

**JOHN XXII**  
**QUIA NONNUNQUAM**  
26 March 1322

Translated from Jacqueline Tarrant, ed. (1983) *Extravagantes Iohannis XXII*,  
Monumenta Iuris Canonici, series B. corpus collectionum, vol. 6, Rome:  
Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 217–221.

*It is declared that it can be disputed concerning and over the other  
constitution published by Pope Nicholas III, which begins ‘Exiit’, not  
withstanding the penalties appended by lord Nicholas in that same  
constitution.*

**B**ECAUSE not infrequently subsequent experience shows that what con-  
jecture believed to be beneficial proves to be harmful, it must not be  
judged reprehensible if /218/ the creator of canons should strive to revoke,  
modify, or suspend canons published by himself or his predecessors, or [do  
the same to] certain parts contained in those canons—should he see that  
they hurt rather than benefit.

To be sure, a little while ago our predecessor, Pope Nicholas III of blessed  
memory promulgated a certain explanatory constitution that begins ‘Exiit’  
on the *Rule* of the beloved sons of the Order of the Lesser Brothers, which  
blessed Francis, the propitious confessor, instituted; he, forbidding firmly  
under sure penalties, [1] so that the opposites of harmony or adverse and  
diverse opinions are not induced<sup>1</sup> to a certain extent by the the readers and  
expositors of that constitution; [2] nor that any glosses be made on that  
constitution by anyone except perhaps those through which<sup>2</sup> a word, or its  
sense or [grammatical] construction, or the constitution itself is, as it were,  
explained literally in a grammatical way; [3] nor that its understanding  
be distorted by the reader /219/ to something different than what the  
very words of that same constitution signify. However, those who gloss  
that constitution in their writings differently than it is expressed above,  
making, also, a commentary, writings, or books, and determining in the  
schools on the basis of certain knowledge and deliberation, or preaching  
against the contents of the said constition, or [doing] one or the other of the

---

1. Adopting the variant reading ‘inducantur’ for ‘inducatur’.

2. Adopting the variant reading ‘quas’ for ‘quos’.

aforesaid, notwithstanding other privileges or indulgences or apostolic letters for certain persons, dignities, orders or places (religious or secular), generally or individually, granted under a certain form or expression of words, which he did not wish support in certain of the aforesaid in any way, by that very fact he wished to submit [them] to the sentence of excommunication.

But we—attending that a hidden truth may be opened often by arguments and conferences, and that a multiform understanding often lies hidden under the same words, and indeed that it is difficult to avoid the added penalties in a constitution of this kind for those who wish to perfectly read and understand the aforesaid constitution—wishing to open a way to truth, and to sidestep salubriously the dangers that can occur from the aforesaid to educated (particularly scholastic) persons, especially since some doubts have recently arisen concerning which truth can be endangered, and a way be opened to error unless it be licit to confer, and even debate, on the contents of a constitution of this sort—we consider, by apostolic authority, the prohibitions, aforesaid penalties, both reported and threatened, and their effects, to be suspended at the pleasure of the Apostolic See as long as we hold a consistory in the presence of our brothers and many archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, as well as many professors of both laws and the masters of sacred theology. By a suspension of this sort, however, we by no means intend to grant a licence to anyone that it be licit to dogmatize, write, or determine, preach, or speak wickedly against the *Rule* of the aforesaid brothers, publicly or secretly. On the contrary, we prohibit this, by apostolic authority, even more strictly to each and every one.

But in order that the suspension of the mentioned prohibitions and penalties not be able to be called back into doubt in the future, in order that, due to a defect of proof, it not be able to be claimed of someone that he has fallen into the penalty or the aforesaid penalties like a transgressor of those prohibitions, we, wishing to provide for this from an advantageous remedy, shall ensure that letters and parchments containing the same suspension are nailed or affixed on the doors or lintels of the greater church of Avignon, which publicize the aforesaid suspension with an, as it were, sonorous proclamation and an open opinion.

Dated in Avignon 26 March 1322.