses fulfillment of his sexual will over logic . Colonna 's work was a great influence on the Franciscan monk François Rabelais , who in the 16th century , used Thélème , the French form of the word , as the name of a fictional abbey in his novels , Gargantua and Pantagruel . The only rule of this Abbey was " fay çe que voudras " (" Fais ce que tu veux " , or , " Do what thou wilt ") . In the mid @-@ 18th century , Sir Francis Dashwood inscribed the adage on a doorway of his abbey at Medmenham , where it served as the motto of the Hellfire Club . Rabelais ' Abbey of Thelema has been referred to by later writers Sir Walter Besant and James Rice , in their novel The Monks of Thelema (1878) , and C. R. Ashbee in his utopian romance The Building of Thelema (1910) .

= = = François Rabelais = = =

François Rabelais was a Franciscan and later a Benedictine monk of the 16th century . Eventually he left the monastery to study medicine , and moved to the French city of Lyon in 1532 . There he

wrote Gargantua and Pantagruel , a connected series of books . They tell the story of two giants ? a father (Gargantua) and his son (Pantagruel) and their adventures ? written in an amusing , extravagant , and satirical vein .

Most critics today agree that Rabelais wrote from a Christian humanist perspective . The Crowley biographer Lawrence Sutin notes this when contrasting the French author 's beliefs with the Thelema of Aleister Crowley . In the previously mentioned story of Thélème , which critics analyze as referring in part to the suffering of loyal Christian reformists or " evangelicals " within the French Church , the reference to the Greek word ?????? " declares that the will of God rules in this abbey " . Sutin writes that Rabelais was no precursor of Thelema , with his beliefs containing elements of Stoicism and Christian kindness .

In his first book (ch . 52 @-@ 57) , Rabelais writes of this Abbey of Thélème , built by the giant Gargantua . It is a classical utopia presented in order to critique and assess the state of the society of Rabelais ' day , as opposed to a modern utopian text that seeks to create the scenario in practice . It is a utopia where people 's desires are more fulfilled . Satirical , it also epitomises the ideals considered in Rabelais ' fiction . The inhabitants of the abbey were governed only by their own free will and pleasure , the only rule being " Do What Thou Wilt " . Rabelais believed that men who are free , well born and bred have honour , which intrinsically leads to virtuous actions . When constrained , their noble natures turn instead to remove their servitude , because men desire what they are denied .

Some modern Thelemites consider Crowley 's work to build upon Rabelais ' summary of the instinctively honourable nature of the Thelemite . Rabelais has been variously credited with the creation of the philosophy of Thelema , as one of the earliest people to refer to it , or with being " the first Thelemite " . However , the current National Grand Master General of the U.S. Ordo Templi Orientis Grand Lodge has stated :

Saint Rabelais never intended his satirical , fictional device to serve as a practical blueprint for a real human society ... Our Thelema is that of The Book of the Law and the writings of Aleister Crowley

Aleister Crowley wrote in The Antecedents of Thelema , (1926) , an incomplete work not published in his day , that Rabelais not only set forth the law of Thelema in a way similar to how Crowley understood it , but predicted and described in code Crowley 's life and the holy text that he claimed to have received , The Book of the Law . Crowley said the work he had received was deeper , showing in more detail the technique people should practice , and revealing scientific mysteries . He said that Rabelais confines himself to portraying an ideal , rather than addressing questions of political economy and similar subjects , which must be solved in order to realize the Law .

Rabelais is included among the Saints of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica .

= = = Francis Dashwood and the Hellfire Club = = =

Sir Francis Dashwood adopted some of the ideas of Rabelais and invoked the same rule in French , when he founded a group called the Monks of Medmenham (better known as the Hellfire Club) . An abbey was established at Medmenham , in a property which incorporated the ruins of a Cistercian abbey founded in 1201 . The group were known as the Franciscans , not after Saint Francis of Assisi , but after its founder , Francis Dashwood , 11th Baron le Despencer . John Wilkes , George Dodington and other politicians were members . There is little direct evidence of what Dashwood 's Hellfire Club practiced or believed . The one direct testimonial comes from John Wilkes , a member who never got into the chapter @-@ room of the inner circle . He describes the group as hedonists who met to " celebrate woman in wine " , and added ideas from the ancients just to make the experience more decadent .

In the opinion of Lt. Col. Towers , the group derived more from Rabelais than the inscription over the door . He believes that they used caves as a Dionysian oracular temple , based upon Dashwood 's reading of the relevant chapters of Rabelais . Sir Nathaniel Wraxall in his Historical Memoires (1815) accused the Monks of performing Satanic rituals , but these claims have been dismissed as hearsay . Gerald Gardner and others such as Mike Howard say the Monks worshipped " the

Goddess " . Daniel Willens argued that the group likely practiced Freemasonry , but also suggests Dashwood may have held secret Roman Catholic sacraments . He asks if Wilkes would have recognized a genuine Catholic Mass , even if he saw it himself and even if the underground version followed its public model precisely .

= = Aleister Crowley = =

Aleister Crowley (1875 ? 1947) was an English occultist and writer . In 1904 , Crowley claimed to have received The Book of the Law from an entity named Aiwass , which was to serve as the foundation of the religious and philosophical system he called Thelema .

= = = The Book of the Law = = =

Crowley 's system of Thelema begins with The Book of the Law , which bears the official name Liber AL vel Legis . It was written in Cairo , Egypt during his honeymoon with his new wife Rose Crowley (née Kelly) . This small book contains three chapters , each of which he claimed to have written in exactly one hour , beginning at noon , on April 8 , April 9 , and April 10 , 1904 . Crowley claims that he took dictation from an entity named Aiwass , whom he later identified as his own Holy Guardian Angel . Disciple , author , and onetime Crowley secretary Israel Regardie prefers to attribute this voice to the subconscious , but opinions among Thelemites differ widely . Crowley claimed that " no forger could have prepared so complex a set of numerical and literal puzzles " and that study of the text would dispel all doubts about the method of how the book was obtained .

Besides the reference to Rabelais , an analysis by Dave Evans shows similarities to The Beloved of Hathor and Shrine of the Golden Hawk , a play by Florence Farr . Evans says this may result from the fact that " both Farr and Crowley were thoroughly steeped in Golden Dawn imagery and teachings " , and that Crowley probably knew the ancient materials that inspired some of Farr 's motifs . Sutin also finds similarities between Thelema and the work of W. B. Yeats , attributing this to " shared insight " and perhaps to the older man 's knowledge of Crowley .

Crowley wrote several commentaries on The Book of the Law , the last of which he wrote in 1925 . This brief statement called simply " The Comment " warns against discussing the book 's contents , and states that all " questions of the Law are to be decided only by appeal to my writings " and is signed Ankh @-@ af @-@ na @-@ khonsu .

= = = True Will = = =

According to Crowley , every individual has a True Will , to be distinguished from the ordinary wants and desires of the ego . The True Will is essentially one 's " calling " or " purpose " in life . Some later magicians have taken this to include the goal of attaining self @-@ realization by one 's own efforts , without the aid of God or other divine authority . This brings them close to the position that Crowley held just prior to 1904 . Others follow later works such as Liber II , saying that one 's own will in pure form is nothing other than the divine will . Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law for Crowley refers not to hedonism , fulfilling everyday desires , but to acting in response to that calling . The Thelemite is a mystic . According to Lon Milo DuQuette , a Thelemite is anyone who bases their actions on striving to discover and accomplish their true will , when a person does their True Will , it is like an orbit , their niche in the universal order , and the universe assists them . In order for the individual to be able to follow their True Will , the everyday self 's socially @-@ instilled inhibitions may have to be overcome via deconditioning . Crowley believed that in order to discover the True Will , one had to free the desires of the subconscious mind from the control of the conscious mind , especially the restrictions placed on sexual expression , which he associated with the power of divine creation . He identified the True Will of each individual with the Holy Guardian Angel , a daimon unique to each individual . The spiritual quest to find what you are meant to do and do it is also known in Thelema as the Great Work .

= = = Cosmology = = =

Thelema draws its principal gods and goddesses from Ancient Egyptian religion . The highest deity in the cosmology of Thelema is the goddess Nuit . She is the night sky arched over the Earth symbolized in the form of a naked woman . She is conceived as the Great Mother , the ultimate source of all things . The second principal deity of Thelema is the god Hadit , conceived as the infinitely small point , complement and consort of Nuit . Hadit symbolizes manifestation , motion , and time . He is also described in Liber AL vel Legis as " the flame that burns in every heart of man , and in the core of every star " . The third deity in the cosmology of Thelema is Ra @-@ Hoor @-@ Khuit , a manifestation of Horus . He is symbolized as a throned man with the head of a hawk who carries a wand . He is associated with the Sun and the active energies of Thelemic magick . Other deities within the cosmology of Thelema are Hoor @-@ paar @-@ kraat (or Harpocrates) , god of silence and inner strength , the brother of Ra @-@ Hoor @-@ Khuit , Babalon , the goddess of all pleasure , known as the Virgin Whore , and Therion , the beast that Babalon rides , who represents the wild animal within man , a force of nature .

= = = Magick and ritual = = =

Thelemic magick is a system of physical , mental , and spiritual exercises which practitioners believe are of benefit . Crowley defined magick as " the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will " , and spelled it with a ' k ' to distinguish it from stage magic . He recommended magick as a means for discovering the True Will . Generally , magical practices in Thelema are designed to assist in finding and manifesting the True Will , although some include celebratory aspects as well . Crowley was a prolific writer , integrating Eastern practices with Western magical practices from the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn . He recommended a number of these practices to his followers , including basic yoga ; (asana and pranayama) ; rituals of his own devising or based on those of the Golden Dawn , such as the Lesser ritual of the pentagram , for banishing and invocation ; Liber Samekh , a ritual for the invocation of the Holy Guardian Angel ; eucharistic rituals such as The Gnostic Mass and The Mass of the Phoenix ; and Liber Resh , consisting of four daily adorations to the sun . Much of his work is readily available in print and online . He also discussed sex magick and sexual gnosis in various forms including masturbatory , heterosexual , and homosexual practices , and these form part of his suggestions for the work of those in the higher degrees of the Ordo Templi Orientis . Crowley believed that after discovering the True Will , the magician must also remove any elements of himself that stand in the way of its success .

The emphasis of Thelemic magick is not directly on material results , and while many Thelemites do practice magick for goals such as wealth or love , it is not required . Those in a Thelemic magical Order , such as the A ? A ? , or Ordo Templi Orientis , work through a series of degrees or grades via a process of initiation . Thelemites who work on their own or in an independent group try to achieve this ascent or the purpose thereof using the Holy Books of Thelema and / or Crowley 's more secular works as a guide , along with their own intuition . Thelemites , both independent ones and those affiliated with an order , can practice a form of performative prayer known as Liber Resh .

One goal in the study of Thelema within the magical Order of the A ? A ? is for the magician to obtain the knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel : conscious communication with their own personal daimon , thus gaining knowledge of their True Will . The chief task for one who has achieved this goes by the name of " crossing the abyss " ; completely relinquishing the ego . If the aspirant is unprepared , he will cling to the ego instead , becoming a Black Brother . Rather than becoming one with God , the Black Brother considers his ego to be god . According to Crowley , the Black Brother slowly disintegrates , while preying on others for his own self @-@ aggrandisement .

Crowley taught skeptical examination of all results obtained through meditation or magick , at least for the student . He tied this to the necessity of keeping a magical record or diary , that attempts to list all conditions of the event . Remarking on the similarity of statements made by spiritually advanced people of their experiences , he said that fifty years from his time they would have a

scientific name based on " an understanding of the phenomenon " to replace such terms as " spiritual " or " supernatural " . Crowley stated that his work and that of his followers used " the method of science ; the aim of religion " , and that the genuine powers of the magician could in some way be objectively tested . This idea has been taken on by later practitioners of Thelema , chaos magic and magick in general . They may consider that they are testing hypotheses with each magical experiment . The difficulty lies in the broadness of their definition of success , in which they may see as evidence of success things which a non @-@ magician would not define as such , leading to confirmation bias . Crowley believed he could demonstrate , by his own example , the effectiveness of magick in producing certain subjective experiences that do not ordinarily result from taking hashish , enjoying oneself in Paris , or walking through the Sahara desert . It is not strictly necessary to practice ritual techniques to be a Thelemite , as due to the focus of Thelemic magick on the True Will , Crowley stated " every intentional act is a magickal act " .

= = = Ethics = = =

Liber AL vel Legis does make clear some standards of individual conduct . The most primary of these is " Do what thou wilt " which is presented as the whole of the law , and also as a right . Some interpreters of Thelema believe that this right includes an obligation to allow others to do their own wills without interference , but Liber AL makes no clear statement on the matter . Crowley himself wrote that there was no need to detail the ethics of Thelema , for everything springs from " Do what thou Wilt " . Crowley wrote several additional documents presenting his personal beliefs regarding individual conduct in light of the Law of Thelema , some of which do address the topic interference with others : Liber OZ , Duty , and Liber II .

Liber Oz enumerates some of the rights of the individual implied by the one overarching right , " Do what thou wilt " . For each person , these include the right to : live by one 's own law ; live in the way that one wills to do ; work , play , and rest as one will ; die when and how one will ; eat and drink what one will ; live where one will ; move about the earth as one will ; think , speak , write , draw , paint , carve , etch , mould , build , and dress as one will ; love when , where and with whom one will ; and kill those who would thwart these rights .

Duty is described as " A note on the chief rules of practical conduct to be observed by those who accept the Law of Thelema . " It is not a numbered " Liber " as are all the documents which Crowley intended for A ? A ? , but rather listed as a document intended specifically for Ordo Templi Orientis . There are four sections :

A. Your Duty to Self : describes the self as the center of the universe , with a call to learn about one 's inner nature . Admonishes the reader to develop every faculty in a balanced way , establish one 's autonomy , and to devote oneself to the service of one 's own True Will .

B. Your Duty to Others : An admonishment to eliminate the illusion of separateness between oneself and all others , to fight when necessary , to avoid interfering with the Wills of others , to enlighten others when needed , and to worship the divine nature of all other beings .

C. Your Duty to Mankind : States that the Law of Thelema should be the sole basis of conduct . That the laws of the land should have the aim of securing the greatest liberty for all individuals . Crime is described as being a violation of one 's True Will .

D. Your Duty to All Other Beings and Things : States that the Law of Thelema should be applied to all problems and used to decide every ethical question . It is a violation of the Law of Thelema to use any animal or object for a purpose for which it is unfit , or to ruin things so that they are useless for their purpose . Natural resources can be used by man , but this should not be done wantonly , or the breach of the law will be avenged .

In Liber II : The Message of the Master Therion , the Law of Thelema is summarized succinctly as " Do what thou wilt ? then do nothing else . " Crowley describes the pursuit of Will as not only with detachment from possible results , but with tireless energy . It is Nirvana but in a dynamic rather than static form . The True Will is described as the individual 's orbit , and if they seek to do anything else , they will encounter obstacles , as doing anything other than the will is a hindrance to it .

= = Contemporary Thelema = =

= = = Diversity of Thelemic thought = = =

The core of Thelemic thought is " Do what thou wilt " . However , beyond this , there exists a very wide range of interpretation of Thelema . Modern Thelema is a syncretic philosophy and religion , and many Thelemites try to avoid strongly dogmatic or fundamentalist thinking . Crowley himself put strong emphasis on the unique nature of Will inherent in each individual , not following him , saying he did not wish to found a flock of sheep . Thus , contemporary Thelemites may practice more than one religion , including Wicca , Gnosticism , Satanism , Setianism and Luciferianism . Many adherents of Thelema , none more so than Crowley , recognize correlations between Thelemic and other systems of spiritual thought ; most borrow freely from the methods and practices of other traditions , including alchemy , astrology , qabalah , tantra , tarot divination and yoga . For example , Nu and Had are thought to correspond with the Tao and Teh of Taoism , Shakti and Shiva of the Hindu Tantras , Shunyata and Bodhicitta of Buddhism , Ain Soph and Kether in the Hermetic Qabalah .

There are some Thelemites who do accept The Book of the Law in some way but not the rest of Crowley 's " inspired " writings or teachings . Others take only specific aspects of his overall system , such as his magical techniques , ethics , mysticism , or religious ideas , while ignoring the rest . Other individuals who consider themselves Thelemites regard what is commonly presented as Crowley 's system to be only one possible manifestation of Thelema , creating original systems , such as those of Nema and Kenneth Grant . And one category of Thelemites are non @-@ religious , and simply adhere to the philosophical law of Thelema .

= = = Thelemic holidays = = =

The Book of the Law gives several holy days to be observed by Thelemites . There are no established or dogmatic ways to celebrate these days , so as a result Thelemites will often take to their own devices or celebrate in groups , especially within Ordo Templi Orientis . These holy days are usually observed on the following dates :

March 20 . The Feast of the Supreme Ritual , which celebrates the Invocation of Horus , the ritual performed by Crowley on this date in 1904 that inaugurated the New Aeon .

March 20 / March 21 . The Equinox of the Gods , which is commonly referred to as the Thelemic New Year (although some celebrate the New Year on April 8) . Although the equinox and the Invocation of Horus often fall on the same day , they are often treated as two different events . This date is the Autumnal equinox in the Southern Hemisphere .

April 8 through April 10 . The Feast of the Three Days of the Writing of the Book of the Law . These three days are commemorative of the three days in the year 1904 during which Aleister Crowley wrote the Book of the Law . One chapter was written each day , the first being written on April 8 , the second on April 9 , and the third on April 10 . Although there is no official way of celebrating any Thelemic holiday , this particular feast day is usually celebrated by reading the corresponding chapter on each of the three days , usually at noon .

June 20 / June 21 . The Summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere and the Winter solstice in the Southern Hemisphere .

August 12 . The Feast of the Prophet and His Bride . This holiday commemorates the marriage of Aleister Crowley and his first wife Rose Edith Crowley . Rose was a key figure in the writing of the Book of the Law .

September 22 / September 23 . The Autumnal equinox in the Northern Hemisphere and the Vernal Equinox in the Southern Hemisphere .

December 21 / December 22 . The Winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere and the Summer Solstice in the Southern Hemisphere .

The Feast for Life , celebrated at the birth of a Thelemite and on birthdays .

The Feast for Fire / The Feast for Water . These feast days are usually taken as being when a child hits puberty and steps unto the path of adulthood . The Feast for Fire is celebrated for a male , and the Feast for Water for a female .

The Feast for Death , celebrated on the death of a Thelemite and on the anniversary of their death .

= = = Contemporary Thelemic literature = = =

Aleister Crowley was highly prolific and wrote on the subject of Thelema for over 35 years , and many of his books remain in print . During his time , there were several who wrote on the subject , including U.S. O.T.O. Grand Master Charles Stansfeld Jones , whose works on Qabalah are still in print , and Major @-@ General J. F. C. Fuller .

Jack Parsons was a scientist researching the use of various fuels for rockets at the California Institute of Technology , and one of Crowley 's first American students , for a time leading the Agape Lodge of the Ordo Templi Orientis for Crowley in America . He wrote several short works during his lifetime , some later collected as Freedom is a Two @-@ edged Sword . He died in 1952 as a result of an explosion , and while not a prolific writer himself , has been the subject of two biographies ; Sex and Rockets by John Carter , and Strange Angel by George Pendle .

Since Crowley 's death in 1947 , there have been other Thelemic writers such as Israel Regardie , who edited many of Crowley 's works and also wrote a biography of him , The Eye in the Triangle , as well as books on Qabalah . Kenneth Grant wrote numerous books on Thelema and the occult , such as The Typhonian Trilogy . Lon Milo DuQuette has written several books which analyze Crowley 's system .

Other notable contemporary writers who address Thelema include Allen H. Greenfield , Christopher Hyatt , Richard Kaczynski , Marcelo Ramos Motta , Rodney Orpheus , IAO131 , Phyllis Seckler , James Wasserman , Sam Webster , and Robert Anton Wilson . There are also journals which print original Thelemic writing .

= = = Thelemic organizations = = =

Several modern organizations of various sizes claim to follow the tenets of Thelema . The two most prominent are both organizations that Crowley headed during his lifetime : the A ? A ? , an Order founded by Crowley , based on the grades of the Golden Dawn system ; and Ordo Templi Orientis , an order which initially developed from the Rite of Memphis and Mizraim in the early part of the 20th century , and which includes Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica as its religious arm .

Since Crowley 's death in 1947 , other organizations have formed to carry on his initial work , for example , the College of Thelema , the Temple of Thelema , the College of Thelema of Northern California , the Holy Order Of RaHoorkhuit , the Temple of the Silver Star , the Typhonian Order of Kenneth Grant , the Order of Thelemic Knights , and The Open Source Order of the Golden Dawn . Other groups of widely varying character exist which have drawn inspiration or methods from Thelema , such as the Illuminates of Thanateros and the Temple of Set . Some groups accept the Law of Thelema , but omit certain aspects of Crowley 's system while incorporating the works of other mystics , philosophers , and religious systems . The Fraternitas Saturni (Brotherhood of Saturn) , founded in 1928 in Germany , accepts the Law of Thelema , but extends it with the phrase " Mitleidlose Liebe ! " (" Compassionless love ! ") . The Thelema Society , also located in Germany , accepts Liber Legis and much of Crowley 's work on magick , while incorporating the ideas of other thinkers , such as Friedrich Nietzsche , Charles Sanders Peirce , Martin Heidegger and Niklas Luhmann . Horus @-@ Maat Lodge combines the ideas of the occultist Nema with those of Crowley .

Thelemites can also be found in other organizations . The president of the Church of All Worlds , LaSara FireFox , identifies as a Thelemite . A significant minority of other CAW members also identify as Thelemites .

= = = Thelema and the British justice system = = =

In May 2009 Thelema was recognised by Her Majesty 's Court Service in the United Kingdom as a religion , as it has both a " Holy Book " (The Book of the Law) and deity (primarily for the purposes of the oath , Nuit) as required in law . John Mitchell of Seaford , East Sussex was on Jury Service at Lewes Crown Court and after providing information to Justice Richard Brown , the Senior Recorder for East Sussex ? mainly Liber AL and the article " Your Duty to Mankind , " gained recognition of Thelema as a valid religion . The article , " Your Duty to Mankind , " states that :

Crime being a direct spiritual violation of the Law of Thelema , it should not be tolerated in the community . Those who possess the instinct should be segregated in a settlement to build up a state of their own , so to learn the necessity of themselves imposing and maintaining rules of justice . All artificial crimes should be abolished . When fantastic restrictions disappear , the greater freedom of the individual will itself teach him to avoid acts , which really restrict natural rights . Thus real crime will diminish automatically .

Mitchell demonstrated that Thelema was a religion and created an oath that could be used instead of the affirmation : " I swear upon Nuit and by my own True Will , that I will faithfully try the defendant and give a true verdict according to the evidence . "

The swearing of the oath was first used after the sitting Judge , Justice Tain , ruled it was acceptable ; after some confusion due to the regular court ushers being on holiday , word had not got to the judge before the case started , causing a delay in proceedings while the legal technicalities were sorted out . The stand @-@ in court officer had a copy of the letter from Justice Brown , saying Mitchell could use the oath and swear on Liber AL . Justice Tain ruled that if this is the case , HMCS should be notified so this sort of thing does not happen again to avoid embarrassment for Thelemites who are called up to jury service .