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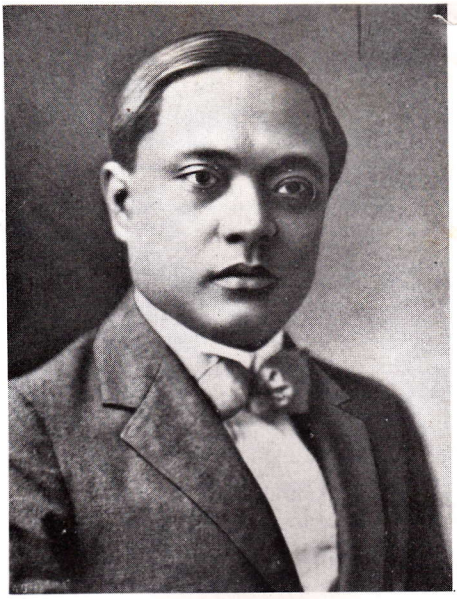

Our Cover

". . . An institution with the ideals, mission, clear vision of justice of Masonry is bound to be a factor for perennial good, particularly when we always keep in mind the great objective of the Fraternity. We should therefore have lose sight of the fact that we are a Brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God . . ." Thus said our 9th Grand Master Quintin Paredes. Our Brother advocated tolerance, frankness and sincerity. Once he said: "We must whisper *good counsel* into the ear of our erring Brother and not slander or insult him or speak ill of him."

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Counter point

Samuel P. Fernandez

Receiving a goodly number of positive criticism on the present Cable-tow as well as the efforts of some of the brethren who have taken to task suggesting what should the organ be is an indicator of an awakening. It is a healthy sign that the brethren turn to this official organ for enlightenment despite the fact that some would rather listen than be edified by preceptive masonic articles.

* * *

Some are of the opinion that we should reduce the number of pages of the "Encounter". We are afraid that much as Bro. Flor Nicolas has summarized the voluminous monthly report of our Grand Master in a capsule, we cannot help these lengthy accounts. It is perhaps in the effort that our pilgrim Grand Master has made it his cup of tea to bring the Grand Lodge to the widows and to the orphans as well as to the senior members of the fraternity of the different districts of the archipelago. This documentation, we are sure, is for posterity and the effort will have its merit in the future.

* * *

Time was when members of the Grand Lodge were not privy to the doings of our Grand Masters. The dismal lack of information has become a bane for serious masonic researches. Our system of recording is not very systematic and many of the beautiful encounters are lost to posterity simply because of inadequate recording. Needless to say that we tried our outmost to make our brethren aware of our Grand Master's dedication. His interminable schedule of activities is certainly worthy of projecting to the brethren in the hope of goading us into action.

* * *

Dr. Filemon L. Lagon, President of the Northern Christian College at Laoag City wrote "Shibboleth or Sibboleth." Reading through his article ushers us to the biblical times when two of the twelve tribes of Israel, the Gileadites and the Ephramites, found themselves at war with each other for a minor reason. What is the real meaning of Shibboleth? Read his article and be blessed by its message.

* * *

For our Christmas offering, we deem it best to turn Tielhardian or Hegelian, treating variegated but somehow related subjects if only to titillate the imagination of our brethren.

* * *

We have included the keynote speech of Father Francisco Demetrio, S.J. delivered during the multi-district convention of Southeastern Mindanao in Davao City. The good Father sounded very masonic in his dissertation on the "Brotherhood of Men under the Fatherhood of God."

* * *

Browsing from the books in the Saigon Lodge Office I stumbled on an excellent book about George Washington by H.L. Haywood
Since the man is undoubtedly a known figure, we print his masonic biography to enlighten our brethren on the life of this great mason whose influence has penetrated not only the lives of his countrymen but all the freedom-loving people around the world.

* * *

HOW OLD ARE YOU

Youth is not a time of life – it is a state of mind, it is a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over love of ease.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair – these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

Whether seventy or sixteen, there is in every being's heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement at the stars and the starlike things and thoughts, the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing childlike appetite for, what next, and the joy and the game of life.

– Chicago Scottish Rite Magazine

ENCOUNTER

THE GRAND MASTER IN SEPTEMBER

Bro. Flor R. Nicolas

We Masons may individually differ in our religious and political persuasions, but we should take very great care never to involve the Fraternity in religious and political issues.

Week One

Day

1. In his office at PMT, with Bros. E.F. Evangelista, Antonio Hombrebueno, Sammy Fernandez, Mac Ramos, and Bernard Pulido, the GM talked on Masonic miscellany. But he discussed insurance and shipping with E.G. Requierme and Nolan Cabrera, respectively. And, with VW Ed Gonzales, Jr., their trip to Tumawini.

2. DDGM Tody Eusebio and SGL Ed Gonzales and he arrived at Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya at 8:30 p.m., met by Nueva Vizcaya Lodge No. 144 and Magat Lodge No. 68. The brethren were led by VW Pablo Macaraeg and VW Victor de la Cruz, respectively, DGL and DDGM. WB Guillermo Bongolan was the Senior Mason to whom the Grand Master gave due recognition.

"Thank you, MW Sir and party," WB Bunhawa said sincerely. "Tonight here you must tarry; take it from me: 'tis advice for your safety."

"Thanks, too, for the attention and comfort" was the GM's retort. With your able support, it's a certainty, my administration will end successfully."

3. The brethren accompanied GM and party. Their destination in Isabela was Tumawini. The GM, his party, and the brethren breakfasted at the residential den of Mayor Romarico Eugenio, Tumawini Lodge No. 251's Junior Warden.

The tri-district convention, presided by DDGM Leonides Melendres, began with Bro. Pablo Adduru's invocation, followed by WB Oscar Abad's opening salvo and the welcome address of Bro. Eugenio. Then the GM was introduced by VW Victor de la Cruz. The Grand Master's speech now follows.

Involve Your Family!

In my visits to Masonic districts, I've discussed the emphases of my administration: family involvement, youth development, recognition of senior Masons and of widows and orphans, Masonic education, and temple construction. Some brethren seem to complain about family involvement, saying their wives and other family members are very busy in their business, studies, or other concerns. But I'm stressing family involvement as the main point of my program because, I believe, the families of Masons should have Masonry as a common point of interest, if not their main concern in their daily life.

Life is noticeably getting more difficult, so that everyone is kept busy coping with the times. As a result, everybody seems not to have time anymore for anybody else.

We may have the best intention of giving our families the best of everything. But we may be so occupied with attaining ends that people consider important — nourishment and shelter, money-making, maintaining respectability, raising the family — that we don't have time anymore with our families. But time for our families is the best thing we could give them, indeed the most precious element of good family relationship.

Life on earth, old people say, is very short. Yes, our time is very precious. We could have everything: money, fame, power. These are, admittedly, of help. But material things easily fade. In fact, at times, these things bring disunity and misunderstanding within the family. But time spent meaningfully and devotedly lingers on, even if we fade away. It strengthens and ties up the family. . . .

Now, contrary to the belief of many, our Grand Lodge is not really well off, as can be evidenced by the Grand Lodge Temple, which is still under construction. This fact, along with my own feel of daily living in this stage of our history, has made me realize the need for going back to the basics: working for better unity and understanding among men. This is the most important and most meaningful program each and every Mason can share with everybody else.

Let us Masons, to begin with, involve our families in our open and civic activities. This, I know, does not require much time. We do not, *after all, have fellowship everyday. This, I also know and have always stressed in my speeches: Masonry is a beautiful thing, and all things beautiful must be shared with our families first.*

This, I also know: we Masons can work better, we can think better, if our families understand us and the organization we belong to. In effect, we'll be more constructive and more progressive. But sometimes it takes more than involving them to

make a Mason's family members, as well as the families of Masons, work together. It requires us to be involved with our families first. Time is of the essence in this case. No matter how hard the times grow for us, there is no excuse for a good father *not to have time with his family. This is the problem of members of other organizations. To a lesser degree, this is the problem in ours. There is in a Masonic district one member, or two, who could not involve his family, precisely because he does not have a good relationship with them.*

Happily, such cases of unhappy families are minimal in Masonry. I'm proud to say that, in many of the districts I've visited, those who are prominent and respected are predominantly families of Masons. My remarks on this topic, then, are only a reminder – and a spur for you to involve your families in our Masonic activities.

The next two aspects of my program are almost synonymous. Masonry is, as you know very well, the oldest fraternity in the world. We should realize how the Senior Masons have worked and sacrificed to keep Masonry alive and working. Without these Senior Masons, there would be no Fraternity to enjoy now. In their prime, they spent wisdom and time and effort and money to make Masonry prestigious and honorable. It is a must, *I believe, that we give our Senior Masons the honor and recognition they deserve. If, I repeat, we have a beautiful Fraternity today, it's because of our elders who have managed it well, adhered to the ancient landmarks, and had zealously guarded the prestige of the Fraternity.*

Let me, therefore, call on our Senior Masons present.[1]

Sirs, Sisters, Sons, We Love You!

My dear Sirs, one of the thrusts of my Masonic administration is to give due honor and recognition to you, our elderly Brothers. (And he told them about the May 14 reception he gave in honor of the PGMs and their ladies and their widows.)

Today I'm very happy to be here with you – you who have been the builders of Masonry and the makers of its leaders, including myself. We hope you will always be with your brothers in the Lodge and in other Masonic gatherings, and serve as our guide and inspiration. You are the strength and the wisdom that holds the unity among our Brethren. I hope the younger Masons will follow your footsteps for a better Fraternity and a better community. (He gave them KINSHIP TO GREATNESS and souvenirs.)[2]

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[1] At this juncture, the following Senior Masons approached the altar: Anez, Silvino; Bongolan, Guillermo; Bonoan, Ildefonso Sr.; Cadatal, Maximo; Calimag, Teofilo; De la Cruz, Marcos; De Leon, Fundador; Guillermo, Cristeto; Limgueco, Vicente Sr.; Lingan, Perfecto Sr.; Lumicao, Leon; Macapoy, Federico; Mangilan, Tomas; Marii, Rolando; Mequi, Bonifacio; and Pulido, Hiembrado.

The widows and orphans should share the same honor because they themselves have given their share of sacrifice to Masonry. They've inspired and guided our lost Brothers in the Fraternity. Now that they have been left behind, let us, Masons who are living, make them feel that they still belong to this family of Masons. The Fraternity and its members still care for them. In some districts, like Cagayan de Oro and Bacolod, our Brethren have been implementing this program. They have been visiting the widows of our late Brothers and this overt act of living Masons showing care for them gives them happiness.

I myself have scheduled different dates of recognition for the widows — in Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, and Manila.

I hope your blue lodges in this district will also schedule visits to your sick brothers, the old ones who can no longer attend lodge meetings, and the widows. What we'd like others to do to us and our families when we leave this earth, we must do now.

In the path of life, it's good to look back, and remember the Brothers who had worked with us and had been a part of our lives. This looking back, this remembrance brings happiness and closeness among men. And the unity among the members of the Fraternity, young and old, rich and poor, is what the Fraternity needs most.

With your help in this program of your Grand Master, Masonry will stand firm and tall in the hearts of our families, our friends, and our communities. Let's join hands and work together to push this program toward success.[3]

Our itinerant Grandmaster and party, two hours later, were at Santiago, Isabela's Friendship Restaurant. They did really want, and enjoyed, warm fraternity with District 3 brethren, led by DDGM Pablo and Sis Baguioen.

4. Cabanatuan Lodge No. 52 celebrated its 64th Anniversary at Wesleyan University. Dr. Gloria Lacson of WUP led the glad assembly in thanking God Almighty; and the Lodge's Worshipful Master, to each and everyone, extended warm welcome. Songs and dances then made the occasion frolicsome. Much later, WB Doroteo Joson, the Lodge's Past Master, and the oldest in its roster, traced his Lodge's development. The GM's message highlighted the event. "Lord, this we pray to you," WB Cesar Francisco did solemnly recite, "give our Lodge more power and might."

5. USA's Mr. Serenven talked with the GM; then followed two brethren: Araw Lodge's Bro.

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[2] He gave, likewise, each of the 17 Lodges of the three Masonic districts a copy of KINSHIP TO GREATNESS, and promised to send the copies of at least six brethren, including DDGMs Resurreccion and Melendres.

[3] In response to appeal, the GM donated ₱500 for the construction of the temple of Lodge No. 251.

Tanueco (Ricardo) and VW Castañeda (Olimpio). VW Castañeda and MW Herrera engaged themselves in a discussion of the coming District No. 10 convention.

6. Mabini-Kalaw Lodge in Lipa, represented by Bros. Laygo, Rocelis and Mendoza, invited GM Herrera for the laying of its cornerstone toward the end of October. Then, in came Bro. de Leon (Claro), accompanied by MW Manuel Crudo, to discuss his salary from the defunct Cabletow.

7. Half an hour after noon, the Board of Directors of the Masonic Youth Foundation met at PMT's Social Hall. Bro. Malig would revise the By-laws of the Foundation. Chairman Mac Ramos discussed financial outlays: how much goes to the Rainbow Girls, Job's Daughters, and DeMolays. Discussed, too, was each prong of the program of the Foundation to make it relevant and strong. The Directors were in agreement that, for better management, the funds be transferred to the Foundation, and that the Youth Center needs more equipment.

I feel Masonry may be the key to world peace. If only the majority, if not all men, would be Masons, then there would be understanding, brotherly love, and unity.

Week Two

Day

8. In his office practically the entire afternoon, he stayed. Attention to routinary matters, he paid.

9. The GM and his party were welcomed enthusiastically at the airport of Cagayan de Oro City. RW Pete Guerzon and WB Manuel Lee led the welcoming throng, numbering more than a hundred, some of them armed with drums and agong, thereby showing Masonic solidarity that made the Grand Master happy; for he said with frequency that Masons should involve the family.

The motorcade, led by Bro. Col. Lastimoso, was impressive, too. And one could tell, the GM fared well in his television interview at the city's VIP Hotel.

MW Manuel and Sis Noemi Mandac were among the hundred or so guests whom RW Guerzon met at the fellowship dinner he had set.

10. At the Maguindanao Masonic Temple, to the assembled brethren, DDGM Codina introduced the Junior Grand Warden. RW Fajardo (Reynold) then clearly told young and old about the functions of his office and about the part the elderly Masons played in erecting Masonry's edifice. In his own enunciation, the GM also extolled the Senior Masons' contribution and dedication. Listen, then, brethren.

GM: – Success in the Family is Success for the Fraternity

Like yours, a district I visted chose family relationship as its convention theme. The short speech I had prepared for the occasion touched on good husband-wife relationship, with Masonry and Masonic teachings as its guiding factors. The audience, composed mostly of husbands and wives, applauded and, I believe, accepted my message. Then, when we were having refreshments, a Brother approached me and whispered, "Most Worshipful Sir, tomorrow I'm going to demit because of what you have made me realize about family relationship." And, without giving me a chance to answer, he went back alone, into the midst of the happy couples enjoying the evening.

The incident surprised and saddened me, but it also made me thankful that, in the almost four years of speaking engagements I've had, he was the only one, so far, who had chosen to demit on hearing something about the importance of right husband-wife relationship to having a successfully happy family.

I've always admired the closeness and cooperation of Masons and their families here in Cagayan de Oro City. Outstanding examples are MW Maning and Noemi Mandac, RW Pete and Charo Guerzon, VW and Sister Maning Lee, WB Dick and Inday Panares, and of course, the rest of you, who are way ahead in implementing your Grand Master's program, having already involved your better halves and your children in your Masonic, civic activities. You have, indeed, started right. Perhaps you yourselves feel the success and happiness this district is enjoying. Knowing you've gone ahead of others in family involvement, all I can say is, Keep it up!

You know, there are times a little good time can lift the spirit up. But it is best to keep the happiness that comes from making your family happy and united. The real achievement of a man, especially of a Mason, doesn't depend on how many "chicks" he has, or on how many happy night-outs he enjoys, but it is measured by the sacrifices he does, for the good and the future of his family he is responsible for.

Let me repeat: If you are not successful at home, you are not successful anywhere else.

The Brother I told you about earlier decided to demit because he felt he was not successful at home and therefore felt he could not be a successful Mason at all.

It's really funny that some people can relate well with their friends and brethren, but they relate poorly with their families. In this case, we have to re-assess our values as husbands and as parents. . . .

Then MW Bro. Rody, in behalf of his family and the Fraternity, gave due recognition to the Senior Masons in the assembly — all in all, one and twenty.

At the Caprice Steak House

at 7 p.m., the Grand Master gave a dinner in honor of our departed brethren's widows and orphans. PGM Mandac introduced the honorees, with Sister Anching pinning the corsages on them. The Past Grand Master did aver, "This is a rare occasion since it's the first time the widows of our Brothers who have passed to the great beyond are specifically included in a Grand Master's program." Down the widows' cheeks rolled grateful tears, and three hundred and fifty souls gave them cheers. And the honorees were moved further by these words of the Grand Master:

"We, the living brothers of your husbands, and your Sisters in Masonry, wish to express to you, my dear Sisters, that you still belong to us, family of Masons, despite the physical absence of your husbands. I know they are there in our celestial Lodge observing us and will join in this fellowship of honoring our widows in this part of Masonic jurisdiction.

"I hope you, Sisters, will feel free to attend and join us in our open Masonic activities. We'll be very happy to have you with us. You are members of the Masonic family without you, we are not complete.

"Again, our respect and affection to you. Rest assured we will do our best to give you continuous care.

"I hope you won't hesitate to approach us for help, when you need it. I know our Brother Masons will only be too happy to extend help whenever they could do so.

"By this, I hope, Masonry and its family will always be united and happy."

After dinner, upon request, GM and Lady started dancing; in a twinkling, around the duo dancing, contributions went a-showering. (God bless you, Cagayeños! Because you are magnanimous, the Grand Lodge Temple Fund is bigger by 36,000 pesos!)

Very happy, MW Bro. Rody returned to the hotel. Patiently waiting there was a Colonel, Bro. Bernardo Alejandro, who, with his wife, had driven from Agusan to Cagayan de Oro, for the PC Commander wanted to greet his Grand Master, too.

11. Breakfast was leisurely. To the airport went GM and party, in several brethren's company. And, hours later, the Grand Master was in Manila, tired but happy.

12. In his office at PMT, he chatted with Bro. Edgardo Ortiga, from faraway Zamboanga. WB Rodolfo Papa, of Ozamis City, also came to see MW Bro. Rody.

13. Many a paper awaited action; GM worked on them. He gave *Kinship to Greatness* to Sis Concepcion Baradi. Then he opened his office door to DDGM Santiago (Salvador). Finally, with WB Antonio Cruz, on Masonic District No. 7's convention, he had a long discussion.

14. MW Bro. Rody and Sis Anching Herrera hosted a luncheon at Manila's Jorama, and then went in a hurry to Army and Navy. Later, returning to PMT, GM Rody Herrera and VW Teodoro Alcantara, accompanied by Bro. Jun Medina, ascertained the date of the GM's visitation to Masonic District Nos. 11, 12, and 28.

The real achievement of a man, especially a Mason, . . . is measured by the sacrifices he does for the good and the future of his family (and Fraternity) he is responsible for.

Week Three

Day

15. MW Bro. Rody, together with Bro. Gonzales (Eddie), Bro. Fernandez (Sammy), and yours truly, enplaned for Davao City, the site of the first Multi-District Masonic Convention in Southeastern Mindanao.

The welcome at the airport, the reception at Insular's lobby, and the cocktails were all warm, fraternally. The GM renewed his fraternity with the hundred-times-three who attended the cocktail party. Bro. Ernesto Uy and company arranged entertainment numbers which filled the Brothers with appreciative glee.

16. The morning's important event consisted in the laying of a wreath at the city plaza's Rizal monument. Then brethren and sisters all went to the city hall. Gladly, Mayor Elias Lopez received GM and party, who called on him to give courtesy.

Later in the morn, the Convention received the GM in due and ancient form. Francisco Demetrio, S.J., in his speech, did lay the basis of cooperation between the Catholic Church and our organization. And, I'd say, the DeMolay degree's exemplification deserved commendation.

As requested by the Sisters, Sis Anching, accompanied by Bro. Areto Pacquing, to Davao City, went a-hurrying. The GM fetched them at the airport; then, with his wife, he went to report to his downtown commitment: to throw the ceremonial ball for the multi-district bowling tournament! After his ball-throwing, he and Sister Anching went a-shopping.

The talk during dinner with DDGM Banzonan and Sister Teng and daughter ranged from personal matter to politics to peace and order, settling, finally, on the GM's visitation to General Santos City.

7. To be able to join the fund-run, Bro. Rody breakfasted quite early. Did he fare well? He wouldn't tell. But, according to him, the night before, he took his secret vitamin: disgustingly delicious durian!

The GM's message below is quite a dosage.

Masonry: Key to World Peace

I feel Masonry may be the key

to world peace. If only the majority, if not all men, would be Masons, then there would be understanding, brotherly love, and unity. . . . Inasmuch as Masonry is a brotherhood of men, we should always remember that men are created equal, and that men have to treat one another fairly in order to maintain this equality.

We should imagine each man standing on a square provided him by the Almighty. Symbolically, the square does not only pertain to man's place under the sun, but to his right to live as well. Stepping into another's square is stepping into another's right.

Since man is a being-in-the-world-with-others, he has two choices: either to live in peace and happiness with others or to live otherwise. If we want to live peacefully and happily, we should take care to move within our squares, and not to step on another's square. What we don't want others to do unto us, we must avoid.

We are, indeed, lucky to belong to a Fraternity that makes us understand the value of living happily and peacefully. Although sometimes, especially during meetings and fellowships, misunderstandings arise, we should not let these misunderstandings put us apart. Rather, as brothers, we should make anger and hatred subside and coolness prevail. Let us always be united with our brothers in the fraternity. Let us respect one another and always adhere to brotherly love, relief, and truth.

As Masons and as individuals, we should look upon God as our guide in life. Just as God has provided us with love, we should share our love with others, make it be felt and shown through our concern not only for our brothers in the Fraternity, but for the others outside it as well.

Let us spread Masonry to humanity, so that, in our own little way, we will help bind men in love and unity. Is Masonry really a Brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God? Our families, our neighbors, and our communities will judge us. Let us, then, do justice to this phrase and to ourselves by living as Masons and as human beings capable of loving, sharing, and understanding. . . .

After lunch, the GM and party went to the hospital to visit the Governor, who had been ambushed. The Governor and his wife were deeply appreciative.

The fund for the Grand Lodge Temple definitely got bigger through many a generous giver among those who graced the evening's dinner.

18. The Davao trip made MW Rody Herrera happily tired; yet, hardly rested to Kawit, Cavite, he hied, to attend a meeting, with DDGM Olimpio Castañeda presiding.

"Happily, I join you in your labors," he told his auditors, all brethren, meeting to re-organize

Masonic District No.10. "Honestly, since my election to the Office of Grand Master, this is, dear provincemates, our first real interaction with one another. Repeatedly, in district conventions like this one, I've told the members of our organization to have mutual respect and honor for individual religious and political convictions. Individually, we Masons may differ in our political and religious persuasions; collectively, however, and this, I aver: In issues of politics and religion, we should *never* involve our Masonic organization."

Elatedly, he told the Caviteños about the 30,000 generous pesos he got from the (Southern) Cagayeños and about the 82,000 he brought home from General Santos City. "So, you see, dear Brethren," he stressed, "the challenge for you in District No. 10 is to make your coming convention a veritable success." And he continued: "Let's become a stronger brotherhood. A Mason's personal difficulty should, automatically, elicit any other Mason's sympathy."

19. Various Lodges — Noli Me Tangere No. 148, Pilar No. 15, Nilad No. 12, and Dapitan No. 21 — respectively represented by WB Sammy Fernandez, Bro. Antonio Castañeda, WB Jose Edralin Racela, and WB Ponciano Abaño, visited their Grand Lodge. WB Racela's example, the GM felt, points to Masonry's real wealth; for, though poor in health, he spent time and energy just to be, and talk, with MW. Bro. Rody.

20. The Grand Lodge received Malinaw Lodge No. 26, with Bros. John Agar and Miguel Cabrales as the latter's representatives; fraternally open was the talk on the coming convention of Masonic District No. 11.

21. Camarines Norte Lodge No. 107 and Koronadal Lodge No. 209, represented by Bro. Felipe Paca and Bro. Pacifico Padua, visited PMT. Bro. Paca, who was soon to travel abroad, we were told, requested a letter of introduction from MW Bro. Herrera. Such a letter penned by a Grand Master is a good morale booster for a Masonic traveller?!!

Masonry is a brotherhood of men under the fatherhood of God. Throughout its history, it has brought together men of various beliefs and opinions, binding them in brotherly love, firing them toward relief of human suffering, and persuading them toward constant search for truth.

In the evening of the *21st*, accompanied by VW Marcelino Dysangco, the GM officially visited Jose Rizal Lodge No. 22. Responding to WB Antonio Mendoza, declared MW Rody Herrera: "I especially came here to see that the rules of the Fraternity are, in every Lodge ceremony, followed strictly, and that the FCs are duly examined. . . ."

The first session was presided by VW Jose B. Perez, with WB

Tomas Pangalilaoan conducting the examination. VW Alejandrino Eusebio presided over the second session. In his closing message, the GM gave the new MMs this challenge: "Continue, Bros. Bernardo Go, Ildefonso Lim, and Luis Co Sing, to be good men and true, and leaders in the community." And proudly:

"In this association of men under God's Fatherhood, one Brother's principles are, by the others, respected; for Masonry is over and above any relationship in religion, in occupation or profession, in politics, or in any business. Being thus, it unites all men, and makes Masons close to one another. Let's continue, Brethren, to spread the teachings and tenets of our Fraternity: sincere friendship, brotherly love, and search for truth, especially. Your Grand Master, finally, gives each of you the seal of the Grand Lodge as a memento of your raising to the sublime degree of Master Mason. From your promises, don't budge."

Week Four

Day

22. In his office, Bro. Rody worked on matters routinary.

23. WB Cesar T. Lucero, Walana Lodge No. 13's Master, and his bride Susan Ramos, today, wedded each other. One of their sponsors was the Grand Master,[4] who, after the reception, joined his wife and children at Hyatt where, with Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos and Vice-Gov. Ismael Mathay, they dined.

24. The GM, at about 6:30 a.m., went up to Rafael Palma Hall of the Grand Lodge to visit Bro. John T. Ware's remains, which, later in the day, would be transferred to Salinas Lodge No. 163 at Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya. Five-hundred pesos was the donation of Bro. Rody to our deceased Brother's family.

At about 8:00, with his party, he left for Malolos, Bulacan,[5] where convened the Brethren of Masonic District No. 7. "Here we come, acquaintances, to renew; hence, in fellowship, we join you. We are, indeed, lucky to have this Fraternity where everybody is a friend sincere to his Brothers dear." Thus responded GM to DDGM, WB Antolin Naguiat, whose pronouncement on Masonic commitment and involvement was very eloquent. Here is the main part of his disquisition.[6]

Urgently Needed: Committed and Involved Masons! ! !

Tolerance is one of the chief principles of Freemasonry. The Craft, furthermore, prescribes, dictates, requires, demands, *and* commands *obedience to certain time-honored ideals.*

But we who become and call ourselves Master Masons are all motivated to performance for the good of the Order? The diminishing number of candidates for the

mysteries of Freemasonry is a proper topic of concern of all brothers. But equally important should be the behaviour of those brothers who are fully obligated to the responsibilities and entitled to the privileges of membership within the Fraternity.

A candidate, knocking distinctly upon the door of the Symbolic Lodge, comes wishing to identify with a group about which he knows little, but from which he hopes to learn much. Positively, he repeatedly affirms his intent to identify. In due form he fully obligates himself to the principles of the Order. Through such ceremony the candidate and the Lodge identify each with the other.

But identification alone falls short of the needs of both parties. MASTER MASONS, NEW AND OLD, must be integrated fully into the activities and projects of their Lodges. Failure to do so results in individual dissatisfaction and unrealized opportunity.

Candidates for Masonic degrees appeal for the opportunity to enjoy the consequences of belonging and identifying that come through commitment and involvement.

Commitment is demonstrated as the obligations are taken at FREEMASONRY's sacred altar. This commitment is the result of a voluntary pledge to abide by Masonic Law and authority. It implies more than a passive acceptance of the principles of the order.

But many who take the step of Commitment remain INACTIVE. They do not become involved in the good works of Freemasonry. INVOLVEMENT is a state of mind in which attention to the degree of ENGROSSMENT is required. Failure may be the result of one of many reasons.

The candidate-turned-Brother may decide that the need to belong *has been satisfied solely through the act of commitment. Or, he may find that the Lodge in which he is now a member is more interested in "committing" candidates than "involving" brothers.*

To measure the degree of involvement and maximize the possibility of realized opportunity, Master Masons and their Lodge officers need but to consider the following questions:

1. Are you and your Lodge making involvement as much a part of your Masonic program as commitment?
2. Is each Brother made to feel that he "BELONGS" as much AFTER he had taken his obligations as he did on the day he took it?
3. Is each brother both permitted and tasked to perform Lodge duties for which he may be capable or trained?
4. Does each Brother know what his INDIVIDUAL EFFORT can provide for the good of the Fraternity?

5. Is each Brother appropriately recognized for his participation in and contribution to Masonic work?

Where its Symbolic Lodges and Master Masons remember their commitment to each other and provide opportunity for serious involvement, FREEMASONRY WILL CONTINUE TO REMAIN STRONG. Only with such full commitment and involvement of the brethren can the Order prosper.

VW Winthrop Benson, Sr., and WBs Filemon Zafra, Rudolph Littleton, Jim Rockman, Ralph Ready, Nicanor Cunanan, and Bros. Ricardo Cajanding, Reynaldo Abunda, Pacifico Aniag, and Rene Henson were the recipients of the CERTIFICATE OF DISTINGUISHED MASONIC SERVICE.

And WB Jose C. Reyes and Bro. Generoso Reyes were given LETTERS OF APPRECIATION for their voluntary contributions to the Grand Lodge Temple Fund.

That the GM prevent by way of edict further solicitation by Blue Lodges other than those required by our Fraternity, and that the GM issue an edict calling the Lodges under this Jurisdiction to fittingly observe August 28 and December 30 as Masonic Heroes Days – these were the Convention resolutions.

For their dedication to the Fraternity, KINSHIP TO GREATNESS was awarded to Bro. Jose Aviado and to WBs Jose Reyes, Alfred Adrian, Ralph Ready, Mariano Lucero, Abraham Manahan, and Antonio Cruz.

District No. 7 donated ₱15,000 to the Grand Lodge Temple Fund; WB Mariano Lucero, ₱1,000.

KINSHIP TO GREATNESS was also given to Bro. Eugenio Estrella, whom the GM visited. This 86-year-old Brother, together with his wife and children, were profusely grateful to the GM and the visiting brethren.

25. He sent a condoling wreath to the family of the late Bro. Ernest Eugene McGuire, whose remains lay at Paranaque's Trinity Memorial Chapel.

When evening came, together with Sis Anching and children (Cynthia and DeMolay Monching), MW Bro. Rody Herrera attended a birthday party – that of DeMolay Chichi Gonzales, son of VW Ernesto and Sister Perla.

26. The GM had a visitor from another jurisdiction: Bro. William R. Washington, Amos Lodge No. 148, Kansas City, Missouri, USA, who was gifted with a copy of the *Panorama, Kinship to Greatness,* and other memorabilia.

27ff. WB Gil Octaviano (Kanlaon Lodge No. 64), as well as West Germany's Wolfgang Weber and WB Dominador Kiamson, a *balikbayan* from New York and PM Nilad Lodge No. 12, failed to encounter the Grand Master who had, temporarily, to foreign

lands, turned a traveller.

But we want you, dear reader, to encounter our Grand Master for the last time. To VW Naquiat's Words, he gave this complement.

Let's Act Out Our Commitment

For the first time and with great happiness, I'm visiting Malolos Lodge No. 46, the host in this Masonic district convention, whose theme is quite intriguing but very relevant to your Grand Master's program of activities for this Masonic year inasmuch as it deals with two momentous aspects of our dedication to the Fraternity.

Throughout its history, our Fraternity has brought together men of various beliefs and opinions, binding them in brotherly love, firing them toward relief of human suffering, and persuading them toward search for truth. Like his counterpart in any other organization, however, a Mason has his own outlook and needs and, therefore, is susceptible to mistakes and misgivings. This is where our commitment to leadership is needed. Commitment to leadership in the Craft we've embraced is a true basis of love — love of self, family, Fraternity, community, country, or even humanity.

Modern society, I've mentioned frequently, is so sick that everybody is confused and rattled by the problems of survival and recognition and often loses sight of his duty to work for human dignification. "With cut-throat competition and war among nations, with disease and poverty and oppression, with misfortune and peso devaluation, who but fools will give serious attention to others' humanization?" This attitude is nowadays very common. Our Fraternity is not unaffected by such a sick opinion.

In the face of this modern sickness, our commitment to Masonry and leadership is being challenged. In these difficult times, there is a more urgent need for leaders who seek unity, who promote love and understanding, and who spread charity. Let's help fill in the void. Only when we prove ourselves to be committed Masons *and* involved leaders *could we invite others to commit and involve themselves. "Our responsibility in the performance of our duties," once wrote a Mason, Andres Bonifacio, "shall be the example our countrymen will follow." It is, in other words, only when we are interested in others that we can draw interest from them. It is our involvement in their welfare that will draw involvement in ours.*

Let us Masons look around us. Are there sick and/or old Brothers who need our consoling visit and word? Are there Brethren who need our understanding help? Is there a neighbor longing for friendliness? Or,

what can I do to help and develop the youth in my community and in the Masonic community? What can I, as a member of Masonry and head of a family, do to keep my family united, progressive, happy?

The answers to these questions have given birth to the different thrusts of my program of administration: family involvement, youth development, recognition of Senior Masons, and concern for widows and orphans, not to mention Masonic education and Grand-Lodge-Temple construction.

Let's launch these activities into a successful reality and, simultaneously, reach out to others in our local and national community . . . .

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[4] The other sponsors were Min. Juan Ponce Enrile, Gov. Bro. Johnny Remulla, Gov. Narcing Santiago, and WB Enrique Lim.

[5] The GM's party included AGS Domingo, GC Perez, SGL Gonzales, GSB Dysangco, WB Remedios Racela, WB Abelardo Lumague, MW Vicente Pajaro, Bro. Juanito Laochoo, Bro. Sammy Lim, and Bro. Francisco Lovero.

[6] VW Naguiat spoke at Plaridel Temple, Malolos, Bulacan, on Sept. 24, '83.

THE MASON'S FAITH

"Faith is the backbone of the social and the foundation of the commercial fabric; remove faith between man and man and society and commerce fall to pieces. There is not a happy home on earth but stands on faith; our heads are pillowed on it, we sleep at night in its arms with greater security for the safety of our lives, peace and prosperity than bolts and bars can give." – Thomas Guthrie.

Speaking before the Feast of St. John in the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Governor and Brother Leverett Saltonstall began his address: "Gentlemen of the Masonic faith."

The words burn brightly in the mind, lighting a new vista. For while Freemasonry has no dogma, nor claims to be nor is a religion, it has a faith which is at once its glory and its pride.

Grand Master leading the members in Masonic District No. 8 and other appendant bodies in Rizal Avenue, Olongapo City during the floral offering to Dr. Jose Rizal as a part of the program of the Convention of District No. 8 on August 27, 1983.

Grand Master Herrera with the Brethren of District No. 37 headed by VW Ben Hidalgo and VW Gauvain J. Benzonan, DDGM of District No. 37 at General Santos City on August 5, 1983.

Grand Master Herrera during the fellowship night of District No. 37 in General Santos City on August 6, 1983 held at Matutum Hotel.

Grand Master Herrera with VW Larry Esguerra, VW Marcelino P. Dysangco, one of the crippled children and two of the nurses during the visitation of Grand Master at the Masonic Hospital for Crippled Children in Mary Johnstone Hospital in Tondo, Metro Mla. on August 9, 1983.

Grand Master Herrera with Bro. Bobby Serafia, Jr. Deacon, Bro. Ronnie Allersa, Bro. Sesante, Marshal, Bro. Tuldo Bonsilao, Sr. Deacon, in Ormoc Lodge during the Grand Master's Official visitation to District No. 15, Ormoc City on August 13, 1983.

Grand Master Herrera visiting WB Perpetivo Asturias of District No. 15 in Ormoc City during the Grand Master's Official Visitation on August 13, 1983.

Grand Master Herrera with WB Roberto Herrera of Cavite Lodge No. 2 and WB Macario R. Ramos, the Deputy Grand Master and Grand Master of the Order of DeMolay in the Philippines, respectively.

The Philosophical and Moral Implications of Santa Claus in the World of Technology

Santa Claus exists not only in poetic or romantic people's imaginations, but also in the people he symbolizes – people marked with love and generosity and devotion . . .

Introduction

Since this article, by nature, desultorily treats variegated but somehow related subjects, we deem it best to turn Teilhardian or Hegelian or to follow the thesis-antithesis-synthesis method of presenting our ideas.

The Query

115 West 9th Street
New York City, N.Y.
December 1897

Dear New York *Sun:*

I am eight years old. Some of my friends say there is no Santa Claus. My Papa says, "If you see it in the *Sun,* it is so!" Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia O'Hanlan

The Response

Dear Virginia:

Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds.

All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias.

There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the earth would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your Papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove?

Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove?

Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neighter children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart a baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strong

men that ever lived could tear apart.

Only fairy, fancy, poetry, love, romance can push aside that curtain and view and picture and super-natural beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Francis Parcelius Church

The Postscript

Dear Virginia:

A seasoned scribe writing for the *Sun,* Mr. Church has something significant to say and knows how to say it. Indeed, his open letter to you has been reprinted in numerous newspapers, translated into diverse dialects, and included in many magazines. It has, thus, become one of the lasting expressions in words of the meaning of life. As such, it will, to echo Mr. Church's words, continue to make glad the hearts of children and of childlike adults a thousand – and more – years from now.

Thank God, Virginia, there are writers like Mr. Church who continue delighting us by enlarging our understanding of man's moral grandeur and the richness of the meaning of human life.

Mr. Church, you should note, has descried the adverse effect of skepticism on children like you. Many practical realists, who must stick pretty close to the business of feeding and preserving life, are intolerant of poetry, fairy, fancy, romantic story. These people have somehow eroded the confidence of children, as well as of childlike adults, in many things with their insistence that to see is to believe or with their declared doubt that our observations do reflect the real world. Apparently, they forget that what a person experiences either personally or vicariously, or both, is *his* reality. The whole of truth and knowledge can, of course, never be experienced by any one of us. Boundless is the world "out there;" inexhaustible are the myste-

ries of the world "in here." In its endless, commonplace, unfathomable complexity, human life impresses human beings in ways which vary with individuals, with generations, and with the nations. That is why, Virginia, keep on asking questions, keep on searching for the truth, keep on observing yourself and the world around you, and keep on weighing and considering what other people like Mr. Church think they know and what they know they feel. "To live fully," a poet once wrote, "is to wonder; to wonder is to inquire; and to inquire is, for the most of us, to read."

Yes, Virginia, keep on reading; for reading takes us through time and space and enables us to transcend the world of direct experience – to live as "complete" persons, not as creatures of a limited sensory realm. You can learn much from writers. Take, for example, Mr. Church. He knows that the tautology, "Whatever is, is," is somehow correct; hence, he feels that Santa Claus exists not only in poetic or romantic people's imaginations, but also in the people he symbolizes – people marked with love and generosity and devotion. Poetic people like Mr. Church, people in a poetic mood like your Papa, and children like you make human existence tolerable; they and you think and feel that the most real and therefore essential and abiding are the unseen and the unseeable, the super-natural beauty and glory beyond. This is, similarly, the belief of Antoine Saint-Exupery's Little Prince.

Literary works like *The Little Prince,* Virginia, will enable you to understand yourself and other men better and therefore improve your relationship with them. Many of these works, you see, deal with the old verities and truths, as well as problems, of the human heart in conflict with itself, the old universal truths and problems like love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. Yes, Virginia, through reading such works, you and we are reminded of the courage and honor and hope and pride and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of our human past. Thus reminded, we ought to lift up our hearts in thanskgiving to God who has so loved man that He made the human soul in His image.

Down the centuries, however, man continually failed to reciprocate God's love. He ungratefully turned into a proud, disobedient creature, scheming to be like unto God. Nemesis fell. Man's nature got broken. But still God loved man. Many times He saved man; man failed Him many times. In fact, man came to be so oblivious of God, his Lover, that the latter had no other alternative but to send angel Gabriel to Nazareth, in Galilee, to announce to a virgin named Mary,

betrothed to a carpenter named Joseph, that the Word would become incarnate to win man back from his sinfulness.

It is in this context that we can say Christmas is the first page of the yet-to-be-surpassed love story between God and the human soul, His bride, and that the Incarnation is the first love letter of the Word to the world.

Let us, at this juncture, recreate the highlights of the Anunciation.

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women." Thus the angel addressed Mary, the virgin. And, perplexed, the latter pondered, "What manner of greeting is this?"

"Have no fear, Mary," assured Gabriel; "for you have found favour with God. And lo, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son and you will call him Jesus. He will be great and called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will be king over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Necessarily, the virgin Mary made this query: "How will this be, since no man has yet become husband to me?"

Definitely, Virginia, the virgin Mary, in her winsome simplicity, knew it to be a certainty that there is no impossibility with God Almighty. But her little mind was really unable to make heads and tails of the words of the divine emissary. Anxious, she came to be. The Judaistic cultural ethos was stiff and steep. With Joseph, she did not yet sleep. But she would conceive in her womb and give birth to a son, not of Joseph, but of the Most High. How would Joseph take it? How could her people believe it? How could they give credence to her when, like other Orientals, they equated virginity with purity, and purity, in a woman especially (in this age, decidedly a rarity) was a masculinely proud necessity? Conjugal infidelity went without impunity in Galilee and its vicinity. Retribution overtook any woman found guilty of having an affair with a man other than her husband with merciless rapidity. She was brought outside the city and stoned to death ignominiously. Is it any wonder, then, that Mary questioned the angel's enunciation?

Seeing Mary's momentary confusion, Gabriel gave her this reassuring consolation: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the Holy One to be

born will be called the Son of God. And lo, Elizabeth, your kinswoman, has also conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month; for nothing is impossible with God."

The angel's reassurance contains the seed of first-class poetry and romance. An inconspicuous teenaged earthling, chosen from among all women to become mother to a heavenly king! A youthful virgin, the Lord's humble but brave bondslave, exalted to bring up David's greatest kin! An insignificant being, in lowly Galilee residing, to conceive Him who would be King over Jacob's dwelling! A finite earthly traveller, a practically unknown Easterner, overshadowed by God's power, to become the Infinite One's mother! This great disparity, this grave responsibility, this awe-inspiring mystery, Mary's naive, puny mind could not fathom. But Elizabeth, her cousin, much advanced in age, long time despised for her barrenness, was benevolently granted pregnancy by God? The news must have reminded Mary of Sarah, Abraham's 90-year-old wife, who became pregnant by dint of God's blessing, and would give birth to Isaac and be the mother of nations,and from whom people's kings would spring. Thus realizing God's omnipotence, a typical Oriental, she said, "Here I am, the Lord's bondslave. Let it be with me as you say." To paraphrase this historical, monumental declaration, Virginia, Mary humbly and readily offered herself as medium for the Lord, whose word she had utter trust in, to communicate His redemptive love for prodigal mankind. Concomitantly, as a woman of honor, whose word was her oath, she would resolutely and responsibly perform the herculean duty of becoming the mother of God's Son. Therefore, her declaration was unconventional at the same time; for, with it, she defied the strictness of the Jewish culture in regard to conjugal fidelity. But if God, whom she loved above all things and who in turn filled her with grace, was with her, who could be against her?

Underlying Mary's declaration, Virginia, are certain important lessons. In this age of marked materialism, a great many of us have become bondslaves, not of the Lord, but of Mammon and his offsprings. Aye, our sense of values has become so distorted that we often prefer the useful and the pleasurable to the cultural and the spiritual. But, as Mr. Church has written, are not the super-natural beauty and glory beyond the real and abiding things?

In addition, in this age of sexual permissiveness, when it costs practically little to make and then break a promise, our motto being "Promises are made to be broken," a great many of us are very

unlike Mary. Take, for example, the mutual vow of conjugal fidelity made before God's altar and in the presence of friendly others witnessing the nervousness of the wedding ceremony. How many, really, have kept that vow of fidelity? Our integrity in the modern world, where a big number of us suffer from crises of identity as well as from mindless conformity or follow-the-latest-fads mentality, is, decidedly, suspect. We do many things, not really because we believe they are the right and just things to do, but because everybody else is doing them. We want others to see we are in the swim, sartorialy and even morally. In this permissive period of human history, most probably because their elders are not exemplary, more and more young people live together without the benefit of holy matrimony. Monogamy? It is continually frowned upon as antediluvian, as old-fashioned, as "out." Experimentation is the order of the times. Open marriages that go with extra-marital sexual freedom, mate-swapping, communal marriage, not to mention premarital sex, sodomy and abortion, are "in." But is not monogamous marriage meant to be an exclusive partnership between a man and a woman? Is not the agapeic love between the true spouses, i.e., the total giving of one's self for the good of the other, one of the most effective antidotes to ephemeral relationships that give rise to many interrelated social and moral problems? The responsibility of parents in the performance of their duties – is this not the best example their children and their friends' children will imitate? Is not the accessible presence of adult models living rich and full lives, or of mature persons possessing a sound hierarchy of values, the best stimulus for young people to pursue their own identify or their own unique selves? Yes, Virginia, the modern world is in dire need for men who prefer honor to personal desires. Young people like you should be exposed by your parents and other responsible adults to the best values they have found. And Mary is the exemplar of such values. Take her as your model, Virginia, for she is the image of woman worth pursuing. Mary is, indeed, more blessed than all other women combined. She is more fortunate that the widow, named *Josephine,* whom Napoleon had met at St. Helena, whom he penned passionate love letters to during lulls in the battlefields, and whom he gifted with fabulous jewels, including a tiara encrusted with eight-hundred pure diamonds. She is by far luckier than *Muntaj Mahal,* whose doting husband, the Mogul Emperor Shah Jahan, ordered 20,000 strong to build, in eleven years, the incomparable Taj Mahal in Agra, India in order to immortalize her memory. Mary was surely more blessed than the *Persian wife of Nebukadnezzar,* ancient Babylon's king, who, desirous of driving away his wife's deadly homesickness for her native

Persia's hilly landscape and wondrous woodlands, had hanging gardens, composed of a series of arcade-propped terraces, built from the river banks to the city walls and annexed to the palace. She is even much more fortunate than Filipino poetess Evangelina Guerrero-Zacarias who deemed herself very lucky, indeed, for having received from her husband Tony the best gift a mortal man could give to his beloved: his true self or, to use the poetess' own words, "the strong nets of your own life." In the poem below, Virginia, Mrs. Zacarias suggests her profuse gratitude for her husband's sacrificing, persevering, trusting, supportive, communicative, nonpossessive, always constructive, because agapeic, love for her.

Although You Tell Me Not

I know that you love me although you tell me not.
I know that you have me prisoner for always
in the strong nets of your own life,
heavenly censer of a perennial dream.

Although you tell me not that without me you don't live,
my longing tells me that everything is true,
that many sad flowers surround your forehead
if, troubled, you think of an awakening.

I . . . what must I tell you? I look at you and keep quiet.
You already well understand my deep silences.
The star made flower of the distant sky
contemplates on the waters its shadow without fears.

Let me deposit my pain on your breast
like a tired, traveling dove;
at the lukewarm shade of the tranquil orchard,
let us, the good caress of peace, enjoy.

May the rest be a song, a serenade,
while we recollect in the serene hour
the mature dreams of past times
that fill to the brim our old souls.

Although you tell me not that you think of me,
that you keep me totally in your heart,
I'll return to remembrance, and . . . finding you (there),
although you tell me not, I will know that it is love.

In another, in fact higher, realm, Virginia, Filipino national hero Jose Rizal expressed his agapeic love for his "querida Filipinas" in this way: "Sad and withered my life might be, in giving it to thee, I'm going to be happy. If it were more brilliant, more fresh, more flowery, I'd also give it to thee, I'd give it for thy felicity." Later, antithetically and lyrically, he addressed his adored Filipinas thus:

"Dream of my life, my ardent living desire,
Thy welfare! shouts to thee this soul soon to depart,
Thy welfare! ah, how beautiful it is to fall to give thee flight,
To die to give thee life . . .!"

Such love, Virginia, is what makes the world go round. Such, too, is is the love between God and man's soul. Such, the love between the Lord and Mary, His bondslave.

Unimpeachable was her performance in her maternal role. How happy she must have been to see that, despite the austerity of her Son's nativity, several shepherds, who knew they knew little, went to pay Him homage! How elated, to see that Magi from the East, wise men who knew they did not know everything, fell down and worshipped the approximately two-year-old Jesus, offering Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, which, according to the early Fathers, symbolized Christ's royalty, divinity, and passion, respectively!

Since these gifts were the principal products of Arabia of the Nabateans, a kingdom bordering on Palestine, the magi were believed to have come from that kingdom. They might have been either priests devoted to the study of astrology and skilled in interpreting dreams; or, according to St. Jerome and the historian Strabbo, sages or "serious observers of justice and virtue;" or, as the Greek Philo said, "eager investigators of the secrets of nature in order to come to a knowledge of truth." But, most likely, they were not kings.

The Magi must have been seen the spectular burst of stars over Bethlehem. Hence, they told Herod, "We have seen in the East the star of him that is born king of the Jews, and have come to worship him." And, tongue in cheek, Herod said, "Go and carefully inquire about the child; and when you have found him, bring me word that I, too, may go and worship him."

Guided by the same star they had seen in the East, they found and worshipped Jesus; but, warned in a dream, instead of returning to Herod, they returned to their own country through another route. Incensed by the Magi's trickery, Herod testily ordered his men, "Go and slay all the boys in Bethlehem and all its neighborhood who are two years old or under." (That is why, Virginia, the customary artists' conception, as can be seen in the Filipino *belen* and on Christmas cards, that the shepherds and the Magi worshipped together the child Jesus lying in a manger and watched by Mary and Joseph is quite inaccurate.) But the ire of Herod was again foiled because by the time his soldiers were slaying the innocent children, the Holy Family were already in Egypt, where they stayed until Herod's death. But, hearing that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as king of Judea, they went instead to Nazareth, Galilee, and settled there, thereby paving the way for the inscription on the cross: *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum.*

It is interesting to note, Virginia, that the Magi were precursors of Santa Claus and that they were non-Jews or Gentiles. Today their feast, called Epihany, or the Revelation of Christ to the Gentiles, liturgically marks the culmination of the Christmas season. This feast signifies that Christ was born, not for a special group of people, but for all peoples who, like the Magi, are desirous of finding Him.

Yes, Virginia, like the Magi, we should search for life's meaning in the divine. That search should start with study and inquiry, continue with following the star of Christ's teachings, result in joyful worship of Him and in giving the best of what we have and are. Furthermore, reading the signs of the times, we ought to outherod Herod, the representative of those who are so perverse that they even resort to violence in order to exalt themselves, preferring wealth and power rather than honor, even at the expense of innocent others. It is from these smart and scheming people we should protect Emmanuel, or God within us, so that, gradually, we will become Christlike.

How existential was Mary, for she let her Son be in His mission of doing His Father's business! How genuinely concerned her expectation of filial submission from the child Jesus! How happy her realization that her Son was advancing not only in stature, but also in wisdom and in God's, as well as in man's, favour!

Herod has had precursors, too, Virginia, such as the 500 Athenians who had, in 399 B.C., accused the seventy-year-old Socrates, the lover of wisdom, the relentless questioner (in fact, the originator of

the Socratic method), of corrupting the innocent youth and teaching them to disrespect the gods and the State. His accusers included generals, politicians, priests, and artisans who could not, respectively, explain the meaning of courage, justice, piety, and art. Hence, fearlessly facing those people, he said: "If you think that by killing man you can prevent someone from censoring your evil lies, you are mistaken; the easiest and noblest way is not disabling others, but improving oneself . . . I am not angry with my condemners or with my accusers. They have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good; for this, I may gently blame them. The four of departure has arrived, and we go our ways — I to die and you to live. Which is better, only God knows.

Socrates was, similarly, Christ's precursor. Both of them loved people but reproved people's evil acts. Socrates gently blamed his accusers or condemners for not meaning to do him good; Christ forgave His. Both taught that the easiest and noblest way of preventing self-ruin is to improve ourselves, not by "disabling," either by word or by deed, or by both, the well-meaning others who constructively criticize us to help us know and become our authentic selves. Truth often hurts; but a concerned word from another person often leads us to the Joycean "epiphany," or moment of sudden realization of a truth. Thus, in his poem "To Sorrow," Filipino author Emeterio Barcelon writes in part: "Hurt me, hurt my soul,/ and don't get tired of hurting (me);/ I want to attain, upon dying,/ the palm of victory."

Yes, Virginia, endowed with a spiritual soul, every one of us is in constant search for the true, the good, and the beautiful, all of which find highest fulfillment in God. Take, for instance, the *mystic.* He searches for knowledge of God through direct awareness of personal intuition, rather than through logic and reasoning. Mysticism has, indeed, played a prominent part in Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Shinto. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have produced many mystics. One of the famous Christian mystics is *St John of the Cross,* so called because this Carmelite monk looked at the cross of Christ and read in there the song of His love.

Writers, too, as was suggested earlier, have been attracted by Truth's almighty charms. Take, for example, the British poet *John Masefield.* In the following poem, after seriously meditating on the brevity of life and on the impermanence of "beauty, courage, youth," he concludes that "Truth will preserve through death." Endeavor to find

out, Virginia, what Masefield compares man's whole occupation in life to.

Truth

1

Man with his burning soul
Has but an hour of breath
To build a ship of Truth
In which his soul may sail,
Sail on the sea of death.
For death takes toll
Of beauty, courage, youth,
Of all but Truth.

2

Life's city ways are dark,
Men mutter by; the wells
Of the great waters moan.
O death, O sea, O tide,
The waters moan like bells,
No light, no mark,
The soul goes out alone
On seas unknown.

3

Stripped of all purple robes,
Stripped of all golden lies,
I will not be afraid.
Truth will preserve through death;
Perhaps the stars will rise,
The stars like globes.
The ship my striving made
May see night fade.

We *Masons,* likewise, seek moral lessons in each degree and participate in a ceremony that illustrates them. As Master Masons, we constantly seek "That Which Is Lost," for we believe that in our seeking after it, we come nearer and nearer to personal perfection. As such, too, we endeavor to dedicate ourselves to our Fraternity's ideal: the bringing to mankind of a full comprehension of the Brotherhood of all men under the Fatherhood of one ever-living God, a subject a Jesuit priest, Fr. Demetrio, treats somewhere in this issue. We seek for truth further by receiving degrees in either or both of the two branches of advanced Masonry: the *Scottish Rite* and the *York Rite.* Whatever degree we may have received, Virginia, all of us Masons try to be good men and true. We believe we can find in our Fraternity simple yet profound solutions to the problems of human relationships. Our Fraternity certainly presents unlimited opportunities for helpful friendship and encouraging companionship. But we also realize, Virginia, that no matter how we dream and search for the Truth, finite that we all are, we cannot comprehend the Infinite; our dreams of Truth must always fall short of the Absolute. Nonetheless, in striving for it, we grow. Since the early members of our Craft translated their comprehension of the truth into verbal and ceremonial form, we fall back on these interpretations as aids in our own search.

Variegated, indeed, Virginia, are the sources of Truth. You sought the truth about Santa Claus from the *Sun.* Mary queried from the

angel Gabriel in order to find out the truth. To arrive at a knowledge of truth, the Magi eagerly investigated the secrets of nature. Philosophers constantly ask "why" to know more about reality, and writers observe the "out there" and search the "in here" to be able to communicate to us general truths about human life or commentaries on people. Mystics employ direct awareness or personal intuition in their search for knowledge of God. We Freemasons seek moral lessons in the various degrees of our Fraternity. Yes, whether young or old, we have to relate our lives to the evidences of the ages, and judge our philosophy in the light of values that history has proven truest. And one of the best evidences that have come down to us, to which we can relate our lives, is Mary's experience, as well as the Magi's. We can re-evaluate our philosophy of life in the light of the values of Mary, who remained "full of grace" and therefore pleasing to the Lord, thereby meriting the epithet "blessed among women" and deserving of the most unimaginable gift ever given by a lover: *mother to God's Son.* This gift, with its staggering responsibilities, she courageously accepted, and she faithfully lived up to her decisive declaration: "Here I am, the Lord's bondslave. Let it be with me as you say." It is this declaration, Virginia, that has changed the world. It has a ringing message for mankind, full of content and truth, satisfying to the mind, appealing to the heart, firing the will, a message you and we can stake our whole lives on.

Yes, Virginia, keep on reading the Bible, the recorded history of God's infinite love for His bride, the human soul. And, indubitably, *Santa Maria, llena de gracia,* as well as *San Melchor* and *San Gaspar* and *San Balthazar,* precursors to your *Santa Claus,* prominently figured in the ultimate attempt of the Divine Lover to rescue His bride from the dark, dingy, dirty, dank dungeon His odious, carnivorous, heinous, diabolical rival has seduced her into.

That about covers everything we want to communicate to you, Virginia. Remember, you are loved by God, by Santa Claus, and . . .

By the two of us: *Brother Flor R. Nicolas* and *Bro. Samuel P. Fernandez, PM.*

The sum of Masonic ethics may be expressed in three common words: Faith, Hope and Charity; Faith in God, Hope in immortality, and Charity to All Mankind.

— Tyler-Keystone

Shibboleth or Sibboleth?*

o Dr. Filemon L. Lagon
President, Northern Christian
College Laoag City
Chaplain, Laoag Lodge No. 71
('81-'82)

By and large, Masonry must do something if it wants to take part in a building and reformation activity . . .

Sometime ago, when the people of Israel were in the process of developing their tribal existence into nationhood, they had to struggle against the test of time, so that they would be able to assert their uniqueness as chosen race over a hostile environments. What was unique among the Israelites was their sensitivity and loyalty to Yahweh, the Supreme Being, who was continuously challenged by Baalism and other forms of idolatry.

Two of the 12 tribes of Israel, the Gileadites and the Ephraimites, found themselves at war with each other for a minor reason. Jephthah, a Gileadite warrior, successfully smashed the threats and strengths of the enemy, *viz.*, the Ammonites. But, jealous of the success of the Gileadites, the Ephraimites challenged these fellow-Israelites. The Gileadites, however, were so confident that God was on their side and that, through the leadership of Jephthah, they would put down the Ephraimite threat.

Eventually, the Ephraimites were defeated. To avoid further humiliation and repression, many Ephraimites tried to escape from their Gileadite lords, whom they looked down upon. Jephthah and his army prevented their exit by checking all those crossing the fords of Jordan. They devised a test to identify the Ephraimites. Since the Ephraimites could not pronounce *h* or *sh,* the test was *Shibboleth,* meaning a stream or ear of grain. If the passersby said "Sibboleth," instead of "Shibboleth," they were apprehended; for they were Ephraimites hiding their identity.

Interestingly, according to biblical literature, due to foreign contacts and influences, the Ephraimites lost the sound *h* or *sh,* and this loss would almost always betray even an Ephraimite in disguise.

My point in the story is this.

* An address delivered during the Public Installation Ceremonies of Laoag Lodge No. 71, F. & A.M., Laoag City, January 22, 1983.

Like Jephthah, who did not only devise a test word to differentiate others from his tribe but also became victorious because the *h* sound proved to be the Waterloo *of* the Ephraimites, Masonry has a shibboleth or pet phrase: *honest commitment and obedience to God Almighty.* Like the Gileadites, Masons serve God and anchor their beings on Him.

Jephthah's tribe had been, indeed, continuously challenged by the many gods and goddesses at the time. But the tribe recognized Yahweh, the Holy God, to be the only supreme and ultimate God of the universe, in whom man must put his unfaltering faith and trust. Thus, a candidate who desires entry into Masonry can never advance into full membership unless and until he puts his trust in God first and foremost.

This is what the Ephraimites lost because they had become too proud and too complacent about their glorious past, believing they could already muster their future by their own power and might. In like manner, the test of Masonry is not on the self-sufficiency of its members but on the quality of trust they profess to God.

Secondly, I want to point out from the story that the *h* sound the Gileadites could pronounce very well was their acknowledgment of their *human* needs to be transformed into the side of God as a just, upright, and adoring community.

Why most of the involvements of Masonry have been in the side of the poor and the weak, of the oppressed and the widows, many could not understand. This is because the moral tenets and sense of values of Masonry are deeply founded on the liberating concerns and activities of God who said to Pharaoh, the symbol of oppression, "Let my people go." The freedom *to be* is, decidedly, an essential element of a just, upright, and adoring communiy. And the presence of enslaving, exploitative and coercive powers and institutions are too dehumanizing and violative of divine laws and of upright and worshipful community living. Hence, to correct the imbalance is to listen to the cries of the poor, the less fortunate, those who are suffering because of inhuman conditions, in order to raise their capability and human dignity to participate creatively and effectively in a sound community enterprise.

Take, for instance, Masonry in the Philippine setting. Toward the end of the 19th century, it was recorded in our history that, because of the extreme de-humanizing activities and discriminatory attitudes of the Spanish regime and the Spanish friars, Masonry took the side of the poor and the oppressed, with the hope of evolving with a just, sane, and liberated society. These people were not bloodthirsty or warlike ones, but freedom-lovers and reformers. Yet their activities and organizations were threats to the established political and reli-

gious orders. They were accused as rebels and subversives because they were opposed to the abuses of the Establishment and the serious disregards of the rights of the Filipino people. To demonstrate their concerns and the seriousness of the inhuman acts of the oppressors, the leaders, most of whom were Masons, conceived books and newspapers and organizations. What these leaders had done to expose and resist Spanish abuses were not Masonic in themselves but by-products of Masonic principles of justice, liberty, high moral and spiritual values and great humanitarian concern for the future of their fellow-humans and countrymen.

Thirdly, let me point out further that Masonry has its own "shibboleths." When Masonry loses the basic sound of its fundamental principles and tenets, in exchange for superficial and temporary values, its passwords can never be understood. Those passwords, in fact, would even become funny and unintelligible.

A group of people in the Philippines have lost the "h" sound where it should be pronounced, but they could say it where it should not be said. Thus, an American teacher once asked his student from this group to spell *coffee.* Boldly, the student stood up and said: C-HO-EP-EP-HE-HE, COFFEE.

A historian also related in a class that the Philippine-American soldiers started fighting each other prematurely because the Filipino sentinel failed to understand the password.

Masons are, more often than not, noted for their proficiency in memory work and rituals. Their performance in humanitarian projects within their respective communities is, however, far behind the civic clubs in aggressiveness. Their *shibboleth* has become *sibboleth* in this instance. The *h* sound of *humanity* is not dominant even if it is clearly pronounced in the rituals.

But this is not enough to misunderstand Masonry. While it has its *sibolleth,* it can always redeem itself. Its redeeming grace lies in its operative tools that constantly indicate its proper direction. Thus, to Masonry, *shibboleth* is the ideal, while *sibboleth* consists in its correctible parts; these parts corrected, it will continuously grow for itself and for human lives.

Having said all these things, I now move to what I really wanted to share, particularly to the incoming leadership and the life-style of the Lodge this incoming term.

We are today, ladies and gentlemen, ushered in a new strange age. Many of the things supposedly built for ages are crumbling into trifle things. In lieu thereof, strange ideologies and moral conviction as well as secular life-style are becoming pervasive, so that reorientation or renewal is called for. Failure to respond is tantamount to missing the opportunity to take part in the changes taking place and to offer alternatives for development processes.

One of the New Thrusts becoming very pronounced in our national development is the need to effect

Humanism and Nationhood. Dehumanization and divisions are real threats to our desire to grow as a nation. Despite the claims of progress, no amount ot statistical data can offset the dangers of dehumanization and divisiveness if they are allowed to prosper. By and large, Masonry must do something if it wants to take part in a building and reformation activity. But how?

Moments ago, we paused by saying that our lodges have their own *sibboleths* — their inability to pronounce clearly their fundamental principles for progressive human growth. We also indicated, however, that Masonry has its working tools that should now be brought out from rituals into concrete actions. The square, the level, the compass and the plum should now be carried out from ceremonials to the task of building depressed social conditions into better ones in order to bring about life in its exalted meaning.

Furthermore, we can pronounce *shibboleth* very well in our rituals. That is, we have memorized a higher meaning of human values needed in an age where moral life is in danger in a permissive,sensuous, materialistic, and exploitative society. If it is necessary to make a definite stand and project for and in behalf of the poor and the oppressed, what is holding us from doing it?

Finally, we have placed our trust primarily in God. One Evangelist observed that our present generation do not know how to spell God anymore. In their day-to-day lives, G-O-D has become G-O-L-D. This is a serious matter because the moment God is displaced from us, we become nothing and, therefore, bound for meaninglessness. These lines from a song should bring the foregoing to sharper focus:

Without Him I can do nothing.
Without Him I'd surely fail.
Without Him I would be drifting
Like a bird without a wing.

Every Masonic year signals a new chance for us to translate into concrete terms our *shibboleth* to become builders of lives and of communities, liberators of the oppressed and of the poor, champions of the dislocated and of the brokenhearted, and, above all, worshippers of the Grand Master -- the Architect of our human lives and of the universe.

Be the master of your petty annoyances and conserve your energy for the big, worthwhile things. It isn't the mountain ahead that wears you down; it is the grain of sand in your shoe. If most of us had taken time to stop and remove the grain of sand, we would more than likely be sitting on top of the mountain ahead.

— Wisconsin Freemason

The Brotherhood of Men under the Fatherhood of God*

o Fr. Francisco Demetrio, S.J.

And the rule of the gun must be subordinate to the rule of law . . .

I. *Kratophany or Manifestation of Power.* It is a truism that man first became aware of God precisely through his being impressed by God's power. And it is generaliy through the world of nature that God's power is manifested.

Let's go back in imagination to the first day in human history when man first emerged as a man. After long years of creative evolution, one sunny morning we see the first man and woman, or, if you will, the first men and women, under a tree with wide-spreading branches, beside a river. See them first becoming aware of their material selves: their limbs, arms, legs, shoulders, torso — their bodies. See them touch and caress these members with gratitude and new-found satisfaction. Then see man turn his look for the first time on woman and woman likewise on man. See them reach out for each other's hands, arms, legs and torsos. Created in grace, they were innocent and holy. As the Scriptures say, "they were naked and were not ashamed." And on that first day, God is said to have given them the command to increase and multiply. Sex, in other words, was not forbidden them — even as it is not forbidden today for legitimately married people.

Their attention for each other is broken by the sound of hooves down the road. A group of carabaos are coming in their direction, black skins glancing in the sunlight. There a mother duck with litter hurries down to the river and soon the ducklings are afloat gleefully on the water. On the greenward a little ways off, a brown dog startles a troop of geese and the air is filled with their strident noises. The heat

*This is the keynote speech Fr. Demetrio delivered during the Multi-District Convention of the Free and Accepted Masons of Southeastern Mindanao at Insular Intercontinental Inn, Davao City, on September 15-17, 1983. Fr. Demetrio's introductory remarks have been arbitrarily omitted for lack of space.

of the noonday is oppressive but is relieved by the shadows of the trees and the gently blowing breeze. For food, they have only to reach out to the branches overhead heavily laden with fruits of all kinds.

Towards evening a herd of sheep and goats settle under the shelter of trees — the lambs and kids bleating for their mother's udders.

With the setting sun, darkness soon envelopes the world. And man and woman have the first experience of night. It is a moonless night. Only the bright points in the dark canopy of sky provide some light. Man has yet to discover fire. And so it is total darkness under the trees.

Suddenly, the winds begin to blow. And soon the forest becomes a howling wilderness. The overcast sky is riven by shafts of lightning. And the burst of thunder sends the first man and woman cowering under the tree trunks. Still another clap of thunder and fear grips the heart of Adam and Eve. For the first time they begin to fear for their lives. As human beings, they have no memory of fear. Yet in their deepest selves, they realize that they are not altogether lost. Hope has always been a lamp within man's heart, lighting his darkest night. Wet and shelterless, except for what the trees could afford them, they cling closer to each other — in the dark. Utterly bereft of defence, helpless against the dark, the terror of the lightning flashes and the shattering thunderbursts, cold and shivering, the first man and woman have been driven to the wall as it were. And they have no recourse but to pray. Instinctively, they realize that the Power that whipped nature into fury is responsible for their bodies and the warm bright sun earlier in the day. Instinctively, they know that this Power is amenable to prayer and petition. Thus they fling their arms in the direction of the sky in a gesture of petition for help.

And help does come.

The storm soon spends itself. And calm settles over the world again. Huddled under the tree, they fall asleep together and dream that above in the sky whence the rains, the lightning and the thunder come, there lives Someone whose eyes and hand never leave them even in the midst of storm and thunder. And him they could call upon and trust as Father.

This experience of Power is replicated throughout the history of man's religious life. We see Moses as he leads his flock into the side of Mt. Horeb. His eye is caught by a manifestation of power: a bush burning but not consumed. He indulges his curiosity and hears the voice: "Take off your shoes and proceed no farther. The ground on which you stand is holy." This was the beginning of Moses' involvement in the liberation of his people which was effected through the power of God. And the offshoot of this history was the profession of faith which they shouted together at the time God established the covenant with them "There is no God but Yahweh. Him only

shall we serve."

And Saul, the great defender of the traditions of the Jews, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, also had an encounter with God's power. He had gotten the commission from the Jerusalem authorities to go to Damascus and to round up the Christians and to bring them back to Jerusalem in chains. They were approaching Damascus when suddenly a lightning bolt hit him and he fell blinded on the ground. And he heard the voice: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" And Saul replied: "Who are you, Lord?" The answer came: "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting." This experience of Saul made him realize a truth which he afterwards never tired of expounding: that there is a mystic union between Christ and his Church. And that to persecute the Church is to persecute Christ. For Christ is the head and the Church is his body. A union and solidarity exists between the two, even as union and solidarity exist between the vine and the branches. It is the same sap that runs through the branches from the vine.

The experience of God's power is above all centered on his creative capacity: to bring the world from nothing into existence, as well as man and woman, the animals, the plants, the trees, the rivers, seas, mountains and the islands and the continents. His power to cause storm and tempest, floods and drought, his power to make the calm and quiet settle again after turmoil, to make the rain fall over the tilled farmsteads, to make the seed germinate and to shoot green over the brown soil, to strengthen the stems of rice and the stalks of corn and to bring them to golden harvest and the storing into barns – all this bespeaks of God's creative power.

II. *Manifestation of God's Love.* This experience of power in the course of human history has also been matched by man's experience of God's loving care. Among many primitive peoples like the Australians, the Andaman islanders, and the Africans, the supreme being who lives in the sky knows every thing. He is all-wise and all-good. He punishes evil and rewards the good.

His creative powers are emphasized and underscored in the role he is made to play in the initiation rites. For the initiation rites were, as it were, an extension of creation. For through the rites of initiation, a young adult acquires new abilities and new knowledge. In fact, he acquires a new personality. He is equivalently a new creation. We can very well understand this in the Catholic Church. For the sacrament of baptism is itself an initiation rite. By it a Christian becomes identified with the death of Christ as well as with his resurrection. He is thus incorporated into the body of the Church. And divine life is channeled into his spirit through this and the other sacraments. He is, indeed, a new creation. He becomes a son of God, brother of JC and co-heir with him of the kingdom of heaven.

And all this happens under the purview and providence of the loving Father. For his purpose is to bring each adult member of society to participate in the life of the community, so that he will fully develop himself and become a full-fledged member. In the Christian context, this same is expressed by St. Paul (Eph. 1, 3ff.):

> Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens! God chose us in him before the world began, to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love: he likewise predestined us through JC to be his adopted sons — such was his will and pleasure: to bring all things in the heaven and on the earth into one under Christ's headship.

Our own Philippine tribes have their own supreme being. *Laon* or *Malaon,* the ancient one, was recognized by the early Bisayan people. He was "the greatest and the most powerful, without beginning, and the author of all visible things."

The early Bisayans also knew of *Macapatag,* the leveller or he who renders everything equal. Another supreme being, *Macaobus,* was given the attribute of eternity; he is *without end for he foresees the end of all things.* He dwells on a very high mountain. Another supreme being was known as *Makaako* "who lived in the sky. He could command thunder bolts and lightning of fire, and could kill those who were evil and perverse." The Tagalogs, too, recognized *Bandhala* or *Bathala May Kapal* as god, the creator of all things.

But it is especially in the Judaeo-Christian tradition that we know of God as Father.

God, or Yahweh, is the father in that he loves his people as a father loves his son. Moses, for instance, is enjoined by God to tell Pharaoh: "Israel is my first-born son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your first-born son.' " (Exodus). Again, in Deuteronomy 8, 5, we read: "Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you." Yahweh is father in his compassion and forgiveness. Thus, in Psalm 103, 19: "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him." And in Jeremiah 3, 19: "I thought how I would set you among my sons, and give you a pleasant land, a heritage most bounteous of all nations: and I thought you would call me 'My Father' and would not turn from following me." Yahweh's paternal affection stands in contrast to the ungrateful rebellion of Israel. Thus in Isaiah 1, 2: "Hear, O heavens, and give year; O earth: for the Lord has spoken: Sons I have reared and brought up, but they have rebelled agains me." The paternity of Yahweh signifies his creation of Israel as a people. In Deuteronomy 32, 6, we read: "Do you thus requite the Lord, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father who created you? and made you and established you?" In Isaiah

64, 7 we read: "Yet, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, thou art our potter. We are all the work of thy hand.: And what better piece of Old Testament literature can express God's fatherly concern for his children than Psalm 23?

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
Beside restful waters he leads me;
He refreshes my soul.
He guides me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil: for you are at my side
With your rod and and your staff that give me courage.
You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup overflows.
Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life:
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.

In the New Testament, Jesus did not introduce something new altogether concerning the paternity of God of man. However, he broadened and deepened the notion of God's fatherhood. It includes the notion of paternal love and care. In Matt. 6, 5-8, Christ instructs his disciples to pray:

When you are praying, do not behave like the hypocrites who love to stand and pray in synagogues or on street corners in order to be noticed. I give you my word they are already repaid. Whenever you pray, go to your room, close your door, and pray to the Father in private. Then your Father who sees what no man sees, will repay you. In your prayer do not rattle on like the pagans. They think they will win a hearing by the sheer multiplication of words. Do not imitate them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

And in Matt. 6, 26ff. we read:

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

In Matt. 7, 11, we also hear these words of Jesus:

If you who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in heaven, give good things to those who ask him?

Again in Matt 10, 29-31, these words:

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny and not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will? Even the hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.

And in Matt. 18, 14 we are assured: "So it is not the will of my Father

who is in heaven that any one of these little ones should perish." The love of the Father in heaven is the model of the love with which the disciples should love even their enemies. In Matt. 5, 43-45, we read:

> You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; he sends rain on the just and the unjust.

Perhaps the supreme statement of God's paternal forgiveness appears in the parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15, 11ff. You know the story, having heard or read it more than once . . . I would just like to highlight these points as being typical of God's fatherly love for his son. He divided his property between his two boys. The elder remained with him, but the younger brought with him whatever monies he could gather and left for a far away country. There he spent his substance living in an extravagant manner. At first he had many friends. But then he began to be in want; most of his friends left him. Thus he was forced to attach himself to one of the richer citizens. His work: to take care of a herd of pigs in the countryside. He had nothing to satisfy his hunger save the feed that the swine ate. It was at this juncture that he remembered how plentiful was the bread in his father's house with which the servants fed themselves. Driven to the wall, he did not despair. Rather, he made a strong resolve to return to his father's house; to ask his forgiveness, and to petition that he be accepted as one of the hired help. But little did he know how much his father had been missing him; how he spent long hours scanning the horizon for telltale signs of his long lost son. So when he finally appeard on the horizon, the Father came down from his home in order to meet him while still afar off. He embraced and kissed him; he ordered shoes and clothes to be brought for him, a ring to be put on his finger, and the fatted calf to be slaughtered; and the reason: this my son was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.

III. *The Brotherhood of Men under the Fatherhood of God.* If God is our father by title of his having created us, it follows that we are all his children, that we are all brothers.

We would like now to consider the meaning and implication of this brotherhood.

There are truths or principles which derive immediately from the truth that we are God's children by reason of our common creation. First of them is this: all men are equal in their dignity as human beings, objects of love of the common father and destined for union with him in our common homeland.

Indeed, there are inequalities among men: some are more gifted in body and mind; some are born to prestigious and powerful families, while most of us are not; some have more doors opened to them by reason of circumstances of time and place. Some are more industrious and persevering while others are not. Inequalities among brothers arise by virtue of stamina, all are equal.

The next principle is this: This common dignity, the basis of equality, should be acknowledged not only by the individuals but also by society – namely, by the family, the school, the Church, and the State. And human being should be very jealous of this fundamental human right. They must oppose with might and main any movement from whatever quarter it may arise to diminish and jeopardize it.

The third general principle which derives from our common brotherhood is the requirement of justice. Justice is the giving to everyone what is his due. This giving to each and everyone what belongs to him, though it should begin on the level of the individual, should be observed also in the level of the community – through the observance of what is commonly known as *social justice.* And this especially concerns the leaders in the community; in the home: the parents vis-a-vis their children and their dependents; in the Church: the Pope, the bishops and the priests, deacons and others empowered to serve the community of believers; in the State: the President and his official family, from the highest to the lowest.

In social justice, the basic norm for legislation and implementation is the common good of all. The common good requires that the material goods of the community be equitably distributed according to the needs of the members of the community. These should not be apportioned according to family connection, party affiliation, friendship or personal favors done. The Holy Father in his address to the President and the Nation said:

> How exalted is the mission of those to whom the people have entrusted the leadership of the nation, and in whom they place their trust to see enacted those reforms and policies that aim at bringing about a truly human society, where all men, women and children receive what is due to them to live in dignity, where especially the poor and underprivileged are made the priority concern of all. Those that are entrusted with the tasks of government do honor to Christianity when they uphold their credibility by placing the interests of the community above any other consideration, and by regarding themselves first and foremost as servants of the common good.

Consonant with our democratic and republican form of government, the State should maintain by all possible means the supremacy of the civilian government. And the rule of the gun must be

subordinate to the rule of law. What may be allowed during a state of emergency to the Army and the military should not be extended beyond the duration of emergency. For continues the Pope: "Social organization exists only for the service of man and for the protection of his dignity."

Even considerations of the national security should not in any way infringe on the basic freedom and dignity of the individual. The Pope then reminds us that:

> It is the joint effort of all the citizens that builds a truly sovereign nation, where not only the legitimate material interests of the citizens are promoted and protected but also their spiritual aspirations and their culture. Even in exceptional situations which may sometimes arise, one can never justify and violation of the human person or of the basic rights that safeguard that dignity. Legitimate concern for the security of a nation as demanded by the common good, could lead to the temptation of subjugating to the State the human being and his or her dignity and rights.

Nor can we close our eyes to the actual happenings of injustice, outright deception and criminality in Manila, in Cebu, in Davao and the other large urban centers of the land. The dastardly gunning down of a senator in the MIA was but a culmination of a wave of violence which has been a-building for the past eleven years.

IV. *The Basic Christian Communities.* Perhaps one very crucial area in the modern Church in Mindanao wherein there can be close fraternal cooperation between the Masons and the Church could be the area of what is called Basic Christian Communities or *Gagmay ang Katilingbanong Kristohanon.*

The BCC is an effective means of educating the grassroots in brotherly care and concern, starting with the smallest unit, the cell, and reaching out in widening circles through the chapel, the zone, the parish, the district, the diocese or prelature.+

V. *We Must Cooperate at All Cost.* After Senator Aquino's assasination, the political situation in our country has become very precarious. The future looks quite bleak. We don't know what is going to happen in the next several months. In view of this dire situation, the citizens should do whatever they can to prepare themselves for any eventuality .

+Fr. Demetrio explains here in detail what happens at every level of the BCC.

The people can be prepared for any eventuality if they are united. And they must be united on the grassroots level, different from the imposed regimentation of the barangay system.

The Church is, de facto, now a focus of unity. This is not suggesting that the Masons become Catholics. The ecumenical spirit does not mean that. But it is imperative, in the face of mounting problems

nationwide, that we take stock of our pockets of strength. And I say – and many of you, I'm sure, will agree with me – that the Church in Mindanao at least as far as I know is strong precisely because it is organized. And it is organized on the level of the grassroots: through the Basic Christian Communities or the *Gagmayng Katilingbanong Kristohanon.*

It will be foolhardy for me to suggest how the lines of cooperation could be drawn up between the Church and the Masons. I believe your own creativity and concern will dictate to you in the immediate weeks ahead what links to forge with the Church in order to save our country in any eventually.

All I have done during this talk has been to point out to you the areas in our social and community life wherein to cultivate cooperation.

These are extraordinary times, and they call for extraordinary solutions to the problems that crop up in our socio-political life. The marriage between the BCC and Masonry is just such extraordinary means to meet our present situation. Imagine the good results for the community if the Masons who are mainly in the professions will support the Church's Basic Christian Communities, particularly against harassment from either Right or Left. Many of you are lawyers and civic leaders. Indeed, such a cooperation will bring to fulfillment the ancient prophesy that lion and lamb will lie together and the leopard and the kid shall consort with each other in the era of peace and justice that will characterize the day of the Lord.

This is my reading of the providential turning of Mags Cruz from the Cursillo Movement to Masonry. He has been a very active Cursillista and was an outstanding one then, and now he is an outstanding Mason. He has seen both sides. He can very well attest that it is not impossible to bring about a new climate of close cooperation between the Church and Masonry in order to prepare our people for any evantuality, even the worst of all.

For the grassroots who are evangelized and conscientized, and who have taken unto themselves the task of finding solutions to their problems based on a communal awareness of them and mutual consulation – such a people is prepared to stand up to any happening on the political, cultural and social level. Let's give it a chance. If God is with us, who can be against us?

History proves that human nature can be improved a little, but has never been radically changed.

George Washington

(1732-1799)

H.L. Haywood

The First President is still the first among Presidents. If we also hold him to be first among American Masons, it is because he was as a Mason the same man of greatness that he was in government and in war. Other men after him came into the Craft who had a fame of their own; and among them were other Presidents; but he was more than a famous man who was a Mason, he was also a man who was a famous Mason because of what he accomplished in and for the Craft.

Washington was initiated in the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Va., on November 4, 1752, he being then four months under his twenty-first year; on March 3, in 1753, he was passed; on August 4 of that same year he was raised. According to an old tradition the Lodge was then working under a dispensation from a Massachusetts Grand Lodge, but of this we cannot be certain because so many records of that period have been lost or destroyed. Some twenty years afterwards it became No. 4 on the rolls of the Grand Lodge of Virginia; it continues to work until this day and is venerated throughout the Fraternity as Washington's Mother Lodge. The Holy Bible on which he took his obligation is still in its possession.

Washington was thus a very young man when he was initiated but even so he was one year older than was duly constituted Freemasonry in the Colonies. There had been a few individual Masons here and there at about 1700 or a little earlier, like John Skene and Jonathan Belcher, but there had been no Lodge until one had been opened in Philadelphia in 1729, or thereabouts—Benjamin Franklin was a member of it—but it appears to have had no charter from any Grand Lodge, and it was small and for three or four years was alone. Daniel Coxe had been given an ambiguous authority in 1730 by the

Grand Lodge of England to preside as a Provisional Grand Master over New York and New Jersey and beyond, but the appointment was abortive because there were no Provincial Grand Lodges for him to preside over. Duly constituted Freemasonry did not begin until 1733, when Henry Price brought to Boston from London the authority to set up there both Lodges and Grand Lodges. In due time other Provincial Grand Lodges followed, and established Lodges here and there; and while they were doing this the Grand Lodges in England, Scotland, and Ireland themselves continued, and in spite of Provincial Grand Lodges already here, to issue charters for new Lodges. The area belonging to each Grand Lodge was vaguely defined, or not defined at all; there was as yet no rule of exclusive territorial jurisdiction. American Grand Lodges were not independent, either among themselves or in relation to foreign Grand Lodges; only a few men could know what was orthodox and regular in such things. It was therefore the task of the generation of Masons to which Washington belonged to work out the form American Freemasonry was to take, to sever the dependence of the Craft here on the Craft abroad, and to find out a good and sound system for Grand Lodges in an untried nation. This settlement of the young Fraternity in its new home had scarcely begun to be undertaken when Washington entered the Lodge at Fredericksburg; it had been largely accomplished by the time of his death at Mt. Vernon in 1799, and he had been among the leaders who had assisted to that accomplishment.

The written records of the Lodge were meager, as was the way with Lodges in that period, and of these the greater part were lost. It is therefore impossible to piece together any continuous record of his early Masonic activities; we know that he attended Lodge a month after he was admitted a member, and that he was again in attendance in 1755, but we know little more. There is a silence in the records for the next twenty-two years. During some of that time he was busied in the French and Indian wars; during other of the years he was away on long exploratory and surveying trips through the wilderness; during much of the time otherwise it is probable that he was not in reach of a Lodge, or that the roads were too often impassable for being abroad at night; and it may be that for a time Masonry had passed from his thoughts.

But when the next record is discovered it of itself offers a clear proof that if Masonry had been out of his thought at all it had not been for long. This, the first of a series of records that was to cease only with his death, is dated 1777. By that year there were ten or twelve Lodges here and there in Virginia, of various kinds and origins, three or four of English charter, three or four of Scotch, a French one, a Time Immorial one, Lodges constituted by other Lodges, and so on forth. Five of these met and agreed

to erect a Grand Lodge; and held conventions for that purpose on May 7, May 13, and June 23; on the last date they recommended to their constituents that Washington should be named the first Grand Master. But he was then in action against the British in the north and gave that as one of his two reasons for not accepting the honor. His other reason is also a cogent one, but it has an added significance of its own because it proves him to have had experience in the practices of the Craft: "he did not consider it Masonically legal that one who had never been installed as Master or Warden of a Lodge should be elected Grand Master."

In December of 1778 that much-wandering and famous Lodge, American Union, assembled at Morristown, N.J., to celebrate St. John the Evangelist's Day, with Washington and a number of officers of the time present as guests of honor. During the day the gathering turned itself into an informal conference to discuss a National Grand Lodge. Prior to the War each Colony had had a Provincial Grand Lodge; these were now beginning to separate themselves from the Grand Lodge of England, and the question was being discussed among the Lodges whether each Grand Lodge should become sovereign and independent, or a single national Grand Lodge should be formed with the existing Grand Lodges subordinate to it. After the members and guests of American Union had debated the question a majority voted in favor of a National Grand Lodge, and appointed a special committee to promulgate the plan, with General and Bro. Mordecai Gist as its chairman. It was tacitly assumed that if a sufficient number of States approved the plan, General Washington would be asked to become the first General Grand Master; what his own vote on the motion had been we do not know but in view of the grounds he had given for refusal to accept the Grand Mastership of Virginia it is probable that he would not have accepted the National Grand Mastership even if he had approved the scheme. But there was no need for him to make a decision because the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts refused to participate; and from that time on there was never anything more than a local and sporadic support for a General Grand Lodge.

Washington was a frequent visitor in Lodges. It is of record that he had twice before attended American Union itself, once on the St. John the Baptist's Day preceding the meeting at Morristown when the Lodge had been at West Point, and once at an earlier meeting held at Reading, Connecticut. On October 26, 1779, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts issued a dispensation to a new Lodge to be named for Washington; according to Moses Greenleaf, one of its first Worshipful Masters, he visited it on more than one occasion. How many other Lodges or Masonic occasions he attended during the seven years of the War it is impossible to say, because most of the records were

lost, but it probably was fifty or sixty.

In October, 1781, Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, and thereby brought the war to an end. Washington had been in the field himself for seven years; with him had been his closest and oldest friends; more than once the War had appeared to be decided against him, at one time his army having been reduced to scarcely 4000 men, but he had persisted; and had done so when many times he had been almost too weary to walk. Where would he go, after that long ordeal, to celebrate his victory? He went where he had so often gone before; taking Lafayette and John Marshall and a few others with him he spent the evening at a Masonic Lodge!

In the Revolution there were no hospitals. There was no Red Cross. There was no post-office. The majority of villages were a small cluster of homes, with a mill, a store, and a church, and the church seldom had a resident pastor. There were no telephones, telegraphs, newspapers, or wireless, and seldom a highway worth the name, so that a soldier in the field seldom had means to hear from home. In the more remote areas there was not even a church for a soldier to attend except when he and his comrades might arrange a sketched-up service in a tent or a hut. It was natural under such conditions for many men to become Masons; and for them to come to have for their Lodge a feeling and a fondness and an appreciation which might sound exaggerated to us now because the Lodge was many things, and was all of them at one stroke: a hospital, a first-aid station, a news center, a post-office, a rendezvous, a social center, a service club, a circle of friends and acquaintances, a funeral chapel, and in an emergency might become a church. It was all these things to Washington as much as to any of his men; when, therefore, in correspondence with two old friends abroad in 1782 he used such word as, "For your affectionate vows, permit me to be grateful and offer mine for true Brothers in all parts of the world," he intended them to be taken for what they said.

During the year 1782 a certain number of Washington's friends and neighbors at Alexandria, Virginia, petitioned the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania for a charter. The petition was acted upon favorably at the Quarterly Grand Communication held in Philadelphia, February 3rd, 1783. Under this authority the Brethren met on February 25th to institute the Lodge, and on December 21st held its first election of officers, choosing Robert Adam to be its first Worshipful Master. The Lodge was placed on the Grand Lodge roll as No. 39.

Three years later, and on February 23rd, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania severed its connection with the Antient Grand Lodge of England and set about to reorganize itself as an independent and sovereign Grand Lodge, and as a step to that end requested its constituent Lodges to return their original charters in return for new ones. But the Alexandria Lodge refused to return its charter, even tem-

porarily, because it had come to feel that it would be more in keeping with the fitness of things if it were to transfer itself to the Grand Lodge of its own State. This it did, and with his consent General Washington was chosen to be first Worshipful Master under the new charter. He was installed April 28th, 1788; on the following December 20th, he was re-elected, and remained in office until the end of 1789, twenty months in all.

During this period Washington had been at the forefront of the movement which was to result in founding the United States of America. For five months in 1787 he presided over the Constitutional Convention. Immediately after the Convention had produced a draft of the Constitution he gave himself to working for it among the States, which were then sovereign nations. Half of them were opposed to the new government in the beginning; and as it turned out in the end it was Washington himself who saved it by throwing the whole weight of his name behind it in his own State of Virginia.

When he had seen it adopted he returned home to Mt. Vernon, not only weary but almost exhausted by ten continuous years of labor for his country. But even so he was not to be permitted to retire; in spite of him, against his own will, and his friends abetting, he was elected to be the first President. He went up to New York City, the then Capital, and took the oath of office on April 30th, 1789. That date is one for Freemasons to note, because it means that Washington was still the Worshipful Master of his Lodge at the time of his inauguration.

The inauguration ceremonies themselves were almost Masonic, though they had not been planned to be so. The oath was administered by Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York. The Marshall of the Day was General Jacob Morton, who was to become Livingston's successor as Grand Master in 1801. Washington's personal escort was General Morgan Lewis, and he was to become Grand Master in New York from 1830 to 1843. The Holy Bible on which the oath was solemnized had been borrowed from the altar of St. John's Lodge, No. 1, and remains still in the Lodge's possession. During the evening when the people came down into the center of the city for a gala celebration the local Masons hung an illuminated transparency across the street decorated with Masonic emblems and inscribed with a welcome to the new President.

During the ten years that followed, Washington visited Lodges and Grand Lodges, received addresses in writing from time to time from a number of Grand Lodges; walked in public Masonic processions; took part in Masonic funeral ceremonies; had correspondence with Lodges and individual Masons; Grand Lodge Books of Constitutions were dedicated to him; he was more actively concerned in affairs of the Craft than in any other period of

his life, not only in public, and formally, but in his own private circle, in his home community and in his own Lodge. There was no purpose in these activities to push Freemasonry to the front, or to give the Fraternity any voice in governmental affairs, for the contrary was the case; they were partly because in them Washington was carrying on friendships that had begun in the Lodges of the Revolution, and partly because both he and his associates knew that Freemasonry was in its own silent and pervasive spirit helping to unite and to bind together into a national unity the sections and the jealous groups which the war had broken asunder.

During the whole of Washington's two terms as President there was a state of unrest throughout the land. The Constitution itself was looked upon as an experimental, almost as a tentative, device, which nobody liked wholly and many did not like at all. Even by the beginning of the second term, the Government had not yet wholly come into being; the Supreme Court which was designed to be one of three co-ordinate branches of it had difficulty to find a room to meet in and judges to serve on it, and moreover was so unpopular that a number of citizens wished to see it go by default. There were certain unexpressed enmities between North and South; labor troubles, sectional disputes, money difficulties, a quarrel over the national debt which almost split the Union; Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians organized themselves into two parties to fight for political control; the States carried over into the Federation the jealousies which had sprung up among them during the years when they had each one been a separate nation; foreign governments interfered; racial groups could not get along together; there was so much strife among the churches that less than ten per cent of the population belonged to any one of them; and to make bad matters worse slavery was already becoming an ugly problem.

It is accordingly easy to understand why with general consent the Fraternity was chosen from among all other public agencies and associations to preside over the ceremonies when the corner-stone was laid of the new Capitol at the site of the City of Washington. Freemasonry had all along been in the battle and yet above it, it had controlled itself throughout; had gone across the lines of State, and race, and religion; had in itself no sense of division; and it had become the visible exemplification of the union, tolerance, and a general humanity for which the Revolution had been waged. The Grand Lodge of Maryland had sole charge of the ceremonies. A place of honor in the processions was given to Alexandria Lodge. The oration of the day was delivered by R:.W:. Joseph Clark, acting Grand Master of Maryland. Washington himself set the stone wearing the Apron that Lafayette had presented to him, with a gavel carved from a stone of the building, and a trowel which is still in possession of the Lodge at Alexandria.

Washington died December 14th, 1799, and it is symbolic of what Masons had felt for him that of the three physicians attending him each was a Mason and one was Worshipful Master. The ceremonies were in charge of the Lodge; and after an appropriate time its members changed its name to Washington-Alexandria; and Masons of our own day, remembering all these things, have built for it a towering temple of granite on the summit of Shooter's Hill in Alexandria from which it looks out across the City of Washington.*

THE MASON'S . . . *(from page 17)*

The Standard Dictionary lists seven definitions of the word *faith:*

1. A firm conviction of the truth of what is declared by another.

2. The assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed.

3. Intellectual conviction in general, on whatever based.

4. The instinctive confidence which reason has in its own fundamental assumptions.

5. A doctrine or system of doctrines that one holds to be true.

6. An obligation to fidelity, whether expressed or implied, as, "the mutual faith of brothers."

7. The character of deserving belief or trust; good credit; credibility; reliability.

A Mason's faith may embrace any or all of these.

Exacting no religious test and taking to itself men of "every country, sect and opinion" Freemasonry requires only a belief in Deity, who may be called by each initiate for himself by any name he pleases. To the Mason God may be Jehovah, Allah, Mohammed, Buddha, Vishnu, Great Architect of the Universe, Great First Cause, the Absolute, Nature.

A blief in God connotes faith in His being omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient; all-powerful, all-pervading, all-knowing.

As all theologies set forth a future life in the doctrine of immortality, some may consider this as the cornerstone of a Mason's faith.

But consider: The whole structure of Freemasonry is built about the Legend of the Third Degree which is constructed within the frame of belief in a resurrection. It is firm in dependence upon a life

(Turn to page 54)

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(Required by Act 2580)

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PEDRO P. AGUDA
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THE MASON'S . . . *(from page 52)*

hereafter and everlasting. Freemasonry is but one of a thousand groups which so believe; every church in the world, no matter of what sect, teaches and believes that God is, that He is the Father of all; that all men, therefore, are brothers; that after this earthly life there is a life everlasting -- this Freemasonry shares with all faiths, all doctrines, all churches.

Therefore this can not be considered as exclusively belonging to a Mason's faith. One must look further to find what Freemasonry may consider to be her own special faith.

First among tenets of a Mason's faith (beyond that set forth above) may be faith in country. Throughout the degrees is emphasis upon country. Masons are charged to be true to it; to countenance no disloyalty or rebellion; to support their government. So are millions of other men in thousands of other organizations. But Masons have a special right to consider that their faith rests in part on a belief in the country, for no other organization has been so deeply concerned in the creation and establishment of this nation as has Freemasonry.

A man has faith in the work of his hand and brain. The United States of America is largely the work of the brains and hands of Freemasons, and has largely been governed by Masonic principles and by Masons since its beginning. In the Bill of Rights is much that is Masonic. The Constitution was framed and signed more by Freemasons than by others. Washington and most of his generals were Freemasons. Congress and the Supreme Court are usually composed of a majority of Freemasons. At present thirty-four Governors of States are members of the Fraternity.

So belief in this nation, its ideals, its purposes, its progress, its future and its glory is a great part of a Mason's faith.

A second part, scarcely less great, is the belief of Freemasons in brotherhood. It is idle to contend that some Freemasons neither think much about it, or act much by it. Backsliders and the unregenerate are in all faiths, organizations, fraternities. The vast majority of Freemasons have made the concept of a universal brotherhood of man a part of themselves, believe in it, practice it as well as they can, have faith in it.

There was but one perfect man upon this earth and Him they crucified. No Mason is perfect. The faith of no Mason, therefore, is perfect. If there was perfect practice of brotherhood there would be no more war, poverty, or any other ill save those caused by act of God. It is idle, too, to say that because our faith in brotherhood is not equalled by our works, *therefore* there is no faith. Belief in brotherhood, in its power, in its reality, in its future and its potency is a great part of a Mason's faith and cannot be written off by refering to the imperfections of human nature.

Masons believe in ritual. Ritual is one of the world's puzzle. The source of its power, the reason behind its effects, man's insistence

upon the importance of its perpetuation, are alike mysteries. Ritual has always played a large part in the affairs of men; in their churches, their armies, their governments, their relations one with another. Something deep within us all responds to ritual; something so well hidden in the human mind that even the philosopher and the psychologist have not been able to dig it out. It makes us sounding boards which give back a new tone when ritual strikes upon our minds.

The truths taught in ritual can of course be expressed in non-ritualistic language. For instance: God, who resides in heaven, we desire Thy name to be glorified, and that what. Thou willest to be upon this earth, including the bringing of Thy kingdom, be accomplished here as it is in heaven. We ask of Thee our meals every day and entreat Thee to forgive us when we sin, just as we will forgive those who sin against us. Do not let us come into the snares of temptation but keep us from all that is evil, because Thou hast both glory and power, now and for ever, amen.

The words mean the same as those in the Lord's prayer; they do not sound so beautifully nor so musically, but the sense is there. The Lord's prayer is ritual known to every English speaking man and woman the world over. It is ritual which can be said by any group, anywhere, anytime; a power for unity, a bond between strangers, a level on which high and low, rich and poor may meet and commune.

So it is with the Masonic ritual. Rituals do differ in different jurisdictions, but in details rather than in essentials. Many Freemasons go from place to place, but the great majority stay within their own jurisdictions. The Masonic ritual they learned is the only ritual these know.

What is important is not the particular ritual, but the fact that it is the same ritual which a brother hears, learns, knows and grows to love. It is an integral part of the mystic tie. It is a cement joining heart and heart. It is a silken cord between mind and mind, drawing a brother back and back again to hear the same old words, the same old truths framed in the same old phrases.

Aye, Freemasons believe in their ritual as a foundation stone of a Mason's faith.

Freemasons believe in their leaders. As all know, mistakes are made, occasionally the wrong brother gets in line, sometimes reaches the East with little ability, with nothing to give his Lodge. But it is the exception which proves the rule. Through countless years brethren have learned that their leaders are to be trusted. The heavy responsibility which is a Master's, the almost crushing burden which rests on the devoted shoulders of a Grand Master, have in the main been proudly and successfully born. Somehow the arcanum which clothes the Master, the sheen of the purple a Grand Master wears, give birth to the desire and the ability to rule justly and to deal gently, to lead wisely and to decide rightly.

So Masons have learned to believe in their leaders, to reverence the position of Master and Grand Master, to applaud what is well done, to forget and forgive what is ill done. Belief in leadership is an essential for progress in any institution; that the Fraternity has had the belief so long and with such justification cannot but be a main part of a Mason's faith.

A Mason believes in his Mother Lodge. Ah, pity the Freemason for whom those words hold no thrill; to whom the right to belong to the little Lodge of long ago is not a diamond in life's coronet of honors won! Actually she may be little and ineffectual; her hall small and ill furnished; her brethren undistinguished; her accomplishments too minute to be found in print. But to most Masons she holds something no other Lodge can possess; for most there is a glory about her name and a rainbow within her temple. To return and to mingle again with those who make her is an event to be looked forward to, a privilege to strive hard to possess.

From whence comes it, this love for Mother Lodge?

From whence comes it, love for mother?

From the same wellspring, buried deep in humanity. Our mother gave us life. Our mother cherished. guarded, guided, taught and loved us. Our mother is proud of us. Our mother exults when we succeed and weeps when we fail. Our mother is ours, and none may take her from us.

So with the Mother Lodge. She gave us Masonic Life. She cherished, guarded, guided, taught and loved us. If we succeed, the Mother Lodge rejoices. If we fail, she is grieved. Our Mother Lodge is ours and none may take her from us.

Belief in our Mother Lodge is at once fierce and tender. The more our minds tell us there is no reason therefor, the more intolerant we are with those who dare to say so! Love for, belief in, our Mother Lodge is well woven in with a Mason's faith.

Brethren believe in Grand Lodge. Newcomers at times do feel that the Fraternity is divided into "we" and "they" — "we" being the officers of Lodges and delegates and "they" the officers and Past Officers of Grand Lodge. Such a conception, dividing the Craft into the sheep and goats, is as unfortunate as it is unkind. Those who attend Grand Lodge much and often have a clearer vision. In the long run, no body of men has collectively a kinder heart, a greater mercy, a keener justice, a saner decision between what is attractive but not wise, and what is conservative and therefore apt to be safe. Read as many *Proceedings* of as many Grand Lodges as you will and over what period of time you may have the patience to go. You will find here and there legislation which has proved mistaken in later years, but you will look hard and far and find little or none of decisions based on other than decent and selfless thinking; upon the humanities rather than upon political considerations.

Hence it is that the Fraternity has an abiding belief in Grand

Lodge, justified by experience and practice. Surely this, at times almost touching in its assurance that in Grand Lodge lies the remedy for all fraternal ills, is a great part of a Mason's faith.

The triumph of good over evil is one of the great teachings of Freemasonry. That truth cannot be crushed to earth there to remain; that selfishness and greed cannot in the long run triumph over fidelity and skill; that at long last virtue brings its own reward and sin and evil its own punishment, is a part of Freemasonry. It is impossible to be a Freemason and not carry that teaching into daily life.

At long last, goodness, not evil, wins. At long last, that which is slain by error is raised by truth. At long last, heaven is above and hell beneath the feet of men.

Multiplied thousands also so believed who are not of the Fraternity. Belief in the triumph of good over evil is not the exclusive possession of Freemasonry. But is so much, so often, so completely taught in Freemasonry, so impressed in formal ceremony and ritual and degree, so constantly sung in the ears of those who go to Lodge that it cannot but be considered among the materials from which a Mason's faith is built.

Finally, Freemasons believe in men. It is a great possession, this — to believe in our fellows because we have said the same vows, seen the same "work," taken the same degrees, sat in the same Lodge, struck hands with the same grip. To have faith in one's fellowmen is an asset beyond money and beyond price. To believe that all men are good if we dig deeply enough; that most men have good within them to be found without digging far to find it; to know that in the long run a man will do what he promises, can be depended upon to keep his word, is worthy of trust and confidence — this is wealth at its best and not to be destroyed by the cynic who points to the men who have failed those who believed.

Man does fail. He reaches for the stars and grasps a branch above his head; he adventures towards the sunset and settles on the banks of the first river which blocks his path; he starts right and runs strongly and turns off to the primrose path and falters when he reaches the garden. All sadly true. But *some* reach for the stars and find them; *some* travel to the sunset nor stay not until the goal is reached; *some* run until they drop nor ever swerve. It is these in whom Freemasons believe. It is belief in such as these and the knowledge that a majority of men *are* such as these, which makes belief in men the capstone of a Mason's faith.

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