



The Cabletow

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES



A FRATERNAL TRIBUTE TO THE MESSIANIC LEGACY OF DR. JOSE RIZAL



Join Installation Ceremony of Charleston Lodge No. 44, Milton C. Marvin Lodge No. 123, and Micronesia Lodge No. 173, the WMs of which are VW Gregorio B. Blas, WB Lorenzo Dela Torre, and WB Jose Manzon, IV, respectively. MW Jun Ebdane was Guest of Honor and Speaker.

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OUR COVER

Our cover, compliments of Lodge Perla del Oriente No. 1034, S.C., show some pictures of Bro. Jose Rizal. This issue, in a sense, is a fraternal tribute to his messianic legacy - messianic because he was called a Filipino Christ by Wenceslao Retana, and because, like Christ, he triumphed over death. He challenged us, his Brothers in Masonry "not to rest so long as the world nurtures a tyrant, so long as the night gathers in its echoes the moans of the oppressed, so long as there are slaves, so long as there are oppressors." This work, he said, is perhaps the greatest that Masonry has imposed upon itself and the only one worthy of its universal name. it is our task to keep undimmed his immortal vision.

Erratum: The Caption of the picture on the inside front cover of the preceding issue should have read, "President Manuel L. Quezon announcing over K2RH that World War II has begun (and not began)."

Editorial Staff

Vol. 82, No. 3

3rd Quarter, 2006

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From the Grand Orient



PAYING FRATERNAL TRIBUTE TO THE FOUNDERS OF THE GLFMP AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

As we celebrate the 93rd anniversary of the founding of our Grand Lodge, let us recall how it came into existence and grew both in number and strength.

On December 12, 1912, the American Lodges in the country which were then working under the Grand Lodge of California convened at the Masonic Temple in Manila for the main purpose of creating their own Grand Lodge.

Exactly a week later, they again assembled at the same venue and adopted the Constitution which they had formulated. This Constitution would direct the Grand Lodge of their own creation in administering and supervising them, all Masons under its jurisdiction, and the Craft.

The newly constituted Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands exerted effort to win over to its fold the Symbolic Lodges in the country which were then working under the two Grand Lodges in Spain, namely, the Gran Oriente de España and the Gran Oriente Español. Its effort was not inutile. In 1917, the majority of the Philippine Symbolic Lodges merged with their American counterparts. The merger resulted in the change of name from Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands to Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines (GLFMP, for short).

From then on Freemasonry in this grand jurisdiction has taken long strides in both quantitative and qualitative progress. In fact, it has contributed significantly to the growth and development of our nation.

From the foregoing brief account of the genesis and metamorphosis of our Grand Lodge may be inferred the following fundamental relations between it and its constituent Symbolic Lodges:

1. The Grand Lodge is the creation of a group of Symbolic Lodges, which are, in turn, creations of individual Masons.
2. The constituent Symbolic Lodges concern themselves with their members, as well as with such matters that are inherent to themselves, while the Grand Lodge concerns itself with the welfare, desires, and interrelationships

of its constituent Symbolic Lodges, the well-being and progress of the Craft, and its own relationship with other Grand Lodges.

3. The constituent Symbolic Lodges are autonomous, governed and restrained only by the general rules and regulations of Freemasonry, the Constitution of their own adoption, and the By-Laws of their own making. The Grand Lodge, on the other hand, derives from its constituent Symbolic Lodges its powers and prerogatives, as well as its duties and responsibilities, through the medium of the Constitution they have adopted at an Annual Communication (Ancom).
4. The Grand Lodge has been directed by its constituent Symbolic Lodges to see to it that the Constitution of their own adoption, together with the Edicts and the general rules and regulations of Freemasonry, is strictly maintained, supported and obeyed.
5. At any subsequent Ancom, the constituent Symbolic Lodges, through their representatives, may update the Constitution of their own adoption, as well as the Edicts and Circulars issued by the Grand Lodge, in accordance with their own desires.
6. Clearly, then, the Grand Lodge does not rule its constituent Symbolic Lodges; rather, it sees to it that they themselves maintain, support and obey the Constitution they have adopted and updated. Nor does it impose upon them; instead, it ascertains that the Craft enjoys efficient and effective administration.
7. The Grand Lodge's earnest desire is to promote more healthy and harmonious relations between itself and its constituent Symbolic Lodges on the one hand and between the latter and their members on the other.
8. The Grand Lodge's primary concern is to ensure the collective interests of its constituent Symbolic Lodges, which should, in turn, be concerned with having a strong Grand Lodge to administer for them.

This mutual relationship between the Grand Lodge and its constituent Symbolic Lodges was recurrently stressed by MW Mariano G. Tinio during his watch in 1967. I want to restate what MW Tinio told the brethren in the following manner:

The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines is our very own. It is here to serve and not to rule nor to impose on us. It was the desire of those brethren who came this way before us to have it. It should now be our concern to maintain it, our task to direct it, our privilege to make best use of it, and our responsibility to support it.

9. We who compose the Symbolic Lodges that constitute the GLFMP should, therefore, willingly subordinate our personal views and appetites to the considered opinion and decisions of the constituted Masonic authority, which

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should, in turn, be always mindful of, as well as sensitive to, the differences of opinion within its jurisdiction, so that peace and harmony will prevail among the brethren.

On the basis of the foregoing fundamental relations between the Grand Lodge and its constituent Symbolic Lodges, as well as between us ourselves and the duly constituted Masonic authority, I resound the clarion call of those who preceded me in the Grand East that we talk less and do more toward the realization of our vision, which is to develop ourselves into a dynamic Fraternity committed to enhancing brotherly love, relief and truth, as well as to improving men toward the attainment of an enlightened and a progressive humanity.

I believe that this is the best fraternal tribute we can give to the founders of our Symbolic Lodges and their successors, as well as to the architects of our Grand Lodge.

In celebration of the 93rd anniversary of the founding of our Grand Lodge, the other Grand Lodge Officers and I have prepared a fitting program of activities, which include honoring our living Past Grand Masters, who now compose the Council of Elders; giving of gifts to less fortunate countrymen; and projecting a good image of our Grand Lodge and the Craft to the general public. For this purpose, we have directed the various Masonic Districts to undertake civic action projects during the month of December in particular. I am confident that the leaders of our Masonic Districts have complied, or will comply, with this directive.

Long live our Grand Lodge and its constituent Symbolic Lodges! May God always love and bless the Masonic Family in this grand jurisdiction! May Philippine Masonry become so dynamic as to recapture its old glory!

Fraternally,

(Sgd.) **MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr.**
Grand Master

*The Grand Lodge, Brother, is here to serve you.
You should, in turn, maintain, optimally use,
and support it.*

Editorial

FIGHTING TERRORISM AND RELATED EVILS IN A MASONIC WAY

These are, indeed, times that try the souls of men and women everywhere who love peace and freedom because terrorists and their ilk continue to create confusion in order to bring about the ultimate disunity of our world by using various forms of violence, such as kidnap for ransom, bombing populated areas (including suicide bombing), and even what they call bacteriological warfare.

It is, certainly, not enough to bluntly condemn terrorism and the evils related to it. It is not enough, either, to aver that we cannot in any way condone it. We must, individually and collectively, do all that is in our power to fight those evils; for they have impeded the progress of our arduous labor to build Masonry's symbolic temple of liberty, equality and fraternity in the souls of men and nations. We have to spring into action if we really want to convince the world that, as Gen. Albert Pike, 33^o, has put it, "Masonry is the Hercules, the Osiris, the Apollo, the Mithras, and the Ormuzd, at everlasting and deadly feud with the demons of ignorance, brutality, baseness, falsehood, slavishness of soul, intolerance, superstition, tyranny, meanness, the insolence of wealth, and bigotry." (*Morals and Dogma*, or *MAD*, p. 221).

The least that we can do to fight terrorism and the evils related to it is to disseminate more vigorously and zealously than before among our fellowmen, particularly our countrymen, the moral, political, philosophical, and religious truths which Masonry teaches.

We can, for instance, tell the people we come in contact with that:

- *Misery, discrimination, exploitation, and indifference cause resentment; resentment abets terrorism; and terrorism breeds, develops, and produces hatred toward what is different.*
- *Religious fanaticism leads to superstitions, triggers hatred towards other men, and therefore stimulates persecutions and bloodshed.*
- *This country will be a better place to live in if and when all residents therein observe the Masonic ideal of tolerance, which teaches that we should respect the individual's right to his opinion and faith.*
- *There will be peace in this country if everyone therein thinks better of his neighbour; quiets, instead of aggravating, difficulties; brings together those who are severed or estranged; keeps friends from becoming foes; and persuades foes to become friends.*

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Man must use the rational, spiritual, and divine in him for controlling his own temper and for governing his own passions, so that he will fit himself to keep peace and harmony among other men.

We may even tell others with pride but without arrogance and without propulsion that Masonry is "a realm of peace" because "among Masons there must be no dissension, but only that noble emulation, which can best work and best agree," thereby suggesting to them that the Philippines – any country for that matter – will be a realm of peace if this is the practice among residents therein.

There are many other Masonic teachings which we can share with our fellowmen, particularly our countrymen. Every one of us in the Craft can do something to promote universal brotherhood, religious unity, and loftiness of character among our fellowmen, particularly our countrymen.

Yes, dear brethren, we can fight terrorism and the evils related to it in a Masonic way. Hence, as MW Franklin J. Demonteverde, PGM, would say:

*Let us to the task, to the battle, to the toil,
each to our part, each to our station – until
the Masonic Creed reverberates and prevails
throughout our country in particular and
the global village in general.*

We must take this challenge if we are truly convinced that, as Ill. Pike once more has written:

... if men were all Masons and obeyed with all their heart her (Masonry's) mild and gentle teachings, that world would be a paradise; while intolerance and persecution make of it a hell. For this is the Masonic Creed: BELIEVE in God's Infinite Benevolence, Wisdom, and Justice; HOPE for the final triumph of Good over Evil, and for Perfect Harmony as the final result of all the concords and discords of the Universe; and be CHARITABLE, as God is, toward the unfaith, the errors, the follies, and the faults of men; for all make one great brotherhood. (MAD, p. 531).

Let's proficiently use the symbolic TROWEL!

OF THE 3RD, 4TH QUARTER EVENTS

by VW Juanito "Boy" Vaño, Jr.
Senior Grand Lecturer



Again, we revisit the events of the 3rd quarter of this Masonic year and look forward to those of the 4th and last quarter, which we should so plan and implement as to crown them with success and fruition, thereby making the general public see and recognize that we are not at all what those who oppose us portray us to be. As our Grand Master, MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr., pointed out in the preceding issue of this publication, the challenge which faces us and which we must embrace is to be so visible to the community as to be known and acknowledged as a fraternity that is dynamic and has a meaningful and relevant existence in this fast-changing world.

Revisiting the 3rd Quarter

November is Stewardship Month, in which we are to focus our attention on effective ritual management and Masonic protocol as well as get involved in community affairs and social development programs.

Effective ritual management includes enhancing our proficiency in degree work and participating in ritual rehearsal, as well as discussing with one another the symbolic significance of the various portions of the rituals. This will enable us to comprehend and appreciate the rituals more deeply than when we speculate on them individually.

Again, a reminder is in order here. We must listen, during discussion, to our brethren's points of view with unbiased respect and eager curiosity. We must, but often don't!

It is imperative that we study and faithfully observe Masonic protocol, which is explicitly explained in our Masonic Law Book, Edicts, and other regulations of our Grand Lodge, in order that we will maintain harmony among us. By doing so, we exemplify our being true stewards of the Craft.

It is imperative, likewise, that we get involved in community affairs and social development programs like those relating to environmental protection, promotion of peace and order and justice, and advocacy of women's and children's rights; for this is one way of showing to the general public that, as a Fraternity and as individuals, we are responsive to issues and concerns that affect our people. It is, therefore, an effective means of demonstrating our continuing relevance.

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The events of December include the celebration of the 93rd anniversary of the founding of our Grand Lodge and Grand Master's Day.

MW Jun Ebdane, together with the other Grand Lodge Officers, invited the brethren to join him on December 19 in meaningfully celebrating the founding anniversary of our Grand Lodge.

Grand Master's Day is devoted mainly to gift-giving and charity projects aimed at projecting the Fraternity's good image.

The Grand Lodge leadership expects each District/Lodge to carry out at least one civic action project during the month.

During the same month, we discuss with one another the history of Philippine Masonry, particularly that of our Grand Lodge. Perspective, after all, is the key to the life of the Craft in this grand jurisdiction – nay, in every grand jurisdiction. We have to view the present of the Craft within the framework of its glorious past and its probable future.

The events of January include enhancing our proficiency in Masonic laws and making the Installation of Lodge Officers a "showcase" for Philippine Masonry. The former requires us to focus our attention on the first 50 questions asked in the proficiency examinations for Lodge Lights, while the latter suggests that we invite as many non-Masons as we reasonably can in order that they will see for themselves that we are not a secret society nor anti-religion nor atheistic, but rather an organization of excellence. Inviting non-Masons to our public gatherings and special events is part of our Public Awareness Program.

Looking Forward to the 4th, Last Quarter

February being Love Month, as Masonic Districts, we hold a Ladies Night to demonstrate our sincere appreciation of the continuing concern and support of our spouses, daughters, mothers, sisters, and even girlfriends for our Masonic endeavors.

We continue, moreover, to enhance our proficiency in Masonic laws by discussing the other 50 questions asked in the proficiency examinations for Lodge Lights.

It is, indeed, a duty incumbent upon all of us to increase our knowledge of Masonic government. That is why we ought to be eager students of our Masonic Law Book.

March is Awards Month. It is the time when, as Masonic Districts, we hold a Past Masters Night to honor our Past Masters and give the recognition due them.

During the month we also discuss the significance of the Annual Communication of our Grand Lodge to us as Lodges and as individual Master Masons.

The Ancom is the proper venue for discussing and deliberating on concerns and issues vital to keeping the Craft dynamic, strong, vigorous, vibrant, and meaningful in today's busy world.

All Blue Lodges should make it a point to attend and actively participate in the discussion of the vital issues and concerns.

Individual Master Masons should also endeavour to attend the Ancom or at least to read and study the proceedings thereof.

No, we should not take the Ancom lightly, nor engage in any political activity that tends to disrupt the peace and good harmony that exists, or should exist, among the brethren during the Ancom.

April is Family Month. As Districts or Lodges, we undertake activities whereby we acknowledge the love, understanding and support which members of our families give to us in the course of pursuing our Masonic careers.

The same month is also the time for us to get more familiar with the ancient landmarks and the old rules and regulations of our Order. Remember, *ignoratio legis neminem excusat* (ignorance of the law excuses nobody).

A Final Word

MW Jun Ebdane invites all of us, his brethren, to attend the Ancom in Cebu City, which will serve as a climactic ending of the short short story of his year in the Grand East. He is confident that the host District, MD No. 24, has exerted every ounce of energy to make the Ancom a "showcase for Philippine Masonry."

See you, then, at the Ancom in Cebu City!

In the next issue, I'll give you my valedictory message as Senior Grand Lecturer.

The Ancom is the proper venue for discussing and deliberating on concerns and issues vital to keeping the Craft dynamic, strong, vigorous, vibrant, and meaningful in today's busy world.



THE RETRACTION ISSUE

Samuel P. Fernandez, KGOR

Past Supreme Pursuivant
Order of the Knights of Rizal

"Later on the doctrines were adulterated, faith weakened, the religious spirit fermented into secrets. Those who preached equality and poverty desired to become master and wealthy. Then virtue was confused with intolerance and fanaticism, and harmless at best, assumed unnatural forms. Forced celibacy became a virtue, though God had commanded man to grow and multiply. It became a virtue to abhor the beautiful, to hate love, although all nature is beautiful, and the entire creation from the moon to the flower preaches love. Fasting and abstinence became a virtue although man needed to unfold and multiply his strength to use it in the service of his fellowmen. It became a virtue to torture and humiliate one's self, when pain is the protest of nature and the snake thrives in the mud and God in heaven; in short, ignorance itself became a virtue, though wisdom is a divine attribute, intelligence is a gift, and man can redeem himself only through his profound studies." (Rizal's Masonic Speech, English Translation).

At a time when one got killed for being a Mason, the above statement of Dr. Rizal was an invitation to death.

Bro. Rizal's acidic tirade made the friars uncomfortable. Efforts were made to "convert" Bro. Rizal back to the Catholic faith. Rizal's Masonic pronouncement was anathema to the then theocratic government. To the Spanish patriotic friars, Bro. Rizal was a subversive, a threat to Mother Spain.

Purpose of Masonry

Bro. Rizal wrote: "Barbaric centuries, dear brethren, were those when the emanations from the cloisters confused human intelligence. But it could descend even lower, and greater and deeper still was the fall of reason. These were then called virtues: to hate men who do not profess the same faith, to destroy and burn them; to recite words after words, nonsense after nonsense and perhaps blasphemies before the images of sanctified and deified men. They called virtues the relief in the impossible and the rejection of the conclusions of science and of experience; virtue, faith in the absurd, to give to the Pope for the support of his pomp the money denied to the young man for his education; virtue, the madness, the senseless, the ridiculous and even vices provided they are cloaked with religion." (Rizal's Masonic Speech, English Translation)

"WHEREAS, contrary to truth, it has been published that a certain paper, reproduced more than once, is a copy of the original document of his alleged retraction and conversion reading as follows:

'I declare myself a Catholic and in this religion in which I was born and educated I wish to live and die.

I retract with all my heart whatever in my words, writings, publications, and conduct has been contrary to my standing as a son of the Catholic Church. I believe and profess all that she teaches and I submit to all that she commands. I abominate masonry, enemy that it is of the Church. The Diocesan Prelate, as the Superior Ecclesiastical Authority, may make public this spontaneous manifestation of mine, to repair the scandal that my acts may have caused and that God and men may forgive me.'

"WHEREAS, since the year 1901, when the Filipinos contended in the press that the document was fake, they have time and again demanded that the original be produced;

"WHEREAS, notwithstanding this insistent demand, those who supported the authenticity of the paper were not able to produce its original, on the pretext that it had been lost;

"WHEREAS, it was not until a lapse of 30 years, or in 1935, that it was announced that the original document had been found in a vault, or iron safe, in the Archbishop's Palace in Manila;

"WHEREAS, the explanations and excuses offered are of the most puerile kind (Latin puer – boy, hence childish, SPF) as in this one from the Jesuit Father Pio Pi;

'The original (of the retraction letter) was delivered to Archbishop Nozaleda. The copies still remain in our archives. What became of the original (mention is also made of the retraction of other masons) since all of them have disappeared, we do not know. In the Archbishop's Palace, it seems, search has been in vain. We are not informed whether any inquiry has been made from Mr. Nozaleda or from whoever, at that time were in charge of the Secretary's office. In the absence of better clues, we point to on suspicion the verisimilitude (Latin verus – true; facio – to make, SPF) of which may not be dismissed. In those days when people were so curious about everything that happened, could it not have been that the papers were borrowed by some who were not careful enough to return them? For certain persons, those documents had to have some value, and precisely this value might have been the reason why they were not returned, not to mention the shame whoever took them or – who knows? If was of their anti-Catholic fanaticism.'

Our national hero further wrote: "Thus Masonry preaches and practices the sacred principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity among all men and they compose the Masonic virtues, the only virtues whose practice would banish among men wars and abuses and bring about that state of which all great reformers dream. In this concept, for the present, virtue has no other temple but the Masonic temple from which emerge some gleams of light that illuminate the minds of many lay thinkers. In these concepts virtue is no longer a barren, rare, unnatural, fierce or devout quality. Virtue becomes beautiful, fruitful, civilizing, universal, for what is more beautiful than the liberty, and fraternity of all men?" (Rizal's Masonic Speech, English Translation).

Liberty, equality, and fraternity for all men? Liberty for as long as we confine ourselves to our respective beliefs? Equality if you agree with what is accepted by your faith? Fraternity if you belong to the same religious persuasion?

Bro. Rizal penned: "In ancient times Masonic workshop was a true workshop where they discussed the building plans of such temples. Liberty are all born everywhere even from death and dirt itself. Only man remains the enemy of man, tyrannizes his fellowmen, oppresses everyone, transmits his anger and his diseases to the animals that fall under his power and rejoice in the humiliation of his brothers. A cry announces his birth, misery, and battles darken the tortuous oath of his life with tears, blood, and gall; vices, diseases, and passions suffering, and like the tyrants, howling and crying tears of fire, envying the faith of the peasants, man, the lord of creation, envies the fate of the insects, the faith of the butterfly which, flying from flower to flower, feeds on nectar, is born at dawn and dies with day without luckily seeing the sad shadows of the night!" (Rizal's Masonic Speech, English translation)

With Bro. Rizal's pronouncement at a time when the power behind the Spanish theocratic government was in the hands of the Religious Orders, our illustrious Brother's indictment must be stopped.

Whether Bro. Jose Rizal retracted or not is a raging debate, then and now. A number of us are not familiar with the Grand Lodge of the Philippines' resolution passed on 24 January 1939, declaring its stand that "Rizal did not abjure Masonry and that he wrote 'My Last Farewell' on December 29, 1896." I shall quote liberally the resolution and add my own commentary.

A. Grand Lodge of the Philippines' Resolution

"WHEREAS, slighting his sacred memory, noble character, firm convictions, and high culture, the claim has been made in public and in private, that our Brother Dr. Jose Rizal retracted from Masonry, being converted into Catholicism before he was executed on Bagumbayan Field, December 30, 1896;

"WHEREAS, if the Archbishop's Palace had really loaned the original document to some person, this person, especially if he was an anti-Catholic, would never have returned it and the document would not now be, as claimed, in the Archbishop's Palace; and if, on the other hand, he was a Catholic, he would not only have returned it, but would have corroborated its existence with his valuable testimony at the very outset of the dispute;

"WHEREAS, if, as Father Pio Pi asserts, despite the search made for it in 1901, when it was to the particular interest of its supporters to exhibit, it in order to bolster their unfavourable position in the controversy, the document was not found in the Archbishop's Palace, now in the name of reason and truth could it have been found in a vault, or iron safe, in the same Palace on May 18, 1935, as alleged by Padre Manuel Garcia;

"WHEREAS, it is common knowledge in the Philippines that, during the Spanish regime, there was not such a thing as a vault in the archives of the Government of the Church, and the so-called original could not have therefore been kept, and much less found, in a vault, unless the vault already contained the document when it was delivered to the Archbishop of Manila, which of course would sound ridiculous for those who claim that the document is genuine."

B. Commentary

What document are we really expecting? The document Bro. Rizal did not have time to make the night before he was to be executed? How can we reconcile Bro. Rizal's acid and antagonistic confession made to T.H. Pardo de Tavera in Paris in 1889? He told Bro. Tavera:

"I wished to throw the missile against the friars; but as they made use of the rituals and superstitions of a religion as shield, I had to get rid of that shield, in order to wound the enemy that was hiding behind it... What happens in the Philippine is horrible; they abuse the name of religion to enrich their haciendas to seduce an innocent girl, to destroy an enemy, to disturb the peace of a married couple and rob a wife of her honor. Why should I not fight a religion like that when it is the basic cause of our miseries and tears? The responsibility fall on those who abuse its name. Christ did the same thing with the religion of his country when the Pharisees abused it."

If the language of Bro. Rizal offends us now this is because we have not read Bro. Rizal's indictment of the abusive friars.

BRO. RIZAL BURIED IN HALLOWED GROUND?

A. Grand Lodge of the Philippines Resolution

“WHEREAS, all we need is common sense to realize that Rizal, a man of great intellect could never have subscribed to the assertion attributed to him in the alleged retraction paper, to the effect that he wished to live in the bosom of the Catholic Church, knowing as he did that he was to be executed a few hours after;

“WHEREAS, if it is true that Rizal abjured masonry and died within the Catholic Church, he would have been buried in hallowed ground in the Paco Cemetery instead of in a place reserved for the impertinent, the excommunicated, and all those outside the Church, and the Catholic ministers would have denied him funeral obsequies, as when the Jesuit fathers refused to say a requiem mass for his soul at St. Ignatius’ Church in Manila a few days after his execution, notwithstanding the fervent request of Rizal’s mother and other members of his family; nor would the then Bishop of Cebu, Fr. Martin Garcia de Alcocer, have forbidden the celebration of a similar mass in Cebu on December 30, 1900, on the ground that Rizal died outside the Roman Church;”

B. Commentary

Masons in some diocese have trouble with the Church when they lay down the working tools. Quite a number are denied the blessings of the church despite their contribution to the construction of the church building and/or church’s various outreach programs. If Bro. Rizal retracted at the very least he would have been given a decent burial in Paco Cemetery. But why was he denied Christian burial? Why was Bro. Rizal in the Book of Burials among those executed criminals, those who committed suicide, those who were incarcerated, and/or were Protestant?

MS. JOSEPHINE BRACKEN MARRIED TO RIZAL?

A. Grand Lodge of the Philippines’ Resolution

“WHEREAS, when Miss Nelly Bousted, whom Rizal had wanted to marry, exacted as condition of the marriage his conversion into Catholicism, the Hero preferred to lose her and her love, to being converted:

“WHEREAS, in assuming that Rizal abjured Masonry and was converted into Catholicism, those who insist he retracted claim that the Jesuit fathers would have married him and Josephine Bracken if Rizal had not adjured;

"WHEREAS, if such marriage had really taken place, the ministers of the Roman Church would have furnished the corresponding marriage certificate to Rizal's family, who have insistently asked for it without success to the present day."

B. Commentary

What marriage certificate do we have? Josephine initiated court cases against the mother of Rizal and Bro. Jose Ma. Basa in Hongkong. She first claimed she was the widow of Bro. Rizal. The case did not prosper for Josephine could not produce any marriage certificate. This is the reason why Josephine could not claim the title Josephine Bracken de Rizal. When she married Vicente Abad, she was described as "Josephine Bracken, daughter of James Bracken."

BRO. RIZAL RETRACTED MASONRY?

A. Grand Lodge of the Philippines' Resolution

"WHEREAS, if Rizal had retracted Masonry and died within the Roman Church, he would not have said without vacillation, the following passage in his Last Farewell:

'For I go where no slave before the oppressor bends,
Where faith can never kill
And God reigns ever on high.'

B. Commentary

How can a Mason retract his belief in God? How can Bro. Rizal retract his belief in God? How can Bro. Rizal retract his own pronouncement that:

"The duty of modern man to my way of thinking is to work for the redemption of humanity, because once man is dignified there would be less fortunate and more happy men that is possible in this life. Humanity cannot be redeemed so long as there are oppressed peoples, so long as there are some men who live on the tears of many, so long as there are emasculated minds and blinded eyes that enable others to live like sultans who alone may enjoy beauty. Humanity cannot be redeemed while reason is not free, while faith would want to impose itself on facts, while whims are laws, and while there are nations who subjugate others. For humanity to be able to attain the lofty destiny toward which God guide it, is necessary that within its fold there should be no dissensions nor tyranny, that plagues do not decimate it and no groans and curses be heard in its march. It is necessary that its triumphant career march to the tune of the hymns of glory and liberty with a bright face and serene forehead." (Rizal's Masonic Speech, English translation).

Two questions asked of those who knock at the door of Masonry.

- a. Do you believe in God?
- b. Do you believe in the immortality of the soul?

BRO. RIZAL DID NOT WRITE THE LAST FAREWELL?

A. Grand Lodge of the Philippines' Resolution

"WHEREAS, likewise slighting Rizal's memory, and evidently to detract from his merits and reduce his stature in the eyes of his people and of the world, it has been, and still is being claimed that he wrote his "Last Farewell" on the 12th day of December 1896, or day prior to December 29th, one minister of the Roman Church going as far as to say that Rizal did not write the poem at all;

"WHEREAS, it is obvious that his detractor's intention is to give his alleged retraction the appearance of plausibility, for the moment they accept that Rizal wrote his Last Farewell on December 29, 1896, the same day on which they say he wrote his retraction, the conclusion becomes inescapable that Rizal did not abjure masonry and embrace Catholicism, for the poem definitely proves him to be a free thinker;

"WHEREAS, on December 12th, 1896, the case against Rizal had not yet been decided, for it was not until the 27th and 28th of that month that the court martial met to pass sentence on him, neither was it then known whether Rizal was going to be convicted, Rizal did not expect the capital punishment because 'he was in hope of not being convicted of the crime of rebellion';

"WHEREAS, it was only on the 'morning of the 29th day of December of 1896 that the sentence of death was read to Rizal';

"WHEREAS, the Last Farewell was the Hero's sad and enchanting farewell to his Country; his parents; relatives, friends and foes alike; and a man does not bid farewell forever when he neither knows whether he is going, nor expects to go;

"WHEREAS, Don Manuel Alhama, correspondent of the El Imparcial, who was present on December 29, 1896. when Jesuit Father Faura was trying to convert Rizal, sent to his paper in Madrid, Spain at 6:45 p.m. on December 30, 1896, a dispatch which the newspaper printed the day, a pertinent part of which read: xxx

'Afterwards Rizal showed a strange reaction. He asked for pen and wrote verse.'

"WHEREAS, no poem of Rizal which may have been written on December 29, 1896, exists aside from My Last Farewell;

"WHEREAS, those who claim Rizal wrote his Last Farewell many days before the execution day, contend that, with his downcast spirit according to them, on the eve of his death, he could not have produced verses of the beauty and thoughts of the Last Farewell;

"WHEREAS, if ordinary men are incapable of such a feat under similar circumstances, in the case of Rizal, who was not an ordinary man, who at the moment of his execution maintained a normal pulse and a firm will, and who was a poet by birth and passionately devoted to his people, it was different; and as a poet is best inspired in the dramatic moments of life, it was not strange that Rizal, serene as he was in face of death, could produce a composition so sublime;"

B. Commentary

The day before Bro. Rizal's execution, his sister Trinidad visited him and he gave her a *lamparilla*. Knowing that the guard did not speak English, Bro. Rizal said:

"There is something there." The Rizal sisters shook the alcohol burner and a 9x15 centimeter paper fell out. The poem was neatly written but was unsigned and untitled. The sisters of Rizal copied it and distributed it to their friends. Bro. Mariano Ponce gave it the title *Ultimo Pensamiento*. Our National Artist Nick Joaquin says that "the poem had been running through his head during his incarceration, and maybe even before that; and what he wrote down on the 29th of December (or 28th December if Trinidad got the lamp on 29 December) was but the final and complete version of a poem long in progress."

The Last Farewell is Bro. Rizal's swan song. The untitled poem showed his genius. To question that it was his last hurrah, his last poetic outpouring is to doubt his literary power and strength.

CONCLUDING PART OF THE GRAND LODGE RESOLUTION

"WHEREAS, it is the duty of Masonry to defend the truth, justice and reason;

"THEREFORE, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines, at its 27th Annual Communication, resolves:

1. To make, as it hereby makes, an integral part of this Resolution, the following paragraphs of Chapters XXXIV of the work of Dr. Rafael Palma;

'Is the version of the Jesuits in that short treatise by chance irrefutable? It is not if we will apply the historical criticism. In the first place, the statement was anonymous; if the facts alleged to have occurred were true as stated,

among the various Jesuits who attended at Rizal somebody would have authorized it with his signature. In the second place, the statement reads like a fairy tale that only children may believe it.'

'In the first pages it states that when Father Viza brought to the chapel the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which Rizal carved while a student in Ateneo, the first thing which Rizal asked upon seeing the Jesuits was about that statue. Is this not a puerile coincidence? Why would Rizal think of statues when he did not believe in them? The same thing can be said of the detail that tears rolled down Rizal's cheeks when Fr. Balaguer reminded him of his eternal condemnation, and that immediately after, he became restless and asked for confession. Rizal might have been easily converted for any other reason than that, because it was precisely that dogma of eternal condemnation that he had studied thoroughly, and in that point he had an old and strong conviction, a proven by his discussion of Purgatory in the Noli, and his famous Vision of Fr. Rodrigues. To allege that the words of Fr. Balaguer, who was an ordinary Catholic priest, changed his religious convictions, after the works of Felix Sarday Salvani, and of Bishop Bougaud (who were more learned authors than Fr. Balaguer which he had read in Dapitan did not convince him, is to ignore the character of Rizal.'

'The story contains also a number of details and exaggerations of the narration which the author himself would seem to doubt. For example, that Rizal became impatient and insistently asked for the form of retraction after being told that he could not confess without retracting; that he had to wait because the Prelate's form did not arrive; that the Prelate ordered that the prisoner be left alone for a few hours in order to meditate, but that this was not done as the prisoner insistently asked for the form; that the form was not immediately given as it was not yet the right moment and he was still struggling with himself and was not yet subdued. Of what use is the narration of all these details when the document itself was the best proof, unless it was that the author suspected that the document would be doubted?'

The story does not mention that the retraction was signed by Rizal in the presence of witnesses, yet it appears signed not only by Rizal but also by two witnesses, the Chief of Squad and the Adjutant of the Garrison. Were these persons sought out expressly to witness the retraction? When and how did they stamp their signatures? No reference at all is made regarding this point in the story'

'Another point: that a half past one o'clock in the morning, Rizal knelt before the altar and read the retraction aloud in the presence of the officers of the garrison. What was the necessity of his regarding the retraction?'

'One more point: that Rizal confessed three times and heard mass twice kneeling all the time, and that he had to be told to sit down. All of this was to show, perhaps, that Rizal was truly converted; but these details are exaggerated, considering that Rizal was not a neophyte.

"Furthermore, the first part of the document says, 'In this religion in which I was born and educated, I wish to live and die.' How? Did Rizal expect to live when he positively knew that he was going to be shot within a few moments? This statement is, at least, contrary to the facts and Rizal could not have subscribed to it under the circumstances he found himself.'

2. To declare, as hereby declares, to the whole world that Rizal did not abjure masonry, nor was he converted to Catholicism before he was executed, and that he wrote his Last Farewell on the 29th of December 1896;
3. To request, at it hereby requests, all masons to teach their sons and daughters that the letter of retraction attributed to Rizal is forgery and that it is not true that the letter is the Martyr's profession of faith;
4. To send copies of this Resolution to all subordinate lodges, and all Grand Lodges of the world, and to the National Library, for the information and guidance of future generations; and
5. To publish this Resolution in full in a number of The Cabletow.

ADOPTED in the City of Manila, Philippines, on this day, the 24th day of January, 1939.

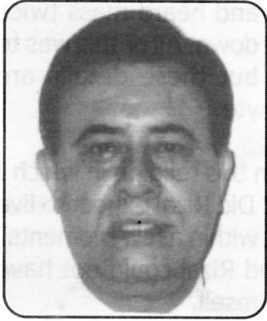
Commentary

Bro. Rizal offended the friars, the actual rulers at that time. In his Last Farewell he penned these immortal words:

"I go where there are no slaves, no hangman, no oppressors
Where faith does not slay, where he who reigns is God."
(Austin Coates translation)

To our National Hero, "Uprising and revolutions have already taken place in countries under tyrannical governments, under those where though and the human heart are compelled to keep silent. (The Philippines a Century Hence, La Solidaridad, 15 December 1889)

Bro. Rizal bravely intoned: "We... fight so that there may be more justice and more liberty, and for the sacred rights of men." (Letter to Marcelo H. del Pilar, 22 June 1889, Epistolario Rizalino)



Jose Rizal

by Manuel L. Morato

The life of our beloved foremost national hero, Jose Rizal, should be more alive in the minds and hearts of our people now more than any other time.

At the rate things are going in our land, we seem to have veered farther and farther away from what Jose Rizal had lived and died for.

Before all his efforts and sacrifices go to naught, all of us must wake up to the reality that we indeed have become undeserving of the motherland he died for.

As a Fifth Degree Rizalist, a Knight of the Grand Cross of Rizal, I am particularly bothered by what is happening around. We have become so different from what Rizal had wanted the Filipinos to be.

It is a shame in more ways than one, for a people usually try their best to reflect the image and likeness of its national hero, if we are to give him credit and honor the legacy he had left behind. But truth to tell, it is as though we neither had Jose Rizal's genes nor an iota of his nobility, honesty, and integrity to guide our lives.

What kind of race have we all become? We seem to be totally bankrupt of humanity.

Instead of fighting the enemies, we fight each other. Instead of caring for each other, we hate each other. Instead of helping one another, we only help ourselves.

For the record, Jose Rizal died at the age of 35, not 30 or 33 as some say. It is easy enough to estimate from the day he was born in 1861 to that day on Dec. 30, 1896 that he was executed in Bagumbayan or Luneta.

There are so many misconceptions about his life, short as it was. There are those who made him appear as womanizer, which he was not. Though he easily fell in love, he avoided any serious relationships with the ladies he met in his travels because he and his older brother, Paciano, had made a pact that only one of them would get married.

And we must take note that Jose Rizal was sent to Spain for a mission: to defend his country. Thus, when he met a lady in some foreign country and felt that he was falling in love, he left for another country.

We have the Spanish friars of the University of Sto. Tomas and Letran to blame for making Jose Rizal a lesser person because they could not accept his leaving the Church.

When Zaide and Agoncillo wrote their books on the "life" of Jose Rizal based on hearsay, the Spanish friars in Sto. Tomas and Letran would not accept them as textbooks unless the authors downgraded Jose Rizal by making him a philanderer.

Jose Rizal was not that at all. He was a very obedient son to his mother who had always told her only two sons never to touch a woman until they got married. Jose Rizal followed his mother's advice to the letter.

It took Dr. Jose Baron-Fernandez, a multi-awarded Spanish author and researcher, to correct the misconception about Jose Rizal's life. It took him 20 years to research in all the secret archives in Spain, other parts of Europe, Mexico, and America. Based on documents, he wrote a book, *Jose Rizal – Filipino Doctor and Patriot*, which I published in 1981. I bought the rights to the book from Dr. Baron in 1979 and decided to publish the book in Manila, so that our people would know the true Jose Rizal.

The Spanish friars who disliked Jose Rizal and whom Jose Rizal disliked, in turn, for their grave abuses on the Filipino people made it appear that Jose Rizal turned against the Church, which he did not. He believed in God, never turned into an atheist, and died a true Christian. Jose Rizal only fought the bad Spanish friars, which is also happening to us today with some of our local religious. Many Catholics have also turned against some of our bishops, priests, and nuns for their improper behaviour in the streets of Manila. I am one of those who cannot stand them either.

But as then and now, we have to accept that there are a greater number of good priests, bishops, and nuns who live up to their calling. Bless their souls!

According to Dr. Baron, Jose Rizal never retracted, never impregnated Josephine Bracken in Dapitan (her pregnancy remains a rumor, no document or letter was ever found to that effect), never turned against God, never gave his permission to Bonifacio through Pio Valenzuela to go on with the revolt, for the Filipinos were not prepared, and was never an important member of Masonry.

There is really nothing wrong in being a member of Masonry, for it's only a brotherhood out to do good and it is not anti-God as what other friars made it appear to be.

The Masons believe in God. Its members come from all religions – Catholics and Protestants and so forth – who join together in the fraternity of men.

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The Spanish friars doubted the Masons, for the Masons precisely banded together to censure the wrongdoings of the friars against the people. Such a movement was necessary even if only to maintain some sort of balance.

I feel bad that our students are learning the wrong things about Jose Rizal through the books of Zaide and Agoncillo. There is a need to re-evaluate these textbooks if we want to project the true character of Jose Rizal.

Three of Bro. Rizal's Amigas



Gertrude Beckett



Josephine Bracken

Rizal preferred pursuing his secret mission, to prepare himself in the mighty task of liberating his oppressed people, over continuing a romantic interlude with any one of his *amigas*.



Nelly Boustead

DOGGEDLY DETERMINED TO DO A DIMASALANG

by Flor R. Nicolas, PM (42)



Introduction

If, according to our Monitor, it is important for us to imitate a legendary hero, the Grand Master Hiram Abiff, in his truly exalted and exemplary character, in his unfeigned piety to God, and in his inflexible fidelity to his trust, it is far more important, methinks, to imitate our nation's foremost patriot and hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, whose Masonic name was Dimasalang, not really in his many admirable accomplishments, which to us ordinary mortals would just be a consummation devoutly to be wished or an impossible dream, but rather in the things for which he lived and died, particularly the ideals, principles and values for which he stood, such as truth and sincerity, justice, personal excellence, education, peace and freedom, patriotism tempered by the spirit of humanist internationalism, courage in the face of adversity and great odds, disinterested and dedicated service to the community, sacrifice, and so forth, which, when practiced by us Filipinos, will make our nation's goodness shine through and which we should use for guiding us into the uncertain future.

In accordance with our theme for this Masonic year, then, let us "revisit" the ideals, principles and values which our distinguished Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal stood for and renew our commitment to help develop our people into what the late nationalist writer and speaker and Senator Claro Mayo Recto called "a nation of Rizals".

Relentlessly Searching for, Courageously Defending the Truth

Perhaps the most noteworthy trait of Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal's character was his constant and sincere desire to know the truth, which our Monitor defines as "a divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue" and which, together with goodness, ought to be the distinguishing mark of a member of the Masonic Fraternity. As he himself had recounted, when he was but a small boy, he used to spend long hours on the shore of the Laguna de Bay, thinking and dreaming of what might be over there, on the other side of the waves. A witness to the violence of the authorities in his hometown, Calamba, and the atrocity of the *tulisanes* or outlaws on its outskirts, he wondered whether these evils also existed in other towns or villages.

Desirous of finding out the truth, he investigated, through keen observation, whether the white man was really superior to the *indio* (the term used by the

peninsulares and the *insulares* for derisively referring to the native of the Philippines). In his youth, Pepe Rizal was irritated by the unfounded feeling of superiority of the Spaniards. Later on, however, his indignation calmed down because he had found out that the Spaniards' feeling of superiority was the result of the indios' lack of education. He realized that there were tyrants in his country, to which he referred as "nuestro perdido eden" (our lost eden) in his untitled valedictory poem, because, fearful and ignorant, the majority of the indios allowed themselves to be enslaved by the relatively fewer Spaniards. Hence, he adopted as his own the French proverb "Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner" (To understand all is to forgive all).

He therefore determined to liberate his enslaved countrymen from fear and ignorance and suffering by exposing the truth. Not even the promise of freedom, nor the dragnet of persecution, nor the loneliness of exile, nor the threat of execution could make him detract from what he perceived to be the truth.

In *Noli Me Tangere* (Touch Me Not), he described with utmost vividness a cancerous tumor that was so malignant that it became inflamed at the slightest touch and caused intense pain. He hoped that it might perhaps be cured by a divinely inspired healer, as in the former civilizations when the sick were left exposed on the steps of temples. He wanted to hold a mirror up to his suffering countrymen, to present a true and merciless image, to lift the veil hiding the truth. He was ready to sacrifice everything, including his own ego, since the weaknesses he diagnosed were also his own as a son of the "lost eden", which when cured of those weaknesses, could develop itself into "perla del mar de oriente" (a pearl of the sea of the orient).

The courageous publication of the *Noli* and the surreptitious distribution of copies thereof among the people so incensed the conservative elements in the country, particularly the reactionary friars, that they intensified their persecution of the author. But, a staunch defender of the truth, he held fast to what he had written.

NO, I do not believe that he retracted his Masonry and all that he had written because Masonry has always stood for the truth, and all that Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal had written was the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Persistently Pursuing Personal Perfection, Undauntedly Demonstrating His Sense of Justice

Endowed by God with a logical mind, the young Pepe Rizal determined to convince the world, by his example, that the indio, when given access to educational opportunities, was not at all inferior to, but as good as, if not better than, his Spanish master.

A son of an *inquilino*, he was enrolled at the school of Maestro Justiniano Aquino Cruz in Biñan, Laguna. He so dedicated himself to his studies that he surpassed all his classmates in all academic subjects, including Spanish and Latin. He was one young indio who did not like to uselessly squander his leisure time; he was, Masonically speaking, a proficient user of the symbolic 24-inch gauge. Thus, he spent his leisure time at the studio of Juancho, his maestro's father-in-law, who gave him lessons in drawing and painting.

Quarrelsome by nature he was not. But he never ran away from a fight. When, for instance, he was challenged by the bully of the school named Pedro to a fight, he readily accepted the challenge. The two furiously wrestled in the classroom, to their classmates' glee. Having learned the art of wrestling from his athletic Tio Manuel, Pepe Rizal defeated the much bigger bully, who subsequently reformed his ways.

When informed by his only brother, Paciano, of the unjust execution of the three innocent secular priests, Jose Burgos, Mariano Gomez and Jacinto Zamora, the youthful Pepe Rizal was inspired to fight the evils of Spanish tyranny and redeem the "lost eden".

At the Ateneo de Manila, not only did he excel in his academics, but he also read both extensively and intensively. He, moreover, joined such elite student organizations as the Marian Congregation, the Academy of Spanish Literature, and the Academy of Natural Sciences. Besides, during his leisure time, he cultivated his literary talent under the inspiring guidance of Fr. Francisco de Paula Sanchez. He, furthermore, produced sculptural works, the beauty and grace of which amazed the Jesuit priests. At the end of his fourth year, he graduated at the head of his class. The indio had proven that he could be better than the peninsular and the insular!

When, however, he went on a short visit to his hometown, another untoward incident deeply offended his sense of justice and seriously injured his *amor propio*.

One evening, while he was taking a *paseo* by the lake, the lieutenant of the guardia civil passed by. Because it was dark, the young man did not recognize and failed to greet the official, who irately beat him.

Upon his return to Manila, he reported to the Governor-General what the lieutenant had done to him and demanded compensation. But he was very disappointed when the Governor-General superciliously commented, "You cannot seriously expect the representative of the Spanish crown to trouble himself with such a trivial matter." The sensitive young Pepe could not accept that there were different rules for different people owing to race or socio-economic standing.

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His experiences in the arbitrariness of justice and the arrogance of the Spanish ruling classes caused him to start pondering on ways of helping his adored land break ties with Spain.

So, when he was a student of the University of Santo Tomas, although he did not like the conservative atmosphere prevailing therein, he entered a poetry-writing and a play-writing contest in order to drive home his point that the indio was not inferior to the Spaniard. The two literary contests were open to all residents of the country at that time, including professionals. In both, his ode entitled "A la Juventud Filipina" (To the Filipino Youth) and his allegorical play entitled "El Consejo de los Dioses" (The Council of the Gods), won the first prize. But when the organizers of the contests learned that the winner was an indio, instead of praising the champion, they lauded the runners-up because they were Spaniards.

Again, Jose Rizal's sense of justice was deeply offended and his pride seriously injured. But he was very sensitive and courageous. He lashed back at the offenders in the form of an acrid satire to make them realize the injustice of their action.

In any case, in his award-winning ode, he urged his fellow youth to shed off their fearful ways, awaken to a new blossoming by avidly studying the arts and sciences, and use these for promoting the welfare and happiness of their country and people; for, after all, the youth were "the beautiful hope of my country," and the Philippines, not Spain, was their mother country.

In an earlier poem, "La Intima Alianza entre Educacion y Religion" (The Intimate Alliance between Education and Religion), he urged his fellow youth to complement their intellectual development with moral and religious values, for the latter would give the former the right direction and the proper balance.

In his award-winning play, he suggested three means by which the Filipinos could regain their "lost eden" from the Spanish colonialists' deadly stranglehold, namely, revolution, assimilation, and reforms. He subtly hinted at his preference for reforms; for he was not only a staunch advocate of popular education, but a man of peace.

Staunchly Advocating Popular Education, Freedom through Peaceful Means

Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal bought Freemasonry's idea that an individual should constantly improve himself and, through him, the society in which he lives. Hence, his initiation into Freemasonry intensified his desire to cultivate himself to his highest potential, to persistently develop himself from "rough" to "perfect ashlar," and to use the great book of nature and revelation as his spiritual, moral and Masonic trestleboard for building himself into a symbolic temple, the various parts of which

fitted with such exact nicety that it had more the appearance of the handiwork of the GAOTU than that of human hands. As a professional and a Freemason, he never stopped learning and perfecting what he had learned. As a result, he developed himself into a truly versatile renaissance man, a real gem of a man and Mason, an extraordinary individual with remarkable knowledge and admirable accomplishments.

After developing himself into such an individual, he dedicated every working time of his life to teaching his countrymen. Even while in exile in Dapitan, he opened a class for 30 students.

He expressed his belief in popular education through the protagonist of his Noli, Cristostomo Ibarra, who said, "I build a schoolhouse. Progress is possible only through education. How can we find the road without light?"

Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal insisted that the Filipinos should first master the art of peace before learning the art of war. That is why he did not give heed to the urgent call of the revolutionaries, led by Bro. Andres Bonifacio, for him to join the Katipunan and even to lead it. He held fast to his conviction that a revolution from below would fail, and that it would result in the needless shedding of innocent blood. He desperately advocated reforms from above, such as representation in the Spanish parliament, freedom of the press, competitive examination for civil service posts, and restriction of the arbitrary behaviour of certain groups.

Recurrently, he warned Spain thus: "So we repeat and we shall repeat, while there is time, that it is better to anticipate the wishes of the people rather than to yield to force; the first wins sympathy; the second, contempt and indignation."

In *El Filibusterismo*, Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal made Fr. Florentino tell Simoun, a nihilist, a social democrat, and a Machiavellian leader, that God did not approve of the means he was using. Said the secular priest:

The glory of serving a country cannot be given to one who has contributed to its ruin. You believed that what crime and iniquity had stained and deformed, more crime and iniquity could cleanse and redeem. This was an error. Hate only creates monsters; crime criminals; only virtue can redeem. If our country is, some day, to be free, it will not be through vice and crime, it will not be through the corruption of its sons, some deceived, others bribed; redemption presupposes virtue; virtue, sacrifice; and sacrifice, love.

Explained the secular priest further:

I do not mean to say that our freedom must be won at the point of a sword; the sword now counts for every little in the destinies of our times; but I do say that we must win our freedom by deserving it, by improving the mind and enhancing the dignity of the individuals, loving what is just, what is good, what is great, to the point of dying for it. When a people reach these heights, God provides the weapon, and the idols and the tyrants fall like a house of cards.

Prudently Tempering His Strong Sense of Nationalism with the Spirit of Humanist Internationalism

Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal was an intense patriot and nationalist but at the same time a good and true Mason, who was well aware that Masonry's long-term goal is to establish on earth a veritable brotherhood of men of every country, sect and opinion under the Fatherhood of God.

In his essay entitled "Amor Patrio" (Love of Country), he urged his fellow Filipinos thus:

Let's love our country always, desiring nothing but her welfare; for by so doing, we'll labor in conformity with the purpose of humanity dictated by God, which is the universal peace and harmony among His creatures.

In *El Filibusterismo*, he made the idealistic student Basilio pronounce these words:

Within a few centuries, when humanity has become redeemed and enlightened, when there are neither tyrants nor slaves, neither colonies nor mother countries, when justice reigns and man is a citizen of the world, science alone will remain, the word patriotism will be equivalent to fanaticism, and he who prides himself on patriotic ideas will doubtless be isolated as a dangerous disease, as a menace to the social order.

During his time, however, the Spanish colonialists enslaved and oppressed the masses of the Filipino people, and the Philippines was the Filipinos' "lost eden" and Spain's colony, where reigned tyranny, fear, ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, and other moral evils. Hence, patriotism was in order.

After spending several years in Europe, leading in the campaign for much-needed reforms and endeavouring to awaken his fellow Filipinos from their centuries-long

lethargy, Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal came back to the country and established La Liga Filipina, which he intended to be the foundation of the Filipino nation he had envisioned to emerge. He capsulized his vision of the emergent Filipino nation in the metaphor "perla del mar de Oriente" (pearl of the sea of the Orient). Yes, he envisioned his "patria adorada" (adored country) to be a free and progressive place where would prevail the principles of the Filipino national tradition: *pagkakaisa*, *pakikisama*, *pagsasarili*, *pagkabayani*, and *pakikipagkapwa-tao*. He embodied these principles in the objectives of La Liga Filipina.

But suspecting and fearing that La Liga Filipina was designed by Bro. Rizal to be a subversive association, the conservative elements in the country, particularly the reactionary friars, adamantly worked for his exile to Dapitan in far-away Zamboanga.

Disinterestedly Dedicating Himself to Community Development

Although his arduous work of helping build Masonry's symbolic temple of liberty, equality and fraternity in the hearts of his countrymen and in the soul of his conceived Filipino nation was temporarily impeded, Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal persisted in standing for service. He transformed Dapitan and the neighboring areas into better places to live in, and he improved the lives of the residents thereof.

We must take the cue from Bro. Rizal. We ought to pursue with a little more vigor and earnestness our community development and civic action programs and projects; for, after all, the spirit of Masonry is disinterested and dedicated service – service without counting the cost, service without expecting any other reward than the feeling of having done something for the good of our fellowmen, particularly our countrymen, and specially the economically disadvantaged among us.

Sacrificing Himself for Country's Sake

As cited earlier, Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal wrote, "Redemption presupposes virtue; virtue, sacrifice; and sacrifice, love." Because he firmly believed that "love of country, next to love of God, is the greatest," he sacrificed much for his idolized Filipinas. He even sacrificed his love life, i.e., his love for the women who came to love him, because he wanted to fulfill his life-long commitment to Filipinas. He expressed his agapeic love for her in his valedictory poem. In the first stanza, he apostrophized to her thus:

Farewell, country I adore, region loved by the sun,
Pearl of the sea of the Orient, our lost eden.
To give thee my sad, withered life
would be a joy for me. Were it more brilliant,
more fresh, more flowery, I'd also give it to thee,
I'd give it for thy weal.

The Cabletow

In the second stanza, he pointed out that what really mattered was not where or how her sons showed their love for her, but their motivation. Their proper motive should be to make of her a realm of reason, of justice, and of work; for it she would be happy, they and their families would be happy, too. Their motto, in other words, should be "Bayan muna, bago pamilya, bago ako."

In the second stanza of his valedictory poem, Bro. Rizal told his beloved Filipinas:

In the battlefields, fighting with delirium, others give thee
their lives without doubts, without regrets. The place matters
not: cypress, laurel or lily, Scaffold or open field, combat or
cruel martyrdom, 'Tis all the same if it's demanded by country
and hearth.

Bro. Rizal spent his whole life working to make of his beloved country a realm of reason, of justice, and of work, desiring nothing but her welfare and happiness. Exclaimed he:

Dream of my life, my ardent desire while alive, Thy health!
Shouts to thee this soul soon to depart. Thy health! ah,
how beautiful it is to fall to give thee flight, To die to give
thee life, to die beneath thy sky, And on thy enchanted
land to sleep through eternity.

Later on in his valedictory poem, he said:

My idolized country, sorrow of my sorrows, beloved Filipinas,
hear my very last adieu! Here I leave thee all: my parents,
my loves. I'm going to where there are no slaves,
executioners, nor oppressors, Where faith doesn't kill, where
He who reigns is God.

Up to the last moment of his life, Bro. Rizal hoped that his beloved country would become a place where would reign a veritable Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God. To hasten the dawning of her becoming such a place, he sacrificed his life at the tender age of 35 years. He viewed his martyrdom as "a rest from the toilsome day"; hence, in the last line of his valedictory poem, he echoed Socrates' immortal statement: "To die is to rest."

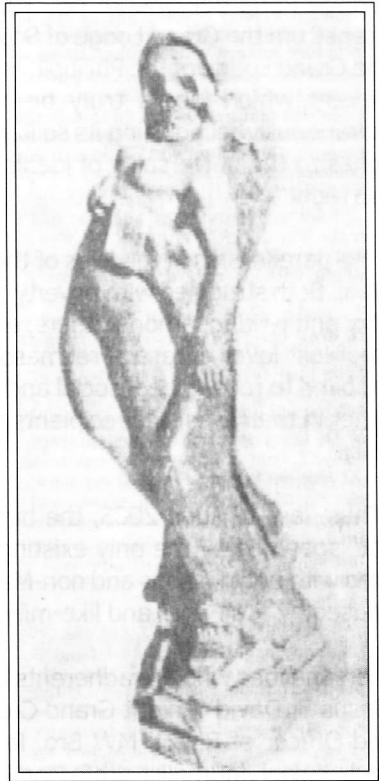
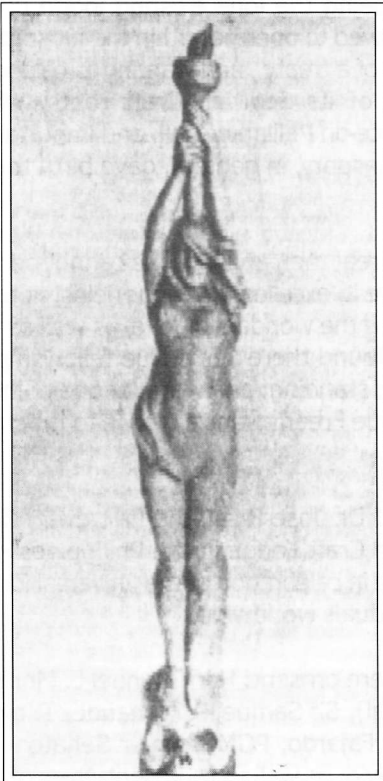
In Conclusion

We who came this way after Bro. Jose "Dimasalang" Rizal should emulate the example set by him of standing for truth, personal excellence, justice for all, education, freedom through peaceful means, patriotism tempered by an international

perspective, service to fellowmen, and total dedication to the common good (tayo muna, bago kami, bago ako). These are, after all, the ideals, principles and values on which our ancient and honorable Fraternity is founded.

To help improve the society in which we live, we should also wage an awareness campaign among our countrymen relative to the need for practicing these ideals, principles and values because if we, as a people, practice them, our goodness will shine through, and nothing will stop us from securing our future in this century and from making the Philippines into a great country of a great people.

In other words, let's be so doggedly determined to do a Dimasalang until we become, as the late Senator Recto put it, a nation of Rizals.



Sculptural Works of Rizal: The Triumph of Death over Life and The Triumph of Science over Death. He gave both works as gifts to Blumentritt.

RIZAL NIGHT

by Bro. Senen A.S. de Santos, IPM
Perla del Oriente No. 1034, S.C.

The concept of a "Rizal Night" was the product of a "Filipinization" of the annual observance of the Burns Night by Scottish Craft Lodges, Masonic Clubs and non-Masonic Burns groups on the 25th of January. "Burns", of course, is none other than the bard, Bro. Robert Burns (1759-1796), the famous national poet of Scotland and a Brother Freemason.

Lodge Perla del Oriente No. 1034, S.C. being the lone existing lodge under warrant from the Grand Lodge of Scotland allowed to operate within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines by virtue of a treaty, and wanting to celebrate an event which would truly be reflective of its Scottish Craft roots, while simultaneously recognizing its solitary existence on Philippine soil, and importantly emphasize the universality of ideals of Freemasonry, in general, gave birth to the "Rizal Night".

The parallelisms in the lives of these two great men and Masons cannot be lost sight of. Both struggled with poverty, rose above it, excelled in various fields, notably poetry and writing, among others; experienced the wonders of love, as well as the pain of lost love; entered Freemasonry and found there lies a true fellowship of men, blind to race, creed, social and economic standing; and were, at one point or another in their lives, the recipients of the virtue Freemasons espouse to practice: Charity.

Thus, last 19 June 2005, the birth date of Dr. Jose Rizal, the first ever "Rizal Night" spawned by the only existing Scottish Craft Lodge in the Philippines was shared with both Masons and non-Masons alike in celebration of the universal ideals espoused by "Ka Pepe" and like-minded individuals worldwide.

Personalities who are adherents of Rizal were present: Hon. Manuel L. Morato, Sir Jesus B. David (Knight Grand Cross of Rizal), Sir Samuel P. Fernandez (Knight Grand Officer of Rizal), MW Bro. Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM, former Senator Eva Estrada Kalaw, journalist-professor Randolf David, as well as representatives of the Rizal clan, headed by their Chairman, Mr. Emmanuel G. Herbosa. Lodges under the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, which have any visage of Rizal were duly represented, as well as representatives from embassies of countries where Rizal passed through and stayed during his journeys were invited and in attendance.

All through the night, Rizal's universality was the unifying theme. The menu served was composed of delicacies researched and known to be favorites of Rizal.

Interspersed during key points of the night was the raffling-off of prizes – aptly called “Lotteria Rizal” – ranging from a yoyo, to travelling chess sets to books on Rizal and a trip to Hongkong (to visit the then newly installed marker of Rizal’s clinic) were given away – all items reflective of Rizal’s passions and travels. The event was further highlighted by musical presentations on the violin by child prodigy (like Rizal), a specially commissioned short multi-media film on Rizal, a characterization of the Rizal’s “Address to the Women of Malolos”, a rendition of his “Mi Ultimo Adios” via a Tagalog version by Bro. Andres Bonifacio, and topped-off with a charitable act in support of the development of gifted children via a “Kabang Talento at Talino” fund.



Seated (L-R) Victor E. Pineda, PM; Teofilo C. Abejo II PM, Joseph T. Juico PM, Benito K. Tan, Brian P. Parsons, Danilo C. Datu, Julio M. Cabali PM, Senen Agustin S. De Santos PM, Rodrigo Bonifacio, Renel M. Rogacion

Standing (L-R) Diosdado Erandio, David M. De Rama, Tony Mendoza Co, Pravin Thakur Sharma, Samuel Esteban, Roger H. Gamboa PM, Ernesto T. Ong PM, Henry W. Cheng

A REFLECTION ON DR. RIZAL'S TRAITS

by Emmanuel G. Herbosa

(Speech delivered before brethren of Lodge Perla del Oriente No. 1034, S.C., under the leadership of RW Master Senon A. De Santos)

I am humbled to be here before you this evening, to deliver a reflection in honor of our beloved national hero. I guess it is by default that I am here, as my claim is merely that as president of our family's Jose Rizal Resource Foundation. You see, I have many illustrious cousins who railroaded me into this position, as they did not want themselves to be trusted into the limelight. Perhaps this desire to assume a low profile is Dr. Rizal's trait or that of our family. So now you have me here!

In the serendipity of my youth, my awareness of being related to our national hero was so gradual, so deliberate that I do not recall any profound nor starting event that trusted the realization that I AM a Rizal. It seemed like a given from the very start of my consciousness and so I were the relationship comfortably on my sleeve – so to speak. But as I progressed in school, classmate and friends eventually found out and so I was attracting more attention than I could handle. It was actually fun when asked how it feels to be a Rizal, but also challenging when it is your teachers who start asking you to do some home research for hardly known footnote to the family's history. As I went about treating this as a chore, unknown to me at that time was how my character was being molded along certain traits that distinguish the Rizal family.

Allow me to mention first the quest for learning, an interest in new ideas or concepts and a passion to make these work. I remember well my high school days, when on Sunday afternoons, I would try to learn the game of chess with my father Francisco and my grandfather Estanislao. Lolo Tan would fondly recall to us what his Tio Jose had advised him to improve his game: "To excel in chess, one must play like a book in the opening moves, a magician in the middle game, and a machine towards the end."

Lolo was the boy Tanis in the history books, the second son of Lucia Rizal Herbosa, who, along with his elder brother Teodosio and a younger cousin, Mauricio Cruz (son of Maria Rizal and grandfather of Gomma Cruz) were made to accompany their Tio Jose in his exile to that lonely and isolated town of Dapitan. As my father recounts in his book:

The three of them, aged a year apart from each other, were tutored in the 3 Rs, learned how to swim, and were prepared to confront the challenges of life, including those on the chess board. In his letter to his older sister Lucia, Lolo Jose wrote of the

dexterity of Teodosio with tools and of the interest of Tanis with books.

There was never a dull moment for them, as Lolo Jose was always occupied at any time of the day. Always, there was something to do and always ideas were thought about that brought out results.

We can see these results in the structures that still stand like monuments in what is now the Talisay Park in Dapitan. If you could only visit this hallowed place, it will dawn on you that this was where the genius of Dr. Rizal fully manifested itself. It was the flowering of a truly renaissance man, an eye doctor who operated a very busy outpatient, charity clinic, a self-taught engineer who put together an intricate waterway and sewage system (to the admiration of the Americans during the Commonwealth period), an unlicensed architect who designed and built all the houses and structures that he needed, a horticulturist who selected the flora that would best thrive and decorate his habitat, and of course the man of letters who wrote the immortal thoughts of such masterpiece as *Mi Retiro*.

Looking back at my own humble educational achievements, I think that this probably explains why my interest in history and literature (in high school) led to an engineering degree in college and further, to a MBA for my postgraduate course.

The other trait of Dr. Rizal that is so profound to me is his Christianity. We all know that he was at odds with Catholic teaching at that time, primarily because of the false witnessing of the friars. Perhaps he was not even a believer but more of a moral and decent fellow. But nonetheless, his remarkable life reproduced in his own behaviour the doctrine and life of Jesus Christ, in the way that he treated and truly cared for others, in his sympathy with other's sorrows and plight under the oppressive Spanish regime. It was his indomitable advocacy of what is right that led to a martyrdom that liberated our people and catalyzed yearnings for nationhood.

Our national hero's life is a testimony of the lonely position that many times over, he would take to advocate a principle, and more so, defend the rights of others. This advocacy, however, often brought trouble as it was misconstrued as disruptive and not in accordance with the tried and tested ways of organizations. But the traits to building organizations and nations are hardly along straight paths. In fact, in this competitive world of ours, we are even challenged to reinvent ourselves. And hopefully, it is for the good of others – to become the best not only in what we do, but to be the best FOR the community.

It is opportune that we commemorate Dr. Rizal this year on Father's Day. None among our heroes is as top of mind as Father of our Nation. He taught us how it was to live, suffer and die for the fatherland. May we do better these days and not anymore waver in following through the heroic initiative of Dr. Rizal in truly securing a nation for us all.

Candidates for

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN



**MEDARDO BENJAMIN O.
APACIBLE**

MASONRY/APPENDANT BODIES/MASONIC CLUBS:

Initiated on March 10, 1979; Passed on July 17, 1979 and Raised on February 9, 1980 in Kalilayan Lodge No. 37, Lucena City.

Dual member of Araw Lodge No. 18 in 1988; elected Junior Warden in 1990, Senior Warden in 1991 and Worshipful Master in 1992 of Araw Lodge No. 18.

Appointed District Grand Lecturer for Masonic District 5 in 1993 and 1994. Appointed District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District No. 5 in 1995 and appointed Junior Grand Lecturer for Metro Manila in 1996.

Conferred the 32° A.&A.S.R., Luzon Bodies in 1989; a Member of Plaridel York Rite in 1988; and a Member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Maqueda Chapter, Catbalogan City, in 1981.

A member of the Aloha Temple, AAONMS in 1989 and a Past High Shereef of Saigon Shrine Club.

The 1999 Chapter President of the PNP Square and Compass Club, Camp Olivas Chapter, San Fernando, Pampanga and the 2002 Chapter President of the PNP Square and Compass Club, Camp Vicente Lim Chapter, Canlubang, Laguna.

STRENGTH and HONOR in PHILIPPINE MASONRY

STRENGTH and HONOR, the motto of the Roman Legionaries. By mere utterance, the soldiers were beholden, the empire widened. On these virtues, olden but tried and proven, my program rests; STRENGTH FROM WITHIN EMANATES HONOR WITHOUT.

The strengthening of Philippine Masonry has never been more urgent than today.

Over the past six years (1999-2004), each of the 307 lodges raised 1.57 petitioners each year on the average. Yet, we lost 1.93 members annually, by death, suspension, expulsion and demit.

Also over these years, 4.6 lodges were established yearly, our membership crawled at a dismal 1.5% rise per annum while the country's growth grew by a whooping 2.4% annually.

Likewise, the dismantling disparity in numbers was worsened by the large 40% composition of senior citizens in the fraternity's population and an 80% membership paying erratically. As of the end of 2004, our fraternity has a total regular membership of 16,027 with 2,955 life time members by longevity leaving only 13,072 regular paying members.

Philippine Masonry has not considerably grown thru these years. Our fraternity is aging fast. If not averted, it will not be long before this ancient and noble institution suffers the fate of dinosaurs.

It also cannot be discounted that there is a lack of continuity of sound programs and projects which are most of the time orphaned by the outgoing leadership. Yet, why replace the old that has not even borne its fruit yet with an untested new?

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

I. STRENGTH

1. STRENGTHEN MASONRY FROM WITHIN

In Philippine setting, the basic unit of government is the barangay. The more peaceful and strong are the barangays, the better for the Philippines. A barangay may be compared to a Blue Lodge. It is about time that we give it due attention and notice. Lessen, if not eliminate, the conflicts and controversies that rock the peace and wither the membership's participation in, and enthusiasm for, the Lodge.

The CREATION OF A CONCILIATION COMMITTEE IN BLUE LODGES is considered for this purpose. The Conciliation Committee works like the Barangay Justice System, to hear and settle disputes amicably. It receives complaints, listens to grievances, arbitrates parties in contention, secures settlement and sees through the implementation of the same. For a heart, no matter how hardened, softens to an attentive ear and to an instructive tongue.

It reports under the DDGM but decides independently of the DDGM.

Every lodge elects the Chairman of this committee who has knowledge of Masonic Law, good inter-personal skills and genuine fraternal affection.

All Masons must always remember and internalize what the Senior Warden says during the opening and closing of the Lodge... "HARMONY BEING THE STRENGTH AND SUPPORT OF ALL SOCIETIES SPECIALLY OF OURS" and the final prayer of the Master of the Lodge ... "MAY BROTHERLY LOVE PREVAIL AND EVERY MORAL AND SOCIAL VIRTUE CEMENT US."

2. BRINGING IN GOOD MEN TO BE BETTER

People who have scant information about our fraternity say that Freemasonry is a religion. Some say Masons are atheists. Some say that Masonry is a secret society. Some even suspect that Freemasonry is a political party.

Perhaps, we are partly to blame for these misinformations. For not only in the past but even today, most of us content ourselves working within the four walls of our Lodges. Most of us hardly and rarely went beyond it.

But times have changed. We are now in the age of modern technology. The internet has more anti-Masonic books and videos than pro Masonic materials. Even our rituals can be found at the internet.

There is a need for us Masons to effect this change. I find it incumbent upon all Masons to start informing the public what Freemasonry is really all about.

The adoption and continuation of "THE BRING A FRIEND PROGRAM" is considered for this particular purpose.

Films on Masonry, either in VCD or DVD format, can be effectively used by Lodges during this particular program, during symposia on Freemasonry or even during the

orientation of petitioners. Lodges may even coordinate with their local cable network for showing films on Masonry which had been done in the past, resulting in good feedbacks and benefiting not only regular Masons but more non-Masons.

3. ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Lodges must ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. We Masons must not only live up to the expectations of our Masonic brothers but must also live up to the high expectations of the community.

All it takes is to coordinate with the city or municipal development officer and propose our participation in the community development.

It does not mean that lodges must compete with other civic organizations in the community nor must have special funds for such participation. There are lined up activities in the community such as "Fire Prevention Month," "Lingo ng Wika," "Civil Service Week," "Clean and Green Programs," "Anti-Illegal Drug Campaign," etc.... which do not need much funds but only need active and personal participation by the Lodge. This is over and above the existing medical/dental projects and other existing projects solely undertaken by Masons.

In these times of uncertainty, Masons must be one with the citizens and other organizations to help develop our respective communities, thereby contributing to nation building.

Masons must not only love our Fraternity, must not only show love and concern for our Masonic brethren but we Masons must also show our love for our country. If this is the only Fraternity we Masons have Remember that this is the only Country we all have.

4. INVOLVMENT OF FAMILIES OF MASONS

In the Philippines, the basic social institution is the family. This is also true in Freemasonry.

Wives, children and relatives of Masons must be encouraged to actively participate in Masonic functions whenever their presence is needed.

THE INVOLVEMENT OF FAMILIES OF MASONS in our activities will expose them to what Freemasonry is really all about and may help us inform the public, the community, about our fraternity.

Let our families be our inspiration so we may work hard to become better men.

II. HONOR

1. CONTINUITY OF SOUND PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND POLICIES

Philippine Masonry abounds with wise policies, programs and projects by the different leaderships. Year after year, we experience new programs and projects and totally forget those acceptable, doable and sustainable ones initiated by past leaderships without fully benefiting from the fruits of former programs and projects.

For this, a 3 to 5 YEAR PLAN emanating from the Grand Oriental Chair is considered and said plan must be deliberated, resolved, set and implemented so as to compel succeeding leaderships to ensure continuity of past but good enterprises, allowing the fraternity to take root more firmly and expand more widely.

2. FEEDBACK ON RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED

Blue Lodges and Masonic Districts have been submitting resolutions to the Grand Lodge for its appreciation and perusal and most of these resolutions are for the good of our Fraternity.

However, authors of resolutions are not given timely feedback on the resolutions submitted. This has affected the enthusiasm of some Lodges and Masonic Districts to pass and send resolutions to the Grand Lodge. THE APPOINTMENT OF ONE OF THE GRAND LIGHTS BY THE INCUMBENT LEADERSHIP is considered who will be responsible in following up with the committees concerned resolutions submitted and who will likewise be responsible for officially communicating to the authors of the resolutions regarding the status and/or finality of the same.

This is a way of governance by consultation, an active participation of Blue Lodges and Masonic Districts in governance.

3. UPDATING THE MASONIC LAW BOOK

The Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines or the Masonic Law Book was revised in 1994. Since then, edicts had been issued and some approved during Annual Communications which have become an integral part of our Masonic Law Book.

Approved edicts during Annual Communications are embodied in the year-end report documents given to all registered participants of Annual Communications. However, most of these year-end reports are not discussed in open Lodges and are mostly set aside. Not all Masons in our jurisdiction attend Annual Communications; not all Masons are aware of approved edicts nor compile religiously edicts issued from time to time.

At present, what is available to the Masons at our Masonic Store is the 1994 revised Masonic Law Book. THE IMMEDIATE REVISION AND UPDATING OF OUR MASONIC LAW BOOK is highly considered, given the priority and must be included in our Masonic Education System.

Our Fraternity has more than enough rules, laws and regulations and what is important is its proper and forceful implementation at all levels in our Grand Jurisdiction.

Brothers raised to the Sublime Degree of Masonry must possess the Masonic Law Book. All Masons for that matter must have a copy of the same so each and every one can actively participate in the governance of the Lodge and be well guided as a Mason.

Updating of our Masonic Law Book is an immediate concern so that there will be no one who can claim that laws presently implemented are not found in the Masonic Law Book.

In my over 33 years in the uniform service, I have learned that a law-abiding country enjoys a place of honor in the international community. Rule of Law brings not only peace and prosperity but also prestige and stocks of political respect. Similarly, if a regime of harmony reigns in Masonry, then we can enjoy unity. And after unity follows success in every fraternal endeavor worthy of noble emulation by all good men and true.

Allow me to thank the Past Grand Masters for selecting me as one of the nominees for the position of Junior Grand Warden, an honored position full of responsibilities.

I pray to the Great Architect of the Universe to fill up my limitations with HIS wisdom, to grant me HIS guidance to continue traveling and to give HIS blessings to all Masons withersoever dispersed.



PETER T. ARAGON

MASONIC DEGREES

Initiated	April 25, 1969
Passed	July 11, 1969
Raised	August 8, 1969

MASONIC INVOLVEMENT

Junior Grand Deacon – 1986

District Deputy Grand Master

- Masonic District No. 9-B (now District No. 13) – 1994
- During term as DDGM, District No. 9-B was composed of 6 lodges as follows: Muog Lodge No. 89, Jacobo Zobel Lodge No. 202, Pagkakaisa Lodge No. 282, Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27, King Solomon Lodge No. 150 and Kagitingan Lodge No. 286

During his term as District Deputy Grand Master No. 9-B, he successfully united the lodges within the jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines and was the first to launch a district convention exclusively for District 9-B held at Fort Bonifacio Golf and Country Club.

District Treasurer, MD No. 9 (now District Nos. 9, 11 and 13)

- Served as District Deputy Grand Masters of District No. 9 for four (4) consecutive years from the terms of: MW Reynold S. Fajardo, MW Teodorico V. Baldonado, VW Emil Andrion, Jr. and VW Eusebio Abella.

MAF Treasurer

Served for four years as District No. 9 Mutual Assistance Fund Treasurer. During his term as such, the District was able to give P10,000 each for the brethren who dropped their working tools.

York Rite Treasurer – Capitol York Rite, Quezon City

- Served for four consecutive years. Same term of office as District No. 9 Treasurer.
- Member – Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite
- Master of the Royal Secret - Luzon Bodies
- Worshipful Master – Muog Lodge No. 89 (1981-1983)
- Life Membership – Muog Lodge No. 89

CHARTER MEMBER

- Mandaluyong City Lodge No. 277
- Molino Lodge No. 352
- Capas Lodge No. 356
- Subic Bay Lodge, U.D.

HONORARY MEMBER

Unity Lodge No. 285
Mandaluyong City Lodge No. 277
Laong-Laan Lodge No. 185

THEME: BROTHERLY LOVE, RELIEF AND TRUTH – A MASON'S LEGACY

I. Vision: A professionalized Freemasonry committed to community development and social awareness

II. Mission: To exemplify Masonic values in our community through socio-civic and charitable interaction

III. Programs

1. Personnel Administration

Continuous Masonic educational programs to encourage brethren to practice the basic tenets of Freemasonry inside and outside of the Fraternity.

- Increase quality membership
- Strengthen sunshine committee

2. Operations

- Charity Programs
- Encouragement of Lodges to conduct charity programs through inter-agency cooperation.
- Community development programs
- Drug awareness program in cooperation with both local and national government.
- Employment Opportunities to Widows and Orphans.
- Sports Development Programs
- Promotion of Sports Development among the Youth.

Some of Rizal's Significant Statements

- To live is to be among men, and to be among men is to fight. But this fight is not a brutal and material one; it is not a fight with men only, but a fight with one's own self, with men's passions, with one's own passions, with errors and prejudices.
- Do nothing that you cannot say or repeat before everybody with the head erect and the heart satisfied.
- In order to read the destiny of a people, it is necessary to open the book of its past.
- The free press will keep the government in touch with public opinion.



EDWARD Y. CHUA

MASONIC AFFAIRS

Blue Lodge

Master - Makabugwas Lodge No. 47 (1996)

Member - S. L. Chua Comm. No. 336

Sogod Bay Lodge No. 337

Biliran Lodge No. 338

District Grand Lecturer (1997)

District Deputy Grand Master (1998-1999)

Junior Grand Lecturer for Eastern Visayas (2000-2004)

Grand Orator (2004-2005)

Junior Grand Lecturer for Central & Eastern Visayas (2005 to date)

Scottish Rite

Venerable Master, Leyte-Samar Bodies (2002-2003)

Venerable Master, Leyte Lodge of Perfection (2003-2004)

Conferred Knight Commander of the Court of Honor

Supervisor, Leyte Bodies

York Rite

Past High Priest, Royal Arch, Eastern Visayas Chapter No. 30

Past Illustrious Master, Knights Templar Commandery,
Eastern Visayas No. 19

Member, Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priest (See of Tiberias LXX)

Shrine

Member, Aloha Temple, Ancient & Accepted Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine

Worthy Patron, Morning Star Chapter No. 12, Order of Eastern Star (2003-2004)

Royal Patron, Tacloban Court, Order of Amaranth (2004-2005)

Grand Rainbow Dad

Grand Assembly of the Philippines International, Order of Rainbow for Girls (2004-2005)

Director of Finance, Bethel No. 17, Tacloban City, International Order of Job's Daughter

Order of DeMolay

Master Councilor, Dr. Manuel Bernardo Chapter (1975-1977)

Exec. Officer for Eastern Visayas, Supreme Council, Order of DeMolay (94 to date)

Past National President – DeMolay Alumni Association of the Philippines (99-2000)

Knights Templar (2000)

Chevalier Degree (2000)

Legion of Honor Degree (2002)

Freemasonry has assumed a distinctive and exclusive position in the Philippines. Thus, we take pride and honor in being a member.

A well-managed Grand Lodge meets the expectations and ensures the continuity of our ancient and accepted Masonic fraternity.

We must remember that effectiveness of any organization, be it Masonic or not, is determined by its leadership. Effective Masonic leadership lies in mastering a wide range of skills in executive and ritual work, from implementing and administering processes of inspiring the brethren to achieve excellence.

Through various programs and activities, of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, as the mother of all subordinate lodges, has set forth and exemplified the tenets and teachings of Freemasonry; promoted brotherly love, relief, truth; and achieved harmony among Masons and fellowmen.

The programs I envision are in conformity with the development plans of the Grand Lodge that includes:

1. *The development of the youth through stronger and expanded activities for the Orders of DeMolay, Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughter; the care and preservation of the environment; and promotion of a closer Masonic ties among its family.*

2. Continuous Masonic Education is important to equip Masons with the correct tools – *tools to guide us through life.*

The Institute for Masonic Education and Studies is worth our serious attention. A standard curriculum implemented through a modular program and Masonic education forum must be considered for every member to advance in Masonic light, in order to make us relevant and face the challenges of our Grand Lodge and its subordinate Lodges. This will result in enhanced understanding of the teachings of our brotherhood. This can be implemented through a distance education program.

The more we understand Masonry, the stronger will be our commitment to the Fraternity.

3. The administration and membership must be a vital consideration. For effective and efficient management of the Grand Lodge and its subordinate lodges, there are two essential elements to be considered:

a. Harmony of the Grand Lodge and its Lodges (most essential at all times); and

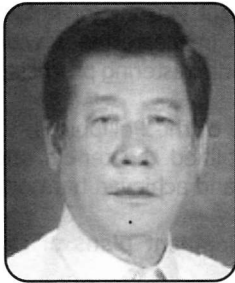
b. Management of property and financial affairs.

For harmony and strong leadership to increase the number and quality of members, we must train and prepare our brethren for Masonic leadership, through their participation in a Masonic Leadership Academy that will develop them for service to the Craft. Their training would include values formation, leadership integration, Grand Lodge program implementation such as scholarship, Masonic assistance, service, networking, adopt a school and community projects. Through this, we will be able to sustain the existing programs and plans of the Grand Lodge.

For Grand Lodge management of properties and financial affairs, it must: *a) be able to maintain a responsive growth in accordance to the mission, goals and objectives of the Fraternity; and b) be able to source and provide funds to support the operations and activities of the Grand Lodge through fund sourcing activities that would be viable throughout the jurisdiction.*

4. Lastly, the most important, should be the **Public Relations Program**. This program will give a better image of the Fraternity to the public and for the public to know us better.

Good public relations, simply, is priceless.



MANUEL T. LEE

MASONIC AFFILIATIONS & ACTIVITIES

- 1972 - Macajalar Lodge No. 184, Cagayan de Oro City
- 1974 - Scottish Rite, Mindanao Bodies, A.&A.S.R.
- 76-77 - Worshipful Master
- 1977 - Grand Lodge Inspector, Maguindanao Lodge No. 40
- ORGANIZER, Cadena de Amor Chapter, O.E.S. and became its Charter Associate Patron
- 1978 - Afifi Temple, A.A.O.A.M.S.
- 1979 - Invested KCCH
- 78-82- DGL, MD No. 17 (now MD Nos. 28 & 30)
- 1983 - DDGM, MD No. 17 (now MD Nos. 28 & 30)
- Coronated IGH
- 1984 - Awarded Outstanding DDGM
- 1985 - JGL for Mindanao Jurisdiction
- 1989 - Grand Marshal
- Also served on different times the position of Bodies Supervisor and Valley Deputy of Mindanao Bodies, Bukidnon Bodies & Agusan-Surigao Bodies RAINBOW, Chapter DAD
 - DEMOLAY, Advisory Council: Chairman, Finance
- 1994 - CROWNED, Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the Orient of Northeastern Mindanao (Agusan & Surigao)
- 1995 - ACTING SGIG, Orient of Mis. Oriental & Bukidnon
- 1996 - Regular SGIG, Orient of Mis. Oriental & Bukidnon
- Acting SGIG, Agusan Surigao
- 1997 - Life Member, Macajalar Lodge No. 184
- 1999 - Life Member, Scottish Rite
- 99-2001- Grand Herald, Supreme Council
- 2000 - Acting SGIG, Orient of Davao
- 01-2003- Grand Standard Bearer, Supreme Council
- 2002 - Acting SGIG, Orient of Lanao
- 03-2005- Second Grand Equerry, Supreme Council
- 05-2007- Assistant Grand Secretary General, Supreme Council

I - VISION

The welfare, growth and the future brilliance of our Fraternity is, to me, of paramount and utmost importance.

We must preserve the basic tenets, landmarks, and principles of the Order. Only when the foundation on which our Fraternity was envisioned and erected is strengthened will our Programs and Projects survive and attain fruition and perfection.

II – MISSION

On membership – I aim to create and instill in our members and lodges a dedication and zeal to improve themselves in Masonry and become a living show-window of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, exemplars of devoted and fine craftsmanship showing love of the democratic ideals, freedom and liberty, and humanitarian service to the community.

Together with these, we shall harness and develop a marked and sterling proficiency in degree works, rituals, ceremonies, jurisprudence, decorum and protocol of members.

I shall call seminars and workshops, either nationwide, regional or district (during their local conventions). I shall create a Committee on Powerpoint Presentation of the above, using video, vcd, dvd or digital. This is the time to avail of hi-tech technology.

On administration – We all know that the Most Worshipful Grand Master performs a dual function and prerogative, first, as the Grand Leader or Grand Master of Masons in the Jurisdiction of the Philippines, Guam and Okinawa, and second as the Administrator or CEO of the MW Grand Lodge of F.&A.M.

Once a Brother is elected Junior Grand Warden, he step-by-step already prepares and trains and acclimatizes himself to develop all the skills, talents, opportunities and creativity and qualities as befits a Grand Master in the future.

The Brethren are keen and interested that the Brother JGW-elect will not only be a Ceremonial Grand Master but he knows and has prepared himself to administer and govern the office of the Grand Lodge as an Office and as a Corporate entity.

I shall further enhance and foster growth, in terms of financial success, quality and in keeping with modern trends and technology for the ACACIA. I shall also strengthen The Cabletow, the Youth Organizations, the Masonic Charities for Crippled Children, as well as the relationship of the Grand Lodge with Scottish Rite Freemasonry, York Rite, the Shrine, and other appendant bodies and organizations.

The Masons must also heed the clarion call to protect and safeguard human rights, preserve the environment, rededicate the Youth to the ideals of our Masonic Heroes, and be vigilant and ready to face natural calamities.

Most Worshipful Sirs, Right Worshipful Sirs, Worshipful Sirs, and Brethren, the Challenge to CLIMB the HIGHER GROUND in Masonry shall no longer be a DREAM in my Heart; that Mission must be done and realized if MASONS ARE TO BE THE MORAL FORCE AND LEAVENING POWER FOR GOOD AND BETTERMENT IN OUR SOCIETY AND IN THE WORLD.

Rizal's Precept to Parents

Awaken and prepare the will of your children to a just and proper appreciation of honor, of sincere and firm purpose, clear judgement, clean behaviour, honest acts, love of fellowmen, and respect to God – this is what you must teach your children.

PETER U. LIM LO SUY



FRATERNAL AFFILIATIONS

Macalajar Lodge No. 184

Initiated April 5, 1977
Passed June 22, 1977
Raised July 14, 1977

Makahambus Lodge No. 315

Leonardo T. Pañares Mem. Lodge No. 220 (Honorary Member)

Mindanao Bodies A.&A.S.R.

Filipinas Shrine Club

Order of Eastern Star, Cadena De Amor Chapter #16

POSITIONS HELD IN THE FRATERNITY

2003-2004	Grand Tyler
2002-2003	Grand Standard Bearer
1995-1996	Grand Standard Bearer
1988-1991	District Deputy Grand Master, Masonic District No. 17
1986-1987	District Grand Lecturer, Masonic District No. 17
1985	Worshipful Master, Macajalar Lodge No. 184
1990-1994	Valley Deputy, Mindanao Bodies A.&A.S.R.
1987-1990	Valley Supervisor, Mindanao Bodies A.&A.S.R.
1986	Venerable Master, Mindanao Bodies A.&A.S.R.
1993	Junior Grand Master for Mindanao Supreme Council International Order of DeMolay
1985-1988	Chapter Advisor, Wadih Saab Chapter Order of DeMolay
1985-1987	Rainbow DAD, Anthurium Assembly #5

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS RECEIVED

1989	Coronated 33°, Inspector General Honorary
88-1991	Most Outstanding DDGM of the Philippines for 3 consecutive years
1987	Conferred GRAND CROSS OF COLOR Rainbow for Girls
1986	Most Outstanding Worshipful Master in the Philippines (GLP Award)
1985	Most Outstanding Worshipful Master in District No. 17
1984	Most Outstanding Mason, Macajalar Lodge No. 184
1983	Mason of the Year, Macajalar Lodge No. 184

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT & WELFARE

- To promote sustained growth in membership, by:
 - implementing a program to improve community perception and information about Freemasonry thus to attract potential members;
 - strengthening the Orientation Program for petitioners;

- implementing strictly a methodical system for investigation and reporting results thereof by the Committee on Investigation;
- establishing reasonable and uniform petition fees;
- establishing an effective program to bring back into the fold Blue Lodge members who have been inactive and suspended;
- strictly implementing the laws, edicts, regulations and procedures on degrees and affiliations in all lodges within the jurisdiction.
- To provide for the development and advancement in knowledge about Masonry among members of the Fraternity, by:
 - formulating a Mandatory Continuing Masonic Education for all regular Masons;
 - establishing a regular program for Lodge Instructions in floorworks and rituals;
 - encouraging the establishment of a Masonic Museum and Library in each Masonic District.
- To establish an institutionalized support system for members of the Fraternity, by:
 - encouraging the establishment of cooperatives of Masons' families in the Masonic Districts;
 - establishing a mortuary fund for regular members and their spouses;
 - setting up an Academic Scholarship Program to benefit deserving students who are children of distressed, qualified Masons;
 - establishing an Employment Information & Endorsement Program to assist unemployed children of Masons.

FISCAL STABILITY IN THE GLP and SUBORDINATE LODGES

- To source out additional funds to support operations and activities, by:
 - conducting a Grand Master's Raffle Draw to be held during the Annual Communications, where all expenses and proceeds shall be shared pro-rata by the GLP and subordinate lodges;
 - conducting a Grand Master's Golf Tournament, one each to be held in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, where all expenses and proceeds shall be shared pro-rata;
 - implementing other appropriate fund-raising activities.
- To ensure proper fiscal management, financial transparency and financial controls in the GLP, by:
 - establishing a continuing program for review, evaluation and improvement of the budgeting, capital expenditure programming and fiscal system in the GLP;
 - establishing and continuously implementing an effective internal control system.

ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT

- To ensure that the administrative and information management system can effectively support the operations needs of the GLP, by:
 - enhancing records management through computerization;
 - providing appropriate systems for supplies, purchasing, equipment and property management;
 - implementing a system for personnel management and development in GLP Staff;
 - strengthening budgeting, accounting and auditing standards and procedures.

- To enhance the GLP's ability to support subordinate lodges, by:
 - ensuring fast and accurate information dissemination to subordinate lodges and members;
 - enforcing strictly regular monthly reports submission from subordinate lodges and immediate updating of GLP records based on the reports;
 - strengthening GLP capability to respond to inquiries and to analyze/discern needs of lodges from regular reports (Minutes of Meeting, etc.) and to take pro-active action thereon;
 - publishing an updated & annotated collection of edicts and the latest edition of rules, regulations and manuals.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- To enliven Masonic patriotism and nationalism, by:
 - enforcing participation of Masons in the celebrations of Philippine Independence Day and anniversaries of National Heroes;
 - encouraging participation in worthy community projects;
 - supporting government's drive against drugs, criminality and corruption.
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EDGARDO C. PEREZ

MASONIC BIODATA

Raised 21 April 1974, Primera Luz Filipina Lodge No. 69
Master, 1978, Primera Luz Filipina Lodge No. 69
Founding Master, La Naval Lodge No. 269, 1983-1985
Secretary, Primera Luz Filipina Lodge No. 69
Life Member by Longevity, 21 April 1999

APPOINTMENTS

Grand Lodge Inspector, Pintong Bato Lodge No. 51, 1980-1982
Cavite Lodge No. 2, 1983
Senior Grand Deacon, 1993
District Deputy Grand Master, District No. 10 (Cavite), 1995
Grand Standard Bearer, 1999
Junior Grand Lecturer (Cavite), 2000
Senior Grand Lecturer, 2004
Senior Executive Assistant to the Grand Master, 2004
Director, IMES, 2004

APPENDANT ORGANIZATIONS

Chairman, Advisory Board, Tierra Alta Assembly No. 4
International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, 1979-1999
Chairman, Executive Committee, International Order of the Rainbow for Girls,
Philippines and Guam, 1993
Executive Officer, Region IV, International Order of DeMolay, 1982-84

Past Active Member, Philippine Supreme Council Order of DeMolay
33° IGH, Cavite Bodies, Scottish Rite Freemasonry
Founding Royal Patron, Tierra Luz Court No. 33
Order of the Amaranth, 1995-1997
Grand Royal Patron, Grand Court of the Philippines
Order of the Amaranth, 2000-2001
Deputy Supreme Royal Patron, Supreme Council
Order of the Amaranth, Inc., 2001-present

AWARDS

2 Past Master Jewels
Hiram Award – 2000 (Primera Luz Filipina Lodge No. 69)
Grand Cross of Colors, International Rainbow for Girls
Numerous medals, plaques and certificates of merit and appreciation for
Outstanding Masonic Services and Leadership
Past Grand Royal Patron Jewel, Grand Court of the Philippines
Order of the Amaranth

OTHERS

Honorary Member – Dapitan Lodge No. 21 & Pinappagan Lodge No. 353

PROGRAM FOR THE FRATERNITY

A program to be successful and to have more lasting impact on the Fraternity cannot be achieved in the one-year term of a Grand Master. There must be a continuing program of at least five years, subject to review every year and adjusted accordingly.

There have been attempts in the recent past to develop such programs but nothing concrete has come out of such resolutions.

On instructions and guidelines of the Incoming Grand Master, I created a Plans and Programs Committee of which I was the adviser, to conceptualize and prepare a five (5) year Development Program for the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. The program has been finalized and is ready for presentation and adoption. It will be presented to the GM, DGM, SW, JW and Board for General Purposes. If approved for adoption, the three Grand Lights will enter into a covenant to implement the development program starting Grand Masonic Year 2005-2006.

I subscribed to the Proposed Plans and Programs, the formulation of which was not only a part of but I firmly believe the key to the solution of most of the Fraternity's problems at the moment.

Any program for the Grand Lodge of the Philippines must consider the fact that Freemasonry as a system and Freemasonry as an organization are inseparable. Numerous programs have been initiated and pursued by Past Grand Masters, the incumbent included, during their one-year term of office which changes from ANCOM-to-ANCOM.

MWB Napoleon A. Soriano set up the Masonic Service Network. MWB Eugenio S. Labitoria set up the Grand Lodge Scholarship Program in 2002 and continued to rehabilitate AMASI. MWB Oscar V. Bunyi's major key point of his program was to attract long lost brethren into the Masonic fold. MWB Franklin J. Demonteverde issued Edict 185 establishing the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies. MWB Enrique L. Locsin labored for recognition of Masonic roles in the Philippine Revolution through publications of "Dimasalang" and "The Brethren" as his term coincided with the Philippine Centennial Year.

The Cabletow

The late MWB Ricardo Galvez's centerpiece is "Reform from Within" which was very timely and appropriate considering the clamor of the brethren for reforms particularly in the electoral process. The reforms initiated fell on MWB Roberto Q. Pagotan for execution. This is in addition to the modernization of GLP services which are now in place.

Efforts of recent PGMs are all outstanding and were vigorously pursued but were not fully accomplished due to a time frame of only one year each.

For a program to be fully realized and its benefits felt and lasting, it long must be made to unfold, develop, pursued, restudied and reprogrammed over a period of time.

The program I envision is therefore precisely that. It will be in conformity with the five (5) year development program to be launched in the term of the Incoming Grand Master. Basically it shall be composed of the following:

1. ADMINISTRATION AND MEMBERSHIP – To increase the number and quality of members; provide a system for development and advancement of Masons in the Fraternity; maintain continued membership; provide qualified and competent staff and officers to lead the Fraternity; and to systematize all reports and procedure in GL administration.

2. OPERATIONS – To provide command and control, and/or supervision over GL activities, committees and Masonic organization to assure compliance and obedience to GL Edicts, Circulars, Laws and Regulations; to provide direction, control and supervision over GL jurisdiction-wide activities like the ANCOM; and to enhance the GL good image to the public.

3. EDUCATION – To institutionalize, systematize and synchronize the Masonic education program so as to orient, introduce, teach and educate Master Masons on tenets, doctrines, philosophies, principles, history, teachings and etc.; to seriously and strictly pursue the IMES; and to enlighten the public on Masonry.

4. LOGISTICS – To plan, coordinate and supervise all construction, maintenance and repair activities of the GL; to determine, coordinate and execute the GL Procurement Program and all purchases; periodically account for all GL properties; and to dispose off properties in accordance with established procedures.

5. ORGANIZATION – To maintain or develop an organization that is effective, efficient and responsive to the mission, goals and objectives of the Fraternity; and to establish definite responsibilities, authorities, jurisdiction and accountability of specific subordinate GLP organizations to prevent overlap.

6. FINANCIAL – To source and provide funds to support the operations and activities of the Grand Lodge; ensure that the fund are spent in accordance with a well-defined approved budget; to provide a comprehensive systems of accounting of all funds and properties; and provide a periodic reporting system of the fiscal status of GLP funds and properties to ensure transparency.

As it is premature to discuss in details the Five (5) year Development Plan and so as not to preempt the Incoming Grand Master, I will limit the presentation of specific programs I envision for the Grand Lodge of the Philippines as an organization and the Fraternity as a system to the barest minimum as follows:

ORGANIZATIONAL

I intend to re-organize the GLP to provide the DGM, SGW and JGW with an opportunity to directly participate in its administrative and operational activities and functions.

The Grand Master shall administer the affairs of the GLP in much the same way that a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a corporation does his job. The Deputy Grand Master will be the Chief Operating Officer (COO) who will be in-charge of the day to day operations of the Grand Lodge. The Senior Grand Warden will be in-charge of supervising all standing and special committees. The Junior Grand Warden, on the hand will be in-charge of the Administrative and Financial functions of the Grand Lodge.

In this set up, the Grand Master will have more time to attend to the problems/concerns of the Fraternity as a whole. He will have more time to visit the Blue Lodges where he could feel the pulse of the Brethren; have a first hand knowledge of the problems of the Brethren and Lodges; issue appropriate and immediate legislation/circulars to address issues observed/raised in such visits.

This set up will also prepare the three (3) Grand Lights for the challenges of the Grand Masters chair when they ultimately occupy it.

My experience in the past two (2) years' full time work in the Grand Lodge as Executive Assistant to the then SGW and now DGM and as Senior Grand Lecturer for the past eight (8) months had given me a holistic point of view of the GLP and the Fraternity. A point of view and appreciation of the multifarious functions and problems that could only be had through a direct participation in its activities. The opportunity for the 3 lights to have the same experience could be had by an on the job training provided by such and organizational set up.

SERVICES

As mentioned earlier, a number of PGMs adopted programs for the good of the Fraternity. Unfortunately, due to the demands of the chair, these programs fall short of being fully implemented.

I intend to pursue the establishment/implementation of some of these projects:

A. Establishment of a Legal and Health Services at the level of the Districts for the benefit of the Brethren and their families. This will be the first part of the adoption of the Masonic Assistance, Service, Operations and Net-Working Systems (MASONS), proposed by MW Bunyi.

B. Setting up of Scholarship Program in every Masonic District (Expanded program of MW Labitoria).

C. Crisis Management Teams in every District. This will make the Fraternity very visible and its good works felt directly by the members of the community where Lodges are situated.

FINANCIAL – a review of the financial status of the Grand Lodge will be undertaken to determine if the trust and special funds are still relevant with the purposes they were established. Hand in hand with this review will be a program that will ensure a more judicious expenditure of GLP Funds.

MEMBERSHIP – I intend to review the membership along the following guidelines:

a. Possibility of merges of Lodges with very small membership and those saddled with financial problems;

b. Lodges instituted under dispensation will only be constituted after raising at least twenty (20) Master Masons. This will enhance the pool of possible leaders and a more financially secured organization. It will also possibly solve dwindling membership.

c. A closer look at the Ageing membership; life membership by longevity; suspensions for non-payment of dues, etc.

INSTITUTE of MASONIC EDUCATION and STUDIES (IMES) – In a number of Masonic Forum, I presented a position paper on the establishment of IMES which MW Demonteverde established through Edict 185 in 1999. Up to this point in time, it still has to be fully established to function as mandated. I came up with a Position Paper to operationalize IMES. It was presented to the Board for General Purposes and it was endorsed favorably for adoption and implementation. It is envisioned to be implemented starting Grand Masonic Year 2005, with its inclusion in the budget.

I will volunteer to be the Director of IMES and if given the chance will see to it that it will be one of the most enduring institutions of the GLP. I firmly believe that Freemasonry could achieve its objectives and goals and solve the problems besetting it at present through an effective Masonic Education Program.

MASONIC SUMMIT – I proposed to the Incoming Grand Master that a Masonic Summit be held once he assumes the Grand Oriental Chair. The Masonic Summit, should be able to identify the problems besetting the GLP and Freemasonry in the Philippines and the factors that led to its current state; propose possible courses of action to aver deterioration and for a complete turn around. The summit could validate the premises made and the solutions proposed in the Five (5) Year Development Plan for the GLP.

Finally, I intend to bring back the dignity of the Oriental Chair. When I was raised as a Master Mason in 1994, I view with great awe and admiration the man occupying the station of the East. Through the years, the majesty of the Oriental Chair has somewhat waned. To bring back the Mystic of the Oriental and grand Oriental Chair that binds all Master Masons whither so ever dispersed shall be one of my top priority. It shall once again be the rallying point of all our endeavors.

OUR BUILDING TASK

Our task as to build ourselves into inward masters; to build character; to build good men into better ones; to build just and humane relationships; to build bridges of understanding among men of every country, sect and opinion; and to construct passageways of friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance. The mission of Masonry, after all, according to Rev. Dr. and Ill. Joseph Fort Newton, is "to form mankind into a great redemptive brotherhood."

— eF.R.eN



In SaipanMW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr., Grand Master, and VW Samuel P. Fernandez, Grand Historian with Emon Lodge No. 179 Officers led by WM Daniel E. Bañez, SW Gener C. Garcia, JW Roque O. Pagulanan, Jr., VW & Treasurer Ernest J. Strange, VW & Auditor Jorge M. Manalili, and VW & Secretary Romulo A. Cayetano.



IF UNDELIVERED, PLEASE RETURN TO:

Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines

Plaridel Masonic Temple

1437 General Luna Street, Paco, Manila, Philippines D-2851



At the Bro. Apolinario Shrine in Guam after floral offering (L-R): VW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr., Grand Auditor; MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr., Grand Master; VW Angel Baldemor, DDGM MD#15; VW Juanito B. Vaño, Jr, Senior Grand Lecturer; and VW Samuel P. Fernandez, Grand Historian.

RE-ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER
AT THE MANILA POST OFFICE ON JUNE 16, 1962

TO SUBSCRIBER: Change and correction of address requested for prompt delivery