

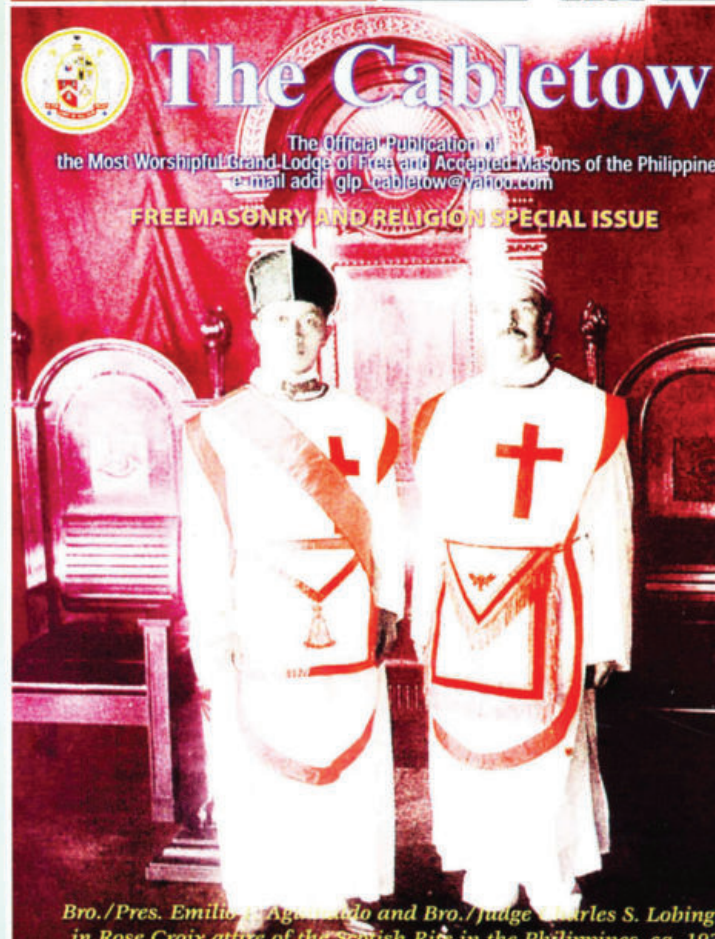


# The Cabletow

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

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MW HERMOGENES E. EBDANE, JR.

*Grand Master*

2005 - 2006



# The Cabletow

SPECIAL EDITION NO. 2

MASONIC YEAR 2005-2006

- 2 A Feat in Itself (Grand Master's Message)
- 4 A Father's Letter to His Son (eF.R.eN)
- 9 The Interrelationship of Religion and Freemasonry (SPF)
- 21 In Pursuit of Our Threefold Mission (RCH)
- 24 The Masonic Fight for Equality: Past, Present and Prospects (RSP)
- 28 Nueva Ecija Revisited (JAGD)
- 30 Says Greybeard (CHC)
- 32 Of Treating Our Candidates Fairly & Related Matters (FRN)
- 35 Why I Stay with Freemasonry (EB)
- 36 A Few Thoughts on Our Vision and Mission (FJD)
- 39 Reflection from a Newly Raised Brother (Name Withheld)
- 41 Enrique C. Sobrepeña, LI.D., D.D.: Apostle of Ecumenism (SPF)
- 47 GM Visitation to the Grand Lodge of California
- 49 What Freemasons Are
- 50 Grand Master's Activities
- 62 Lodge Officers Raring to Masonry's Work
- 71 Elected Lodge Officers, 2005-2006: Implementors of the GM's Thrusts

## Our Cover

Featured on the cover of this second special edition are the covers of the four regular issues and the cover of the first special edition. MW Jun Ebdane labored hard to perform his assignment to lead the Craft during his one-year watch in the Grand East, just as illustrious brethren, all builders of the Filipino nation, all promoters of brotherly love, relief and truth, such as national heroes Jose Rizal, Marcelo H. del Pilar and Mariano Ponce, Bro./Pres. Emilio Aguinaldo and Bro. Judge Charles S. Lobinger, Bro./Pres. Manuel Luis Quezon, as well as PGMs Reynold S. Fajardo and Ricardo P. Galvez, had done before him. All those and other Masonic leaders have prepared the way for greater and better men who are to come after them. They have shown the way for other Masonic leaders to follow, whether the effect of their labors be seen by their mortal eyes or not. All Masonic leaders, past and present, want to leave to others who come after them a noble heritage, ever to increase as Masonic leader follows Masonic leader in uninterrupted succession, until men shall succeed each other in this world no longer.

The members of the editorial staff, similarly, have labored "in the quarries" to make this, the official publication of our Grand Lodge, a "quality product."

## Special Thanks

We have to thank the Cabletow secretary, Vangie Abarquez, for her dedicated work, especially at layouting, and Bro. Charles Agar, for contributing invaluable photographs for this special issue.

## Editorial Staff

**Samuel P. Fernandez**  
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**Vangie R. Abarquez**  
*Layout Artist*



## *A Feat In Itself*

**Consummatum est!** *Despite the constraints of time, manpower, logistics, and other factors, we have achieved our goal, namely, to publish two special editions of this, the official publication of our Grand Lodge, in addition to the four regular issues. This is, to us, not an ordinary accomplishment; it is, at least to us, a feat in itself. This we say without arrogance and without propulsion.*

*The first special edition focused on the interrelationship of Masonry and religion. It showed that Masonry is not antithetical to any religion, and that, on the contrary, it is an ally to religion, enjoining its votaries not to display a confrontational attitude toward people who seem to speak a totally different language and have somehow conceived a fear, a dislike, or even a hatred of it, but rather, to practice tolerance, promote the ecumenical spirit, and build the bridge of understanding between those who understand it and those who do not.*

*This second special edition is composed of two parts.*

*The first part consists of regular columns, articles, personal testimonies, Mason personalities, and messages. These are intended to provide the brethren with further esoteric enlightenment — and satisfaction, if you please — and our non-Mason readers with information that may enable them to understand Masonry and Masons better. It is high time that non-Masons know the truth about Masonry and about what we Masons are, what we are not, what we are doing for the good of Philippine society in particular and for humanity in general, what we should refrain from doing, and so on.*

*Our editor, VW Flor Nicolas, gives us some ideas about Masonry and Masons in the form of a letter to his son, while our editor-in-chief and Grand Historian, Vw Sammy Fernandez, provides us with a well-substantiated discussion of the interrelationship of Religion and Freemasonry.*

*Three of our Past Grand Masters have contributed their ideas to make this special edition all the more substantial. MW Rody Herrera further explicates the importance of our threefold mission; MW Rey Puno delves into the concept of equality, which, together with those of liberty and fraternity, is an ideal which we have been fighting for in every age and country; and MW Franklin Demonteverde shares his insights into our theme, mission and vision.*

*VW Jose Ariel Domingo recounts the role of the province of Nueva Ecija in the cry and fight for freedom of the country from Spanish bondage, focusing on the Masons who prominently figured in that fight, while Bro. Carl H. Claudy shares with us, in his informal and interesting way, his conception of brotherly love, while VW Flor Nicolas once more discusses why we have to treat our candidates fairly and how Lodge officers can make the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree more meaningful to the newly raised brethren.*

VW Eli Buenaventura, PDDGM, discusses why he continues to be actively involved in the fraternity.

Our Grand Historian and editor-in-chief, VW Sammy Fernandez, once more writes about Bishop Enrique Sobrepeña, LL.D., D.D., with particular focus on his ecumenical fervor. Bishop Sobrepeña may be said to be a true and exemplary Mason, whose footsteps we ought to follow.

Prime Bishop Ignacio Soliba, in the reflection on the Talmud reading he delivered during the interfaith service held on the occasion of the celebration of the 93<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of our Grand Lodge, stresses that we free and accepted Masons believe in God, that we do not need so many laws, and that we are Godly people. Indeed, a true and exemplary Mason would be upright and just even if there were no laws, divine or human, except those written in his heart by the finger of his divine Creator.

I like to think that our readers, Masons and non-Masons alike, will not regret spending their time reading the articles in this special edition.

The first part of this special edition, in short, is part of our Public Relations Program.

The second part consists of pictures of doings of the Grand Lodge, particularly those of your Grand Master, and those of its constituent Districts and Lodges.

The pictures are an eloquent rejoinder to the nettling and even demoralizing query "Where are the Masons now?" This query is, indeed, nettling and even demoralizing because it implies that the general public perceives Philippine Masonry to be on a steep decline as a deciding influence in local and national issues and concerns. But the truth is, we Masons are very much around, doing Masonry's inner and outer work in our own silent ways; contributing our share, "without the sound of ax, hammer or any tool of iron," in the building of Masonry's symbolic temple of liberty, equality and fraternity, as well as brotherly love, relief and truth, in the souls of our countrymen and in the soul of our nation; striving hard, sans fanfare or publicity, to recapture our Masonic forebears' dynamism in and commitment to enhancing the touchstone tenets of our ancient and honorable fraternity; improving not only ourselves and our families, but also other men, particularly fellow Filipinos; and helping attain an enlightened and a progressive humanity.

The pictures herein included, in short, are a prima-facie evidence that Philippine Masonry is definitely on the move, and that the Craft at all levels are undertaking projects for the benefit of our local and national communities.

I fondly hope, dear brethren and non-Mason readers, that this special edition will give you both emotional and intellectual pleasure.

Fraternally,

**MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr.**  
Grand Master

# A FATHER'S LETTER TO HIS SON

*(Dedicated to the memory of VW Mabini G. Hernandez, PDDGM, "one much loved and long dead" who shared his insights into Freemasonry or Speculative Masonry in the form of letters to his son)*

Dear Son:

When you told me last Sunday of your desire to seek admission into the fellowship of our Craft, I replied I would deem myself a very fortunate father if you would be made a Mason. Then you asked me to give you some ideas about Freemasonry or Speculative Masonry. Hence, this letter.

Like love or charity, which is one of its touchstone tenets, Freemasonry is a many-splendored thing, and like life, of which it is at once a plan and a way, it has been variously defined owing to its extensive scope and deep significance.

Freemasonry is, according to the late Bro. Manuel V. Moran of Pangasinan Lodge No. 56, one of the most respected Chief Justices of the Supreme Court our country has ever had, a fraternal organization or institution which aims at creating in the world a band of men to whom others may look for example and inspiration — men who others will say are men of honor, virtue and charitable feelings.

Freemasonry is defined in our Monitor as "an ancient and honorable fraternity — ancient, as having existed from time immemorial, and honorable, as tending to make all men so who are strictly obedient to its precepts." Continues our Monitor:

*It is an institution having for its foundation the practice of the social and moral virtues; and, to so high an eminence has its credit been advanced, that in every age and country, men preeminent for their moral and intellectual attainments have encouraged and promoted its interests. Nor has it been thought derogatory to their dignity that monarchs have, for a season, exchanged the scepter for the trowel, to patronize our mysteries and join in our assemblies.*

111. Bro. Albert G. Mackey, 33<sup>o</sup>, author of many books, such as *Symbolism of Freemasonry* and *Masonic Jurisprudence*, has given the following definitions of Freemasonry:

- 1. A fraternity of men bound together by a peculiar tie to be kind to one another and to other men.*
- 2. The scientific application and the religious consecration of the rules and principles, the language, the implements and materials of Operative Masonry to the veneration of God, the purification of the heart, and the inculcation of the dogmas of a religious philosophy.*
- 3. A progressive moral science taught by degrees, veiled in allegory, and illustrated in symbols, which has its moral, religious, and philosophical doctrines.*

We Freemasons, indeed, are "bound together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection." When one of us lays down the working tools of life, we who survive him are urged to "be yet more strongly cemented by the ties of brotherly love that during the brief space allotted to us here, we may wisely and usefully employ our time, and in the reciprocal intercourse of kind and friendly acts, mutually promote the welfare and happiness of each other."

Since we are a fraternity, peace and good fellowship must prevail among us. Hence, we are charged to recommend obedience and submission to our inferiors in rank or office, courtesy and affability to our equals or peers, and kindness and condescension to our superiors. Besides, we are to zealously inculcate universal benevolence, and by the regularity of our conduct endeavor to remove every aspersion against our Craft. We are charged, furthermore, to carefully preserve the ancient landmarks of our Craft, never to suffer them to be infringed, and never to countenance any deviation from its established customs.

We ought to actively participate in the great crusade of Freemasonry, which is to build its symbolic temple of liberty, equality and fraternity in the souls of men and nations, so that it will achieve its long-term goal, which is to establish a veritable Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God on this planet, which has been plagued, since time immemorial, by man's inhumanity to brotherman. Freemasonry is cognizant of the purpose of humanity dictated by God, which is, according to Bro. Jose Rizal in his essay "Amor Patrio" (Love of Country), the universal peace and harmony among His creatures.

The second definition by Bro. Mackey may lead you to suppose that Freemasonry is a religion *sui generis* (i.e., of its own kind). No, it is neither a religion nor a church because, as our Monitor puts it:

*By Speculative Masonry we learn to subdue the passions, act upon the Square, keep a tongue of good report, maintain secrecy, and practice charity. It is so far interwoven with religion as to lay us under obligation to pay that rational homage to the Deity which at once constitutes our duty and our happiness. It leads the contemplative Mason to view with reverence and admiration the glorious works of the Creation, and inspires him with the most exalted ideas of the perfection of his divine Creator.*

Yes, it is interwoven with religion. It is religious in the sense that, in the words of the Masonic Service Association (MSA), "it is a plan of life — a trestleboard — whereon are written the laws and edicts of the Great Architect of the Universe in accordance with which men must live if they are to be happy."

The strength of Freemasonry's appeal to men of every country, sect or opinion lies in the fact that, to quote the MSA once more, "In our lodges we teach the Brotherhood of Man based on the Fatherhood of God and advance no other dogma. Not only do we leave to every brother the choice of his creed but we draw no swords to compel others to adopt our belief. Nay, we go no further than this, for within the tiled precincts of the lodge every Mason is taught to revere and respect and be tolerant of that which is sacred to his brother, be he Christian, Mohammedan (Muslim), or Jew."

The religious nature of Freemasonry may also be seen in the prayer of the Senior Deacon early in the ritual of the 1<sup>st</sup>, or Entered Apprentice, degree, which reads as follows:

*...grant that this candidate for Freemasonry may dedicate and devote his life to Thy service and become a true and faithful brother among us. Endue him with a competency of Thy Divine Wisdom that, by the influence of the pure principles of Freemasonry, he may the better be enabled to display the beauties of holiness, to the honor of Thy holy name. Amen.*

Our Fraternity teaches us that the holy or spiritual values are of the highest order, followed by the cultural (intellectual, moral and aesthetic), then by the life values. It admonishes us to always prefer these values over the material ones. Thus, it charges us "to regard the Volume of the Sacred Law as the great light in your profession, to consider it as the unerring standard of truth and justice, and to regulate your actions by the divine precepts it contains..."

Freemasonry teaches us, through the person and character of Solomon, king of Israel, that "When human strength and wisdom fail, divine assistance is vouchsafed us through the medium of prayer," and that we should never enter upon any great or important undertaking without first invoking the blessing of God. In fact, toward the end of our stated or special meetings, we implore God "so to influence our hearts and minds that we may, each one of us, practice out of the Lodge those great moral duties which are inculcated in it, and with reverence study and obey the laws which Thou hast given us in Thy Holy Word."

What is the profession of a Freemason alluded to in the monitorial passage given above?

I maintain that it is not the profession which enables the Freemason to earn his livelihood, but rather Freemasonry, the great lights of which are the Volume of the Sacred Law and the Square and Compasses.

Yes, my dear son, Freemasonry is a noble and glorious profession, which is founded on the Holy Scriptures, the humanities, the liberal arts and sciences, and the wisdom of the ages. Hence, its scope is very extensive, while that of a non-Masonic profession is quite specialized or limited.

While students of a non-Masonic profession, such as law or medicine, are instructed by professors who have specialized in certain fields of knowledge or activity, we students of Freemasonry are taught by the Master and other officers of the Lodge, as well as by those brethren appointed as Lecturers. Generally, however, we are encouraged to be our own professors, for, as St. Gregory has paradoxically put it, "I am my own parent."

This is, undoubtedly, a difficult task since the mode of instruction in Freemasonry is indirect and suggestive, through symbols, metaphors and allegories, while that in a non-Masonic profession is direct and inductive, by observation, experiment, analysis and comparison/contrast. Yet we have no other alternative than to endeavor to gain mastery of Freemasonry because we have embraced it as our special profession.

In his third definition, Bro. Mackey states that Freemasonry has its moral, religious, and philosophical doctrines.

Its moral doctrines include relieving the distressed, giving good counsel to the erring, speaking well of the absent, observing temperance in the indulgence of the appetite, bearing evil with fortitude, being prudent in all our activities, and dispensing justice to all men, without showiness.

Our ancient brethren were charged by their Masters to *"pity the misfortunes of others; be humble, but without meanness; be proud, but without arrogance; abjure every sentiment of hatred and revenge; be the enemy of vice; respect the innocent; pay homage to wisdom and virtue; be magnanimous and liberal, without ostentation and without propulsion; and avoid every irregularity that stains the soul and distempers the body."*

The religious doctrines of Freemasonry include belief in God and in the immortality of the soul. Every candidate for Freemasonry has to express a belief in a Supreme Being; otherwise, no obligation would be considered binding upon him. The claim of our critics or detractors that Freemasonry is atheistic, therefore, is without basis. On the contrary, no atheist can ever be made a Mason. Besides, every Freemason believes that the soul of man is immortal, it being "the inspiration of that great Divinity whom we adore, and bears the nearest resemblance or affinity to that Supreme Intelligence which pervades all nature, which will never, never, never die."

Hence, we are urged to imitate Hiram Abiff, the architect of the work in the building of King Solomon's Temple, *"in his truly exalted and exemplary character; in his unfeigned piety to God, and in his inflexible fidelity to his trust, that we may be prepared to welcome death, not as a grim tyrant but as a kind messenger sent to translate us from this imperfect to that all perfect, glorious and celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Grand Master of the Universe forever presides."*

The philosophical doctrines of Freemasonry involve the symbolism of the lost and recovered word, the search after divine truth, the manner and time of its discovery, and the reward that awaits the faithful and the successful searcher. That is why the late VW Amancio S. Donato, Past Grand Orator, recurrently insisted that Freemasonry is a great university where we learn the science and art of high ethical living and where we conduct a serious study in quest of man's almost lost divinity and earnestly endeavor to reestablish our links with the Divine.

To be a student and practitioner of Freemasonry is, decidedly, a herculean task. *Mahirap talaga ang maging Mason!* This is suggested by Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, 33°, in the following passage in his monumental work, *The Builders*:

*When a man can look out over the rivers, the hills and the far horizon with a profound sense of his littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope and courage;*

*When he knows that down in his heart, everyone is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself and seeks to know, to forgive and to love his fellowmen;*

*When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yet even in their sins, knowing that man fights a hard fight against many odds;  
When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them and above all, how to keep friends with himself;  
When he loves flowers, can hunt birds without a gun and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laughter of a little child;  
When he can be happy and high-minded amidst the mean drudgeries of life;  
When star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight in flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead;  
When no voice of distress reaches his ear in vain and no hand seeks his aid without response;  
When he finds good in every faith that helps everyone to lay hold of higher things to see majestic meanings in life whatever the name of that faith may be;  
When he can look into a wayside and see something besides mud and into the face of the most forlorn mortal and see something beyond sin;  
When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope;  
When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellowmen, and with his God— in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of song, glad to live but not afraid to die;  
In such a man, whether he be rich or poor, scholarly or unlearned, famous or obscure, Masonry has wrought her sweet ministry.*

Clearly, any one of us who are born of women finds it difficult to be a Mason, and every one of us who have gained admission into the fellowship of the Craft finds it far more difficult to be a good and true Mason because, in the words of Gen. Albert Pike, 33°, Masonic ritualist and author of the celebrated *Morals and Dogma*, such a Mason is one who:

*...can look upon Death and see its face with the same countenance with which he hears its story; can endure all the labors of his life with his soul supporting his body; can equally despise riches when he hath them and when he hath them not; is not sadder if they are in his neighbor's exequer, nor more lifted up if they shine around about his own walls; is not marred with good fortune coming to him nor going from him; can look upon a man's lands with equanimity and pleasure as if they were his own, and yet look upon his own and see them too just as if they were another one's; never spends his goods prodigally and foolishly like a miser who weighs benefits neither by weight nor by number but by the circumstances of him who confers them; never thinks his charity expensive if a worthy person be the receiver; does nothing for opinion's sake but for conscience, being careful of his thoughts as if acting in markets and theatres, and in as much awe of himself as of a whole community; is bountiful and cheerful to his friends and charitable and apt to forgive his enemies; and loves his country, preserves its honor and obeys its laws, and desires and endeavors nothing more than that he may do his duty and honor God.*

To be a Mason, especially a good and true one, is by no means an easy task. But, as we have learned in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, or Master Mason, degree of the Symbolic Lodge, "Time, patience and perseverance will accomplish all things." Besides, as our famous Brother, the great German author Goethe, has aptly put it, "It is not enough to take steps that one day may lead us to a goal. We must take each step as a goal in itself, even if it is only a step."

An important step that will lead us to the goal of becoming a good and true Mason is exerting earnest effort at gaining proficiency in the lectures and rituals of the various degrees of Freemasonry. That is precisely why the Entered Apprentice is *supposed* to stay in his station for years before he can be passed to the status of a Fellowcraft, and why the Fellowcraft is *supposed* to undertake certain studies for years before he can be raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. That is why the initiated, passed, and raised Brother must pass proficiency examinations.

Even if, as I said earlier, we are encouraged to study Freemasonry on our own initiative, we can understand it better if we speculate on its various aspects together with fellow Freemasons. This is in line with the following statement of the MSA:

*The fundamental creed of Masonry is and ever must be the study of Masonic philosophy... The real Masonic charity (or assistance) that is afforded by one brother to another is assistance in the learning and understanding of Masonic truth.*

To help us learn and understand Masonic truth, the leadership of our Grand Lodge has mandated that Masonic Education is an essential part of the stated meeting of every Lodge. Besides, it has set up a year-round Masonic Education Lecture Program, and it has encouraged us to form ourselves into small discussion groups.

Like many of my brethren, I have discovered that Freemasonry is a worthwhile way of life. It promotes self-analysis, self-guidance, self-knowledge, self-mastery. It urges us to positively know ourselves — our strengths and weaknesses — in order to be able to take the correct direction toward success, toward victory over evil, toward salvation. It guides us to be at peace with ourselves, our families, our neighbors, our country, the world, and our God. It involves a searching inquiry into the secrets of both physical and human nature, as well as an extensive exploration into the fields of the infinite, the invisible and the unknown. It stimulates us to unravel the mysteries of human existence by analyzing and reflecting on the symbols, metaphors and allegories of its various degrees. It encourages us to relentlessly search after truth, so that we will set ourselves, as well as other men, free from ignorance, fear, superstition, and other moral evils. It provides us with the tools we need to avoid the pitfalls and perils that lurk in the shadows as we travel over the rough and rugged roads of our earthly pilgrimage to that celestial Lodge which never closes and which, to those worthy of admission, remains open through the boundless ages of eternity. It urges us to vigorously and incessantly work for the amelioration of the world, without counting the cost, without expecting any material reward, but hoping that when our souls stand before God's throne, there to be judged for deeds done while in their respective bodies, it will be our portion to hear from Him the welcome words, "Well done, ye good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

I fondly hope this explicatory epistle will help you understand the nature and purposes of Freemasonry, which is, I repeat, a many-splendored thing like love or charity, which is one of its touchstone tenets, and which has been variously defined like life, of which it is both a plan and a way, because it is extensive in scope and deep in meaning. I fondly hope, too, that you will soon knock at its door — of course, on your own free will and accord. How soon will you do this?

Your loving dad,

eF.R.eN

### Postscript

The passages penned by Dr. Joseph Fort Newton and Gen. Albert Pike are differently constructed. That by Dr. Newton is *periodic* in structure; that is, its main clause is preceded by a series of subordinate clauses. That by Gen. Pike, on the other hand, is *loose*; that is, its main clause starts the sentence and is followed by a series of subordinate constructions.

If, later on, you read pieces of Masonic literature, particularly those by great authors like Dr. Newton and Gen. Pike, read them both as a reader and as a writer. If you analyze the craftsmanship of each Masonic author and then try to imitate his style, you will improve your own writing style. That is what I have been doing since I gained admission into the fellowship of the Craft.

***Masonry is religious in the sense that "it is a plan of life – a trestleboard – whereon are written the laws and edicts of the GAOTU in accordance with which men must live if they are to be happy."***

**MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION**



# THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF RELIGION AND FREEMASONRY

by **VW SAMUEL P. FERNANDEZ**  
Grand Historian, 2005-2006

(A paper read at the Masonic Symposium, October 16, 2005 in Magdiwang Lodge No. 238, F. & A.M., Noveleta, Cavite)

Freemasonry sees truth in different religions; the religionists see only the differences.

There can never be one religion but all religions teach love of God and man.

Followers of the faith believe God is real. Known by many names Ahura Mazda is God to Zoroastrianism, Amon; Re to the Egyptians, Enlil; and Ea to the Sumarians, Marduk to the Babylonians, Ashur to the Assyrians, Zeus to the Greeks, Jupiter to the Romans, Allah to Islam, and Yahweh or Jehovah to Judaism.

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) eruditely observed: "We have just enough religion to make us hate but not enough to make us love one another."

## RELIGION DEFINED

The following are definitions of religion from Webster's:

1. belief in a divine or superhuman power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe. 2. Expression of this belief in conduct and ritual. 3. (a) any specific system of belief, worship, conduct, etc., often involving a code of ethics and a philosophy; as, the Christian religion, the Buddhist religion, etc.; (b) loosely, any system of beliefs, practices, ethical values, etc. resembling, suggestive of, or likened to such a system; as humanism is his religion. 4. a state of mind or way of life expressing love for and trust in God, and one's will and effort to act according to the will of God, especially within a monastic order or community; as, he achieved religion. 5. any object of conscientious regard and pursuit; as, cleanliness was a religion to him. 6. (a) the practice of religious observances or rites; (b) [pl.] religious rites [Obs.] 7. a religious order or state; a monastery [Obs].

## BASIC ELEMENTS

Theologians are one in observing that the basic elements of religion are (1) priests (religious leaders), (2) prophecy, (3) divine revelation, (4) sacrifice, (5) sacraments, (6) pilgrimage, (7) self-denial, (8) meditation, and (9) mysticism.

## THIRTEEN ARTICLES OF FAITH

Moses Maimonides, a great Jewish theologian, provides us with thirteen articles of faith for our understanding of the nature of modern western religious beliefs: (1) The existence of God, (2) The unity of God, (3) The incorporeality of God, (4) The eternity of God, (5) The obligation to worship God alone, (6) Prophecy, (7) The superiority of the prophecy of Moses, (8) The Torah as God's revelation to Moses, (9) The immutability of the Torah, (10) God's omniscience, (11) Reward and punishment, (12) The coming of the Messiah, and (13) The resurrection of the dead.

Myrtle S. Langley, on the other hand, in her *Book of Beliefs*, posits that there are at least six religious dimensions:

**Doctrine:** A belief system which gives a total explanation of reality.

**Myth:** Stories about God and the gods, creation and salvation, events of historical significance. (Myth is not fiction.)

**Ethics:** Values and codes of behavior.

**Ritual:** Worship, festivals, rites of passage and initiations and customs regulating food and dress.

**Experience:** The individual's experience of the awe-inspiring and the commitment to something greater than self.

**Social:** The institutional organization of people to practice their religion.

## WHAT IS RELIGION?

Religion is a complex subject. Studying polytheism, ethnic religions, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Parsism, Hebrew Monotheism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity is a tedious yet satisfying intellectual journey to those given to academic and religious pursuits.

Today, people of different backgrounds and orientations are willing to build their beliefs around supernatural phenomena they do not comprehend.

The Latin word **religio** originally meant obligation, bond. **Religio** was probably derived from the verb **religare**, meaning 'tie back, tie tight' **Religare** developed into a specialized sense which means a 'bond between human beings and gods' (John Ayton, **Dictionary of Word Origins**).

Religion is the best argument for the existence of God.

"Religion, like music, is not in need of defense, but of rendition" (Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick).

"The term 'religion' whatever its best definition, clearly refers to certain characteristic types of data (beliefs, practices, feelings, moods, attitudes, etc)" (Stanley A. Cook).

"A religion is a set of meanings and behaviours having reference to individuals who are or were or could be religious" (Vergilious Ferm).

"Man is by his constitution a religious animal" (Sir Thomas Browne: *Hydriotapia*).

## IS FREEMASONRY A RELIGION?

Is Freemasonry a religion?

The answer is NO.

Freemasonry is a Fraternity.

"The fact that so many clergymen of different denominations can be Masons and find no conflict in carrying on their duties is proof enough that Freemasonry is not a religion" (Alphonse Cerza, *Let There Be Light*).

Dr. Jim Tesner, Ph.D., 33°, argues: "No, not by the definitions most people use. Religion, as the term is commonly used, implies several things: a plan of salvation or path by which one reaches the afterlife; a theology which attempts to define the nature of God; and the description of ways or practices by which a man or woman may need to communicate with God. Masonry does none of those things .... Have some Masonic writers said that Masonry is a religion? Yes, and again, it's a matter of definition. If, as some writers have done, you define religion as 'man's urge to venerate the beautiful, serve the good and see God in everything;' you can say that Masonry subscribes to a religion. But that, surely, is not in conflict with Christianity or any other faith."

Bro. John Robinson, an author, asserts: "Usually, the allegation that Masonry is a separate religion is helped along by one or more blatant falsehoods – for example, the charge that Masonry has its own path to salvation, through the performance of good works. I never met a Mason who believes that, or who would be able to understand how anyone

could ever draw such a conclusion ... Clearly, one can easily assert that Freemasonry is not a separate religion. It promotes no heaven, no hell, and no means of salvation."

Bro. Rev. Dr. Thomas S. Roy, D.D. (Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in 1952) wrote: "We have none of the marks of a religion. We have no creed, and no confession of faith in a doctrinal statement. We have no theology. We have no ritual of worship. We have no symbols that are religious in the sense of the symbols found in church and synagogue. Our symbols are related to the development of the character of the relationship of man to man. They are working tools to be used in the building of a life. Our purpose is not that of a religion. We are not primarily interested in the redemption of man. We seek no converts. We solicit no new members. We raise no money for religious purposes. By any definition of religion accepted by our critics, we cannot qualify as a religion... And there is nothing in Freemasonry that is opposed to the religion he brings with him into the lodge."

Bro. Robert Macoy (1815-1895), prolific writer and ritualist, opines that: "Speculative Masonry is so far interwoven with religion as to lay us under obligations to pay that rational homage to the Deity which at once constitutes our duty and our happiness. It leads the contemplative mind to view with reverence and admiration the glorious works of the creation, and inspires him with the most exalted ideas of the perfection of his divine Creator. That Freemasonry should be spoken of as a religious institution, or as imparting religious instruction, undoubtedly sounds strange to those who think religion must be confined to a particular set of theological dogmas, or, in other words, be sectarian. But why should it be thought necessary to make religion traverse simply the narrow circle of sectarian ideas? Is it not a degradation to confine it to so limited a sphere?"

The above eruditions show that Freemasonry is not a religion but a fraternal group of men who are respecters of faith and beliefs, who are bonded together in the conviction that we are God's creation, who are members of the craft with no confession of faith in a doctrinal statement, who are male adults believing in the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.

Freemasonry does not proselytize, does not invite men to her bosom, does not woo men of consequence. Seekers must knock at the door of Freemasonry and must come of their free will and accord.

### **FREEMASONRY AS VIEWED BY SOME PROTESTANT FUNDAMENTALISTS**

When Freemasonry is categorized as a religion, then it becomes what it is not. Religion and Fraternity are two different terms. Forcing the issue that Freemasonry is a religion, a cult, a deist will bring us nowhere.

Not a few anti-Masonic books written by evangelists, pastors, and so-called former Freemasons warn the public not to join the followers of Lucifer and Satan.

No doubt the anti-Masonic books range from subtle to silly. Many authors cite the forged quotation by Albert Pike that "Lucifer is Adonai."

Some books promote Albert Pike as Sovereign Pontiff of Universal Freemasonry. This is completely baloney and has no historical basis.

Let us have some sampling of anti-Masonic writings.

Freemasonry is highly ritualized much more than most Christian churches. Lodge ceremonies are replete with prayers, funeral rites, and initiations. (William Schnoebelen)

William Schnoebelen's *Masonry Beyond The Light* considers Freemasonry as a witchcraft, a cult, and Satanism.

Jim Shaw and Tom Mckenny calls Freemasonry a deadly deception in their book **The Deadly Deception: Freemasonry ... By One of Its Top Leaders.**

Shaw was invested with the Rank and Decoration of a Knight Commander of the Court of Honor on November 18, 1965 and resigned from Freemasonry on October 26, 1966. Shaw was never a Thirty-Third Degree Mason and this can be verified from The Transactions of the Supreme Council, 33°.

Shaw never presided over any Scottish Rite Body and it looks like his lie is deadly, indeed!

Pat Robertson's book entitled **The New World Order** claims that Masonic "doctrines are not Christian but indeed tract identically with the syncretism of the so-called New Age religions of today."

Really?

Robertson showed total incompetence in research by quoting from A.C. dela Rive that Albert Pike equated Lucifer with Adonai (page 184).

Another venomous misrepresentation of Freemasonry is the book written by James L. Holly entitled **The Southern Baptist Convention and Freemasonry**.

Dr. Holly claims that Freemasonry worships Lucifer (Satan) in the Lodge and that "salvation is maintained through faithful membership in the Lodge."

Dr. James L. Holly and his kind anti-Masonic vitriolic tirades demonstrate an alarming disregard for the truth.

Freemasonry is not a religion. It respects the denominational faith of the Southern Baptist and other religions.

I have other anti-masonic books like Jack Harris' **Freemasonry**, Salam Kirbin's **Satan's Angels Exposed**, Steven Toukalas' **Masonic Rites and Wrongs: An Examination of Freemasonry**, etc.

Protestant fundamentalists and ecclesiastics' virulent attacks against Freemasonry range from subtle to silly fantasy. Most books cite a forged quotation by Albert Pike that "Lucifer is Adonai." For the uninformed this is a quotation in the 1889 book by A.C. dela Rive **La L'Enfant clans la Franc-Macconnerie Universelle** (Women and Children in Universal Freemasonry).

Supreme Grand Commander C. Fred Kleiknecht wrote Rev. Robertson and gave him the full story of the phony Pike quotation. Supreme Commander Kleiknecht wrote further Rev. Robertson thus: "if we must disagree, let us base our disagreement upon truth."

Rev. Robertson did not respond and preferred to disagree with Freemasonry on some other basis.

De la Rive based his quotation "**Lucifer is Adonai**" on the writing of Leo Taxil (Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pages), an expelled Freemason and convicted pornographer, who publicly admitted on April 17, 1897, that his anti-masonic writings were a gigantic hoax and big hogwash.

Unfortunately, the De la Rive great lie has been quoted by many anti-masonic writings that no one cares to research on the veracity of such malicious imputation.

If you are intellectually inclined and love reading, add to your collection John J. Robertson's **A Pilgrim's Path: One Man's Road to the Masonic Temple**; Rex Hutchens, 33°, and Donald W. Monson, 32° KCCH. **The Bible** in Albert Pike's **Morals and Dogma**; John J. Robinson's **Pilgrim's Path** and **Born in Blood**.

Further add to your collections **Angels and Demons** and **Da Vinci Code** by Dan Brown; **Hiram Key** by Christopher Knight and **The Second Messiah** by Christopher Knights and Robert Lomas and **The Messianic Legacy** by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln for your challenging fictional adventure.

The Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee, in his commentary on **Masonic Heritage for All**, observed the following:

I despise heresy hunts, religious extremism, bigotry and, as Thomas Jefferson phrased it, 'every form of tyranny over the mind of man.'

At Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in the 1950s, I took a course called "Missions" as taught by Cal Guy. We recall all seven fat volumes of Kenneth Scott Latourette's History of the Expansion of Christianity. We were tested over our readings weekly.

Among other things, I learned this: Masons always have stood tall for freedom of conscience, even to the point of martyrdom. Ask anyone who knows about Baptist beginnings in Brazil. The Gospel could not have been preached, the Bible not distributed, and missionaries could not have stayed in many instances without the courageous intervention of Masons who risked all for the free expression of all religious ideas.

One book, **A Wandering Jew in Brazil**, recounts in dramatic detail the struggle for an unhindered Gospel by Solomon Ginsburg just over a century ago. No mission-minded believer could read these tales without pledging eternal appreciation to the Masonic Order.

Also, in Mexico church-state separation had a strong anti-clerical bent after the revolution of 1910. There was an ongoing struggle with religious intolerance and the persecution of Protestants. Even until the 1960s champions of religious liberty, pluralism, free expression, cultural diversity and spiritual integrity often were simply seen as "the Masons."

In 1959, my wife and I visited Saltillo and Torreon on northern Mexico and met with Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist professionals and government leaders who, for good reason, identified themselves simply as **Freemasons**. Religious freedom moved forward in Mexico and Brazil and this was credited to the Masons.

Freemasonry is one of the staunchest allies of all real believers in a free church in a free state.

How then can any religious group ostensibly dedicated to free and moral agency, personal faith, the priesthood of all believers and basic American values challenge the right of the church members to be active Masons and church leaders?

Could it be that assaults on Freemasonry are really a smoke screen for those who denigrate the All-American doctrine of church-state separation?

It is possible that some extremists are using the very opportunity to open debate, the precise privilege of public challenge won for them in part by Masonic heroes, to accuse and abuse those in that great tradition?

Or, worse, have we fallen upon a day in which a climate of suspicion, distrust, and ignorance allows heresy hunts and thinly veiled bigotry to hold sway?

If "yes" is the answer to any of the four questions above, it is time for all who love liberty to rise up and say, "Enough of this silliness!"

## **PAPACY AND FREEMASONRY**

Three Roman Catholic publications say it all, namely: **Papacy and Freemasonry**, by Monseigneur Juin, published on December 8, 1930; **Freemasonry (Why Catholics Cannot Be Masons)** from the Documentation Service Theological Centrum, first printed in September 1988, Vol. 1 No. 9; and **Freemasonry Unmasked!** by Ramon "Monet" T. Brotario, copyright 1999.

Though incomplete, the following are documents against Secret Societies and Freemasonry:

Clement XII  
Benedict XIV

**In Eminenti  
Providas**

April 28, 1738  
March 16, 1751

Clement XIII	<b>A. Quotidie</b>	Sept. 14, 1758
Clement XIII	<b>Ut Primum</b>	Sept. 3, 1759
Clement XIII	<b>Christianae Republicae Salus</b>	Nov. 25, 1766
Pius VI	<b>Inscrutabile</b>	Dec. 25, 1775
Pius VII	<b>Ecclesiam a Jesu Christo</b>	Sept. 14, 1820
Leo XII	<b>Quo Graviora</b>	March 13, 1826
Pius VIII	<b>Traditi</b>	May 21, 1829
Gregory XVI	<b>Mirari Vos</b>	Aug. 15, 1832
Pius IX	<b>Qui Pluribus</b>	Nov. 9, 1846
Pius IX	<b>Omnibus Quantisque</b>	April 20, 1849
Pius IX	<b>Multiplices Inter</b>	Sept. 25, 1865
Leo XIII	<b>Humanum Genus</b>	April 20, 1884
Leo XIII	<b>Letter to the Italian Episcopate</b>	Dec. 8, 1892
Leo XIII	<b>Letter to the Italian People</b>	Dec. 8, 1892
Pius X	<b>Vehementer</b>	Feb. 11, 1906
Pius	<b>Letter to France Statements from Popes</b>	Jan. 6, 1907

The following are references incorporated in the speech of Monseigneur Jouin, who was praised by Pope Benedict XV and His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri.

Monseigneur Jouin is the founder of the **Revue International des Societies Secrets**. He received a letter on June 20, 1919 signed Cardinal Gasparri, Papal Secretary of State, and was accorded the Apostolic blessing.

In 1738, **Pope Clement XII** defined the Pontiffs injunction in unmistakable terms: "We have resolved and decreed to condemn and forbid such Societies, assemblies, reunions, conventions, aggregations or meetings called either Freemasonic or known under some other denomination. We condemn and forbid them by this our present constitution, which is to be considered valid forever."

On December 8, 1892, **Pope Leo XIII** wrote to the Italian Episcopal Hierarchy thus: "It is necessary to fight Freemasonry with those weapons of divine faith which in past ages vanquished paganism."

**Pope Leo XIII** in his encyclical **Humanum Genus** wrote: "Let us remember that Christianity and Freemasonry are essentially incompatible, to such an extent, that to become united with one means being divorced from the other. Let us, therefore, expose Freemasonry as the enemy of God, of the Church and of our Motherland."

**Pope Pius IX**, the prisoner of the Vatican, uttered his complaint concerning the dual failure of previous Pontifical condemnations on Freemasonry (September 15, 1865) He wrote: "However, the Apostolic See's efforts have not been crowned with the success that might have been expected. The Masonic Sect of which we speak has been neither defeated nor overthrown: Just the reverse, the Sect has developed to such an extent that, in these days of great difficulty, it shows itself everywhere and with impunity and raises a more audacious countenance."

**Pope Pius IX** outlined the failure of the Catholic side thus: "Venerable Brethren, we feel deep sorrow and bitterness, when we see that when, according to the Constitutions of Our Predecessors action is necessary to condemn this Masonic Sect, many of those whose functions and sacerdotal duty should make them ultra vigilant and ardent over such an important cause have, alas! shown themselves INDIFFERENT and as though ASLEEP. If some among them believe that the Apostolic Constitutions, published under sentence of anathema against the Occult and their adepts and initiates carry no strength in those countries where civil authorities tolerate them, they are most assuredly laboring under a serious mistake."

"As you well know, Venerable Brethren, we have prohibited and we again today prohibit and condemn this false evil doctrine. In fact, let us ask whether the Sovereign power 'TO FEED AND LEAD THE UNIVERSAL FLOCK' which was vested in Saint Peter by Jesus and through which the Roman Pontiffs received the Supreme Authority that they must exercise in the Church depends from civil power - can such civil power constrain and restrain them in anything whatever? Due to those circumstances and fearing that injudicious people and above all, youth, might be led astray, and in order that silence on our part might induce anyone to lend protection to error, we have resolved, Venerable Brethren, to raise Our Apostolic Voice therefore, we hereby confirm before you the Constitutions of Our Predecessors and in virtue of Our Apostolic Authority, we hold up to reprobation and we condemn this Masonic Society and ALL OTHER SOCIETIES of the SAME ORDER which, although different in appearance, but pursuing the same aim against the Church or legitimate Civil Power are constantly being formed. It is our order that all Christians of any standing whatsoever, of any rank or high appointment and OVER ALL THE EARTH should be informed that the said Societies are forbidden and reprovved by US, and incur the same sentences and condemnations as those that are specified in the former CONSTITUTIONS of our Predecessors."

**Pope Pius X**, successor of Pope Leo XIII, wrote on January 6, 1907 thus: "It is not the Church who first raised the standard; she did so only because war had been declared against her. For the last 25 years she has only had to bear the struggle. Such is the Truth. Declarations, a thousand times published and republished in the Press, in congresses, in Masonic conventions, in the very halls of Parliament, are proof in themselves that attacks against the Church have been led progressively and systematically. Such facts cannot be denied and against them mere words cannot prevail..."

In 1980 the German Bishops formed a Committee to study the question of the compatibility of membership in the Roman Catholic Church and Freemasonry. The Committee pointed the incompatibility thus:

The most important reasons for the incompatibility of Masonic ideology with the Catholic Faith, pointed out by the German bishops (essentially the same points brought out by Leo XIII in his encyclical **Humanum Genus**, 1884) are:

- a. Total rejection of dogma and therefore of objective Revelation;
- b. Rejection of any kind of magisterial authority;
- c. Relativism and indifferentism in religious and ideological matters;
- d. Deism in their conception of God as the Supreme Architect;
- e. A tolerance incompatible with Catholic tolerance. The Catholic Faith demands respect for the person who errs, but not the acceptance of errors as such. Masons accept different ideas — even though they are contradictory among themselves — since they are indifferent to their truth or falsity. They impose this false tolerance, thus fostering infidelity to the Faith;
- f. Their endeavor to morally ennoble themselves and others seems to leave no room for the action of grace on the soul;
- g. Masonry demands the total involvement of its members. It claims membership in life and death, and exclusivity in the formation of the conscience and character of its members.

These observations clearly show the falsehood of considering masonry as kind of ecumenical movement in keeping with the doctrine of the Church as stated by Vatican II in *Unitatis Redintegratio* and by Pope Paul VI in *Ecclesiam Suam*. In both documents, indifferentism is condemned and dialogue is aimed at facilitating the conversion to the fullness of truth of non-Catholics or non-Christians involved.

The Roman Catholic Church has not changed her view on Freemasonry. The following is the answer of Cardinal Ratzinger, who is now Pope Benedict XVI, to the present query on the pronouncement of the Roman Catholic Church:

It has been asked whether there has been any change in the Church's decision with regard to Masonic associations, since the new Code does not mention them expressly, unlike the previous Code. This Sacred Congregation is in a position to reply that this circumstance is due to an editorial criterion which was followed also in the case of other associations likewise unmentioned inasmuch as they are contained in wider categories.

Therefore, the Church's negative judgment with regard to Masonic associations remain unchanged, since their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church and, therefore, membership in them remains forbidden. The faithful who enroll in Masonic associations are in state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion.

It is not within the competence of local ecclesiastical authorities to give a judgment on the nature of Masonic associations which would imply a derogation from what has been decided above and this is in line with the Declaration of this Sacred Congregation on 17 February 1981 (cfr. ASS, 73, 1981, pp. 240-241)

In an audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect, the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II approved and ordered the publication of this Declaration which has been decided in an ordinary meeting of this Sacred Congregation.

Rome, from the Office of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 26 November, 1983.

What now?

Not only the **Roman Catholic Church** but also **Protestant Fundamentalists** have a negative view of Freemasonry.

Freemasonry has a history of standing for what it believes is the truth.

The Scottish Rite Creed defines the Fraternal commitment to society thus: "Human progress is our cause, liberty of thought our supreme wish, freedom of conscience our mission, and the guarantee of equal rights to all people everywhere our ultimate goal."

Freemasonry is no stranger to ecclesiastical negative pronouncements. As Marcelo H. del Pilar, considered as the Father of Filipino Freemasonry, wrote in the *La Solidaridad* on November 30, 1893:

Today the Philippines happens to be the battleground of two social factions which have never been brought to be conciliated anywhere else in the world: Masonry and the Monastic System (or the friars).

Out there, the friars have to their account a few centuries of mission work and have acquired the custody of state powers with which they wield coercive influence over the people imposed through their administrators.

Masonry, on the other hand, does not even reckon on the radiance of an energetic drive. Despite being devoid of government support, nevertheless it exerts its influence among the people through their spontaneous adhesion to it. According to those who are rather close to and fond of the friars, in a very short span of time the Masonic indoctrination has achieved tremendous growth in these islands.

Bro. Marcelo H. del Pilar raised the question on whether Freemasonry intended to wipe out religious sentiment in the Philippines. He wrote:

'La Solidaridad' is not a Masonic publication and never intends to stand in the defense of Masonry. There is, however, that new social factor in the Philippines, and under this consideration we will satisfactorily comply with our intention of being an impartial historian of this Monastic-Masonic conflict.

Is it really true that Masonry intended to wipe out the religious sentiment in the Philippines?

If this were true, Masonry would not only be hideous. It would be the most unreasonable affair, then there would be no need to contend with it, as it will never echo anywhere. It will thus fall by its own weight.

The religious sentiment will never be suppressed. Much less in the Philippines where, prescinding from other considerations, nature in its very magnificent displays is an endless call to holiness and is an immeasurable stimulus for the religious instincts.

The religious feeling is so much imbedded in all peoples that any attempt to uproot it would be tantamount to uprooting their own moral life. A people bereft of moral life is a people without faith. Without faith there just is no social bond, no charity, no friendship, no generosity and no fraternity.

Is it possible that Masonry could have as its propaganda's objective such a likely aberration? Is it possible that such a foolish abnormalcy could count on so many advocates in this planet?

We all know that the concern of the friars compels their defenders to speak up with exaggerated bias regarding this matter. But even without this partiality, we can only cast some doubt on the truth of such an accusation in the face of such worldwide acceptance in all countries and in all religions where the issue of perfection of their religious sentiments still remains questionable.

Bro. del Pilar ended his article thus:

All the Christians scattered all over the earth, all of them, and every one of them, except those who are Popists, accept Masonry and identify themselves with the Masonic ideas expressed in their everlasting trilogy advocating Freedom, Equality, Fraternity.

But why hint at other religions? Was it not said a while ago before a solemn gathering of literary masters by a learned Augustinian friar, the Rev. Francisco Valdez, that Jesus Christ died on the cross to defend liberty, equality and fraternity?

Although we may not wish to defend Masonry, the indictment that the Masons, by promoting freedom, equality and fraternity, aim at extinguishing the religious feelings in the Philippine archipelago will never find acceptance in our mind.

Masonry is not a religious entity. By no means will it ever endeavor to extinguish the religious sentiment of man.

Is Freemasonry in conflict with the Church? Bro. del Pilar wrote with perspicacity and discernment thus:

Specifically, Masonry takes charge of not intruding into the realm of the Infinite. Never in its history has Masonry allowed itself to ascertain the divine attribute; much less determine in heaven or on earth the sphere of action of the Great Architect of the Universe, whose existence it recognizes fully.

Thus, in the Constitution of the "Oriente Espanol", the name of the Masonic Grand Lodge whose jurisdiction has been extended to the Philippines, the following declaration of principles is outlined:

"Masonry believes in the existence of One Supreme and Infinite Being, the Creator whom it calls the Great Architect of the Universe.

"And because it respects the special and intimate manner in which one feels and understands God, it (Masonry) is not the enemy of any positive religion. By virtue of this high regard, it finds itself compelled to hold in high esteem the form of worship which each individual may find most worthy and convenient in the aspect of worshipping God.

"In this respect, Masonry exacts and imposes upon those who profess its tenets the most complete and real tolerance. Anyone who cannot be at peace and amply at ease and forbearing through and through with all beliefs and all opinions deeply and duly upheld and acknowledged, ought not to be a Mason."

Such is Masonry's attitude: to make men brothers independently from their religious beliefs; keeping quite clear that the differences of convictions do not defile the relationship of man with his fellow beings.

Is this what they mean by suppression or extinction of the religious sentiment or others? And is this not precisely what is called for by the social situation in the Philippines where under one flag a variety of peoples — Christians, Catholics, Mohammedans, idol-worshippers, etc. — bask under the sun? will it be more healthful and religious to maintain and favor sectarian entity or "odium" (hatred) which gives way to the imposition of a particular religion?

After all, "La Solidaridad" will not desist from resisting or opposing Philippine Masonry if the Friar will convince her fully that the Masonic movement is considerably detrimental to the interests of the Philippine Islands. Nevertheless, how will this sound convincing when the friar's argument is incapable of mowing the conscience of those sincerely desirous of appreciating the domains of truth and justice?

Certain reasons may be adduced and ideas may be conceived in order to convince the mind and influence the conscience; but as long as we love our country and cherish the peace and tranquil welfare of our land, we pledge to bow our heads only to the voice of reason.

Freemasonry's love for freedom and justice made heroes of Jose Rizal, Marcelo H. del Pilar, Andres Bonifacio, Graciano Lopez-Jaena, Juan Luna, Jose Ma. Basa, Antonio Regidor, Ladislao Diwa, Doroteo Cortes, Jose A. Ramos, Mariano Ponce, Teodoro Plata, Apolinario Mabini, Moises Salvador, Ambrocio Salvador, Jacobo Zobel, Deodato Arellano, Manuel Arias Rodriguez, Juan Atayde, Rafael del Pan, Tomas del Rosario, Domingo Franco, Doroteo Jose, Eduardo de Lete, Julio Llorente, Jose Ma. Panganiban, Ambrocio Rianzares Bautista, Baldomero Roxas, Clemente Zulueta, Numeriano Adriano, Galicano Apacible, Sixto Lopez, Bonifacio Arevalo, Ariston Bautista, Jose Dizon, Estanislao Legaspi, Francisco Nakpil, Doroteo Ongjungco, Timoteo Paez, Arcadio del Rosario, Antonio Salazar, Faustino Villaruel, Juan Zulueta, Damaso Ponce, Joaquin Pardo de Tavera.

Bro. Norman Vincent Peale, known for his book **Power of Positive Thinking**, wrote:

Freemasonry is not a religion though, in my experience, Masons have predominantly been religious men and, for the most part, of the Christian faith. Through Freemasonry, however, I have had the opportunity to break bread with good men of other than my own Christian faith. Freemasonry does not promote any one religious creed. All Masons believe in the Deity without reservation, however, Masonry makes no demands as to how a member thinks of the Great Architect of the Universe. Freemasonry is, for all its members, a supplement to good living which has enhanced the lives of millions who have entered its doors. Though it is not a religion, as such, it supplements faith in God the Creator. It is supporting of morality and virtue.

Freemasonry has no dogma or theology. It offers no sacraments. It teaches that it is important for every man to have a religion of his own choice and to be faithful to it in thought and action, as a result, men of different religions meet in fellowship and brotherhood under the fatherhood of God. I think a good Mason is made even more faithful to the tenets of his faith by his membership in the Lodge.

All faiths have religious culture. Conservative members build walls of exclusiveness rather than recognize the virtues of other religions. Interfaith dialogues are seldom organized. Religion isolates its numbers from understanding each other.

Freemasonry is unique. People of different religious persuasions meet and share in their search for ethical approach to all that they do. Christians, Jews, Muslims and other faiths meet in the Lodge in peace and harmony not to dispute but to unite in fraternal spirit.

Religion divides. Freemasonry unites.

Regardless of religious beliefs, brethren gather and share timeless truths common to all religions. Love is love anywhere. Justice is justice anywhere. Charity is charity anywhere, anytime.

As Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple would have it: "It is a mistake to assume that God is interested only, or even chiefly, in religion"

Non-Mason D. Elton Trueblood observed: "No religion is irrelevant if it helps people to see the hidden glory of the common things they do."

Freemasonry is a fraternal organization.

Freemasonry is brotherhood.

The following article from the ASHLAR Magazine succinctly describes what is brotherhood.

### **FREEMASONRY IS BROTHERHOOD**

Freemasonry is brotherhood. How to be a brother indeed-how in the midst of diversities of interests, diversities of condition, diversities of opinion and belief, diversities of race and nation, to be brothers still, loving brothers is a world rent by violence, sundered by partition walls, full of intolerance and party feeling, sectarian strife and exclusiveness of caste, to be brothers amid the distinctions of common life, where wealth and poverty, obscurity and eminence jostle each other, where religious and political differences, social distinctions and the exclusiveness of wealth cultivate the obnoxious weed at greater distance and water and cultivate the obnoxious weed of selfishness, is the problem which Freemasonry undertakes to solve. It has combined the scattered elements of society, recalled men to a sense of their fraternal relations, revived the sometimes almost extinguished faith in friendship and virtue, opened a new temple and set up a new altar above all prejudice, dissension and selfishness, above all distinctions save moral goodness — a temple dedicated to universal friendship, an altar at which all humanity may kneel, where brethren may seek refuge from the strife and storms of human passion, defense and shelter within an inviolable sanctuary of peace and love. While holding itself aloof from the separate creeds, the symbolism of Masonry, which is its peculiar mode of instruction, inculcates all the duties which we owe to God as being His children and to men as being their brethren ... But above all and before all, it has taught a principle which has permeated its every nerve, caused through its every vein, and respondent to every throbbing of its heart, that man is sovereign over his mind and must deal in charity with the opinions and judgment of his fellows. If then, anywhere, there is taught that the mind of man is subject to the control of another mind, subject to like frailties, to an equally imperfect human vision, which at the very best must be but an inadequate conception of God and His dealings with His creature, man, whether it originates in either an individual or an organised effort, Freemasonry was against that system, whatever may be its claims to infallibility

SO MOTE IT BE.

### **FINAL WORDS**

Members of Freemasonry in the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century were militant and aggressive like-minded brethren whose aim was to liberate their country from political bondage.

The Spanish friars in the Philippines were a patriotic group hostile to any change. Hence, the Spanish missionaries' bellicose and belligerent stance was understandable. The unassailable reality was that the revolutions in El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Panama, Ecuador, Columbia, Venezuela and the Philippines were led by Masons.

As Bro. and Gen. Emilio F. Aguinaldo would have it: "The First Philippine Republic, of which I was its humble president, was an achievement we owe largely to Masonry and the Masons. With God to illuminate them and Masonry to inspire them, the [Masons] fought the battle of emancipation and won."

Freemasons from different provinces became united in the battle against religious obscurantism.

Has the ecclesiastical attitude changed against Freemasons?

No!

In the 1960's an atmosphere of understanding pervaded the air.

In the early 1980's, there was a change of heart by ecclesiastical leaders who had praised the Fraternity

The fact that the Dominant Church recognized that Freemasons in the Philippines are not hostile against the Church in the 1960's, is still the veritable reality.

Freemasons respect religion.

Religion, to a Freemason, is the individual's distinctive mind-set toward God and man as expressed in faith, in worship, in life and in service.

Freemasons retain their faith as members of the Fraternity and revere and highly honor the religion of every Brother.

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*The First Couple of the GLP, together with some brethren, in Saipan*

*Brethren of MD 54, particularly of Emon Lodge No. 179, give GM Ebdane warm welcome.*



# IN PURSUIT OF OUR THREEFOLD MISSION

by **MW Rosendo C. Herrera, PGM**

Our stated mission for the current Masonic year requires us to renew our commitment to performing important tasks with a little more vigor than before.

## **1. Imbuing Ourselves with, Exemplifying Masonic Values**

When, on our initiation into Freemasonry, we were asked, "*What came you here to do?*" our answer was "*To learn to subdue the passions and to improve myself in Masonry,*" which implies, among other things, that we want to seek more and more light in Masonry in order that, influenced by Masonry's simple lessons of practical morality and sublime teachings of religious philosophy, we will attain self-mastery and be a light for others to follow. Indeed, if we immerse ourselves in the tenets and teachings of our Craft, imbue our hearts and minds with them, and then live them everyday, the people we come in contact with will look to us for example and inspiration. The light of Masonic tenets and teachings will so shine before men that they may desire our fellowship and join in our assemblies.

## **2. Enhancing Our Craft's Welfare and Growth**

Each one of us should work for the enhancement of the welfare and growth of our respective Symbolic Lodges, our Masonic Districts, and our Grand Lodge and not for our personal interests, so that we will better be able to realize our vision, which is to develop ourselves into a Fraternity committed to enhancing the beauties of our touchstone tenets, namely, brotherly love, relief and truth, as well as to improving not only ourselves and our families but other men as well towards the attainment of an enlightened and a progressive humanity.

## **3. Dispersing the Masonic Light**

This aspect of our mission is the focus of this opusculum.

As individuals and as Masonic Lodges/Districts, we are obliged to spread the light of the principles of Freemasonry among our fellowmen, particularly our countrymen. We are called upon by our Fraternity to help minimize the world's greatest crime, which is man's inhumanity to brotherman, particularly in these times that try men's souls because the terrorists and other enemies of peace and freedom have stepped up their evil acts.

We must, individually and collectively, promote our Fraternity's principle of universal brotherhood with a little more vigor, zeal and earnestness than before. We must, in other words, demonstrate our skill to use our symbolic trowel a little more proficiently than before. Let us influence our countrymen, by word and by deed, to also regard the whole human species as one big family – the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the powerful and the powerless, the old and the young, etc. – who, as children of one Almighty Parent and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support and protect one another.

It is of common knowledge that misunderstandings thrive in many parts of our country, so that there is really a need for us to spread the cement of brotherly love more actively than before.

Besides, the greater masses of our people are suffering from abject poverty, so that there is a need for us to fly to their relief a little more vigorously than before.

Furthermore, bigotry, intolerance, prejudice, falsehood and similar evils still rear their ugly heads in different parts of the archipelago, so that we who are linked together by the indissoluble chain of sincere affection are obliged to preach the Truth, the principle that will set us free, a little more zealously than before.

We ought to spread the truth that Masonry is not a religion, but a fraternal organization of men of different religious beliefs and political persuasions who are dedicated to the establishment on this planet of a veritable Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God. We ought to tell non-Masons, including our critics or detractors, that Masonry respects all religions but it is not in itself a religion, although *"it is so far interwoven with religion as to lay us under obligation to pay that rational homage to the Deity which at once constitutes our duty and our happiness."* We ought to tell them that we Freemasons belong to different religious denominations, but the spirit of brotherhood binds us together into a common band or society of men among whom there should be no contention, but rather emulation of who best can work and best agree.

We, as a people, are still dismally divided, disunited, fragmented. Soldiers fight against rebels of different sorts, policemen against criminals, Christians against non-Christians, politicians in the opposition against those in the administration, and so on. We must, therefore, show the way to unity, peace and harmony. This we can do, at least in part, by informing our fellow Filipinos, as well as foreigners residing in our country, that we in the Craft may differ in our political opinions and in our religious beliefs, but when we are in Lodge, we are all brothers; that we practice political and religious tolerance and, as a result thereof, unity, peace and harmony prevail among us; that because we sincerely love one another, we respect one another's political opinion and tolerate one another's religious beliefs and, therefore, a feeling of oneness holds sway among us.

We ought to show our countrymen a little more earnestly than before the beauty of harmony prevalent among Christian and non-Christian Freemasons. We ought to tell them that while Christian and non-Christian Filipinos who are non-Masons kill one another, grab one another's lands, and so on, Christian and non-Christian Freemasons embrace one another as friends, love one another as brothers and, consequently, aid, support and protect one another.

If we extend beyond our Fraternity the spirit of brotherhood which pervades the Craft; if we inculcate in the hearts and minds of other men, particularly fellow Filipinos, our belief and teaching that we are all children of one Almighty Parent, whatever name may be given to Him; if we teach our countrymen to love one another as brothers and, correlatively, to respect one another's political and religious beliefs, — then we will be helping our national and local leaders in reconciling all the diverse groups in our country into one family of men, among whom unity, peace and harmony prevail.

Would that all citizens of this country, as well as others who reside in it, were Masons, who adhere to and practice the tenets and principles of Masonry! Then this country would be a realm of peace, a utopia, a paradise. But this is a consummation devoutly to be wished. Nevertheless, we can, at least, spread more vigorously than before the basic teachings of Freemasonry, inculcate in our countrymen the beauty of harmony, the wisdom of unity in diversity, and the rich dividends of brotherly love, relief and truth. If we all do this, then we will realize our vision: a dynamic Fraternity committed to enhancing the touchstone tenets of Freemasonry and improving men towards the attainment of an enlightened and a progressive humanity. If we relentlessly pursue this vision, then we will contribute significantly to the all-important task of minimizing the serious problems that confront our nation, thereby helping in the gigantic enterprise of rebuilding our nation and unifying our people.

We, your Past Grand Masters, who compose the Council of Elders, urge you, dear brethren, to do all in your power to help unite and help build a nation where Faith, Hope and Charity, Love, Understanding and Reconciliation, Unity, Peace and Harmony reign, as well as to help destroy the barriers and walls of separation which have set our people apart.

Since we are not identified with any political group nor with any religious denomination, we can serve as a unifying factor, as a broker for the preservation of peace, democracy, liberty and justice, so that this nation, nurtured by the blood, sweat and tears of our Masonic forebears, as well as by the hopes, dreams and aspirations of our youth, may not perish from the earth.

We remember, at this juncture, one of our Masonic forebears, Ill. Bro. Apolinario "Katabay" Mabini, Grand Orator of the Gran Consejo Regional and Secretary of La Liga Filipina, who served as Executive Secretary to another Masonic forebear of ours, Gen. and President Emilio Aguinaldo, to whom he submitted his *obra maestra* entitled "The True Decalogue", a compendium of moral and civic duties Filipinos at the time ought to perform in order that they would succeed in their war against the Spanish colonialists. In the Prologue to his masterpiece, Bro. Mabini wrote in part:

*... To erect the real edifice of our social regeneration, we must radically change not only our institutions but our way of thinking and being as well. We must simultaneously undertake an external and an internal revolution. We must establish*

*our moral education on more solid basis and abjure the vices most of which we inherited from the Spaniards. Otherwise, our country would find herself more and more decimated and poorer by civil war and continuous internal dissensions until she reaches her complete annihilation, which even the noble blood of our martyrs will not be able to prevent.*

Bro. "Katabay" wrote that more than a century ago, and yet it still applies to our present situation. I like to think that he intended to establish the moral education of Filipinos on the solid foundation of Masonic teachings and principles. His entire "Decalogue", in fact, is fraught with Masonic lessons and teachings.

Let us emulate the example set by Bro. Apolinario Mabini. Let us, either by mouth or in writing, or both, spread a little more actively than before the tenets, values, and principles of Freemasonry, which is actually a realm of unity, peace and harmony.



### **Order of the Amaranth Pays Grand Master Ebdane Courtesy Call**

**Seated from L to R:** HL Marieta M. Recometa, Grand Royal Matron; MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr., Grand Master; MW & SK Danilo D. Angeles, PGM, Grand Royal Patron; HL Angelita J. Angeles, Member N. Ecija Court No. 31.

**Standing from L to R:** Leovigilda V. Escueta, Royal Matron-elect, Muñoz Royal Court No. 17; HL Rizalinda V. Altares, Grand Associate Conductress; HL Leonora M. Lampa, Member, Muñoz Royal Court No. 17; HL Emelita R. Fernandez, member, Muñoz Royal Court No. 17; HL Louise L. Ang, Grand Standard Bearer; HL Alodia C. Salazar, member, Nueva Ecija Court No. 31; HL Elenita A. David, Grand Prelate; HL Catherine N. Matias, Royal Matron, Nueva Ecija Court No. 31; HL Malou B. Manangbao, member, Nueva Ecija Court No. 31; and MW & SK Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM, GMH, Grand Secretary, Past Grand Royal Patron.

# ***THE MASONIC FIGHT FOR EQUALITY: PAST, PRESENT AND PROSPECTS***

by **MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, GMH**

Today we are celebrating the 93<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Republic of the Philippines. This is truly a historic day and justifies sweet reminiscences even if we risk crossing the borders of immodesty. No one can successfully downplay the key role played by Masonry in laying the foundation of this country.

## **The Story of the Philippines Is the Story of the Craft**

Let me quote the Introduction to *The Brethren* written by PGM Enrique L. Locsin:

"After the outbreak of revolution, the Spanish authorities targeted the Masons as the main culprits and jailed hundreds of them. Among the evidence collected was an apron of the 9<sup>th</sup> degree, showing the severed head of a Spaniard held up by the hair. This was proof that Masonry was out to get the Spaniards. All the Lodges were closed.

"Masonry suffered its worst blow when 13 prominent Caviteños were executed in December 1886. Most of them were leading members of the España en Filipinas Lodge. Brother Jose Rizal was executed soon after at the Luneta. Grand Officers of the Gran Consejo Regional were shot in the same place the following year.

"The Revolution raged on, and in 1898, Aguinaldo declared Philippine Independence and unfurled the Masonic flag of the republic, consisting of an equilateral triangle with a sun and a golden eye.

"Said Aguinaldo: 'The First Philippine Republic, of which I was its humble president, was an achievement we owe largely to Masonry and the Masons. With God to illuminate them and Masonry to inspire them, the Masons fought the battle of emancipation and won'.

"Not for long, of course.

"The United States joined the fray. With Admiral Dewey's squadron were three Masons, Joseph Caughlan, Jose Alejandrino and Francisco Aguado, who piloted Dewey's ship. On board were thousands of Masons among the American troops.

"While the Republic lasted, the role of Masonry in it was central. The organization of Government was laid out according to Masonic principles, and was rejected by a largely non-Masonic revolutionary Congress for that reason. Instead, a plan of government proposed by Felipe Calderon was approved. It called for the unity of the State with the Catholic Church. Masons bitterly and brilliantly argued for their separation and won.

"When Aguinaldo was captured at the fall of the Republic, he was brought before a noble soldier, Gen. Arthur McArthur, a Mason. He stayed at his home as guest.

"This began the American rule over the Philippines. During that rule, eight Masons sat as governors general, while three as high commissioners.

"The fall of the First Republic triggered the peaceful struggle for Philippine independence and a new republic. This fight, too, was led and manned by Masons. Among the framers of the 1935 Constitution were Masons: Jose Abad Santos, Jose P. Laurel, Manuel A. Roxas, Rafael Alunan and Tomas Morato.

"All the Missions for Philippine independence were led by Masons. They were met with open doors and open arms by fellow Masons in the American government, among them Sen. Milliard Tydings.

"When the elections for a constitutional convention prescribed by the Tydings-McDuffie Law were held, 41 of the 202 elected delegates were Masons. They were the ones who fought for a bill of rights, for the separation of Church and

State, for public education and academic freedom. 'To that end, the Masons in the convention organized themselves and saw to it that the new constitution of the Philippines was a truly Masonic document', said Conrado Benitez. 'In this effort, they succeeded'.

"US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt approved the Philippine Constitution drafted by the Convention. He was a Mason.

"In the first national elections held under the new Constitution, all the presidential candidates were Masons: Manuel L. Quezon, Emilio Aguinaldo and Gregorio Aglipay.

"Masons composed the Cabinet of President Quezon and controlled the Congress. It was the best government the Philippines ever had.

"During the Japanese occupation, the importance of Masonry in the life of an independent Philippines was recognized by the Japanese Army, which prohibited the rites of Masonry. Yet the Japanese had to call on Masons to run the civilian government of the puppet republic they created, because only Masons possessed the administrative skills.

"In 1944, a Mason waded unto Leyte beach. He was Gen. Douglas McArthur, who would become the American Shogun of Japan. With him were generals and other brilliant officers who were Masons, like the decisive Gen. Walter Krueger, who destroyed Manila in order to liberate it.

"On July 4, 1946, the dream of Filipino Masonry came true; the Philippines was free at last. In solemn rites patterned after Masonry, Past Grand Master & US President Harry S. Truman signed the proclamation of independence. It was read by Paul McNutt, a Mason. Past Master Manuel A. Roxas took his oath as President of the Republic. Brother Manuel V. Moran, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, administered the oath of office.

"Above the stirring rites, the crowds watched the American flag come down and a new flag rise to take its place: a flag bearing the immortal emblem of the golden sun, said to have adorned the Temple of Solomon, the Flag of the Philippines.

"And there you have it. The story of the Philippines is the story of the Craft."

### **A Glorious Past Doesn't Deserve a Less Glorious Present**

Even those who would becloud history cannot completely hide the fact that the most glorious moments of the Filipinos are owed to Masons. Let me add, however, that a glorious past does not deserve a less glorious present. No wizardry of words can blur the impression that today's Masonry has been a less influential force in directing the destiny of the nation. Tomes of essays have been written and theories have been floated on how Masonry, the old lion, can roar back and recover its dominant role in our society. All these schools of thought deserve priority in our thinking.

### **How Can We Finish the Fight for Equality?**

On this occasion, however, I invite the brethren, especially the Light in the East, to think about how we Masons can finish the fight for equality, a fight which was fought with so much blood and many tears by our Masonic heroes.

Our Masonic forebears fought for three ideals: liberty, fraternity and equality. The restraints of time handcuff our effort to discuss with decency the current state of liberty, fraternity and equality in our country. Let me, therefore, limit my message to the need for Masons to continue the struggle for equality so successfully frustrated by the conspiracy of elitist interests in our country today.

### **The Reality That Hurts**

There is no iota of doubt that we vigorously subscribe to the concept of equality. This egalitarian concept has been cast in stone in all our Constitutions – the Malolos Constitution, the 1935 Constitution, the 1971 Constitution, and the 1987 Constitution, all of which bear the unmistakable imprints of Masonry. But while equality has been reduced by the laws of the land as a creed, it has not mutated into reality in our society. The reality that hurts is that the evil of inequality continues to bedevil this land and the best of our beauty parlor treatments cannot drive it away into oblivion.

## Need to Re-adjust Our Concept of Equality

Given the stubbornness of this problem of inequality, I urge you to rethink and re-examine our concept of equality. I respectfully submit that our concept of reality, which was borrowed from the medieval philosophies, needs to be readjusted.

Let us again re-examine the twin aspects of equality: **equality as a moral principle**, the core of which is the right to equal consideration, and **equality as a distributive principle**, the essence of which is the right to equal distribution of opportunities, power or wealth.

## Three Major Concepts of Equality

The history of political philosophies will tell us that from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until this new millennium, there are only three major concepts of equality that have seized the attention of mankind. I will just breeze through them with the hope that it will ignite a light on whether we need to adjust our seemingly immovable mindset on equality despite the undeniable fact that it has not worked well for the unequals in our society.

The first major concept of equality is that of **formal equality**. This concept rests on two assumptions: first, that all people have equal moral worth by virtue of their shared humanity; and second, that each human being should be treated equally unless relevant grounds can justify unequal treatment.

Those two assumptions were derived from the natural rights theory popular during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were first articulated by the English philosopher John Locke, who emphasized the thesis that all men, as creatures of God, have natural right to the God-given rights to life, liberty and property. This is the bedrock of the American Declaration of Independence of 1776, which proclaimed that "all men are created equal."

In time, formal equality took the meaning of **equality before the law and equal rights to other civil and political liberties**. The Americans educated us on this particular dimension of equality.

Historians traced its origin to Plato who, in his major work, *The Republic*, advocated an educational system purposely designed to give equally talented students an equal opportunity to develop their potentials. Plato championed the removal of all social factors or institutions – including the family – which would give any arbitrary advantage of one person over another.

The notion was picked up by the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, often called the "intellectual ancestor of modern thinking on equality of opportunity." In his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* written in 1755, Rousseau pinpointed the institution of private property as the real source of inequality. In his other work, *The Social Contract*, he called for greater equality of economic condition through a redistribution of private property to bring about a free society.

Over time, the **concept of equal opportunity** provided the justification for increased state intervention. Government took a bigger role in regulating industrial conditions, health, education and welfare service. In fine, the State was given the role of removing social and economic barriers that lay in the path of its citizens. Again, we followed this route in our fight to eliminate inequality in our midst.

The third major concept of equality is the most radical concept – **the concept of equality of outcome**, which was developed after the French revolution of 1789 within the European socialist tradition. The concept revolved around the attempt to equalize outcome or end results in society rather than mere opportunities or initial circumstances in life. It espouses the sharper redistribution of wealth either through public ownership of industry or through social policies concerning education, housing and welfare. Socialist thinker Anthony Crosland defined the goal of equality of outcome as "the distribution of rewards, status and privileges enough to minimize social resentment, to secure justice between individuals and to equalize opportunities."

A spin-off of this concept of equality of outcome is Karl Mar'x vision of classless society built on the ideals of from each according to his ability to each according to his needs. The fall of Russia repudiated the validity of this radical concept of equality.

Let me again stress that I offer a thumbnail sketch of these three major concepts of equality if only to trace their medieval roots. It is also to emphasize that none of those concepts has enabled man to capture that elusive goal of achieving the greatest good of the greatest number.

## A New Debate

Consequently, in the last decades of the last century, there has been a new debate on what ought to be the appropriate concept of equality in the emerging global village whose driving force is a market-based economy, where the mantras are deregulation and privatization. The new debate has been sparked by the American political philosopher John Rawls. In 1971, he wrote his *Theory of Justice*, described as the "most important book on political philosophy since the World War." In this highly thought-provoking book, he espoused a new theory of equality based on two fundamental principles.

First: Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive liberty compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.

Second: Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged.

In sum, under this new theory, **inequalities in the allocation and distribution of wealth are acceptable only if they work for the benefit of the least well-off members of society.**

Rawls' new theory of equality has fomented a raging debate about the concept of equality that ought to govern this new millennium. I urge you to follow this exciting debate; for, obviously, our concept of equality, antiquarian as it is, has not worked in the last century and will never work in this new century.

Indeed, an authoritative study made by the Asian Development Bank and validated in experiences in no less than seven countries in Asia, including the Philippines, concluded that **because of inequality, a sense of "learned helplessness" has developed among the disadvantaged in Southeast Asia.** This refers to a resigned attitude and lack of expectations among those who feel that traditional power relations will invariably leave them helpless and hopeless to assert their rights.

## In Conclusion

Let me conclude by saying that this state of "learned helplessness" on the part of the powerless in our society is the challenge that should be met by all, especially Masons, who are concerned with the attainment of real equality. The disadvantaged among our people – the poor, the women, the aged, the children, the handicapped, etc. – need more than theoretical equality. They deserve more than equality in law, which quite often is no more than a hypothetical equality.

After all our experiences, it is time to realize that to give them mere hypothetical equality is to treat them with inequality. Equality in creed is not equality in reality, far from it. Don't we, for instance, have laws and ordinances that prohibit all from sleeping under public bridges? The prohibition is against all, but does not the prohibition in reality affect only the poor without roofs over their heads? Does not the Constitution say that all have the right to travel? But will that right enable an unshod peasant to go to Paris and sip champagne? The Constitution guarantees to all freedom of speech and of the press. But how does an illiterate exercise this right as effectively the educated? The Constitution grants the right to express grievances. But can a poor man go to court without a peso in his pocket? Will lawyers and the courts give him access to our system of justice when all he has is a bent back and a begging bowl?

This is our challenge, a challenge addressed not only to our sense of justice but a challenge that ought to prick our conscience as Masons. We like to think we live under the rule of law when, in truth, it is oftentimes the rule by law of the powerful over the powerless. We like to think that equality is equality before the law, but de jure equality is sometimes de facto inequality.

Our Masonic forebears planted the tree of equality in this country, but it is our duty as their successors to insure that this tree of equality will bear fruits that the present and future can enjoy.

**Let us always remember that democracy cannot thrive on the thin topsoil of theoretical equality between the haves and the have-nots. Democracy has to be deeply rooted on the bedrock of true equality, and we can achieve this ideal only by giving the powerless more equality than the powerful, for only in that way can we really level their playing field; only in that way can we breathe life to the philosopher's dream that there is power in powerlessness.**

# NUEVA ECIJA REVISITED

by **VW Jose Ariel G. Domingo, DGL (35)**

**Note:** The author of this article is a member of Apolinario B. Yap Memorial Lodge No. 328 and Grand Lodge Lecturer for Masonic District No. 35.

NUEVA ECIJA is not just a mere province that forms part of the Central Luzon or Region III area. Neither is it just one of the eight provinces represented by the eight rays in the Philippine flag, nor is it just the rice granary of the Republic. It is more than all that. It has been the setting of various historical events in which Masons prominently figured and which resulted in the founding of the Philippine Republic on the pillars of brotherly love, relief and truth.

In 1705, then Spanish Governor General Fausto Cruzat y Gongora separated a portion from the big province of Pampanga and christened it Nueva Ecija, supposedly in honor of his home province in Sevilla, Spain, named Ecija.

Today, the province is composed of two Masonic Districts, Nos. 29 and 35, the first with 14 Lodges and the second with 9. The brethren of these two Masonic districts are proud of the fact that Masons took part in the cry and fight for freedom. They are not happy, however, over the fact that many Filipinos do not know that the first martyrs of Nueva Ecija were Masons, all members of the Masonic Triangle No. 80 at Peñaranda. It is said that the uprising in the province against the Spaniards was initiated on September 2, 1896. Due to inferior weaponry, several brethren who were members of the Katipunan were apprehended and summarily executed by the Spanish authorities. They were the first martyrs of Nueva Ecija.

Let me recount further the role of the province in the cry and fight for freedom of the country from Spanish bondage.

## **First Cry of Nueva Ecija**

After the "Cry of Balintawak", also called "Cry of Pugad Lawin", headed by Bro. Supremo Andres Bonifacio and Emilio Jacinto on August 23, 1896, Nueva Ecija claimed its proudest moment in the nation's history, when it heeded the Katipunan's alarming call to arms with its own urgent cry of freedom. In the afternoon of September 2, 1896, Katipunan leaders and sympathizers, long oppressed and brutalized by the Spanish civil guards, assembled and marched in a long column from the town of Cabiao to San Isidro, the capital, where there was a formidable Spanish fortress. They were led by Bro. General Mariano Llanera, a son of Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. Leading the rebels on horseback, Bro. General Llanera was followed by "Banda Cabiao", a band of musicians using bamboo instrument that played martial music endlessly. It was here that the Katipuneros toppled the vicious reign of the Guardia Civil and killed their Commander, Capt. Joaquin Nachorro.

## **Capital of the Philippine Republic**

Addendum to its being a scene of a voluminous number of historic battles and cradle of several youthful heroes consumed by patriotic fervor, Nueva Ecija, in March 1899, became the capital of the Philippine Republic, when Bro. President Emilio Aguinaldo held office and lived in San Isidro with his entire Cabinet.

## **Death of Bro. General Antonio Luna**

From San Isidro, Bro. Aguinaldo moved the government to Cabanatuan. In this place, occurred another historic event which was vital to the Revolution, and which up to this day remains a subject of controversy and debate- the assassination of Bro. General Antonio Luna on June 5, 1899.

The real reason for the assassination of the iron-hearted Ilocano general has remained a mystery. It is said that early in June, when Bro. Luna was in Bayambang, Pangasinan, he received a telegram asking him to see the President in Cabanatuan. He left Bayambang with his aide and some soldiers. He arrived in Cabanatuan on June 5 and proceeded immediately to the convent, which was used as headquarters of Bro. Aguinaldo. One of the sentinels who met him was a member of the Kawit Company whom he had earlier recommended for punishment. Bro. Luna, reputedly hot-tempered, slapped the guard for one reason or another and went upstairs, and later found out that the President had left earlier to

inspect troops in Tarlac. The rest was the assassination event. He was buried the next day with appropriate honor. His assassins were never investigated, much less punished. A historic marker now stands on the spot where he was slain.

### **Capture of Bro. Apolinario Mabini in Cuyapo**

Another historic event in the province was the capture of Bro. Apolinario Mabini by the Americans, the US 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, in Kaguilio, town of Cuyapo, on December 11, 1899. It gave rise, incidentally, to many stories revealing that Bro. Mabini had become some kind of a legend himself. One story says that when the American soldiers saw him lying in bed, they mostly assumed that the paralytic was merely a sick member of the household, and left him unmolested. Another says that his defiant attitude toward the Americans gave his identity away, for he did not rise upon the arrival of the soldiers looking for him. In all likelihood, however, it was his physical condition that prevented him from showing courtesy. Bro. Mabini was crippled from the waist down, and when traveling had to be borne in a hammock or a carabao-drawn cart or sled, as he was first summoned by Bro. Aguinaldo when he heard of Bro. Mabini's brilliance. At any rate, the distinguished captive was taken to Intramuros, Manila, where he was kept in prison until his exile to Guam in the Marianas Island.

### **Freemasons of Nueva Ecija**

Atop of the tableau of Masons in the province one will surely have Bro. Isauro Gabaldon, the only senator of the province. Bro. Manuel Tinio, who was appointed Colonel and later commissioned by Bro. President Aguinaldo as a Brigadier General at the age of 20 on November 20, 1897, was the youngest General in the revolutionary army against Spain, and in the armed forces of the First Philippine Republic. At the time of the appointment of Bro. General Manuel Tinio to star rank, Bro. Gregorio Del Pilar of Bulacan was still a Lieutenant Colonel. A lodge was named in his honor, the Gen. Manuel Tinio Memorial Lodge No. 167 in Guimba, Nueva Ecija. In history, Bro. Gen Mariano Llanera, as earlier mentioned, has been called the Father of "Unang Sigaw ng Nueva Ecija" (First Cry of Nueva Ecija). A lodge in the City of Gapan was formed in his name, the Gen. Mariano Llanera Memorial Lodge No. 168. Bro. Pablo Padilla, the leader of Masonic Triangle No. 80 in Peñaranda, is a must in the list, together with its members, Brothers Mamerto Natividad Sr., Pantaleon Valmonte, Domingo Cecilio, Marcos Ventus, Epifanio Ramos, Cipriano Sarile, and Teodorico Lagonera - the unknown, unsung and unwept heroes of the province. Of course, who can forget the Great Patriarch who, among others, initiated the great escape from a Japanese Garrison in Pangatian. Known as "Tatang", the Gentle Lion of Nueva Ecija, Bro. Governor Eduardo L. Josen, was the longest reigning Governor of the Province. A lodge in the Science City of Muñoz was founded in his honor, the Governor Eduardo L. Josen Memorial Lodge No. 326.

(Reference: Profile in Power, The Gentle Lion of Nueva Ecija, by Isabelo Tinio Crisostomo)



### **Courtesy Call to MW Ebdane, Order of DeMolay**

**L to R:** VW Francisco M. Lovera, Grand Secretary; VW Albert K. Tan, Grand Junior Councilor; MW Rosendo C. Herrera, PGM, Grand Master; Bro. Harold S. Villavicencio, Jurisdictional Master councillor for Visayas; Bro. Rafael Henry E. Legaspi, National Master Councilor; Bro. Kristoffer Dan T. Ledesma, Jurisdictional Master Councilor for Mindanao; Bro. Giancarlo George V. Yorobe, Jurisdictional Master councillor for Luzon; Bro. Orlando M. Salatandre, Jr., President; Bro. Roice E. Castro, Secretary; Bro.

Nemencio T. Aguilar, Vice-President for Northern Luzon; Bro. Garyphil R. Paelmo, Vice-President for NCR and Southern Luzon; Dad Eduardo G. Escaño, Congress Advisor; Bro. Billy James M. Cruz, National Congress Secretary; Bro. Gerardo B. Gauna, Secretary of the Board of Directors.

# SAYS GREYBEARD

by **Carl H. Claudy**  
(FROM THE MASTER MASON - JANUARY 1924)

"Brotherly love? Oh, yes, the lodge is full of it. Curious the way it manifests itself, sometimes, but when you dig down enough into men's hearts, you find a lot of it.

"What? Oh, no, certainly not! Men don't go around demonstrating their affection like a lot of girls, you know. But you don't have to see a demonstration to know the feeling is there. The trouble with so many young Masons is their misunderstanding of the term 'brotherly love,' though high heaven knows the words are sufficiently easy to understand.

"'Brotherly,' now, means 'like a brother.' Sure, I know a lot of brothers hate each other, but they don't act like brothers. There have been cowardly soldiers, and forsworn ministers, and corrupt judges, but when you say a man is 'like a soldier,' you mean 'brave and true'; when you say he is 'good as a minister; you mean one who 'truly does his honest best.' When you say 'upright as a judge; you mean 'as straight as the best of judges.' And when I say 'brotherly' means 'like a brother,' I mean, like a brother who is acting as a good brother likes to act.

"As for love,' there are more definitions than there are words in my mouth (which are several). But in connection with 'brotherly' the word means that true affection which first considers the good of the person loved.

"Masonry teaches brotherly love. Lots of its scholars are a long way from 100 percent perfect in their lessons. But a lot more could get 'E' on their report card if the Lodge gave out evidences of scholastic standing!

"For instance, there was B'Jones. 'Twasn't his name, but it will serve. B'Jones undertook to do a piece of work for a hospital. It took him a year. At the end of the year his business was in shreds and tatters. He had one of those businesses that need a man's personal attention.

"His attention had gone to his hospital, which, by the way, was built and flourished, to the everlasting credit of his city. It ought to be called the B'Jones Hospital, but it isn't. Never mind.

"A lot of his brethren in his Lodge got to know about B'Jones. They called a meeting, called it the B'Jones meeting, issued stock in the B'Jones association, bought the stock, started B'Jones off all over again, and let him pay them back as he could. All this, mind you, without B'Jones ever asking for a cent. Brotherly love, my son, in the best meaning of the word.

"There was poor old Smith. Smith, during his lifetime, came to Lodge every night. He wasn't very bright, was Smith. Couldn't learn the work. Had no presence. Couldn't make a speech to save his life. Never was called on at banquets. Never did anything audible. But he was always on committees and he always passed around refreshments and he attended every funeral, and he was always down ahead of the meeting to see if the room was clean, and if it wasn't, he'd sweep it out.

"Gave the best he had in service. Well, Smith died. Men do, you know; awful lot have, already. At the funeral, we found out Smith left an invalid wife and two half-grown children and no assets. It's the Lodge's business to take care of such, and we did it. But three men in the Lodge with more money than ability to keep it to themselves, subscribed enough cash to put the boy through a good business school and the girl through a normal school, so they could earn their own living. Charity? Nonsense! The Lodge attended to the 'relief.' The three attended to the brotherly love stuff. They just remembered what old Smith was and how he gave, and so they turned to and gave. Me, I think it was Smith did most of the loving. The three just acted in reflex to Smith's loving heart, that so cared for his brethren and his Lodge he was always engaged in this brotherly business.

"Do you know Brown? Brown ran a garage. Also, Brown ran a temperature until the doctors took him off to the hospital to cut out his something-or-other-I dunno-what. Well, the garage was about to cash in. Garages don't run

themselves, and there wasn't any one we could hire to run it. So six brothers of this Lodge spent two hours a day each at the place, looking after it. Sure, we did a bum job, and Brown says we are the worst garage keepers in the world, but we saved the shop from being wrecked and looted, and Brown thinks Masonry means something. One reason we did it was because of that brotherly love idea; me, I think sitting around a cold garage selling gasoline is about the uneasiest apology for loafing I know!

"Sure, I could talk all night about it. But what's the use? The fellows to whom 'brotherly love' is just words won't read what I say and those who know what they really mean don't need to read.

"But get it firmly fixed in your mind, young man, more than one man has gone into a Lodge and curled his lip when he learned that he was supposed to be a brotherly lover, and turned around and wept when he found that he was being loved like a brother by a lot of men he didn't know cared what became of him.

"What? Why, of course, it does. Masonry works miracles all the time, and the commonest of them and the one she works oftenest - I suppose so she can keep her hand in - is teaching hard-hearted citizens to be soft-hearted Masons; teaching men the real meaning of the words 'brotherly' and 'love' until they, too, become teachers."



*MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr., Grand Master of Masons of the Philippines, delivers his speech before the Scottish Rite Masons at the Fraternal Luncheon during the Annual Session of the Supreme Council of the Philippines.*

*MW Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr., Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines, receives a Plaque of Appreciation from Illustrious Jainal D. Rasul, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Philippines, as Guest Speaker during the Fraternal Luncheon at the Masonic Heroes Hall on March 10, 2006 in the culmination of the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Supreme Council, while Illustrious Danilo Angeles, 33<sup>o</sup> and Illustrious Fernando V. Pascua, Jr., 33<sup>o</sup>, looks on.*





# Of Treating Candidates Fairly and Related Matters

by Flor R. Nicolas, PM (42)

**Many years ago a friend of mine, a fellow academician and erstwhile faculty basketball teammate, was to be raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. There were three candidates for the degree that evening. My friend was caused to undergo the long form of the Tragedy, while the two others underwent the shortened form. He was subjected to a really rough and rugged treatment by the brethren who acted as ruffians, while the two others were subjected to a moderate kind of treatment by the same brethren.**

That was the last time my friend was seen at the Grand Lodge premises. He decided to drop out of the Masonic scene altogether, and his decision was irrevocable. The Lodge's Sunshine Committee paid him several visits at the university he was teaching in and exerted all-out efforts to persuade him to go back to Lodge, but their efforts were inutile, to no avail.

*Sayang!* He is reputed in the academe as a good man and true. He is adept at organizational and managerial work. He might have become an efficient Worshipful Master, Masonic District leader, or even Grand Lodge officer. This is, admittedly, a hypothesis contrary to fact.

But even if he did not go back to Lodge anymore, he continues to associate himself with the brethren teaching in the same university, and we continue to call him *Uto* or *Brod*. We believe he accepted the tenets and precepts of Masonry because, observably, he conducts himself in full accordance with the tenets and principles of Masonry. Hence, we believe that when he filed his petition for Masonic degrees, he already had Masonry in his heart. At the same time, we respect his decision not to attend Lodge anymore.

We fully agree with those brethren who insist that candidates to the third degree of Masonry should be very well cooked (*lutong-luto*) and not rarely done or scarcely cooked (*hilaw*).

What we object to is the malpractice of subjecting a candidate to a really rough and rugged treatment and not doing the same to the others. In no case should we inflict pain or injury on our candidates. We are admonished to use voice more than actions for conveying the hardened villainy of the three Js.

We must do unto every candidate as, in similar cases, we would that he should do unto us. That is the Golden Rule, which embodies the teachings of Masonry, particularly Justice, "*that standard or boundary of right which enables us to render unto every man his just due, without distinction.*"

Brethren who act as ruffians are unjust when they inflict undue or uncalled-for pain or injury on a candidate. The officers of the Lodge, and even those of the Grand Lodge present, are also guilty of injustice because they have the power to prevent the brethren acting as ruffians from inflicting undue or uncalled-for pain or injury, and yet do it not.

How important, then, it is for us to take the following statements of Ill. Albert Pike into serious consideration and govern ourselves accordingly:

**·Masonry teaches this great and momentous truth: that wrong and injustice done cannot be undone, but are eternal in their consequences; once committed, are numbered with the irrevocable Past; that the wrong that is done contains its own retributive penalty as surely and as naturally as the acorn contains the oak. (*Morals and Dogma, or MAD for short, p. 127*).**

**·Surely, we shall do less wrong and injustice, if the conviction is fixed and embedded in our souls that everything done is done irrevocably, that even the Omnipotence of God cannot**

**uncommit a deed, cannot make that undone which has been done; that every act of ours bears its allotted fruit, according to the everlasting laws – must remain forever ineffaceably inscribed on the tables of Universal Nature. (*Ibid.*, p. 128).**

If we really want our candidates for the sublime degree of Master Mason to be very well done or *lutong-luto*, we must meet with them sometime after their raising and discuss with them, among other things, the lessons of the third degree, particularly the reasons for the ruffians' violence upon the GMHA.

We may provide them with copies of the interpretations of Bro. J. Otis Bell and Ill. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°.

Bro. Bell interprets the reasons for the ruffians' violence upon the GMHA in the following manner:

**In life's journey man encounters many obstacles, which may be symbolically referred to as enemies. They may be considered as accosting him from the three aspects of his being – the mental, spiritual and material. Three of those enemies are Ignorance, Doubt, and Prejudice.**

**The encounter with Ignorance (the first J) may be considered symbolical of the first effort man makes in his progress. The 24-inch gauge, as the weapon used by Ignorance, is symbolical of the mental and the idea that man considers the knowledge he already has as sufficient.**

**As he presses on in his journey for further light, man encounters Doubt (the second J). the knowledge which man has is largely confined to material things, and there is doubt about those things which are spiritual. The square, symbolical of the earthly, may be used by Doubt; thus, a correct understanding of eternal and spiritual truths is prevented.**

**As man still presses onward, he will encounter a third and more deadly enemy – Prejudice (the third J) – which often slays him and stops his progress. The word prejudice comes from the Latin *prae*, meaning before, and *judicium*, meaning judgment. Prejudice is a previous judgment, clung to even after contrary facts are disclosed. Our prejudices, or previous judgments, often come from passions. Fear, hatred, jealousy, and love of the passionate sort, all engender prejudice. These passions have their abiding place in the physical.**

Ill. Hutchens has another interpretation, as follows:

**Hiram is first accosted at the south gate of the Temple where the instrument of attack is the rule. In Greek the word for "rule", whether a measuring instrument or a code of conduct is *canon*. Thus, we see the bureaucracy of the early Church establishing the Canon Law to regulate conduct. This law was to be obeyed with unquestioned loyalty; hence, it is an apt symbol of the suppression of freedom of speech, which might question the divinity and justice of these laws. Therefore, Hiram, with the rule, is struck where the organs of speech are.**

**The instrument of attack at the west gate of the Temple was the square, an implement formed of two rigid pieces of metal at right angles to each other. It represents the merger of civil and religious power intending to control man's emotions, telling him not only what he can do but also what he can believe. Despotism, which history tells us results from this unholy merger of earthly powers, seeks to rule by dividing friends and relatives that none may unite against the tyranny. Thus, Hiram is struck near the heart, the traditional seat of affection.**

**The setting maul, an instrument of brute force, is a fitting symbol of the blind, unreasoning mob. It fears the force of the intellect and seeks the destruction of the products of the mind, banning plays, burning books, and murdering the finest men for the least reasons. Hiram is killed at the east gate by a blow to the head, the seat of the intellect.**

In discussing the reasons for the ruffians' violence upon the GMHA, as interpreted by Bro. Bell and Ill. Hutchens, the Lodge officers may point to the newly-raised brethren that we Masons must exert all-out effort to convince the world, by our actions, that the pure principles of Masonry have influenced us to progressively strengthen our character and, through us, that of the society in which we live.

To fulfill that charge, we should acquire more and more light; for, clearly, the more we learn, the more we can do for the good of general humanity. But, of course, we should not limit our knowledge to material things; instead, we should strive to possess eternal and spiritual truth, as well as to diffuse the light of the truth we possess among our fellows.

Besides, ever bearing in mind the symbolism of the Compasses and Square, we should strive to make the spiritual and divine in us have control over the sensual and material.

We should, moreover, advocate man's fundamental freedoms, particularly those of thought, speech, religion and the press, as well as courageously champion man's basic rights, such as the right to one's opinion and faith.

Correlatively, we should actively and earnestly promote the principle of tolerance, which holds that every other man has the same right to his opinion and faith that we have to ours.

States Ill. Pike: **"A true Mason never scoffs at honest convictions and an ardent zeal in the cause of what one believes to be truth and justice. But he also absolutely denies the right of any man to assume the prerogative of Deity, and condemn another's faith and opinion as deserving to be punished because heretical."** (*Ibid.*, pp. 160-161).

We should, furthermore, exercise vigilance over the strict observance of the principle of separation of church and state, which is enshrined in the Philippine Constitution.

We should, additionally, fearlessly fight against despotism or tyranny and oppression, which spring from excessive ambition and vile greed, as well as against fanaticism and obscurantism, which breed ignorance, intolerance, superstition, bigotry, and related evils, which are, in turn, enemies of human freedom.

We should also adamantly oppose totalitarianism and religious extremism, which resort to persecuting, incarcerating and even murdering intellectuals who produce works designed for the amelioration of the world, as well as censoring their works. This we should do both by direct exertion and in cooperation with other men who have a deep interest in, as well as an abiding affection for, this world and its betterment.

We should, likewise, endeavor to educate and enlighten the people in regard to their duties as well as rights and privileges as men and as citizens in order that they will fight against those who oppress or exploit them.

Yes, these are among the duties suggested by the ruffians' violence upon the GMHA. We should perform them, not in the hope or expectation of earthly rewards or honors, but in the simple expectation of personal satisfaction.

After discussing with the newly-raised brethren the reasons for the ruffians' violence upon the GMHA, the Lodge officers should review with them other lessons and teachings of Masonry contained in the ritual of the third degree, especially the symbolic meaning of the Trowel.

The Lodge officers should also go over with the newly-raised brethren the Charge of the same degree.

Discussing the lessons and teachings of the sublime degree with newly-raised brethren may stimulate them to live a true, just, affectionate, self-faithful life, from the motive of one who endeavors to imitate the GMHA in his truly exalted and exemplary character, in his unfeigned piety to God, and in his inflexible fidelity to his trust.

The Lodge officers must also see that the newly-raised brethren are involved in Lodge work, especially the conferral of degrees, in order that the latter will be motivated to demonstrate active membership in the Lodge and in the Craft.

That, to us, is a better way of insuring that the brethren we raise to the status of Master Mason are very well done or *lutong-luto* than inflicting undue or uncalled-for and, therefore, unfair or unjust pain/injury on them.

# Why I Stay With Freemasonry

by **VW Bro Eli Buenaventura, PDDGM**

During my early thirties, I already thought fizzled out quickly for lack of a Mason to vouch required to carry out Masonic obligations.

It did not take me, however, too long to be talked to me 13 years ago about the Lodge my own free will and accord, I sought eventually made a Mason.

But after 13 long years and counting, why have several reasons.

Firstly, the fraternity promotes freedom of his own individual faith. Fraternity functions meet his religious obligations. If a Mason, therefore, is a Catholic, it gives him the opportunity to be a better Catholic. If a fellow brother is a Protestant, it makes him a better Protestant. If he is a Muslim, it makes him a better Muslim.

Secondly, it helps keep the family stay together. The fraternity assures a member that it will not interfere with the obligations a Mason owes to his family. Family first before Masonry is always foremost in the fraternity. If a Mason, therefore, has family function, he is automatically exempted from lodge gatherings.

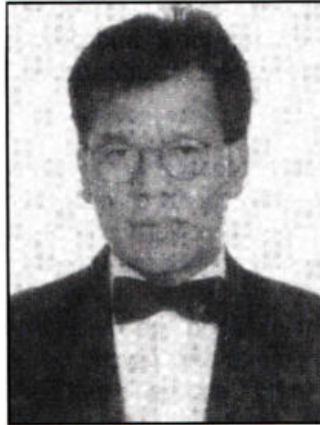
Thirdly, Freemasonry practices charity. Some of our charitable contributions go to the Shriners Hospital and Burns Institute that treat crippled and burned children worldwide. Very few are aware that those facilities in Hawaii and California are run by Masons. There are actually more that 300 children from our jurisdiction who have been benefited by these institutions.

Fourthly, the fraternity does not interfere with the duties a Mason owes to his country. If a brother has a jury duty or military assignment, the fraternity sees to it that these duties are performed. It is interesting to note that some of the great leaders of our nations were Masons. President Harry S. Truman, General Douglas Mearthur, President George Washington, Manuel Luis Quezon, Dr. Jose Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, to name a few.

Fifthly, Freemasonry is not a secret society, as we have been notoriously known in ages. We have, however, secrets that are only known to the members of the fraternity. Multi-national corporations have their business secrets too but it does not mean that they are secret companies. Their secrets are also known only to select officials.

And lastly, the camaraderie among the brotherhood is enormous. Closeness among brothers particularly during time of need is unprecedented. And the intellectual intercourse with our distinguished brothers during annual communications and fellowships is priceless.

I have no qualms whatsoever about staying with Freemasonry for the rest of my life. In fact, given the opportunity, I want my kids to be Masons too in the future because there is no doubt that being Masons will make them better and productive members of our community.



of becoming a Mason. But this desire for my character and the logistics that was

worthy and qualified. When Bro. Boy Ching here, I did not make any hesitation. On admission into the fraternity and was

do I still want to be with the fraternity? I

worship. It encourages a Mason to practice will not stand in the way for any brother to

# A FEW THOUGHTS ON OUR THEME, VISION AND MISSION

by **MW Franklin J. Demonteverde, PGM**

If we read Masonic history, we discover that since time immemorial, Masonry has always been a fraternal organization, the aims of which are brotherly love, the relief of our distressed brethren and their dependents, and the search after truth, which we may express as, and expand into, public and private morality, the knowledge and fear of God, and respect for, as well as love of, our neighbor. This respect includes toleration of his personal viewpoint, his religious beliefs, and his political opinion.

Like the Masons of yesteryears, we Masons of today strive to attain personal perfection, by means whereof we will contribute to the progress of humanity. We endeavor to develop ourselves into "perfect ashlar" or, to use another metaphor, into "magnificent temples, the various parts of which fit with such exact nicety that they have more the appearance of the handiwork of the Supreme Architect of the Universe than that of human hands."

All of us Masons aim at self-improvement – not in the material sense, but rather in the intellectual, moral and philosophic sense of developing the whole persona and psyche so as, in the beautiful language of our ritual, "to fit ourselves to take our places, as living stones, in that great spiritual building, not made by hands, eternal in the heavens."

## **The Importance of Honest-to-Goodness Masonic Education**

I am happy over the fact that our Grand Master, MW Jun Ebdane, has given more teeth to the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES), which I instituted by virtue of Edict No. 185.

Like other senior members of the Craft, I firmly believe that we can bring ourselves to an increasingly higher level with Masonry by immersing ourselves in our landmarks, laws, ancient rules, rituals, traditions and practices, as well as by conducting ourselves at all times in such a way that the non-Masonic public will perceive us to be an organization of excellence.

The leadership of our Grand Lodge has recurrently stressed the importance of an honest-to-goodness Masonic education and study among our ranks because, clearly, the more Masonically educated we are, the more prepared we are to defend Masonry against those who consider themselves our critics or adversaries.

Undoubtedly, the more knowledgeable we are in Masonic history, philosophy, symbolism, ritual, and jurisprudence, the more we can pursue Masonic activities for the enhancement of our Masonic way of life; the more we can get potential members to be interested in joining our ranks; the more we can raise the level of the general public's understanding of Masonry; and the more we can help defend our Fraternity against criticisms and attacks.

## **Off-and-On Vilification Campaign**

Our critics renewed their vilification campaign against us during my year in the Grand East. This year, they have done so again. Actually, such campaign is but a resuscitation of dead issues.

Instead of adopting an adversarial attitude toward anti-Masons, we call upon them to embark with us on a journey of mutual understanding and tolerance, with the hope that they will agree to dialogue with us – again. As Abraham Lincoln said, "Determine that the thing can and shall be done, and then we shall find the way."

We should, of course, answer criticisms or attacks against us. But this task can best be handled by the Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations in collaboration with the IMES.

## **What to Focus on**

We should focus our attention on retaining our current members, reaching out to our inactive brethren, and attracting intelligent young men into the Craft.

Admittedly, our members are falling. But this is mainly due to the superficiality of today's society, the many pressures on individuals, and the multiplicity of opportunities, in the social sense, for disposing of leisure time.

Nowadays, people have a very limited amount of free time due, oftentimes, to very heavy demands by their professions or occupations, and this leisure time must be rationed out sparingly to avoid competition with family and other priority interests. Any pastime which makes substantial demands on time available, or which is not perceived to give a fair return, will not be favored. In Masonic terms, this will be evidenced by reduced attendance at Lodge, no matter how pleased, proud, or honored a brother may feel in being a member of the Craft.

There are, as we know very well, a significant number of our brethren who do attend meetings a few times, if at all, but they acknowledge their "belonging" to the organization.

How can we stimulate such brethren to attend Lodge regularly? How can we stimulate active members to keep on being so? How can we attract young men of promise to seek membership in our Fraternity?

Again, I am pleased to take notice that our Grand Lodge has programs which address these concerns.

### **Upgrading the Packaging of Our "Quality Product"**

Masonry is a fairly stable product in itself. We can do very little to alter it without changing it entirely in both essence and appearance. Its principles and precepts have stood the test of time; they are as valid, relevant and vital as ever. What we have and what we stand for will always be right, even if the acceptance rises or falls on the scales of time.

What we can do is to upgrade the packaging and make it look more attractive to potential customers, while also actually making it more palatable to current customers.

To make Masonry look more attractive to potential customers, we must actively have a higher profile; we must gently but firmly "let our light shine before men."

By improving the packaging and presentation of Masonry as a "quality product", we may identify and maximize those whose minds are attuned to, or even seeking, its attainment and what it provides.

Freemasonry is not for everyone. That's a cinch. But within all populations and at all times, there will be those to whom it will appeal, particularly in this age of the cult of excessive individualism.

This cult has led to a false idea of freedom, to the notion that one is free to do one's own thing, to insist on one's own rights irrespective of the rights of others or to the detriment of community in the true sense of the word. It also militates against the realization of the 'full life' to which all men are called.

We can combat the evils of such a cult by improving the packaging and presentation of our "quality product", Masonry, and by dispelling the myths and turning the spotlight onto the benefits of our Fraternity.

Each one of us can play his part in this endeavor; for, after all, each one of us is "someone else's perception of Masonry." Each one of us should identify "the positive" about our Fraternity, openly talk about them, and then try to promote them.

This will necessitate across-the-board activities, starting in the home and family, expanding through our circle of friends and acquaintances, into the workplace and leisure resorts.

Let us, each of us, exemplify our Masonic virtues with audacity, so that from every corner of our archipelago a mighty current will light up the burning bush of truth and cast its liberating light through the stony path of intolerance and ignorance. Let us, each of us, at the same time disseminate the teachings and principles of our beloved Fraternity throughout our grand jurisdiction.

## More Men Will Join Our Ranks

We must be steadfast in adhering to our Order's aims and principles. We must be patient and bide our time because we will come again. Futurists have pronounced that the pace of life and its stresses will get even more frenetic in the coming decades than in the present one. They have also pointed out that while we may be able to cope with it intellectually, we may not be able to cope with it emotionally.

Since the Internet is bombarding us with a quartermass-like availability of ethical and unethical information in the privacy of our homes, there is reason to believe that, as Bro. Michael Yaxley of the Grand Lodge of Tasmania stated, "Society does have a need for a body such as Masonry. I believe this need will increase rather than decrease. In this century, the workplace will offer fellowship and camaraderie sufficient to satisfy the social instincts that people have. Many people will work at home, linked to the office by computer and telephone. Others will work in an office with complex but nevertheless inanimate equipment. The irony of the age of communication is that people spend, and will spend, more time by themselves."

Yes, men will seek us still. Our Fraternity gives a vision of morality at its best. It forces us, as well as other men, to face the fact that we have not reached our full potential. In short, Masonry is a reminder of what we can become if we work at it. This is enough reason to believe that, as a Fraternity, we will yet endure "the winter of our discontent" and eventually enjoy "an Indian summer".

But, individually and collectively, we have much to do.

Hence, this invitation:

**"Come then, let us to the task, to the battle, to the toil, each to our part, each to our station – until we will accomplish our vision of a dynamic Freemasonry committed to enhancing brotherly love, relief and truth and to improving ourselves, as well as other men, towards the attainment of an enlightened and progressive humanity; until we will achieve our mission of inculcating the tenets and teachings of Freemasonry into the brethren and stimulating them to exemplify the same, enhancing the welfare and growth of our Fraternity and strengthening the Masonic Family, and promoting harmony among the brethren and our fellowmen with the end in view to achieving universal peace and harmony."**



*High Twelve Lodge No. 82 (Larry P. Reyes, Worshipful Master)*

# REFLECTION FROM A NEWLY RAISED BROTHER

**Note:** The author requested anonymity.

"Late have I known you, O beauty so ancient; late have I known you."

My direct contact with Freemasonry happened when I was invited by WB Bong Pinili of Tagum Lodge 204 to give my impression on the Craft during the public installation of elected and appointed officers of the Lodge. I was so impressed by the rituals and the bonding among the brethren that immediately after my speech, I handed over my petition paper to newly installed Worshipful Master Manantan.

As a Catholic priest, I know for a fact that the Catholic Church is against the doctrine of Freemasonry and prohibits its members from joining the Craft. In order to strengthen this opposition, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under the Prefecture of His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, has issued a *motu proprio* Declaration on Masonic associations wherein it reiterated that "the Church's negative judgment in regard to Masonic Associations remains unchanged since their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church and therefore membership in them remains forbidden. The faithful who enroll in Masonic Associations are in a state of grave sin." This statement was issued on November 26, 1983.

In the same manner, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, in support of this Declaration, issued a Joint Declaration on sanctions for Catholics who join Freemasonry. "Any Catholic who is publicly known to be a member of any Masonic association and actively participates in its program and activities, or promotes its views, or holds any office therein, and refuses to renounce such membership despite at least one warning, is to be punished with an interdict (cf Canon 1374). Any Catholic who is a convinced member of Freemasonry, notoriously adhering to the Masonic vision, is already considered excommunicated *latae sententiae* (cf Canon 1364).

I need to be enlightened on this matter. When I knocked at the door of Freemasonry, I was privileged enough to be accepted. Undergoing the process "as all brothers and fellows have done, who have gone this way before," I was initiated, passed and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. My interest in joining the Craft drove me to study further and see for myself why the Church is inimical to Freemasonry. In the process of my quest for the truth, I have learned that history will unlock the door for me to see further the beauty of the ancient Craft and the reason why the principles of Freemasonry have always been considered irreconcilable with the Catholic Church.

As a Mason, I am obligated to practice the Masonic tenets and to be careful to maintain in their fullest splendor those truly Masonic ornaments, Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, and I have learned that Masonry is a progressive moral science taught by degrees only.

Is there anything wrong with being a priest and a Mason at the same time? There is none whatsoever. *Nemo dat quod non habet*: We cannot give what we do not have. Neither can we teach what we do not know. They speak ABOUT Freemasonry but they cannot speak of Masonry. When we say they speak about Freemasonry, they are speaking speculatively, that is, what they heard only ABOUT Freemasonry. Such speculation includes that Masonry is demonic or satanic worship. From this speculation, Catholics who encounter members of the Craft look at the brethren as devils or demons and should not be associated with. We cannot blame them for they were forced to believe so.

The word *satanic* or *demonic* is but an invention of the Catholic Church during the time when the faith was being propagated. Those who did not adhere to the teachings of the Church were branded as demonic or satanic or pagans and as such they were heretics or apostates. While it is true that some of the doctrines of the Church are of pagan origins, there is nothing new in the practice of the Christian religion, which the Catholic Church could claim as theirs.

The Church, in her quest for power, manipulated the truth, that there is no other truth than what is being taught by her. Any doctrines or teachings which are not in conformity with the teachings of the Church are being shunned and as such, being branded as satanic and heretical. History tells us how the Roman Catholic Church managed to silence those

people who did not adhere to and conform with her teachings. THE CHURCH HAD A DECEITFUL AND VIOLENT HISTORY. The intolerance and prejudice of the Roman Catholic Church against Freemasonry has been CHIEFLY ON THE GROUNDS THAT FREEMASONRY, WITH ITS BINDING PRINCIPLES AND RELIGIOUS NATURE, HAS USURPED THE PREROGATIVES OF THE CHURCH. Her ambition to control history leads her to look at herself as the sole depository of the faith, the only dispenser of the truth, and the way in order to attain salvation. "EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS," OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, THERE IS NO SALVATION.

How can the Roman Catholic Church grant salvation when in fact it is God alone who can grant it. I believe in the universality of Salvation; God willed all men to be saved. Salvation is not only for Catholics nor for any group of people, race, profession and the like. Salvation is for everybody. Our religion is not a guarantee of our salvation. "And when your trembling soul shall stand naked and alone, before the great white throne, there to await judgment for the DEEDS DONE WHILE IN THE BODY, may it be your portion to hear from Him who sitteth as the judge supreme, the welcome words WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Being branded by the Church as demonic or satanic and even excommunicated by her will not lead us to our final damnation. For I believe that it is only God who will judge us not according to the religion we professed or any race we do belong to, but according to the "deeds done while in the body." FEAR NOT WHAT MAN CAN DO TO YOU.

May the words of the Most Worshipful and I11. Bro. Raymond E. Wilmarth serve as an inspiration to those people who are contemplating of joining freemasonry.

"From where I stand, I cannot find anything in Masonry that would disqualify a Catholic from becoming a member of the craft. Once a Catholic becomes a Mason, we only ask that, in addition to being a good Mason, he be a better Catholic, so that the world may know that he has benefited from his Masonic way of life. If there is anything that prevents a Catholic from being a Mason, it is not in Masonry."

It is being prayed for that the Roman Catholic Church, of which I am a minister, should start looking at things in an optimistic way, in a way that Jesus Christ wants her to be: A FORGIVING, HEALING AND RECONCILING CHURCH. This is now the time to destroy the walls that divide us. The time has come to build bridges as part of our continuing effort to bring peace and harmony to the whole of humanity and the whole world. In the end, we are but one brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God.

ILLUMINARE OMNES. ALMIGHTY FATHER, LET THE LIGHT OF YOUR COUNTENANCE SHINE UPON US AND WE SHALL BE SAVED, PLEASE ENLIGHTEN EVERYONE.



*Keystone Lodge No. 100  
(W.M Edgar P. Borje,  
S.W Paul H. Ocampo  
and J.W Luis C. Oreta.)*

# ENRIQUE C. SOBREPENA, LL.D., D.D.:

## Apostle of Ecumenism

**VW Samuel P. Fernandez, D.Min.**



*In necessariis unitas, In Non Necessariis, Libertas, In Utrisque Caritas.* (In Fundamentals, Unity; In Non-Fundamentals, Liberty and In Everything Else, Charity).

Nobody more fully understood the above insight than Bishop Enrique Calica Sobrepeña in the time Evangelical Denominational fervor defined missionary groups' doctrinal ethos. Despite his ecumenical commitment, Bishop Sobrepeña never wavered in his faith. During Bishop Sobrepeña's pastoral stewardship at the United Church of Manila on Recto Avenue, Manila, he adopted the motto: "No Creed But Christ, No Law But Love."

Dr. Ray H. Brown, former President of Silliman University, paid tribute to Bishop Sobrepeña and called him "The Prince of Filipino Preachers." I call Dr. Sobrepeña the Ecumenical Parson or Apostle of Ecumenism.

Bishop Sobrepeña essayed his wisdom with oratorical eloquence that attracted young and old alike to the Gospel. He antedates Billy Graham's gift of flawless elocution. He was an orator par excellence.

A Past Master of Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4, Bishop Sobrepeña will be remembered for his ecumenical sway, his vision of uniting church denominations with polemical biases that are divisive.

Dr. Sobrepeña was an exponent of ecumenism. The United Church of Manila (UCM) was then known as the first ecumenical church. Church goers of different denominational persuasions were welcomed to UCM. This is the church that stood pat her doctrinal stand but understood the ecclesiastical ethos of the different churches. Its creed was Christ, its law was Love encompassing love.

Prominent personages were invited to share their ecumenical thoughts at UCM. Among them were Don Teodoro R. Yangco of the YMCA fame (Sinukuan Lodge No. 16); Justice José Abad Santos, 1938 Grand Master of Masons and member of Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4; Supreme Bishop Gregorio Aglipay of Emilio Aguinaldo Lodge No. 31 (formerly Magdalo Lodge); Dr. Rafael Palma, then President of the University of the Philippines and 1920 Grand Master of Masons of Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 and Sinukuan Lodge No. 16; Dean Conrado Benitez, 1936 Grand Master of Masons, of Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 and Lodge Perla del Oriente No. 1034, S.C. Dr. Benitez was one of the founding trustees of the Philippine Women's University.

Notice that Roman Catholic members and Philippine Independent Church Bishops were invited to the Pulpit to share their thoughts. Naturally, many members were not prepared for such accommodation. No less than Leon O. Ty, Chairman of the United Church of Manila for many years, confessed thus:

"In the United Church of Manila, he (Dr. Sobrepeña) was not without oppositors. Even co-workers and close confidants in his own church failed to grasp immediately the scope of the newly-initiated ecumenical movement and other projects. For instance, some elders and I could not immediately understand Pastor Sobrepeña's overtures of friendship toward the hierarchy of the Philippine Independent (Aglipayan) Church, which started after World War II. We noted that there was hardly a major social or religious activity in the United Church of Manila to which the PIC Bishop, Isabelo de los Reyes, Jr., was not invited.

On one occasion, I mentioned the matter to a fellow elder, who like me, had also been wondering about the 'behavior' of our Pastor. But we were not to be in the dark indefinitely. Before long, we found out that Pastor Sobrepeña was promoting not only ECUMENISM (when the term had not yet been heard in Philippine religious circles, including the Catholic Church), but paving the way toward better church relations with the indigenous Philippine Church, which his own fellow Ilocano – Gregorio Aglipay – had founded, much to the consternation of the foreign Catholic priests in the Islands."

During my first year of service at UCM as Associate Pastor, I noticed that the Church had one Sunday dedicated to Brother Masons.

Bishop Sobrepeña continued to keep ecclesiastical rapport with the Philippine Independent Church. He openly supported Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes in the post-war internal conflict between the two heads, namely: Bishop Santiago Fonacier

and Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes Jr. Confessed Obispo Maximo Ga: "Dr. Sobrepeña could not help but involve himself in defense of his friend and the cause for which the latter was fighting."

The Supreme Court resolved the case in favor of Supreme Bishop de los Reyes. In the 1946 Supreme Council of Bishops Session, Dr. Sobrepeña was elected Honorary Bishop, the first and only person honored by a Church founded by two revolutionary Masons: First Founder of Labor Union Isabelo de los Reyes, Sr. and Adviser of Bro. Emilio Aguinaldo and Bro. Apolinario Mabini.

Successor of Supreme Bishop de los Reyes, Bro./Supreme Bishop Ga, penned this revealing observation:

"Bishop Sobrepeña's continued contact with the Philippine Independent Church influenced the thinking of Obispo Maximo Isabelo de los Reyes, Jr. As an expert and persuasive agent of Christian understanding and unity, Dr. Sobrepeña paved the way for the organization of the National Council of Churches and later for membership of the Philippine Independent Church in the World Council of Churches. The organization of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines was made possible with the membership of the Philippine Independent Church which has a following in the country second only to that of the Roman Catholic Church. At the first meeting of the National Council of Churches, the PIC Bishop, Isabelo de los Reyes, Jr., was elected as its first national chairman. In great measure these events in ecumenism were due to the dexterous and diplomatic ability of Dr. Sobrepeña."

## Family

Enrique, an only child, was born on March 2, 1899 to Juan Sobrepeña, former Lieutenant in a Spanish force and later revolutionary leader against Spain and against America, and Anatalia Calica.

Juan Sobrepeña fought in the Battle of Aringay. He was a grandson of a *gobernadorcillo*.

At twelve, young Eking, as he was known in the community, followed the faith of his father. Juan Sobrepeña was one of the first converts and charter member of the Evangelical Christianity in La Union.

## Education

Young Eking had a delicate health but was a determined scholar who was always at the top of his class in the grades and high school.

Young Eking wanted to become a lawyer, first and foremost.

Working his way through college, Eking once again was active in the Church and in the YMCA. In Macalester College, Saint Paul, Minnesota, he prepared himself for the course he thought would be in keeping with his ambition by taking jurisprudence and political science. But shortly before graduation, Eking felt he was called to God's ministry.

A former professor, Dr. Glenn Clark, paid tribute to Enrique thus:

"I had the privilege of being a teacher of Enrique Sobrepeña while he was a student of Macalester College some years ago. He was held in high esteem by students and faculty alike. I shall never forget how he thrilled the audience by his splendid oration in the Minnesota State Inter-Oratorical Contest, one of the greatest orations ever delivered in the annals of the Association's history. A representative of the praying folk in America, I am sending our congratulations for his service in the past, and pledge our prayers for an ever-increasing



*Dr. and Mrs. Enrique C. Sobrepeña and Family. Dr. Sobrepeña was Moderator of the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines and Pastor of the United Church of Manila.*

service in the future of the Kingdom of Heaven on this Earth.”

Eking's theological training brought him to Princeton Theological Seminary for his ministerial formation and Princeton University for his graduate studies.

In 1926, his last year in the USA in Drew Theological Seminary, Dr. H.W. Widdoes, a missionary, and the Rev. Cecilio P. Lorenzana prevailed upon young Enrique to accept the pastorate of the United Church of Manila (formerly the Church of the United Brethren in Christ).

The Rev. Juan A. Abellera succeeded the Rev. C.C. Witmer sometime in 1919.

In 1920, Rev. Abellera became the first Pastor of the incorporated church. Ill health forced the good pastor to quit, leaving the pastorate to Dr. Frank Laubach, who will be known later for his unique and literary work among the Lumads and Muslims and primitive people in different countries. It should be noted here that both pastors were Masons.

Dr. Sobrepeña inspired the youth and was responsible for organizing the Evangelical Youth Fellowship of the Philippines. On Nov. 27, 1930, he challenged the youth thus:

“The freedom of a race does not consist only in the independence of its government from the control of another, but also in being released from the other powers that subjugate life. We will join with the rest of our countrymen in the peaceful struggle for the attainment of our political liberty. Let us equally faithfully awaken them to the facts of our slavery to a tyranny far more cruel. We should, in the words of our decalogue, ‘...enter into an aggressive struggle against all vices, ignorance, and social wrong, including political corruption, usury, the exploitation of the poor, intolerance, superstition, cockfighting, gambling, cabarets, the social evil, the double standard of morality, and the use of intoxicating beverages. We will not rest until these evils are banished forever from our islands.”

Dr. Sobrepeña served UCM for 27 years. In 1938, UCM was cited as one of the leading congregations in Asia by the Tambaran (India) Conference International Missionary Council.

### **Church Union Movement**

In March 1929, the United Evangelical Church was born out of the established denominations: the Presbyterian, Congregational and the United Brethren with the United Church of Manila.

Dr. Sobrepeña was elected Moderator of the Assembly and served in that capacity for a decade.

The first officers of the United Church of the Philippines were Dr. G.W. Wright, General Secretary; Dr. S.L. Hooper, General Treasurer; and Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña, Moderator of the Assembly.

March 1929 saw the Evangelical Union as the National Christian Council led by Dr. Jorge Bocobo (a brother Mason), President; the Rev. Enrique C. Sobrepeña, Vice President; the Rev. E. K. Higdon, Executive Secretary.

In March 1938, the National Christian Council was reorganized as the Philippine Federation of Evangelical Churches. The PFEC included the United Evangelical Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Church of Christ (Disciples) and the Philippine Baptist. The leadership was composed of active Brother Masons namely: Dr. Jorge Bocobo, President; Dr. Gumersindo Garcia, Vice President; and Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña, Executive Secretary.

Dr. Sobrepeña played an important role in the union of Evangelical Churches when the Japanese Imperial Forces brought together all Protestant pastors. In 1943, the Evangelical Church of the Philippines (ECP) was organized and Dr. Sobrepeña was elected Presiding Bishop.

The war over, on May 22-25, 1948 one hundred sixty-five delegates coming from the Evangelical Church of the Philippines gathered at the Ellinwood Malate Church and signed a declaration of union to be known as United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP). Elected officers were:

Rev. Enrique Sobrepeña	Bishop for Northern Luzon
Rev. Cipriano Navarro	Bishop for South Luzon
Rev. Leonardo G. Dia	Bishop for Visayas
Rev. Proculo Rodrique	Bishop for Mindanao
Rev. Hugh Bousman	General Evangelist
Mr. Jose L. Navarro	General Treasurer
Rev. Stephen L. Smith	General Secretary

In May 1952, the UCCP elected its first and only Presiding Bishop, Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña. Following his term, the office was abolished.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines is composed of five Churches: Presbyterian, United Brethren, Methodist, Disciples, Congregational and some indigenous churches. It is a member of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), World Council of Churches (WCC), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), World Methodist Council (WMC), and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC).

Dr. Sobrepeña is an exponent of ecumenism that goes beyond the traditional denominational lines. The realization of the UCCP was his dream.

Dr. Sobrepeña stood tall in his ecumenical endeavor. Below are two testimonies of his life as a pastor and crusader for Christian unity, one from the Philippine Independent Church and one from a Roman Catholic Church.

Bishop Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña is one of the most outstanding leaders of our time in Asia, especially in the Philippines. His accomplishments in the quest for a truly ecumenical world bespeak his sense of dedication and earnest desire for Christian unity. The completion of 50 years in the ministry is a glorious milestone; and he is an exemplary minister of God and a worthy steward of God's heavenly blessings.

On two historic occasions I had the joy of sharing with him in ecumenical and international conferences; first at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and second, at the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India, held in 1959 and 1961, respectively. I saw him like a towering *lawaan* tree in intellectual prowess amidst a forest of intellectuals, renowned world leaders in ecumenism. As a Filipino, I felt proud of our race which is blessed by such a distinguished religious paladin who brings great glory to God's name.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest on the life of Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña, who for half a century labored indefatigably that Christ's name might shine to his fellowmen in all its splendor and that in God's name we may all be one."



*The E.C. Sobrepeña family pauses for picture taking with the President of the Philippines and the Papal Nuncio, following receipt of a Papal Award as an outstanding Christian Family of the Philippines for 1968. In the picture, from left to right: Bobby, Russy, Sorayda (grandchildren), the Papal Nuncio, President Marcos, Bishop Sobrepeña, Mrs. Sobrepeña, Aida, Johnny, Enrique Jr., and Enrique III (grandson).*

Bishop David O. Villanueva, LI.B.  
Former President, Supreme Council of Bishops  
General Secretary, Philippine Independent Church

On the occasion of the Golden Anniversary of Bishop Enrique C. Sobrepeña's ordination to full-time Christian ministry in 1975, I am very happy to join his many admirers and friends in congratulating him for a Christian lifetime 'spent for others.' I will always remember him as one of the moving spirits of the ecumenical movement in the Philippines which gained impetus from the Second Vatican Council. Despite his impressive leadership in the United Church of Christ, his untiring religious, ecumenical, and lately his social and political activities on behalf of justice and the poor, Bishop Sobrepeña has remained an humble servant of God and continues to be 'a Man for others.' *Ad multos annos!*

Fr. Vitaliano R. Gorospe, S.J.  
Professor, Department of Philosophy and  
Department of Theology  
Ateneo de Manila, Loyola Heights  
Quezon City

Rev. Dr. David Sobrepeña said that his father invited Antonio Molina, a Roman Catholic, to conduct the United Church of Manila Choir during the Japanese occupation.

## **BAGUMBAYAN**

Bagumbayan means "new town" in English.

During the Spanish period, it was a killing field where Brother Masons met their destiny.

Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 is named after this killing field. PGM Reynold Fajardo writes:

"Many great Filipinos have seen the lights of Masonry in this lodge. The best known educators of the country were members like - Dean Francisco Benitez, UP President Salvador Lopez, Dean Vicente Abella, Dean Jose Espiritu, Dean Honorio Poblador, Camilo Osiás, Tomas Mapua, Cecilio Putong, Enrique Sobrepeña, Florentino Cayco, Dean Maximo Kalaw, Vitaliano Bernardino, A. C. de los Santos, President of Manila U. Filipino statesmen have also graced the rolls of the lodge - Justice Jose Abad Santos, Justice Calixto Zaldivar, Senator Teofisto Guingona, Senator Francisco Delgado, Gen. Vicente Lim, Joaquín Pardo de Tavera, Gen. Basilio Valdez, Jose Fabella, Pedro Abad Santos, Jose Sanvictores, Luis Yangco, Teodoro Yangco, Ambassador Tiburcio Baja, Angel Arguelles, Governor Tomas Maddela, Sec. Jose Escaler, Gen. Percival Adiong, Arcadio Matela, to name a few. Vice-Governor General Eugene Gilmore, the first man to be made a Mason-at-sight in the Philippines, was also a card carrying member of Bagumbayan Lodge. In addition to all these, Bagumbayan Lodge had produced ten Grand Masters some of whom are Justice Calixto Zaldivar, Damaso Tria, and Manuel M. Crudo.

Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 has the additional distinction of having been the first lodge in the country to initiate a Japanese national. On June 20, 1925 the lodge initiated Naotaro Inouye, a prominent Japanese businessman. In July 1925 the Cabletow reported:

Bishop Sobrepeña has gone to his reward but the brethren will remember him for his dynamic presence. To those who knew him as an ecclesiastic, he was the Ecumenical Parson who did not allow his faith to bar him from appreciating the religion of his peers.

**BISHOP SOBREPEÑA: THE MULTI-FACETED MAN** - Minister, Pedagogue, Writer, Executive Secretary of the Philippine Federation of Churches, former Delegate to the Constitutional Convention.

These are the descriptions of Dr. Sobrepeña in the Cormejo's Commonwealth Directory of the Philippines 1939 - 1940. May I add: Author, Former Pioneer of Evangelical in Luzon and Manila and World-Renowned Ecumenical Leader. General Secretary La Verna D. Mercado of the National Council of Churches wrote:

"No other Filipino Evangelical Church statesman of today has had as dynamic and creative ministry during the last five decades as has Dr. Enrique C. Sobrepeña. In peace and in war, he eloquently demonstrated his brilliance as a preacher, administrator, organizer, soldier, and educator. His sterling character, personal integrity, and rich experience in the fields of religion, politics, and education tower above all other Filipino Protestant leaders of today. His churchmanship transcends geographical boundaries as well as barriers of race and creed, because his vision for the brotherhood of man looms bright in his soul. In his life and witness, Dr. E.C. Sobrepeña epitomizes the true ecumenical Christian leader, whose firm convictions for Christian unity, inter-church cooperation, enlightened nationalism, responsible freedom, and consecrated stewardship of life know no bounds. Undoubtedly, his outstanding leadership in the ecumenical movement here and abroad is one of his great contributions."

## **PAPAL AWARD**

The United Church of Christ of the Philippines (UCCP) is mightily honored with the nomination of the Sobrepeña Family to the search for "the Christian Family in the Philippines conducted by His Excellency, the Papal Nuncio of the Philippines, the Most Rev. Carmine Rocca, OD.

The nominator of the Papal Award concluded his commentary of the Sobrepeña Family thus:

"This family, it can be safely said, is a happy, closely-knit family, rendering most worthy service to church and society, all because as a family they daily observe the "Family Altar" practice; and where the family prays together, they not only stay together, but also serve God and fellowmen happily together."

Dr. Sobrepeña has gone to his heavenly reward. His ecumenical sway will long be remembered: No Creed but Christ, No Law but Love.

United Community Church in Quezon City is now Bishop Sobrepeña Memorial Church. Bro. Justice Abraham Sarmiento (Hiram Lodge No. 88) is its present Council Chairman with Rev. Dr. Pedro T. Maglaya, Jr., (Pintong Bato Lodge No. 51), Rev. Dr. David Sobrepeña (President of Union College of Laguna), and Rev. Dr. Samuel P. Fernandez (Noli No. 42) as Pastors.



*Bishop Macario V. Ga of the Philippine Independent Church, in Episcopal vestment, and Bishop Enrique C. Sobrepeña, in dark suit, walk side by side in the processional to the Cathedral for the opening of the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Upsala, Sweden.*

# GM Visitation to the Grand Lodge of California



**William Rhodes Hervey Lodge # 767**, Los Angeles, California Brethren on their way to attend the 2005 California ANCOM at San Francisco, California.

BRETHREN from **William Rhodes Hervey Lodge # 767**, Los Angeles, California, walking down the streets of San Francisco to attend the 2005 California Annual Communication held at Grand Lodge of California, San Francisco, California – WB Carlo R.J. Cabalar Nilad Lodge No. 12.



# GM Visitation to the Sublime Benecio Lodge No. 5



# WHAT FREEMASONS ARE

by **Prime Bishop Ignacio Soliba**

*(A Reflection on the Talmud reading on the December 18, 2005 anniversary interfaith service at the Grand Lodge of the Philippines).*

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS BELIEVE IN GOD. THEY DO NOT NEED SO MANY LAWS; THEY ARE GODLY PEOPLE.

This reading from the Talmud is an exposition of Rabbi Simlai on the principles, precepts, commandments or laws of Judaism. These more or less define what Judaism is and on them to a great extent are based the precepts, rites and rituals of Freemasonry.

Rabbi Simlai says that 613 commandments were given to Moses. 365 of which are negative and 248 are positive corresponding to the 248 parts of a man's body in contrast to a woman's body, which has 249 parts. I do not know if this has a bearing in the exclusion of women from free and accepted Masonry and why up to now there have been no attempts to admit women in Masonry. I also wonder why women are not protesting or condemning Masonry for their exclusion. Perhaps, they have accepted that this extra part of their body is considered negative, which justifies their exclusion from knocking at the door to seek the light.

King David reduced these 613 commandments to eleven. Isaiah further reduced them to six. Then Prophet Micah reduced them to three and again Prophet Isaiah reduced them to two. Prophet Amos came and reduced them to one and prophet Habakkuk made one sentence out of them all, "The righteous shall live by his faith."

Masonry is a very ancient brotherhood. It began before Islam and Christianity came into being. In this country, however, most members of Masonry are either Muslims or Christians, and this explains perhaps why the readings are from the Koran and from the Bible in this worship service. So in the reduction of the commandments after Habakkuk, may I add that these commandments were summed by the prophet Mohammed into one word '**PEACE**' expressed on the greetings among Muslims of '*asalamo alai cum*' and responded to with '*Alai ko mo salam*', and also summed up by Jesus into one word, '**LOVE**', saying "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength and your neighbor as yourself."

The point here is the reductions of these many commandments to a few up to one and their summing up to a sentence and to a single word. To Masonry, or to you and me, who are gathered here this morning what is the significance of these reductions? Unruly and unbehaved people and communities need many laws to govern their ways and their communities. As people learned, as people are tamed, disciplined and refined, and as people become godly, they need fewer and fewer laws. Metro Manila, for instance, needs so many laws and ordinances to govern its cities and inhabitants. Rural communities need few laws. Some communities even do not have any need of laws.

I once lived in a rural community as a priest for two years. This community and the adjacent communities do not need laws and commandments. They love and care for one another and so with their community. For the two years that I lived in this community, I never encountered any problem. I never heard or saw husband and wife fighting, parents whipping their children, or children fighting. I did not see or hear any violence happening in the home, in school, in church, or in the community. When accidents happen, these are immediately settled. Immediate settlements are also done when there are misunderstandings or disputes like property disputes. This kind of people and communities have little need of commandments, laws and ordinances. Our country would not have all the present woes if most of us or majority of us Filipinos have this kind of care and love for our people and for our country.

Masons do not need many laws. You and I do not need many laws. We know our paths and ways. We know where we are going and what we are doing. We believe in God and we are in the light. It is this **Light** that we need and we have the light that lightens and vanishes any darkness in our lives. This is true if one is a practicing Mason.

# Ancom Highlights



DGM Jun Ebdane  
fixes SGW Romy Yu's  
jewel.



Reception of  
foreign dignitaries

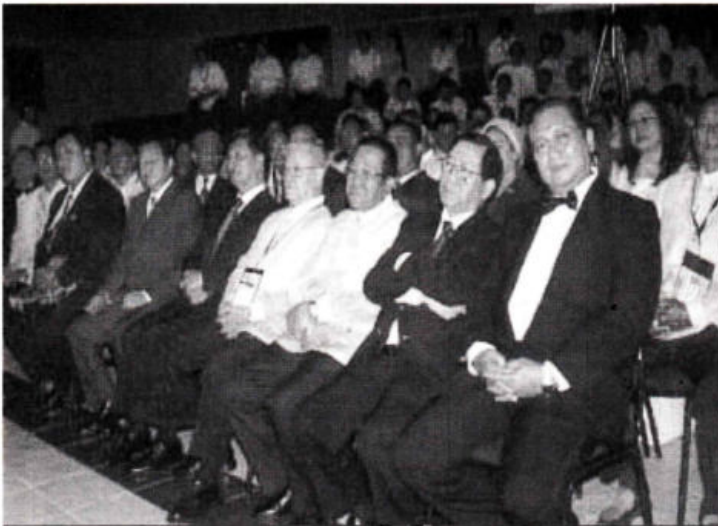


Reception of Pres.  
Gloria Macapagal-  
Arroyo, Guest of  
Honor and Speaker

PGM Rosendo Herrera  
gives PGMA a cue

Grand Lodge  
Officers' Ladies





# WELCOME

GUESTS & BRETHREN TO THE

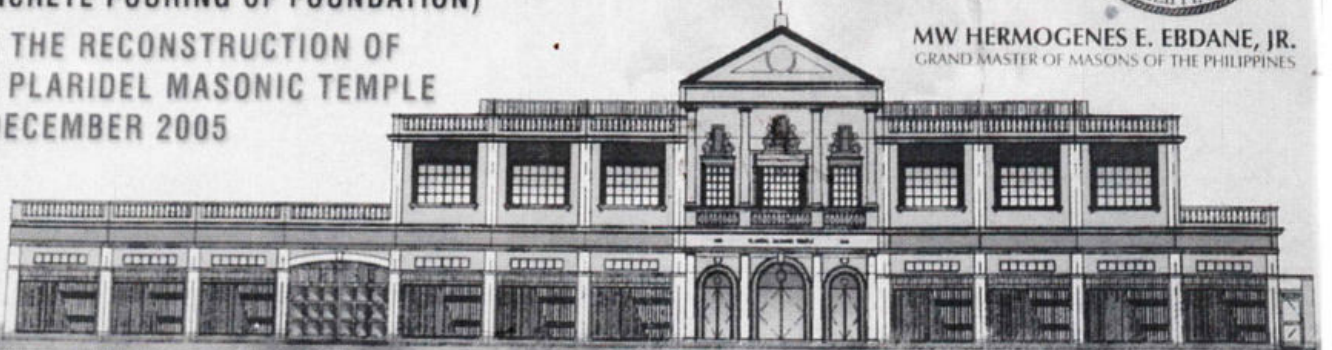
## GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

(CONCRETE POURING OF FOUNDATION)

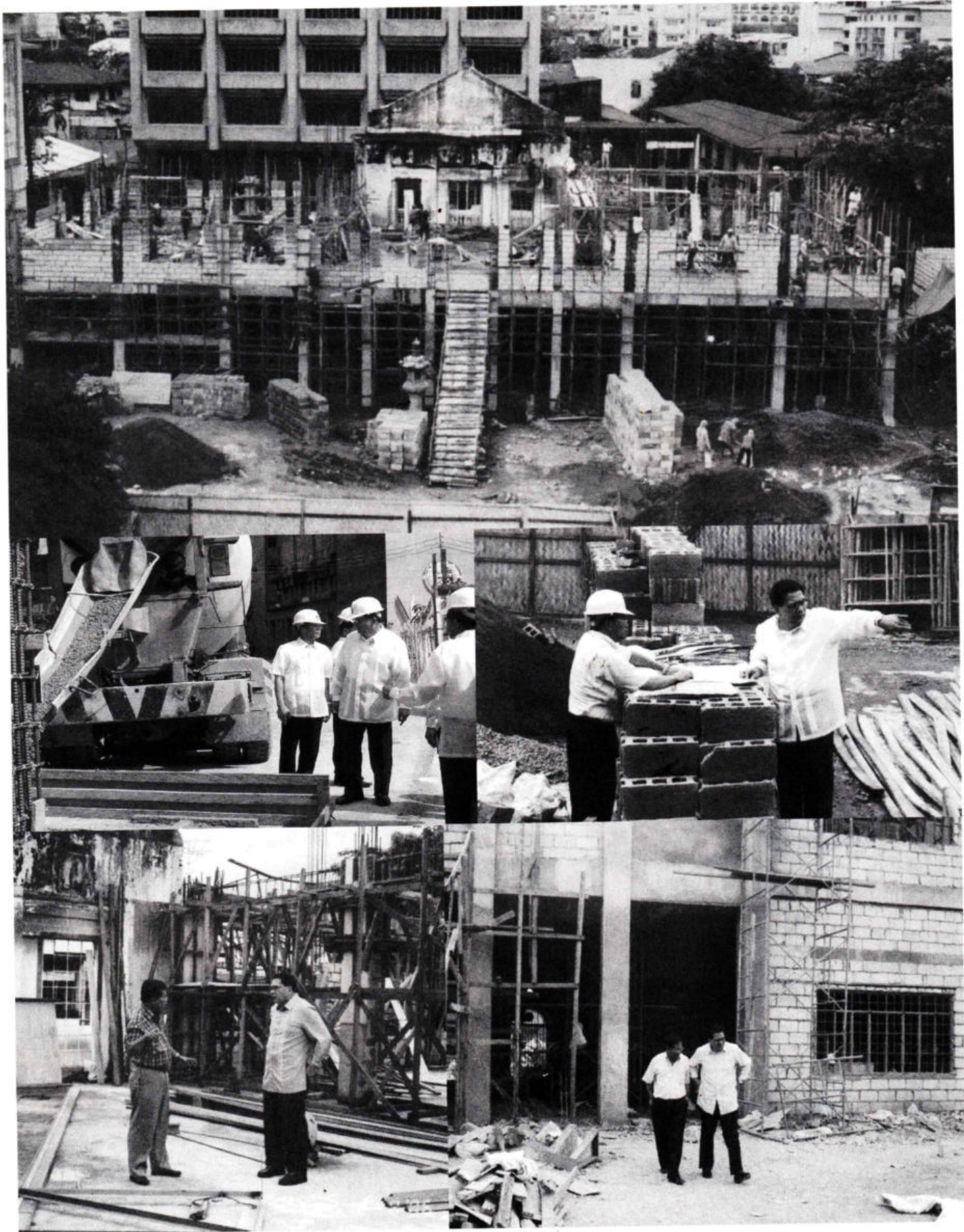
FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF  
OLD PLARIDEL MASONIC TEMPLE  
19 DECEMBER 2005



MW HERMOGENES E. EBDANE, JR.  
GRAND MASTER OF MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES





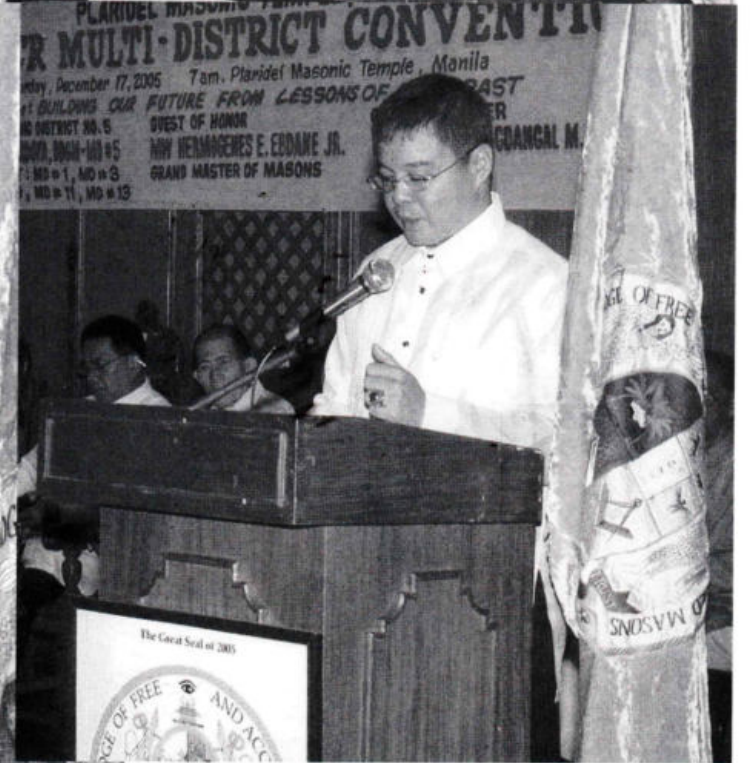


# *Masonic Inter-Faith Thanksgiving Service*

*Sunday, December 18, 2005*

*Jose Abad Santos Hall*





*Proclamation of the Word: Bro. Imam Ebra Minalang Moxir, President, Imam council of the Philippines; Bro. Most Rev. Alberto Ramento, Diocesan Bishop, Iglesia Filipina Independiente; Bro. Prime Bishop, Episcopal Church of the Philippines; and Rev. Fr. Pelagio V. Samson, Jr.*



**THE FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE: Brethren of different Faiths praying in unity.**

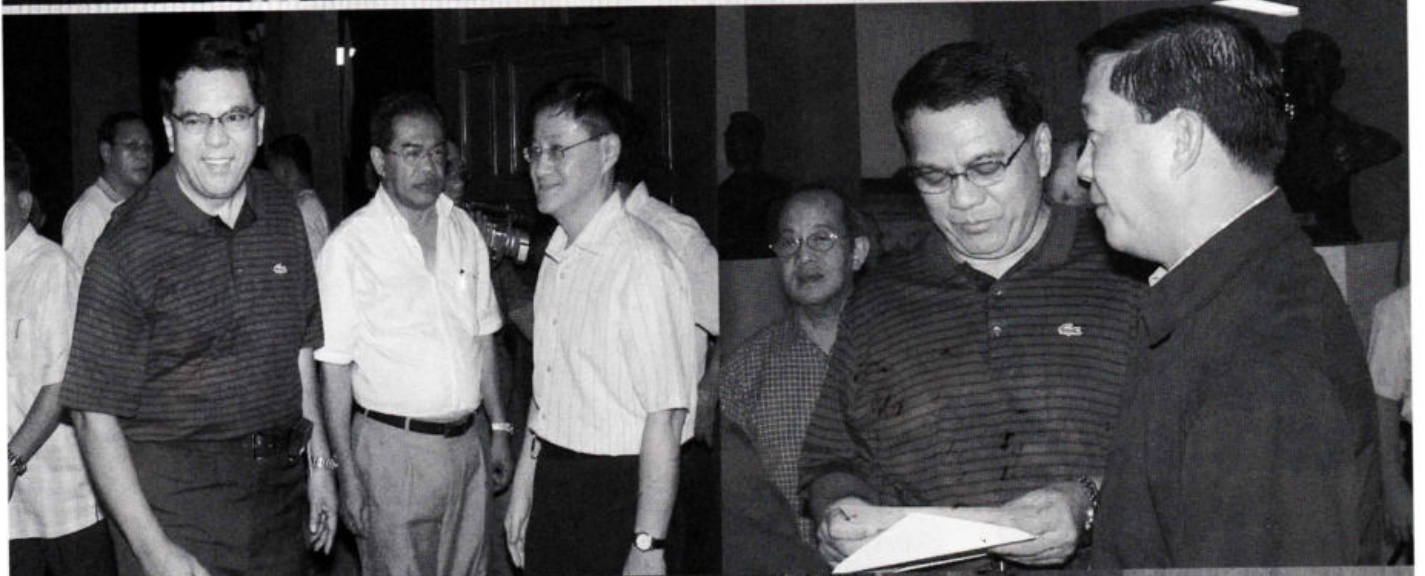
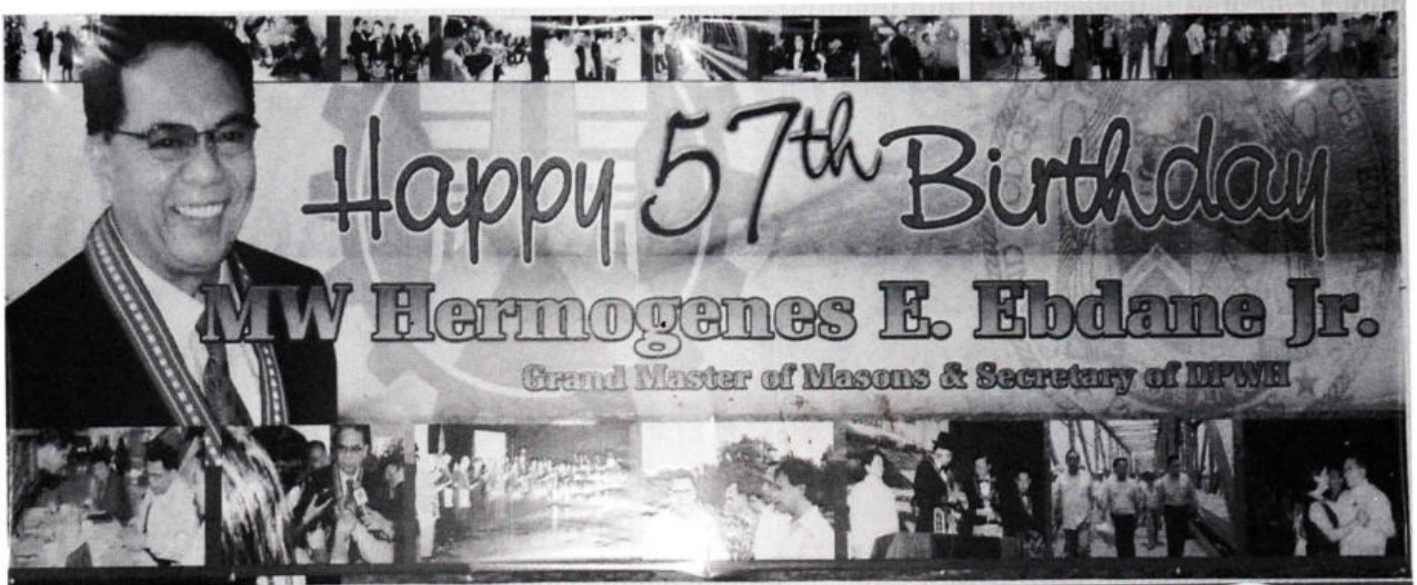


**THE LINK: Imam Ebra Minalang Moxir, Fr. Joel Porlares, Rev. Dr. Samuel P. Fernandez, Fr. Pelagio Samson, Jr. and Eileen Fernandez song stress.**

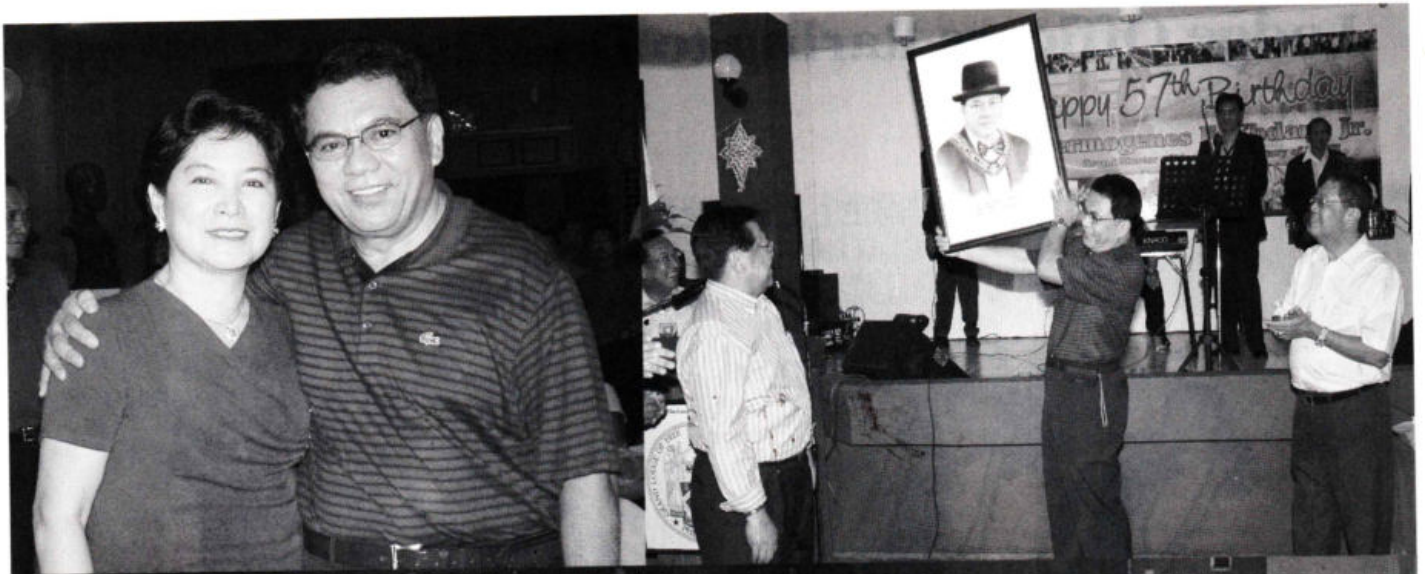
# Tree Planting La Mesa Watershed

December 14, 2005

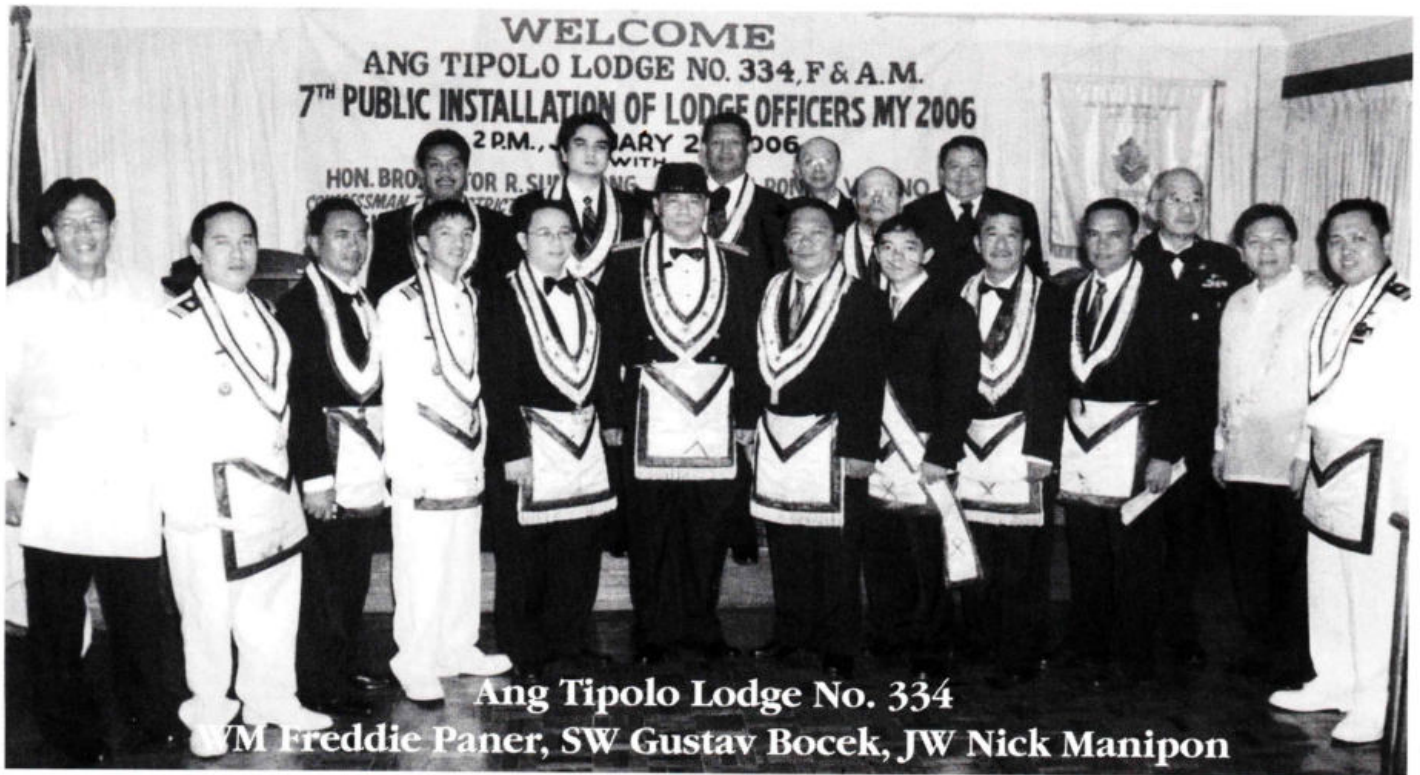




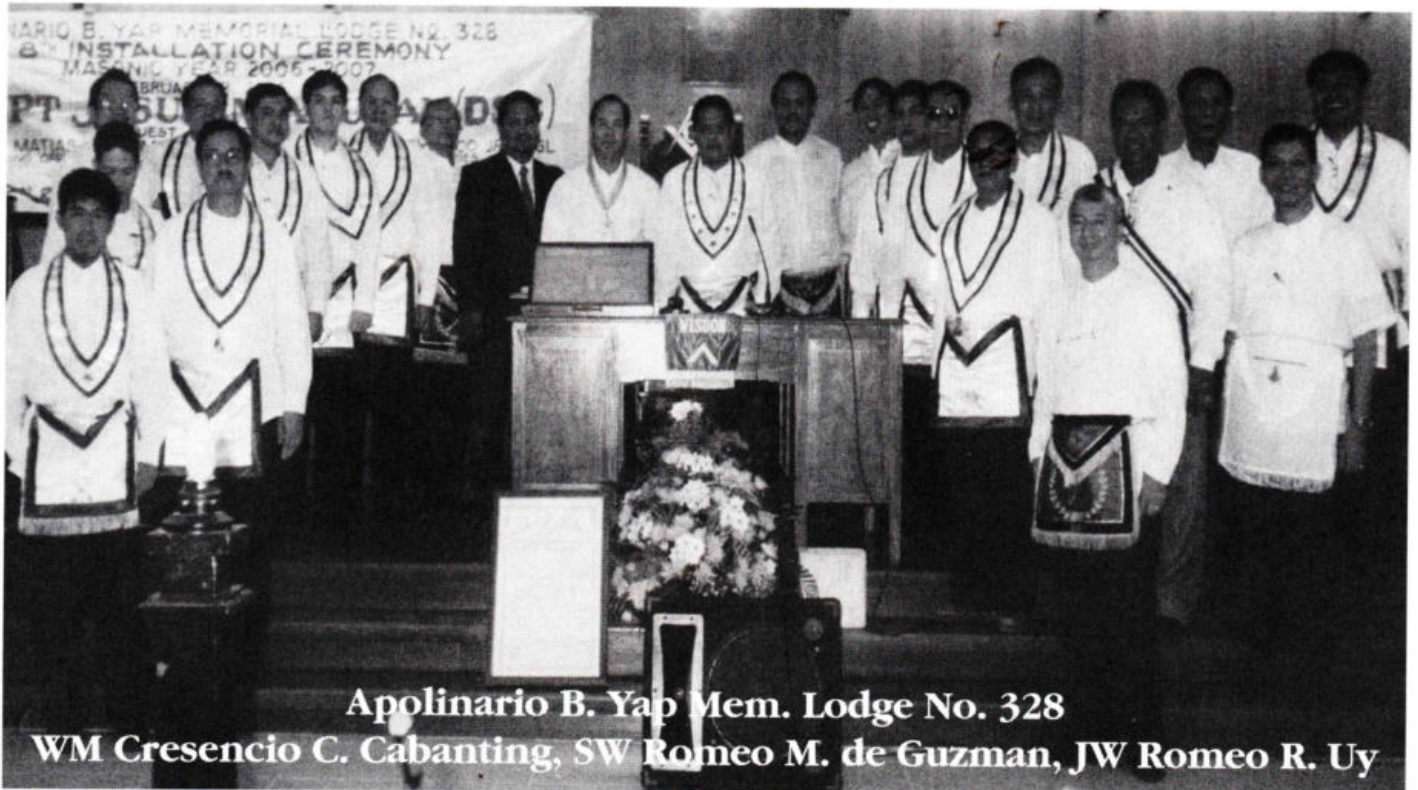




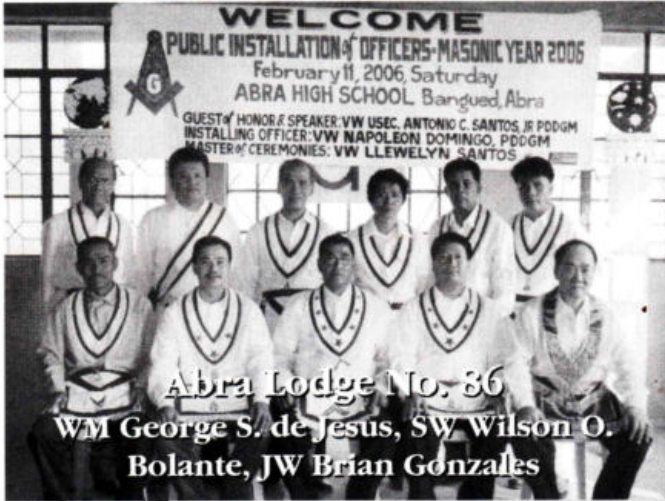
# Lodge Officers Raring to Do Masonry's Work



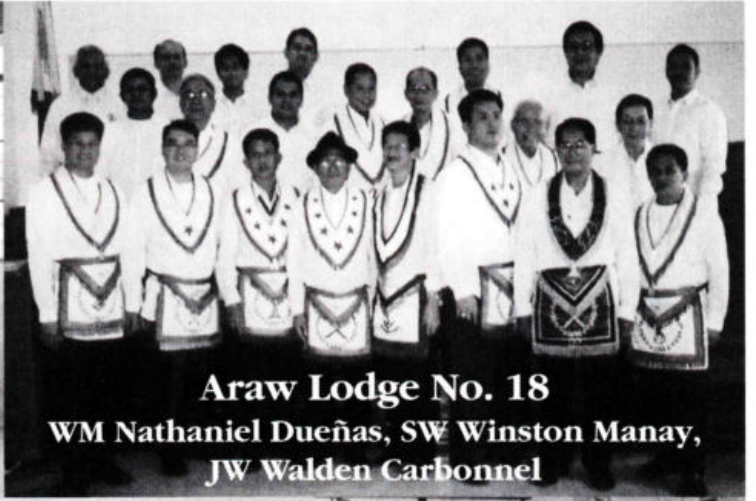
Ang Tipolo Lodge No. 334  
WM Freddie Paner, SW Gustav Bocek, JW Nick Manipon



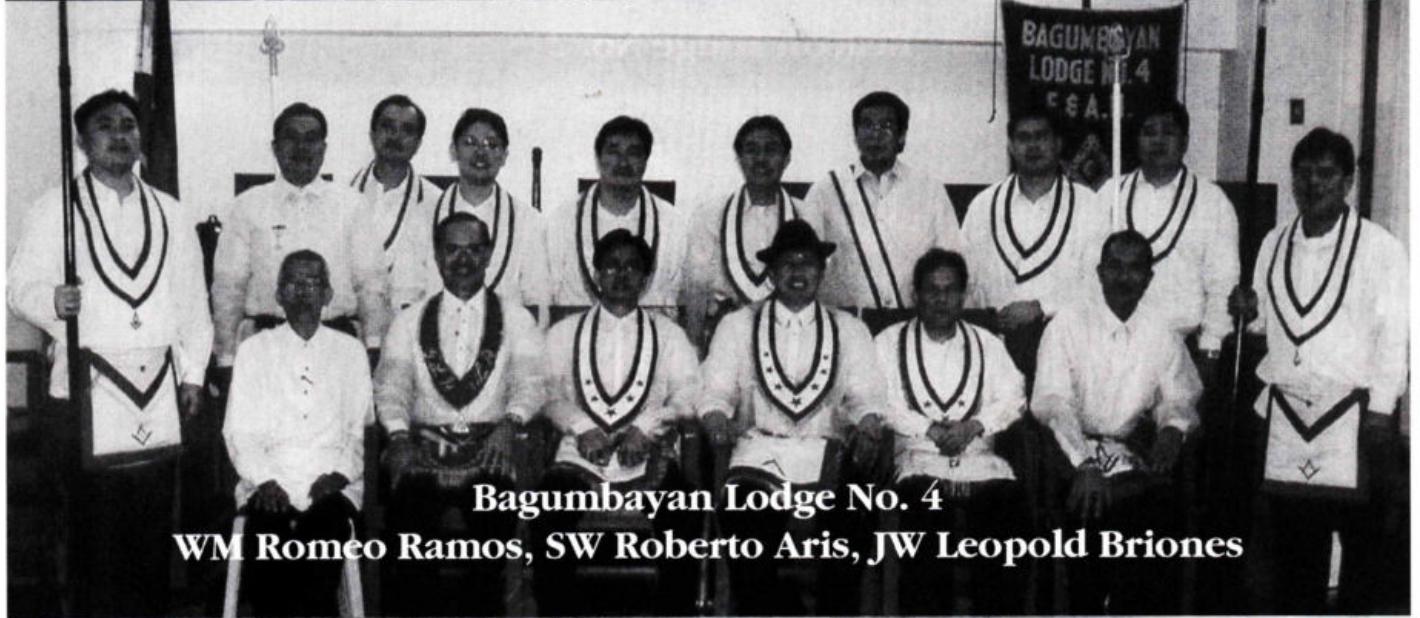
Apolinario B. Yap Mem. Lodge No. 328  
WM Cresencio C. Cabanting, SW Romeo M. de Guzman, JW Romeo R. Uy



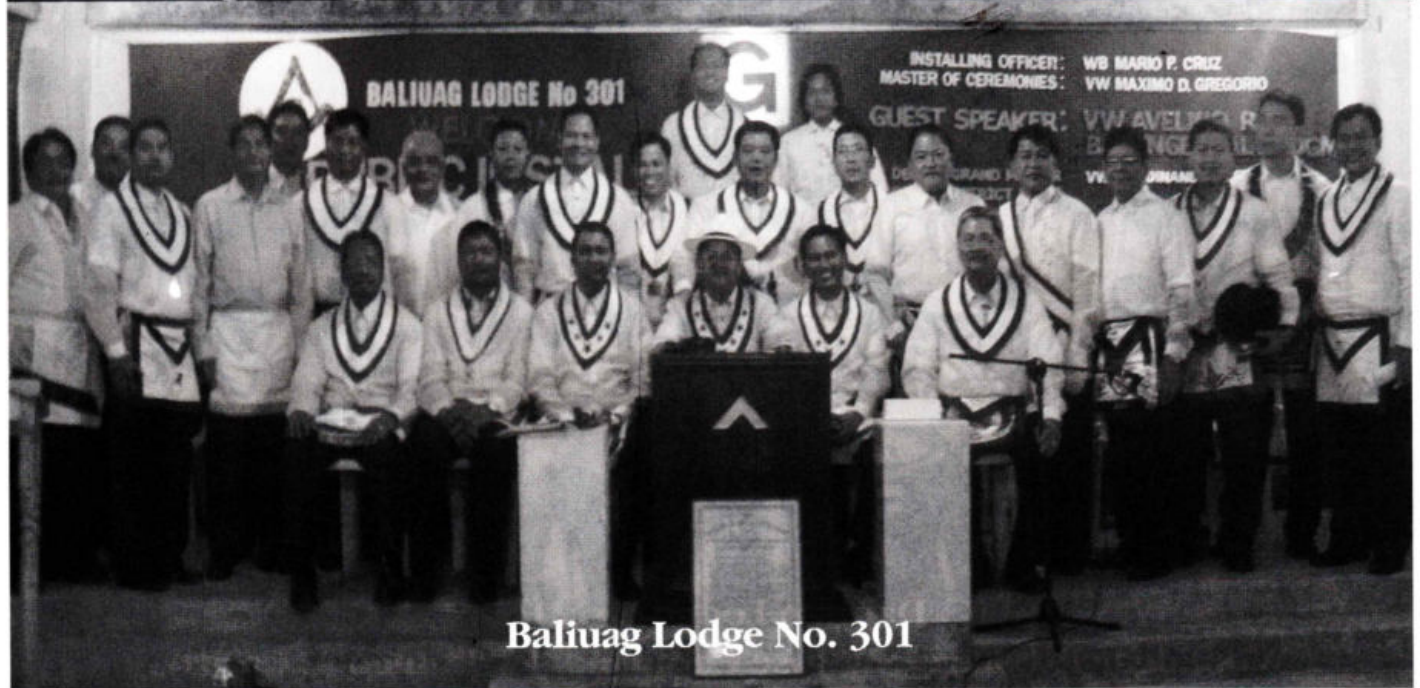
**Abra Lodge No. 36**  
 WM George S. de Jesus, SW Wilson O. Bolante, JW Brian Gonzales



**Araw Lodge No. 18**  
 WM Nathaniel Dueñas, SW Winston Manay, JW Walden Carbonnel



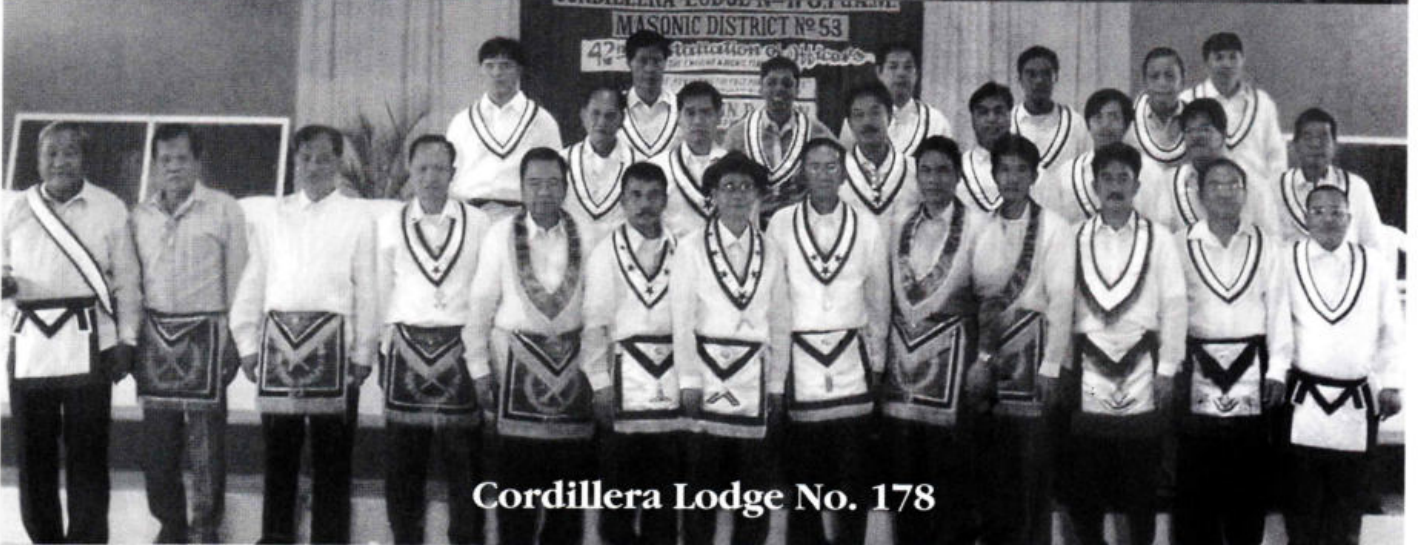
**Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4**  
 WM Romeo Ramos, SW Roberto Aris, JW Leopold Briones



**Baliuag Lodge No. 301**



**Beacon Lodge No. 213**

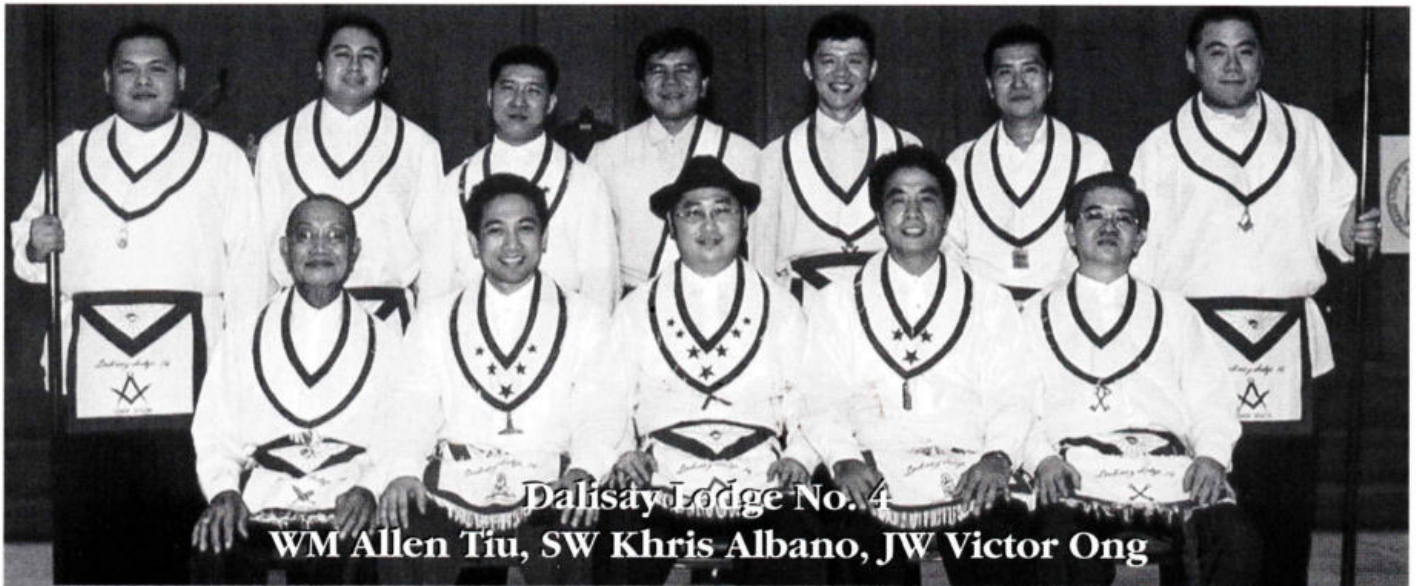


**Cordillera Lodge No. 178**



**Dapitan Lodge No. 21**

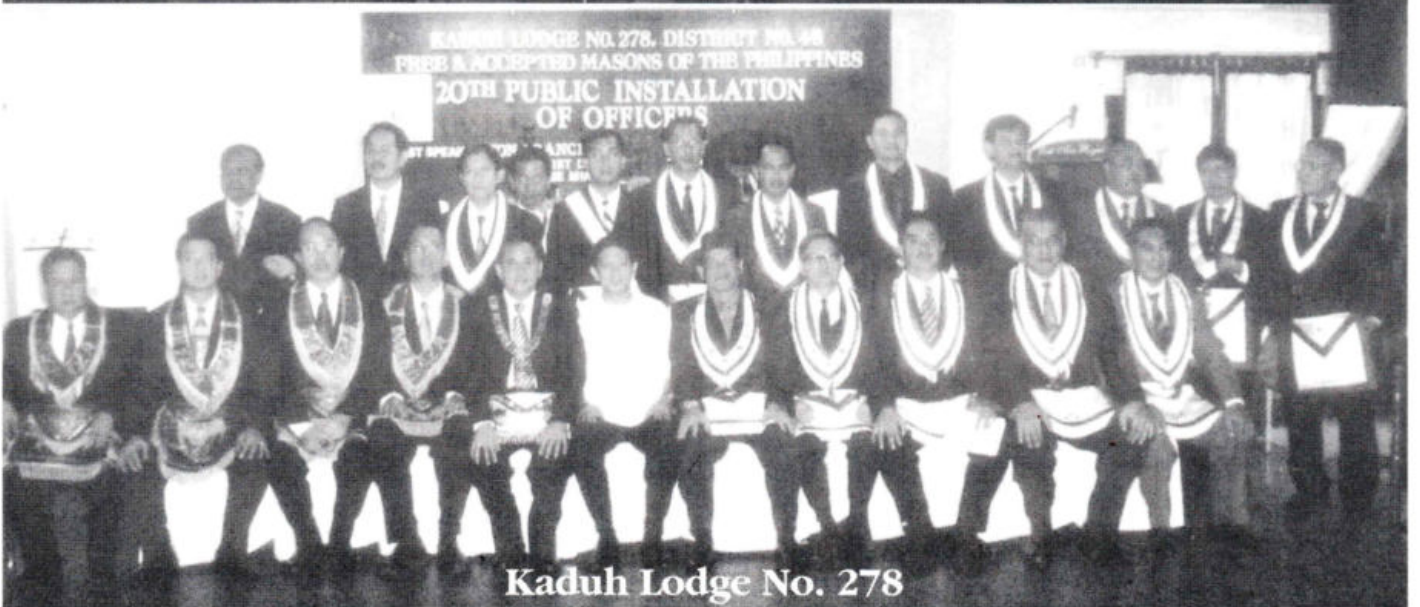
**Wm Edgar P. Ustare, SW Jose Carabaña, JW Romeo A. Carizo**



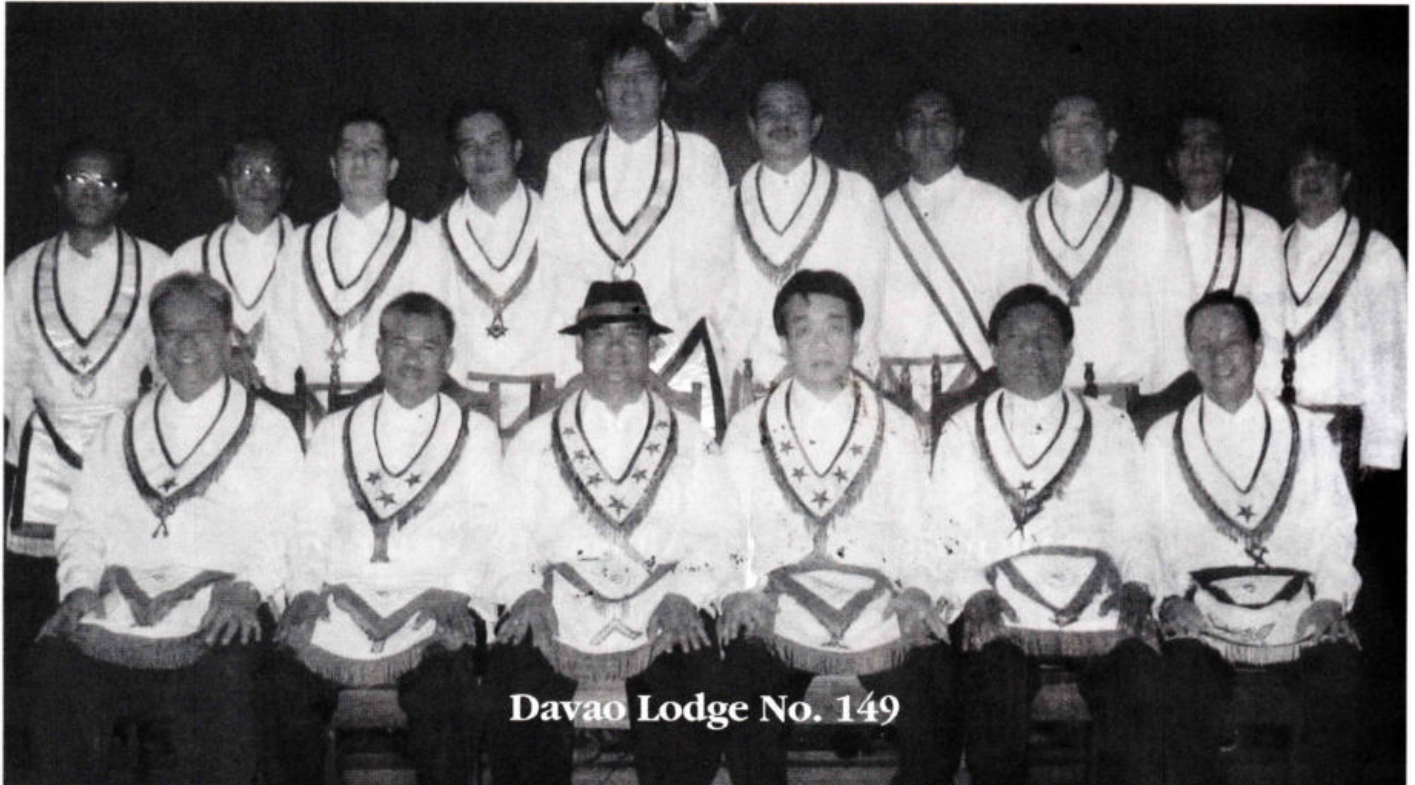
**Dalisay Lodge No. 4**  
**WM Allen Tiu, SW Khris Albano, JW Victor Ong**



**Datu Bago Lodge No. 197**



**Kaduh Lodge No. 278**



**Davao Lodge No. 149**



**Gonzaga Lodge No. 66**

**WM Benjamin M. Lasam, SW Lloyd R. Binasoy, JW Anthony S. Olalia**



**Koronadal Lodge No. 209**



**Digos Lodge No. 198**



**Gualberto C. Agatep Lodge No. 341**  
 WM Segundo C. Lagundi, Jr., SW Florencio  
 B. Soliven, JW Wilfredo C. Adquilen



**Ifugao Lodge No. 218**  
 WM Angel Malabanan Jr., SW Rogelio Garcia,  
 JW Serafin L. Nghayon



**Shangrila Lodge No. 196**



**Lam-Ang Lodge No. 164**  
 WM Felipe D. Cabanlig, SW Fernando M. Idio,  
 JW Jerry B. Malamion



**Jacobo Zobel Lodge No. 355**  
**WM Maverick Evangelista, SW Jun Morales, JW Jimmy Miguel**



**Macario R. Ramos Lodge No. 355**  
**WM Charles G. Agar, SW Januario Siacunco, JW Donald G. Ronquillo**



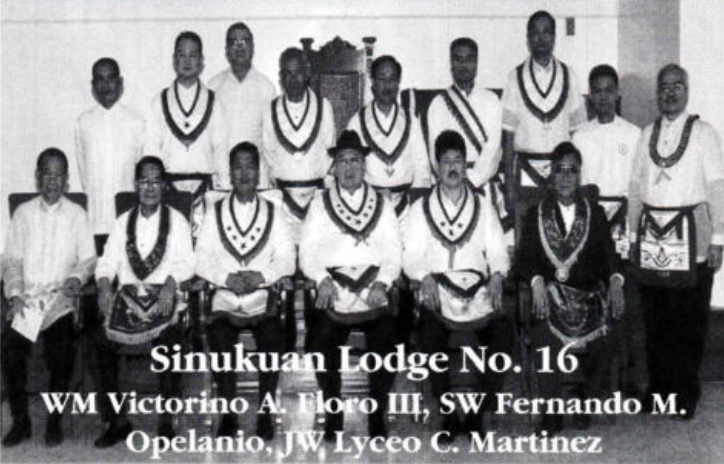
**Manuel A. Roxas Mem. Lodge No. 152**  
**WM Henry Uy-Kiang, SW Jeson Santos, JW Enrique Co**



**M. H. del Pilar Mem. Lodge No. 272**  
**WM Ernesto R. Carandang, SW Dick C. Guzman, JW Giovanni L. Florendo**



**Noli Me Tangere No. 42**  
**WM Arnel Cantos, SW Rudy Tan, JW Nelson Milo**



**Sinukuan Lodge No. 16**  
**WM Victorino A. Floro III, SW Fernando M. Opelano, JW Lyceo C. Martinez**



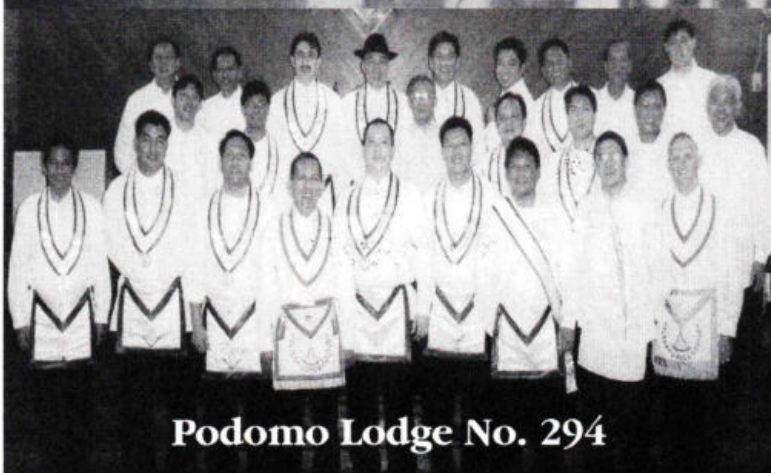
**Sultan Kudarat Lodge No. 348**



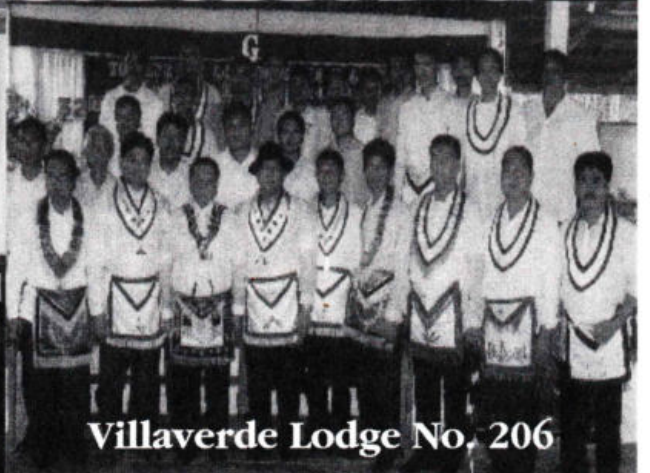
**Sarangani Lodge No. 50**



**Maribulan Lodge No. 304**



**Podomo Lodge No. 294**



**Villaverde Lodge No. 206**

## Elected Lodge Officers, 2005-2006: Implementors of the Grand Master's Thrusts



**Antonio Lim**  
WM #4



**Bernie Bondoc**  
WM #332



**Dominador Arevalo**  
WM #22



**Dominador Ellazar, Jr.**  
WM #277



**Edito Granada**  
WM #286



**Eugene Galbreath**  
WM #84



**Eugenio Santos, Jr.**  
WM #307



**Johnson Lee**  
WM #34



**Joselito Evangelista**  
WM #268



**Joselito Arce, Jr.**  
WM #179



**Larry Wy**  
WM #82



**Leodegario Ramos**  
WM #157



**Manolo Rodriguez**  
WM #359



**Michael Santos**  
WM #14



**Nolan Sudario**  
WM #103



**Reynaldo Tomampo**  
WM #355



**Roberto Gastardo**  
WM #12



**Roy Pabustan**  
WM #224



**Silvester Isnani**  
WM #102



**Sim Cañonera**  
WM #323



**Solomon Abellera**  
WM #164



**Alfredo Buon**  
SW #359



**Arnel Cantos**  
SW #42



**Charles Agar**  
SW #355



**Daniel Bañez**  
SW #179



**Eric Asunzion**  
SW #157



**Jesse Jewel**  
SW #34



**Jose Mari Begorn**  
SW #307



**Juanito La Rosa**  
SW #332



**Leo Rivera**  
SW #22



**Mario Balbuena**  
SW #224



**Roberto Carreos**  
SW #103



**Rodolfo Canido**  
SW #277



**Romeo Ramos**  
SW #4



**Romeo Padrigon**  
SW #268



**Voltaire Gazmin**  
SW #323



**Cecilio Ison**  
JW #157



**Conrad Isahag**  
JW #102



**Emmanuel Brano**  
JW #286



**Ephram de Mesa**  
JW #188



**Gener Garcia**  
JW #179



**Jose I. Costales**  
JW #307



**Jose Taen**  
JW #277



**Nicolos Manipon**  
JW #334



**Ponciano Bagbaguen, Jr.**  
JW #164



**Porfirio Magtanong**  
JW #22



**Ramon Gravecillas**  
JW #150



**Restituto Alcantara**  
JW #323



**Ricardo Herrera**  
JW #268



**Rodolfo Tan**  
JW #42



**Rudrick Bustamante**  
JW #34



**Romeo Manalaysay**  
JW #359



**Salvador L. Lota, Jr.**  
JW #332



**Walter Banzon**  
JW #224



**Alexander Vadil**  
Secretary #22



**Anthony Lao**  
Secretary #102



**Antonio Buenaventura**  
Secretary #268



**Antonio Guinto, Jr.**  
Secretary #157



**Artemio Cacal**  
Secretary #359



**Carlos R. Cabalar**  
Secretary #12



**Eduardo Carpio**  
Secretary #103



**Felipe Cabanlig**  
Secretary #164



**James Best**  
Secretary #34



**Reuben Abenojar**  
Secretary #14



**Rolan Lazarte**  
Secretary #104



**Romeo Asa, Jr.**  
Secretary #323



**Rommel Garcia**  
Secretary #307



**Romulo Cayetano**  
Secretary #179



**Romulo Ignacio**  
Secretary #334



**Ronald Salazar**  
Secretary #332



**Allan Tan**  
Treasurer #286



**Amado Garcia**  
Treasurer #224



**Boy Osorio**  
Treasurer #104



**Christian Bautista**  
Treasurer #334



**Cresencio Gutierrez**  
Treasurer #63



**Eduardo Valdez**  
Treasurer #307



**George Ang Dy Pay**  
Treasurer #22



**Keyu Ang**  
Treasurer #14



**Oscar Reyes**  
Treasurer #34



**Pablo Tan**  
Treasurer #102



**Raffy Pizarro**  
Treasurer #268



**Rodolfo Espiritu**  
Treasurer #164



**Victor Braña**  
Treasurer #179



**Virgilio Cruz**  
Treasurer #332



**Albert Chua**  
Auditor #102



**Alfonso Obsum**  
Auditor #286



**Alpidio Fabian**  
Auditor #164



**Avelino Batungbacal**  
Auditor #268



**Bernard Go**  
Auditor #22



**Eduardo Florendo**  
Auditor #224



**Jorge Manalili**  
Auditor #179



**Lionilo Jarin**  
Auditor #34



**Manolo Teodoro**  
Auditor #104



**Neil Farala**  
Auditor #103



**Pedro Pagunuran**  
Auditor #334



**Rolan Allan Costales**  
Auditor #307



**Teodoro Salud**  
Auditor #323



**Vic Santos**  
Auditor #104



**Zolio Orit**  
Auditor #12

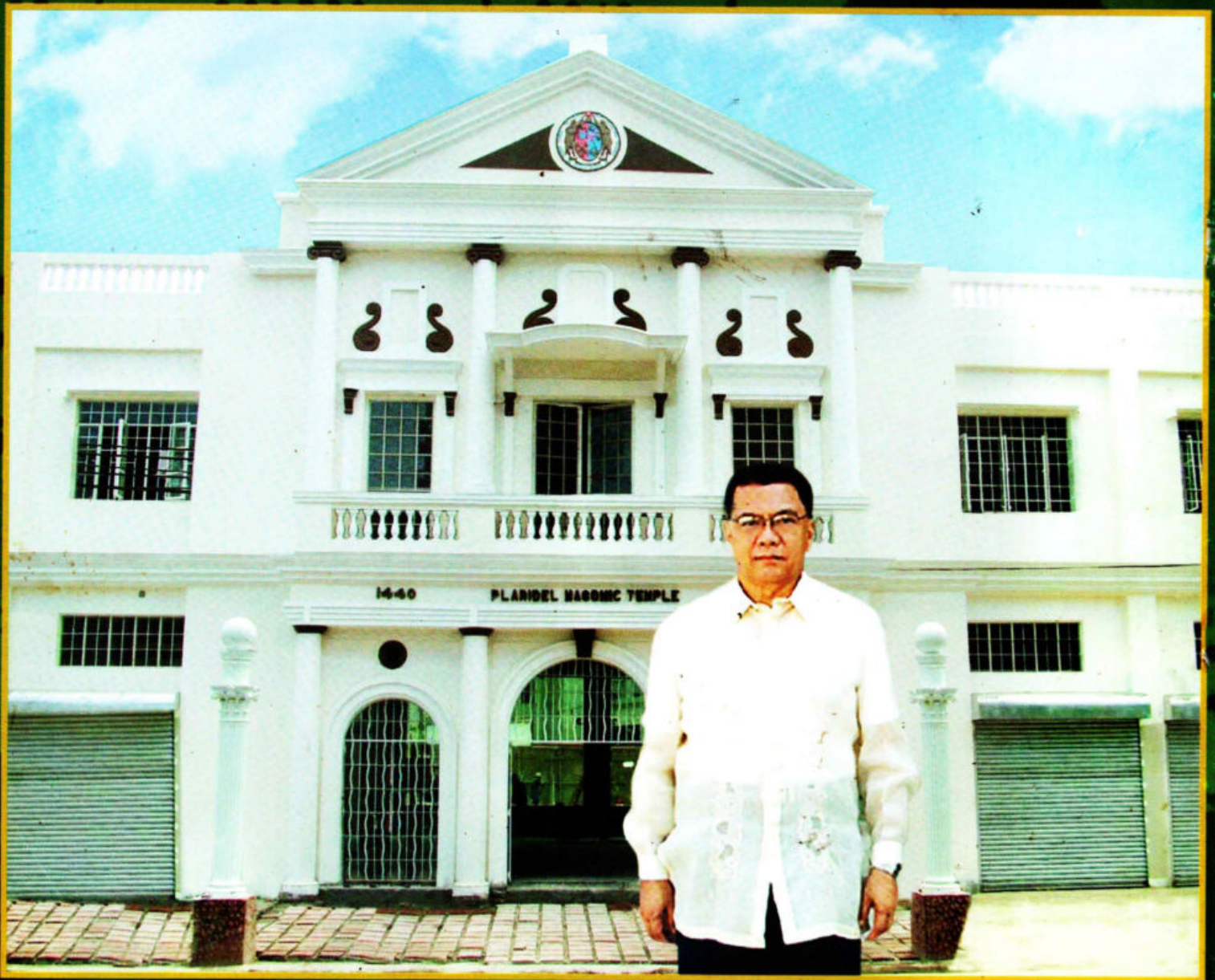


**WELCOME**  
 GUESTS & BRETHREN TO THE  
**GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY**  
 (CONCRETE POURING OF FOUNDATION)  
 FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF  
 OLD PLARIDEL MASONIC TEMPLE  
 19 DECEMBER 2005

NEW REPRESENTATIVE GRAND LODGE #2

**PROPOSED PLARIDEL MASONIC TEMPLE**

Grand Lodge of the  
 Philippines  
 District of the  
 Philippines



Grand Master Jun Ebdane, implementor of the reconstruction of the Old Plaridel Masonic Temple, which was initiated by PGM Henry Locsin, proudly poses in front of the newly reconstructed temple shortly before its inauguration on April 19, 2006.