

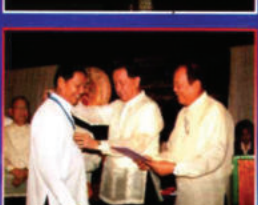


The Cabletow

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



**HONORING DISTINGUISHED MASONS
IN GOVERNMENT**



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TOW.

From the Grand Oriental Chair

Allow me, dear brethren, to share some of the highlights of what we have done together so far. In the area of Membership Growth, Development and Welfare, we have instituted and constituted new Lodges throughout the country for good men to better themselves through the Craft. We have likewise tried our best to strengthen the IMES especially in its operations management; and promoted the Masonic Education Program formulated by our very able Senior Grand Lecturer, VW Robert O. Asuncion.



Through the generous hearts of the brethren in the Philippines and throughout the world, we were accorded the opportunity to concretely express Masonic relief; we provided rehabilitation assistance to brethren and communities devastated by Typhoons Ondoy, Pepeng and Santi.

In the area of Lodge Governance, we have issued several circulars to address Lodge Governance concerns and encourage the brethren to use our handbooks entitled "Practical Guide for Effective Lodge Governance" and "Recommended Three Year Development Program for the Blue Lodges," which we provided to our Lodges through their respective Worshipful Masters. The regional elimination rounds for National Elocution Contest, which should enable the brethren to behold the beauty of our ritual, are also on-going and will culminate in our Annual Communication in April 2010.

In the area of Community Involvement, I am pleased to announce that the Grand Lodge Tree-Planting Project in cooperation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources was a national success in terms of implementation. Let us nurture and cultivate these trees until they grow to full maturity, so that we will be able to make a difference in averting the adverse effects of climate change in our country.

Last September 2009, we also embarked on a well-attended Multi-Cultural and Interfaith Forum, chaired by no less than the Deputy Grand Master, RW Avelino I. Razon, Jr., with the objective of assisting in the achievement of lasting peace and understanding in our country.

Hence, I enjoin you once more to revisit your respective Lodges' plans and programs, realign them with that of the Grand Lodge, and exert sincere efforts to ensure that by the time we would have ended this Masonic Year – we can, in all honesty, proclaim that WE HAVE, INDEED, MADE THE DIFFERENCE.


PETER U. LIM LO SUY
Grand Master



DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN OUR OWN LIVES

WE HOPE AND PRAY THAT THE OFFICERS WE ELECT TO LEAD US IN THE ENSUING MASONIC YEAR prove themselves to be dynamic, principle-oriented, inspired and inspiring leaders, so that our respective Lodges will attain greater heights of achievement. But that hope and prayer may be realized sooner than we expect if we develop leadership in our own lives; for, as St. Gregory has paradoxically stated, "we are our own parents." The word *parent* comes from the Latin verb *parere* (*partum*), which means to give birth (born). We are, in effect, our own parents because we are the only ones – through our own thoughts, words, actions and decisions – who can give birth to our own selves or personalities, although others may help us in the performance of this paramount project.

Correlatively, the late Dean Berry of the Harvard Law School smartly said, "Educate is a reflexive rather than a transitive verb." By this he meant that one educates one's self rather than gets educated by others.

We may, therefore, etymologically define education as the process (*-tion*) of leading (*duca-*) one's self from (*e-*) immaturity to maturity, from imperfection to perfection, or from slavery to one's passions, prejudices or selfish interests to self-mastery or inward mastery.

In like manner, leadership does not really come from others; it starts with us. The so-called "great leaders" emerge from a people's life. At whatever level, our leaders are a reflection of ourselves.

As Master Masons, we have a leadership responsibility to Freemasonry in general and to our respective Lodges in particular. Hence, we should, each of us, ask ourselves this question

with soul-searching concern: "What have I done this past year to show that Freemasonry makes a difference in my own life?"

After answering that important question, we should get busy – developing leadership in our own lives. If we do so, most likely we will begin to see leadership starting to emerge all around us.

How can we develop leadership in our own lives?

We can do so by persistently performing the duties which every Mason who desires to imitate the Grand Master Hiram Abiff (GMHA) ought to perform. These, according to Ill. Albert Pike, 33°, include sleeping little, and studying much; saying little, and hearing and thinking much; learning, that we may be able to do, and then doing, earnestly and vigorously, whatever may be required of us by duty, and by the good of our fellows, our country, and mankind. (See *Morals and Dogma*, p.

Since, of our own free will and accord, we have embraced Freemasonry as our special profession or way of life, we have to avidly study it and its various aspects – its ritual and ceremonies; its symbolism; its benevolence or charity; its philosophy, creed and spirit (of friendship); its jurisprudence or laws, rules and regulations; and its history. We have to learn its simple lessons of practical morality and sublime teachings of religious philosophy, and then to live them consistently in daily life, that our light may so shine before other men that they will desire our fellowship and join in our assemblies.

Our ancient fraternity is, as we all know very well, honorable because it tends to make all men so who are strictly obedient to its precepts and principles. Indeed, if we learn the precepts and principles of Freemasonry and carry them into the world "out

there" to make it a better place for all, then we will be developing leadership in our own lives. We must practice the great Masonic virtues both in the Lodge and without. We must take them into our hearts, so that they will manifest themselves in our outward action. We should be leaders in the Lodge and in the world, dispensing light and imparting knowledge by the best method of instruction known – EXAMPLE. Never should we lose sight of the fact that the purpose of Freemasonry is to create 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. We should constantly support the dignity of our Masonic character on all occasions, and be regular and discreet in our conduct wherever we are, whithersoever we go, and whatever we do; for the noble deeds of a thousand Masons may be forgotten or set asunder by the indiscretion or carelessness of a single Mason. - eF.R.eN

• In Freemasonry, the seed we sow is self-improvement, and the fruit we reap is moral progress. Each of us must become the Magister Interior, the Inward Master; for unless we have mastered ourselves, our influence over other men can bring no good result.

• The noble deeds of a thousand Masons may be forgotten or set asunder by the indiscretion or carelessness of a single Mason.

NEEDED: MASONIC LEADERS WHO ARE

"TOUCHED WITH FIRE"

by WB Edgar P. Borje, PM (#100 & #220)

IN HIS ARTICLE published in *The Northern Light*, November 1972, the late Raymond C. Ellis, 33^o, a Past Grand Master for New York and a former Active Emeritus Member of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite in the Northern Jurisdiction of the USA, emphatically pointed out that both the spiritual and material progress of mankind is due to those dedicated men and women who at some time in their lives have become immersed in a great cause and who, as a result, have been "touched with fire." Stated he: "Such men and women have strong hearts that are open to a great cause; develop a consuming passion for something outside themselves; and believe in something for which they will live – and something for which they will die if called upon to do so."

Our Lodges are in need of brethren with such specifications – brethren who unselfishly and devotedly promote the welfare of their respective Lodges; who ensure a bright future for their Lodges by helping promising, intelligent and dedicated members thereof to prepare themselves for leadership roles not only in the Lodge but in the Masonic District as well – and even in the Grand Lodge; or who believe in and therefore persistently live by, and even willingly die for, the ideals, principles and values of Masonry.

Brethren who are "touched with fire" invariably believe in principle rather than expediency. When the chips are down, they are ready to stand up and be counted, as well as to work hard and sacrifice much, if only to help improve the situation or condition of the Lodge, Masonic District, or Grand Lodge.

There are, however, not a few Lodge officers who are so feeble and timid that they cringe at the mere sight of an important issue or a pressing problem. Apparently, they are afraid to make risky or even unpopular decisions because the consuming passion

of their lives is not a great cause, but rather their own personal popularity and comfort. Apparently, their ambition is to get by in peace and quiet and take no stand that can be subject to question. Some of such Lodge officers even suffer themselves to be dictated or imposed upon by Past Masters who seem to have not really relinquished the gavel of power even long after their descent from the Oriental Chair.

But we Past Masters must not impose our own wills on the Worshipful Master and his officers. Rather, we must grant them the opportunity to exercise and enjoy their right to make their own decisions, as well as to commit mistakes in decision making; for, after all, as Nikki Giovanni has wisely put it, "Mistakes are a fact of life. It is the response to error that counts." By all means, then, we should allow the Worshipful Master and his officers to learn from their mistakes. We must not forget that they have but one year to carry the torch of the Lodge. If we dictate or impose on them, they will never learn to develop themselves into leaders who are "touched with fire," nor will they be able to become "candles of the Lord" in

advancing the credit of our Lodge.

To be able to advance the credit of our Lodge to high eminence, the Worshipful Master and his officers must work together as a team that is highly resolved to be equal to the challenge of improving our Lodge's performance. This, of course, demands critical analysis and positive planning.

Although the Worshipful Master chairs the Planning Committee of the Lodge, he must judiciously and discreetly choose the members thereof. Their task is to plan and design a many-sided program of year-round activities with some out-of-the-ordinary projects – one which will redound to the growth and development of the brethren and their families. They must exert all-out effort to come up with such a program because the Worshipful Master and his officers cannot push the brethren into the Lodge hall to get good attendance and active participation. But, certainly, with a many-sided program of meaningful activities and projects, they will be able to pull them in; for such activities and projects are the life blood of any Lodge. Such a program must be based on the brethren's wishes, engage them, and encourage their participation, precisely because it focuses on their growth and development as men and as Masons.

The objectives of such a program include the following:

1. To conduct Lodge meetings in an efficient, educational and entertaining – but business-like fashion;
2. To create and make prevail in the Lodge an environment that attracts intelligent and even influential young men of promise to seek membership in the Lodge;
3. To enhance the value and

importance of the degrees of Craft Masonry;

4. To get the commitment of all the members of the Lodge to make the sublime degree of Master Mason the worthy goal which every candidate must "earn";

5. To provide both old and new members with continuing Masonic education;

6. To make the Lodge attractive to non-Masons and relevant to the times;

7. To achieve substantial long-term membership growth;

8. To involve members of the brethren's families in Masonic endeavors; and

9. To carry out community outreach projects in order that residents in the community will feel once more the benevolent and relevant presence of the Craft in their midst. (This objective is quite important because non-Masons gauge us not only by the appearance of our buildings and grounds, but also by our actions and non-actions in community projects and activities.)

But there is a 10th objective which is basic, namely, to have fun among ourselves and to care about one another. Indeed, we must enjoy our participation in the Craft in general and in our Lodge in particular; for if we want to participate in Masonic activities, then we are taking our involvement in the Craft, particularly in the Lodge, seriously. We take things seriously when we enjoy what we are doing. And while we are having fun, we must also care about one another since this is part of our obligation as Masons.

Together, brethren, let us share the good times with our brothers in Masonry and look out for their welfare, so that they can appreciate Freemasonry, as we do.

ON LODGE LEADERSHIP



IT HAS BEEN SAID that leaders are appreciated, revered and even glorified 10% of the time; criticized, maligned, and even persecuted 20% of the time; and ignored 70% of all the time.

This paradox of life is applicable to the elected and appointed officers of every Symbolic Lodge. After their term of office, they are usually consigned to near oblivion just like their predecessors, unless they have made revolutionary decisions and have registered unprecedented acts resulting in monumental achievements, or unless they have triggered either an earth-shaking scandal or a big-time controversy that can inspire either respect or ignominy. The so-so, generally, will hardly be remembered.

Running a Lodge is, of course, different from operating a business outfit or practicing a profession; for a Lodge is a volunteer organization. Therefore, its members are not employees. Yet it demands of its officers a quantum of time and passions that can almost approximate that which is required of managers to lead the company or firm to financial success. Perhaps the members of the Lodge do not realize this. The truth is, however, that Masonic leadership entails a great degree of dedication and a big volume of brain work.

The sitting Worshipful Master is, clearly, the highest officer of a Lodge; on him are focused all eyes. Upon assuming command responsibility, he is expected – and obliged – to give credit

to whoever is deserving of it. For instance, he is to express praise and commendation, or to demonstrate gratitude and appreciation, to the officers and committees responsible for the success of particular activities or projects. He is also expected – and even obliged – to direct an appreciative word or to offer a grateful gesture to a member who has done his job well – say in the conferral of a degree on one or more candidates therefor. But when it comes to blunders, omissions, and faux pas, he is to accept sole and full responsibility for them. It is to him that the buck is ultimately passed.

The Worshipful Master may be viewed as one living a double, if not segmented, life or as one forced to put

to a split personality. He strives hard to remain faithful to, as well as productive in, his own business or profession. He struggles hard to serve his clients and to satisfy his peers, and he makes sure that productivity, quality, and industrial peace prevail in his company or firm. Then he has to play the lead role in Lodge activities; this involves much energy and passion. Finally, he goes home to an "aggrieved" wife and a bunch of "neglected" children, who may, for all intents and purposes, consider him a "persona non grata." But, as a Masonic leader, he must show the members of his family that he is a faithful and devoted husband as well as a loving and dutiful father – in brief, an exemplary familyman. He must therefore spend a few meaningful moments with them – if he still has some energy left.

To be a Lodge leader, particularly a Worshipful Master, is not infrequently hazardous to one's business or professional security, and it at the same time poses a grave and imminent danger to one's marriage and family life. If one is not prepared to adjust to change or to the pace of one's career or to face a problematic family life, one is advised to stay away from Lodge leadership.

The foregoing presentation of the risks a Lodge leader, particularly a Worshipful Master, has to take may be a bit exaggerated. But the point is that Lodge leadership, particularly Worshipful Mastership, is not at all for the faint-hearted.

The Worshipful Master, assisted by the other elected officers and probably the Past Masters, must be particularly careful in his choice of appointed officers and committee chairs. Otherwise, his choice may produce a lot of heartaches and pains, as well as jealousies and suspicions. Indeed, the

way the Worshipful Master dispenses political favors in his appointments may cause disappointments on the part of certain brethren; it may even result in factionalism or polarization.

Again, the situation pictured above may sound a little overstated. But the crux of the matter is that the Worshipful Master should show to the brethren that he cannot be pressured by any means, that he is made of sterner stuff, that he is judicious in his appointments, and that all his actions are for the good of the Lodge in particular and the welfare of the Fraternity in general.

A Lodge is, or should be, a beehive of activities, projects, and programs designed to help the brethren and their families exalt and ennoble themselves and to help improve the community.

Hence, the Worshipful Master is like the almighty queen bee setting the individual bees and soldiers at work. (The simile may appear inappropriate because the topmost official of a Lodge must possess virility or manliness, although a beehive is ruled by the queen bee.)

In any case, the members of a Lodge hope and pray that:

1. The incumbent officers will succeed in producing unprecedented attendance, participation and involvement in stated and special meetings, as well as in other lawful undertakings.
2. The Lodge officers will think of, and then carry out, ways and means that will bring home the bacon, so to speak, and therefore add thousands of pesos to the Lodge coffers.
3. The Lodge officers will so labor as to obtain the respect and accolade not only of the Masonic community but of the general public as well.

These hopes and prayers of the members will not be realized if the officers are not inspired and inspiring leaders. The Worshipful Master, assisted by the Wardens and the other officers, must be a catalyst for the progress of the Lodge; a driver toward sterling performance; a visionary with passion to take the Lodge to a higher level of achievement; an advocate of noble causes who inspires, gives directions, and provides constant reason for the membership to go on despite all odds.

In every association or organization, including Grand Lodge, Masonic Districts and Symbolic Lodges, there is a plethora of managers, who plan, organize and control, but there is a dearth of leaders, who will answer the call of duty, make risky decisions, and sacrifice their own convenience and safety in order to serve and stand up for the association or organization.

Lodge officers must be leaders rather than managers. They must, of course, pass the "ACID" Test of Leadership.

"A" stands for AVAILABILITY, the willingness to be around, and readiness of allocate time, effort and resources. Availability, in effect, will separate those who want to serve from those who want to be served.

"C" stands for COMPETENCE. This will provide the ability to cope with the tremendous challenges that go with the job. It is not limited to intelligence; rather, it includes emotional maturity,

social savvy, and political adroitness.

"I" stands for INTEGRITY. We do not need a genius who is corrupt. Our Craft stands for noble principles and high levels of ethics and character. We expect Masonic leaders to be paragons of honesty, reliability, and fidelity to duty.

"D" stands for DEDICATION. We need leaders who spend sleepless nights attending to the crucial and urgent, the imperatives, the top priorities. We also need leaders who willingly do the trivial things that bind and who heal wounds of factionalism and intrigues, if any. We need leaders who shall dedicate their time, attention, passion and loyalty to our venerable Institution.

Managers can be bought at the labor market; leaders cannot be. The former are hired, while the latter are chosen. Leaders are gems; they constitute a rare commodity. They serve us, their brethren, without salaries. They are with us for the love of Masonry and, therefore, of Deity and of humanity. Yes, Masonic leadership is all a matter of love.

I am pretty confident that the officers of our Symbolic Lodges throughout this jurisdiction for Masonic year 2010 will live up to, as well as pass, the "ACID" Test of Leadership.

Lodge Officers for 2010, both elected and appointed, look well to your respective stations and posts!



by VW Art O. Tan, PDGL
Sarangani Lodge No. 50

CIRCULARS

On Posting of Circulars at Lodge Halls

In his Circular No. 25 issued on October 20, 2009, MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy directs all Lodges to post two sets of Circulars, namely, (1) Circulars issued during this Masonic year and (2) the series of Circular No. 12 for the past six months, at noticeable places in their respective Masonic Temples, where the brethren can plainly and readily see them. This will enable the brethren to keep themselves updated on information from the Grand Lodge as well as information pertaining to our memberships.

Adds MW Lim Lo Suy: "For Lodges that share the same place of meetings, a single posting of such two sets of Circulars shall be sufficient."

On Masonic Reference Kit for New Members and Required Orientation for Candidates, Entered Apprentices, Fellowcrafts and Master Masons

In his Circular No. 26 issued on October 20, 2009, likewise, our Grand Master points out that new Master Masons are in dire need of Masonic references, which they are to use for pursuing their personal development and for appreciating the various workings of our Craft, and that the Grand Lodge hereby directs all Lodges to furnish each of their newly raised members the following documents on the night of the conferral of the Third Degree of Masonry on him:

1. Bound copy of the Monitor for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Degrees
2. Masonic Law Book, Latest Edition
3. Basic Instruction for Floor Works in the Ritual
4. Masonic Demeanor and Proper Decorum in Lodge Meetings, Duties, Regulations & Suggestions
5. What Is Freemasonry?
6. Basic Instruction Pamphlet for the Candidate
7. Basic Instruction Pamphlet for the Entered Apprentice
8. Basic Instruction Pamphlet for the Fellow Craft
9. Basic Instruction Pamphlet for the Master Mason
10. By-Laws of the Lodge

The references in Nos. 1 to 9 above are contained in a Member Reference Kit available at the Grand Lodge Supply Store, while the By-Laws of the Lodge shall be furnished by each Lodge to its members

Our Grand Master further directs the Lodges to strictly implement the required Orientation of Candidates and Members after their Degrees. "Even the brethren will also find it helpful to attend such orientations to improve themselves continually in Masonry as they usually gain new insights during such orientations," he states. Then he adds, "It will be better still if they can also equip themselves in heart and in mind with capabilities to give such orientation."

On Waiver of Jurisdiction for Petitioners, Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts

In his Circular No. 27 issued on the same date, MW Lim Lo Suy informs the brethren that numerous queries from Lodges have been received by the Grand Lodge on the issue of waiver of jurisdiction. He cites the following provisions of our Masonic Law Book as a refresher:

No lodge shall accept the petition of a person whose petition has been rejected by another lodge (Part II, Article VI, Sec. 4).

Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts... cannot withdraw from their lodge or apply for membership or advancement in another lodge without a waiver of jurisdiction... (Part II, Article XVII, Sec. 4).

Among its (the lodge's) specific powers are:

h. To confer the degrees upon its qualified candidates and by courtesy upon those of any other recognized lodge within this jurisdiction when requested to do so ... (Part II, Article II, Sec. 3).

He further cites our eminent brother and Masonic scholar, Dr. Albert Mackey, who explains: "The candidate as I have already observed is to be viewed in our speculative system as 'material brought up for the building of the temple'. The act of investigating the fitness or unfitness of that material constitutes a part of Masonic labor and when a Lodge has commenced that labor, it is discourteous for any other to interfere with it."

Our Grand Master then states that valid concerns have been raised as to the relocation of residence of the rejected petitioner away from the jurisdiction of the Lodge to which he made his petition, and that based on the above provisions cited, the following procedure can be observed in regard to the aforementioned concern:

Where Lodge A is the Lodge where the petitioner was rejected and Lodge B is the Lodge where petitioner wants to be admitted.

1. The rejected petitioner re-submits a new petition to Lodge A and his petition shall be circularized again by the Grand Lodge.

2. Lodge A conducts investigation again and if findings are satisfactory, balloting is again conducted.

3. If ballot is favorable, Lodge A then requests Lodge B to confer the First Degree by courtesy). If unfavorable, the petition is rejected and remains with Lodge A.

4. The Entered Apprentice previously favorably balloted and conferred the First Degree by courtesy, then requests Lodge A for a waiver of jurisdiction in favor of Lodge B.

5. Upon receipt of the request, Lodge A conducts a balloting on the request for a waiver of jurisdiction over such Entered Apprentice.

6. If the balloting for such waiver is favorable, the Entered Apprentice submits a petition to Lodge B, who then submits it to the Grand Lodge for circularization. After it has been circularized according to our laws and regulations, Lodge B then ballots the petition of the Entered Apprentice to be admitted to Lodge B.

7. If balloting by Lodge B is favorable, the Entered Apprentice can ad-

vance in Lodge B.

8. If the balloting by Lodge B is unfavorable, the Entered Apprentice remains under the jurisdiction of Lodge A.

On Examination for Masters-elect, Wardens-elect, and Lodge Officers to Be Appointed

Our Grand Master, in his Circular No. 28 issued on Nov. 17, 2009, informs the brethren that, in addition to our usual requirements for officers to be installed, the following examination formulated by our Senior Grand Lecturer to ensure that Officers of the Lodge elected and to be appointed are duly and truly prepared to discharge their respective duties shall also be conducted by the Grand Lodge Inspectors and District Grand Lecturers under the supervision of the District Deputy Grand Master:

Part I - Basic Rituals

1. Opening & Closing of the Lodge
2. Presentation & Retirement of the Flag
3. Reception of Dignitaries
4. Singing of the Grand Lodge March

The above-mentioned District Officers will examine Master's-elect, Wardens-elect and Lodge officers to be appointed as to their proficiency in the aforementioned basic rituals.

Part II – Relevance of Freemasonry

This is for Masters-elect and Wardens-elect only. For their guidance, Questionnaire A is attached to the Circular.

Part III – Rules & Regulations

Pertaining to Government of the Lodge Again, this is for Masters-elect and Wardens-elect only. For their guidance, Questionnaire B is attached to the Circular.

Our Grand Master directs the District Officers concerned to conduct the said prescribed examination either within a lodge hall or in a place where a district meeting is held, as well as to seek the assistance of their respective Junior Grand Lecturers if the need arises.

MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy stresses that "District Deputy Grand Masters shall also make sure that no Master of any Lodge shall be installed unless he has served as Warden in a Lodge."

On Availing of Death Gratuity Grant of P8,000 and of Hospital Gratuity Grant of P4,000 Per Year for Every Master Mason Who Is Not a Past Master

MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy, in his Circular No. 29 issued on Dec. 11, 2009, reminds Lodges that they have to follow the simple procedure given below to insure early issuance of checks due to their members who are not yet Past Masters.

1. To Avail of Death Gratuity Grant

The Lodge Secretary shall communicate in writing to the Grand Lodge, indicating the name of the deceased brother and the date of his death, as well as provide the complete name and address of the widow or any of his beneficiaries (children only).

The Grand Lodge will check the relevant information with its records.

The Grand Lodge will cause the corresponding check to be processed and sent directly to the widow or beneficiaries – or through the Lodge concerned upon request.

If the check is sent through the Lodge, the Master and members of the Lodge, through the Sunshine Committee, visit the family of the deceased brother and present the check.

Note: Benefits are for the deceased brother and his direct beneficiary, and not transferable to the Lodge.

2. To Avail of Hospital Benefit

The Lodge Secretary shall communicate in writing to the Grand Lodge, indicating the name and address of the brother requesting for Hospital Gratuity Grant.

He shall attach to the written communication xerox copies of the receipts is-

sued by the hospital where the brother concerned was confined.

The Grand Lodge will check the relevant information with its records.

The Grand Lodge will cause the corresponding check to be processed and sent directly to the brother concerned or through the Lodge upon request.

If sent through the Lodge and when applicable, the Master and members of the Lodge, through the Sunshine Committee, visit the brother and present the check

Note: The Hospital Gratuity Grant can be availed of once a year or every twelve months only.

On Grand Lodge Renovation & Improvement

In his Circular No. 30 issued on the 24th day of December 2009, our Grand Master has the following to say to the brethren:

"As the clock ticks every moment shortening the time to prepare ourselves for the Centennial of our Grand Lodge, we work even harder to ensure that our Craft in this part of the world will be rightfully regarded. In our labors toward it, every brother can be fulfilled very much to see that the present Grand Lights, the Past Grand Masters, and numerous other worthy brethren are diligently toiling together in harmony, not for their own glory, but for the common objective of meeting the expectations of the numerous foreign dignitaries and visitors who we anticipate will join us in our centennial celebrations.

"You may have already seen the commencement of the renovations and other works at our Grand Lodge premises and facilities, such as the cementing of the parking area, granite floor tiling, refitting of the comfort rooms, refurbishment of the Abad Santos Hall, etc. We have commenced such labors to avoid being overwhelmed when other important tasks for such celebrations become urgent during our centennial year.

"When the foreign dignitaries and visitors come and join us during our Annual Communications and our Centennial Celebrations, they take back home to their respective Jurisdictions an image of our Grand Lodge and of the Masons in our Jurisdiction. Hence, we need to make sure that our Grand Lodge truly reflects the dignity and high importance of Masonry and the quality of Masons in our Jurisdiction.

"Generous brethren have already committed to support the present and other works being undertaken. This Masonic year, the Grand Lodge Committee on Resource Generation and Development was appointed. Its Chairman is VW Christopher Y. Gococo, Junior Grand Lecturer; its Vice-Chairman is VW Juanito G. Espino, Grand Auditor; and the following are its members: VW Enrique Y. Co, Junior Grand Steward; VW Romeo S. Momo, GLP Liaison Officer for Mindanao; VW Edgardo B. Tolentino, Past Grand Auditor;

"With worthy brethren accompanying them, the aforementioned brethren have traveled to several areas in our Jurisdiction and received encouraging responses from the brethren, who immediately committed to already undertake various fund-raising activities to support the renovation and improvement of our Grand Lodge premises.

"Officers and leading members of Districts and Lodges that are interested in organizing and undertaking their respective fund-raising activities to support our efforts may contact VW Christopher Y. Gococo, JGL, Committee on Resource Generation and Development Chairman, through our Grand Lodge or by directly sending an email to him at glprenovation2010@gmail.com

"We now appeal to all brethren, Lodges and Districts in our Jurisdiction to take a part in this noble undertaking to improve our Grand Lodge premises. Those who may want to contribute directly to our Grand Lodge renovation and improvement efforts may also directly deposit their donation to UNION BANK, Tarlac Branch; Account Name: Grand Lodge of the Philippines; Account Number: 00-264-0002000; Account Type: Current.

"Kindly email us, too, for deposit verification at glprenovation2010@gmail.com.

"Our Grand Lodge is the 'Ancestral Home' of all Masons who belong to our Jurisdiction. As we maintain our respective ancestral homes with much dignity and utmost respect, we should also join hands in a collective effort to establish our Grand Lodge in a similar manner. With all of you, dear brethren, supporting us, we will succeed in this endeavor."

**Disinterested or non-mercenary friendships
are the best things in life that remain even
when time shall be no more.**

- VW VICTOR A. YU, PSGL

OUR GRAND MASTER'S NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2009 ACTIVITIES

The activities given below show that MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy has exemplified the oxymoronic statement "Busiest men find time." They also indicate his firm resolve to give due meaning and substance to this year's theme, "Together, Brethren, We Will Make a Difference!"

November

On the 4th, our Grand Master was Guest of Honor & Speaker at the Testimonial Dinner for Distinguished Masons in Government held at the Manila Hotel. (The text of his speech is printed somewhere in this issue.)

On the 6th and 7th, he and his party attended the Northern Luzon Multi-District Convention, hosted by RI-A (Pangasinan), with Urdaneta No. 302 as lead Lodge. Other Districts in attendance were RI & CAR-B (Benguet & La Union) and RI & CAR-C (Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte & Abra).

On the 11th, he presided over the meeting of the Corporate Board at the Plaridel Masonic Temple.

On the 13th and 14th, he and his party attended the Western Mindanao Multi-District Convention in Pagadian City, with Dr. Jose G. Hofileña Sr., Mem. No. 153 as host Lodge. Participating Districts were RIX-A (Zamboanga Del Sur), RIX & RX-B (Misamis Occidental & Zamboanga Del Norte), RIX & ARMM-C (Zamboanga City, Jolo, Basilan & Tawi-Tawi), RX-C (Misamis Occidental), and RX & ARMM-D (Lanao).

On the 18th, he officially visited Gen. Artemio Ricarte Mem. Lodge No. 322, which held a third-degree conferral at the Jacobo Zobel Masonic Temple in Makati City. Then he went back to the

Plaridel Masonic Temple and received various courtesy callers in his office.

On the 20th and 21st, he and his party attended the Northern Mindanao Multi-District Convention in Cagayan de Oro City, hosted by Macajalar Lodge No. 184, his Mother Lodge. The participating Districts were RX-A (Misamis Oriental), RX-B (Misamis Oriental & Camiguin), RX-E (Bukidnon), RX-F (Bukidnon), and RXIII-A (Agusan & Surigao).

On the 25th, MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy presided over the Ceremony of Institution of Dr. Sun-Yat Sen Memorial Lodge U.D., which is under the jurisdiction of Masonic District NCR-D.

On the 27th, he presided over the Cornerstone Laying Ceremony for Model Lodge No. 373 in Baloc, Sto. Domingo, Nueva Ecija.

On the 28th to the 30th, he attended the District Convention of RIV-A in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite, with Primera Luz Filipina No. 69 as lead Lodge.

December

On the 5th, our Grand Master attended the NCR Multi-District Convention held at the Plaridel Masonic Temple, with NCR-E as host District. Other participating Districts were NCR-A, NCR-B, NCR-C, NCR-D, NCR-F, and NCR-G.

On the 7th, our Grand Master met with the Past Grand Masters for the purpose of nominating candidates for the honored position of Junior Grand Warden; the seven brethren nominated will vie for the position during the Annual Communication of our Grand Lodge to be held in Manila in the last week of April 2010.

On the 10th, he presided over the Ceremony of Cornerstone Laying for Bernardo Carpio Lodge No. 359 in San Mateo, Rizal.

On the 12th, he and his party attended the Central Luzon Multi-District Convention, which was hosted by MD RIII-E (Bulacan). The other participating Masonic Districts were RIII-A (Pampanga), RIII-B (Bataan), RIII-C (Zambales), RIII-D (Nueva Ecija South), RIII-F (Nueva Ecija North), and RIII-G (Tarlac).

On the 17th, he presided over the Ceremony of Institution of Bagong Katipunan Lodge U.D.

On the 18th, he and his party attended the Southern Luzon Multi-District Convention in Batangas City, with RIV-D as host. RIV-C (Quezon) and RIV-E (Mindoro) participated in the convention; RIV-A (Cavite) and RIV-B (Laguna) were guest districts.

On the 19th, together with

other Grand Lodge Officers and a significant number of NCR brethren, our Grand Master celebrated the 97th anniversary of the founding of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. On that date, the GLP employees held their Christmas Party at the Aguinaldo Hall on the ground floor of the Plaridel Masonic Temple. Aside from giving out to the Grand Lodge staff their Christmas gift, he delivered a meaningful speech, in which he stressed, among other things, the importance of working together in harmony for the purpose of giving better service to the clientele of the GLP, who are, in the main, the Masons in the Jurisdiction of the Philippines.

In the afternoon of the same day, he took a flight to Cagayan de Oro City in order to be with his family, his friends and associates, and the employees of the business outfits of which he is the manager, namely: Toyota Cagayan de Oro, Inc. (Executive Vice President); Philyres Corporation (President and General manager); and Limac Enterprises, Inc. (Chairman of the Board and President).

Before he took his flight to his native city, he expressed his wish and prayer that Masons wheresoever dispersed, especially those in the Jurisdiction of the Philippines, have a meaningful and joyful Christmas Season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

**Glory to God in the highest realms,
peace upon all the earth, and goodwill
among men of every country, sect and
opinion!**

On Election of District Guild Officers

In his Circular No. 1 for 2009, MW John L. Choa, PGM, Grand Guild of Past Masters of the Philippines (GGPMP) President, informs the brethren, particularly the DDGMs, that pursuant to Article XII (Term of Office) of the standard By-Laws of the GGPMP, Section 1 provides that the position of all District Guild Officers shall be by election, and that the term of office of the District Guild Officers shall be for three consecutive years. Hence, the term of all District Guild Officers ended on April 30, 2009. Section 2 provides that the term of office of the District Deputy Grand Guild Master (DDGGM) shall be co-terminous with the term of the District Deputy Grand Master (DDGM) of the GLP.

MW Choa, moreover, informs the brethren that at the 25th National Convention of the GGPMP held at the Grand Caprice Restaurant, Lim Ket Kai Complex, Cagayan de Oro City on April 22, 2009, the following were elected (or re-elected) for a term of three year; MW John L. Choa, PGM, PGT, Grand Guild President; MW Raymundo N. Beltran, PGM, PGS, Grand Guild Vice-President; VW Mariano Sih, PAGT, Grand Guild Treasurer; and VW Samuel P. Fernandez, PGSB, Grand Guild Secretary. Their term will expire in 2012.

Appointed Grand Guild Officers were MW Danilo D. Angeles, PGM, GS, Grand Guild Chaplain; VW Ben Geli, PSG, Grand Guild Marshal; VW Benito Ty, PGSB, Grand Guild Auditor; VW Andoni Dumlao, PDDGM, Grand Guild PRO; VW Joven Chua, PDDGM, Grand Guild Inner Guard; and VW Peter Phoa, PDGL, Grand Guild Outer Guard.

States MW Choa: "Since the term of the officers of the District Guilds of Past Masters expired last April 30, 2009, it is necessary that every District Guild of Past Masters elects another set

of officers whose term shall be from 2009 to 2012. The DDGM, who is also the District Deputy Grand Guild Master (DDGGM), shall have supervision and control over the District Guild Officers. Therefore, the incumbent DDGMs must convene their respective Districts for the purpose of electing the District Guild Officers for 2009-2012.

"The Past Masters of every Masonic District shall elect the following: District Guild President, District Guild Vice President, District Guild Treasurer, District Guild Secretary, District Guild Chaplain, District Guild Marshal, District Guild Auditor, District Guild Inner Guard, and District Guild Outer Guard."

MW Choa adds that a lot of Masonic Districts have already organized their District Guilds and elected their respective Guild Officers, and that they have invited him to install their officers. He directs every DDGM, who is automatically the DDGM, to immediately convene the Guild of Past Masters of his district, if he has not yet done so, so that the officers can perform their duties accordingly.

GLP Honors 99 Distinguished Masons in Government

The MW Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines tendered a Testimonial Dinner in honor of 99 Distinguished Masons in Government held at the Centennial Room of the Manila Hotel on November 4, 2009.

The Program

After the cocktail, VR Magdangal M. de Leon, Grand Chaplain, invoked God's blessing on the assembly. MW Rudyardo V. Bunda, PGM, GMH, Grand Treasurer, welcomed one and all after the singing of the National Anthem.

Dinner over, MW Danilo D. Angeles, PGM, Grand Secretary, presented the Honorees to Grand Master Peter U. Lim Lo Suy, who invested each Honoree with a Memento (i.e., Medallion) and presented to each a Certificate. He was assisted by the Past Grand Masters present.

In behalf of the Honorees, MW Reynato S. Puno, GMH, Chief Justice of the Philippines, gave an eloquent response, the text of which is printed in this issue.

Finally, MW Lim Lo Suy delivered his closing remarks, the text of which is also printed in this issue.

RW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr., Junior Grand Warden, emceed the program.

The Honorees

Judiciary – The Honorees were: MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, GMH, Chief Justice of the Philippines; Bro. Arturo D. Brion, Associate Justice, Supreme Court; VW Magdangal M. de Leon, Associate Justice, Court of Appeals; Bros.

Romeo F. Barza, Danton Q. Bueser, Michael P. Elbinias, Samuel H. Gaerlan, Edgardo T. Lloren, and Elihu A. Ybañez – all Justices of the CA.

COA Commissioners – VW Juanito G. Espino, Jr. and Bro. Jaime P. Naranjo.

Department Secretaries – MW Hermodenes E. Ebdane, Jr., PGM, DPWH; RW Avelino I. Razon, Jr., DGM, OPAPP; VW Victor A. Domingo, DPWH.

Department Undersecretaries – VW Romeo S. Momo, DPWH; VW Narciso B. Nieto, DAR; WB Antonio C. Santos, Jr., DND; WB Siegfredo R. Serrano, DA; Bro. Ramon P. Santos, DE; Bro. Rafael C. Yabut, DPWH; Bro. Jaime A. Pacanan, DPWH; and WB Nabil A. Tan, OPAPP.

Department Assistant Secretaries – VW Arthur C. Lomibao, VW George S. Yorobe, VW Danilo P. Mangila, and Bro. Reynado I. Berroya.

Commissioners – VW Sixto S. Esquivias, IV, BIR, and WB Eduardo T. Malinis, Insurance Commission.

Ambassador (to Indonesia) – VW Vidal E. Querol.

Congressmen – VW Datu Pax S. Mangudadatu, 1st District, Sultan Kudarat; VW Simeon A. Datumanong, Maguindanao; WB Arnulfo F. Go, 2nd District,

Zamboanga del Norte; WB Alfredo D. Maranan III, 2nd District, Negros Occidental; WB Manuel S. Agyao, Lone District, Kalinga; Bro. Mark Leandro L. Mendoza, 4th District, Batangas; Bro. Teodoro L. Locsin, 1st District, Makati; Bro. Pedro P. Romualdo, Lone District, Camiguin; Bro. Florencio Gabriel G. Noel, Party List, An Waray; Bro. Ariel C. Hernandez, Party List, Anak Mindanao; and Bro. Mark Douglas Cagas.

Governors – VW Suharto T. Manguadatu, Sultan Kudarat; WB Aurelio M. Umali, Nueva Ecija; WB Joseph C. Cua, Catanduanes; Bro. Sadakul A. Sahali, Tawi-Tawi; Bro. Rafael P. Nantes, Quezon Province; Bro. Douglas R. Cagas, Davao del Sur; Bro. Loreto Leo S. Ocampos, Misamis Occidental; and Bro. Rolando E. Yebez, Zamboanga del Norte.

City Mayors – VW Abraham N. Tolentino, Tagaytay; Bro. Alipio F. Fernandez, Dagupan; Bro. Noel E. Rosal, Legazpi City; Bro. Melencio L. de Sagun, Jr., Trece Martires; Bro. Jerry P. Trenas, Iloilo; and Bro. Hector C. Villanueva, Bais, Negros Oriental.

AFP Generals – Bro. Victor S. Ibrado, Chief of Staff, AFP; VW Ruperto R. Pabustan; Bros. Rey C. Ardo, Hilario A. Atendido, Alejandro T. Camagay, Danilo M. Cortez, Ricardo A. David, Jr., Renato T. Delos Santos, Roberto Q. Estioko, Lino Horacio E. Lapinid, Reynaldo B.

Mapagu, Robert L. Morales, Samuel D. Narcise, Robert C. Noblefranca, Juancho M. Sabban, Arthur T. Tabaquero, Felipe G. Tabas, Jr. and Jose Tony E. Villarete.

PNP Generals – Bro. Jesus A. Verzosa, Director General; VW Teodorico B. Capuyan, VW Rodolfo Y. Magtibay, VW Jefferson P. Soriano; WB Orlando M. Mabutas, WB Victorino S. Panganiban, Jr; Gerry L. Barias. Leopoldo N. Bataoil, Drusill C. Bolodo, Abner D. Cabalquinto, Arturo G. Cacdac, Jr., Edwin Corvera, Amerodin T. Hamdag, Juan G. Luna, Francisco S. Manalo, Jr., Romulo F. Maningding, Benjardi H. Mantele, Roberto P. Rongavilla, Mario R. San Diego, Leocadio S. Santiago, Jr., and Felizardo M. Serapio, Jr.

Coast Guard – Bros. Cecil R. Chen, Lino H. Dabi, William M. Melad, Arturo P. Olavardo, and Luis M. Tuason, Jr.

Special Committee on Honors

Chair, MW Oscar V. Bunyi, PGM; Vice-Chair, RW Juanito P. Abergas; Members – RW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr., VW Godofredo V. Señires, Jr., VW Jesus Flor R. Nicolas, VW Jose A.I. Magbanua; Coordinator, AFP – VW Rufino G. Arias, Jr.; Coordinators, PNP – VW Nicanor S. Salvador and WB Tomas G. Rentoy, III; Concept & Design, Bro. Aldrin P. Malaki; and Secretariat – Ms Elo T. Morillo.

A cursory glance at our awardees will reveal that there is no branch in government where you cannot find a brother perched high in the hierarchy of achievers.... MW REYNATO S. PUNO

THE LADDER OF LIFE

by Chief Justice and MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, GMH

(Response in behalf of the Awardees, November 4, 2009, Manila Hotel, Testimonial Dinner honoring Distinguished Masons in Government).



Let me thank the MW Grand Lodge of F.A.M., and the PGMs for hosting this occasion giving recognition to brethren who have done well in the public service. A cursory glance at our awardees will reveal that there is no branch in government where you cannot find a brother perched high in the hierarchy of achievers. I am sure that the same scenario is being played out in the private world. It is heartwarming that a look at the more prominent names that glitter in our political sphere, our economic world, and our social registries, will show that they belong to the brethren and the sisters. It is not without reason that some predict that we are at the gateway of another golden age in Masonry in our jurisdiction. Indeed, while Masonry in other jurisdictions is suffering from the attrition of subtraction, Masonry in the Philippines is growing from the arithmetic of addition – the line knocking at our door seems to be gaining more and more length.

Anyway, having expressed our collective gratitude to the Grand Lodge for the awards, I cannot help but ruminate a bit about the purpose of Masonry, for it is in relation to this purpose that we can measure our success. Masonry teaches us that without exception, we are all rough ashlar aspiring to be the impossible, to be perfect ashlar in an imperfect world. In its most simplistic term, Masonry urges our change, our transformation from good men to better men. And Masonic success to change for good is expressed in various symbolism – resisting the ruffians in life, negotiating the rough and rugged road, and ascending Jacob's ladder, known as the ladder of life.

Our awards certainly convey the impression that we have reached the top of or near the top of life's ladder

and so allow me to express two brief thoughts about life's ladder. First, the ladder speaks of the potential of man, especially of his capacity to improve, to rise above external difficulties, to reach the mountaintop, to catch a glimpse of the end which is the real beginning. Second, the ladder impresses to us the impermanence of earthly success in life. It gives us the warning that the ladder can be used by man to rise but it can also cause his fall. The lowest rung of the ladder reminds us of the law of gravity, that they who ascend will later descend.

But the central lesson of the ladder is that whether we ascend or descend in life, ours is the freedom of choice and this freedom is given by the Grand Architect of the Universe to no other creature but to man. Let me end

with a quote from Pico della Mirandola's *Oratio de Hominiis Dignitate* where Pico imagines the voice of God saying to man:

"We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, xxx thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lowest forms of life, which are brutish. Thou

shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms which are divine." (Short Talk Bulletin, Vol. 87, September 2009, No. 9)

Let us carry all these Masonic lessons in our different stations in life. Brothers and sisters, again we thank you for the awards and may Masonry guide all of us in our progressive ascent on the intellectual, moral, and spiritual planes of life.



GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE TO DISTINGUISHED MASONS IN GOVERNMENT

(This is the text of the message which MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy delivered on the occasion of the testimonial dinner in honor of Masons who have distinguished themselves in Government held at the Manila Hotel on November 4, 2009.)

IN BEHALF OF THE MWGLP, allow me to convey our warmest fraternal greetings and felicitations to you, our distinguished brethren in Government. Because of your dedication and unselfish services, you have merited your respective exalted positions in the Republic of the Philippines; by doing so, you have reflected honor on our ancient and honorable fraternity. Your services as public servants have reached greater heights because, as Masons, you have consistently practiced the tenets of Freemasonry. One of the principal purposes of Freemasonry is, in the words of the late WB and Chief Justice Manuel V. Moran, "to create 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."

Allow me also to express my sincerest gratitude to MW Oscar V. Buniy and his committee members, RW Juanito P. Abergas, RW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr., VW Flor R. Nicolas, VW Godofredo V. Señires, Jr. and VW Juvy Magbanua, for successfully organizing this auspicious assemblage of Masons tonight and to the other brethren behind this memorable undertaking to make this testimonial dinner a reality.

I am, indeed, honored to have this rare privilege to speak before you, our distinguished Masons, who are public servants of the highest caliber.

As I went through the list of eminent brethren whose presence tonight makes an enduring significance to our Masonic existence, I was truly awe-struck by the names and numbers of well-admired and highly regarded



Masons who have made a mark in their respective fields of endeavor, and more particularly in the furtherance of our Masonic dreams and aspirations. However intimidated, I am thrilled and excited; for this will be a "chance of a lifetime" to be able to address you as the Grand Master of Masons in the Jurisdiction of the Philippines.

Tonight is a very happy occasion for me to be in the company of honorable men who are in public service with exemplary performance and have brought with them the name of our fraternity into the limelight of public service and who have made all of us members of our beloved Fraternity very proud of them.

My dear brother honorees, why am I so proud to be with you tonight? Why do I consider this evening's affair one of the highlights of my term as your Grand Master? It is for one reason alone, and that is because tonight, we have gathered the men of honor, virtue and charitable feelings – men who are deserving to be called MASONS. Men and Masons who have been tried and tested and have proven themselves worthy in their endeavors to serve the public. My dear brother honorees, not only have you brought honor to our Ancient Craft, but more importantly, you have set the standards which the brethren may follow. You have blazed the trail upon which others may tread. You have proven yourselves to be men of principles, worthy of emulation by those who dream and aspire to make a difference in this part of the world and make it a better place for all of us to live in.

In my humble assessment, I would like to mention four important principles commonly adhered to by men and Masons like you; these principles,

I believe, have served as your guiding light in your journey towards your dreams and your aspirations in life. First, YOU HAVE MADE YOUR Future GREATER THAN YOUR PAST.

Second, YOU HAVE MADE YOUR Contribution GREATER THAN YOUR REWARDS.

Third, YOU HAVE MADE YOUR Performances GREATER THAN YOUR PREPARATIONS.

And fourth, YOU HAVE MADE YOUR Gratitude GREATER THAN YOUR SUCCESS.

My brethren, these four principles are the hallmarks of a TRUE MASON and a TRUE PUBLIC SERVANT. Indeed, I am humbled by your achievements and your fidelity to your sworn duties for public service. It is for this reason that we have honored you tonight with a simple token of appreciation that comes from our heart. It is a tribute to the countless hours you have spent and the sweat and tears you have shared as you went through the extra mile to make a difference in the lives of those you have touched.

My brethren, let us altogether put to heart and mind our Masonic theme for this year: TOGETHER, BRETHREN, WE WILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE! MAKING THE DIFFERENCE also happens to be my personal advocacy in life. I am always guided by this quote written by William Penn, in whose honor the State of Pennsylvania was named after, and I quote:

"I shall pass through this world

but only once; anything good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness that I can show, let me do it now; let me not defer it nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

As your Grand Master, I call upon each one of you to join me in our quest to spread the tenets of Freemasonry, those of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, as far and wide as our eyes can see and our hands can reach. You, my brother honorees, are at the forefront of this quest and upon your hands lay the hopes and dreams of our nation. There is no better than NOWtime to come forward and be counted, and to do our best in the pursuit of our goals in public service. With our common vision and collective hands, ANYTHING IS DOABLE... NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE.

The late Most Worshipful and Auditor General Pedro Gimenez recurrently told the brethren during his watch in the Grand East: "No matter how heavy the task is, no matter how rough and rugged the road may be, no Mason refuses to do his duty. No one among us should falter to proceed to his allotted task if that would mean for the best interest, the welfare, and the

survival of both our nation and our beloved fraternity."

At this point, allow me to invite you to revisit the Vision of the Grand Lodge which we have set at the start of my term, to wit:

"We shall endeavor to restore Freemasonry as the foremost organization in this part of the world, the members of which are persons of unimpeachable integrity and exemplary conduct who craft positive influences in their respective communities and in the lives of their fellowmen."

Allow me to congratulate you, in my humble way, for the success you have achieved, foremost as Men of honor and as Masons, who exemplify our Masonic ideals for a better tomorrow. With you, I doubt not that we can make the difference we have longed to make in our society.

TOGETHER, BRETHREN, WE WILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!

Again, my congratulations and best wishes to all of you.

Good evening, everyone.

• It is heartwarming that a look at the more prominent names that glitter in the political sphere, our economic world and our social registries will show that they belong to the brethren and the sisters. – MW REYNATO S. PUNO, PGM, GMH

• My dear brother honorees, ... you have proven yourselves to be men of principles, worthy of emulation by those who dream and aspire to make a difference in this part of the world and make it a better place for all of us to live in. – MW PETER U. LIM LO SUY, GRAND MASTER

“Revisiting” the Account by a Witness to Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal’s Execution

by WB Celso B. Hilbero, PM (#270)

On December 30, this year, we commemorate the 113th anniversary of Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal’s unjust execution at the Bagumbayan field.

Bagumbayan field was not what the Luneta or Rizal Park is today. In those days the waters of the Manila Bay still reached the other side of the Malecon Drive (now Bonifacio Drive); the Luneta then went as far back as the site of the old Bagumbayan police station, near where the lush bamboo thickets grew.

Let us “revisit” what a witness to the execution, Hilarion Martinez, narrated to a certain Alberto B. Mendoza, which was published in the Sunday Times Magazine on December 25, 1949. At the time his first-person narrative was published, Martinez was already 72 years old. But at the time of Bro./Dr. Rizal’s execution, he was only 20 years old.

Martinez’s First-Person Account

morn.

“It was six o’clock in the morning of December 30, 1896, when we woke up at our quarters at the corner of Sta. Potenciana and Magallanes Streets, in Intramuros, to attend the execution of Jose Rizal, about which we had already been briefed the day before. We were in the Leales Voluntarios de Manila, a semi-military organization under the command of Capt. Manuel Leaño. Our immediate officer was a youthful Spanish lieutenant named Juan Pereira. I was twenty years old then, and a member of the drum corps.

“We marched out of Intramuros through the Puerta Real, or where Nozaleda (now General Luna) Street out through the walls on the south, clad in our camamo uniforms and with our cajas vivas (or drums) strapped around our waists. We proceeded to what is now Padre Burgos Street, under an overcast sky and in a chilling December

“As we rounded the corner of P. Burgos and General Luna Streets, we got a glimpse of the cuadro, a square formation of about ten companies of Filipino and Spanish soldiers. The former occupied the inner portion of the quadrangle, while the latter were at the rear. This formation was strategic because the Filipino soldiers’ position within the cuadro signified that the Spanish authorities wanted Rizal to die in the hands of the Filipino soldiers. If the latter disobeyed the command to fire upon Rizal, the Spanish soldiers positioned at the rear would fire upon them.

“There were civilian spectators, too. The side of the cuadro near the bay was open.

“As we approached the quadrangle, we saw some Spanish military officers earnestly talking in low voices. Rizal was not yet anywhere to be seen. Not having had a glimpse of the

man before, I began to wonder what he looked like. I remembered what my mother had told me about Rizal: that he was so learned that he could not be poisoned by anybody because he always carried with him his own spoon and fork, by means whereof he could detect whether his food was poisoned or not; that many other legends had started to be woven around him; and that he was fighting for the cause of his country and countrymen.

"Soon the small crowd heard the muffle sound of our approaching *cajas vivas* (or drums) draped with black cloth during execution ceremonies. A slight commotion broke out at the right end of the cuadro near the bay as some soldiers with fixed bayonets entered, followed by a man in black suit, his elbows tied from the back, on his head a *chistera* (or black derby hat), on one side a Spanish officer and on the other a Jesuit priest.

"When I saw the man, I knew he was Rizal.

"A group of Spanish officers who were standing nearby opened into a *media luna* (i.e., a semicircular formation). Then a Spaniard (we would learn later he was Lt. Luis Andrade, one of Rizal's popular Spanish defenders and sympathizers) affectionately shook the latter's hand. When Rizal was near the center of the quadrangle, the mayor de la plaza, a colonel, announced at the *bandillo*: 'En el nombre del Rey, el que se levante la voz a favor del reo sera ejecutado' (In the name of the King, he who raises his voice in favor of the criminal will be executed).

"A deep silence enshrouded the whole assembly.

"The commanding officer accosted us and gave us this injunction: 'Should Rizal attempt to speak aloud, beat your drums so hard as to drown his voice'.

"I looked at Rizal. He was regularly built, unshaven, and quite pale, perhaps as a result of his detention. But he was visibly composed and serene. A Jesuit priest approached him, prayed, and blessed him.

"Then a colonel approached Rizal likewise, as the commanding officer ordered us to move two paces backwards. The firing squad, composed of six Filipinos, came forward and took our former position behind Rizal.

"I saw Rizal exert effort to raise his right hand, which was tied at the elbow, and take off his *chistera*.

"My heart beat fast, and as in all other executions I had witnessed before, I felt tense and nervous. Amid the silence, I saw Rizal move his head very slowly up and down, his lips moving as if he was praying.

"Then the commanding officer raised his saber – a signal for the firing squad to aim. Then he dropped his saber to a *fuego* position. The simultaneous crack of rifle-fire shattered the stillness of the morning. Jose Rizal exerted one last effort to face his executioners and toppled down with a thud, his face towards the sky and his derby hat thrown ahead. He fell dead at his feet in the direction of the bay.

"Many of the reos or offenders had been caused to kneel and be hoodwinked before they were shot on the head. But Rizal was spared that humiliation.

"Suddenly, as if from nowhere, a small dog appeared and ran in circles around Rizal's fallen body, barking and whimpering. (This incident would much later be the subject of our talk in our quarters. To some of my comrades, it was an omen of a coming misfortune.)

"Then the capitan militar de la sanidad (i.e., medical officer) stepped forward, knelt before the fallen man, and felt his pulse. Looking up, he beckoned to a member of the firing squad to come forward and give the final tiro de gracia (i.e., another close-range shot to the heart), probably to ensure that Rizal could not come up with the miracle of life anymore. I thought I saw a faint haze from Rizal's coat, but it might have been a wisp of morning mist. Seeing the body of the fallen Rizal in front of me, I felt very weak.

"The officers began to show animation again. They fell in formation and marched to the tune of the Spanish national air, the paso doble Marcha de Cadiz.

"As in previous executions, we members of the drum corps filed past the body to view it for the last time. When I heard to command 'Eyes left', I did not shut my eyes as I had done at the sight of the several roes whose heads were blown off by rifle-fire. I really wanted to take a close look at the man one last time. He lay dead on the dewy grass. The day had already progressed, and little did I realize then that I was gazing at the face of the greatest Malayan, and that I was witnessing history in making."

Concluding Statements

Hilarion Martinez was, indeed, lucky to have lived in historic times. He

subsequently joined the Philippine Revolution. During the Filipino-American War he was a member of the "Batalon de Manila" under General Pantaleon Garcia and Col. Rosendo Simon. He distinguished himself in several engagements, so that he was promoted later to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. In an assault on the American cavalry stationed in the church of Tondo, he was captured and imprisoned for about eight months in Intramuros and later in Cavite, where he was released shortly after the cessation of hostilities.

We, too, are fortunate because a man sacrificed his life on Bagumbayan field – a sacrifice which hastened the birth of our nation and which led to the savoring by us and our children of the sweet fruit of freedom and independence.

To Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal, at least two factors were of paramount importance for a revolution to succeed. First, proper motivation. And the proper motivation should be "Bayan muna bago pamilya, bago sarili" or "Tayo muna bago kami." He suggested this motivation in the first two stanzas of his untitled valedictory poem, as follows:

Farewell, country I adore, region loved by the sun, Pearl of the sea of the Orient, our eden lost. I'll be happy to give you my sad, withered life. Were it more brilliant, more fresh, more flowery, I'd also give it to you, I'd give it for your good.

In the fields of battle, fighting with delirium, Others give you their lives without doubt, without regrets.

The place matters not: cypress, laurel or lily, Scaffold or open field, combat or cruel martyrdom, 'Tis all the

same if country and home demand it.

Second, proper timing. He did not join the armed struggle against Spain initiated by Bro. Andres Bonifacio because he thought the Filipino insurgents were not yet well prepared for a protracted fight with the Spaniards. But by the time he was about to be executed, he felt the Filipino revolutionaries were already quite prepared. He eloquently enunciated the importance of proper timing in this stanza:

I die when I see your sky being colored
And announces the day after the dark night.
If you need coloring with which to dye your dawn,
Turn my blood, pour it out in the right hour,
And let it gild its newly-born light.

Let us strive hard to have the proper motivation and the proper timing in order not to suffer the supreme sacrifice of Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal and other Filipino heroes to go to waste. With proper motivation and proper timing, we will serve as vanguards against abuses

and corruptions in government; we will also be beacon lights for our children, so that they, too, will clear the path towards a peaceful, progressive and prosperous Philippines. With Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal in our minds and hearts, I know we can develop our nation into, metaphorically speaking, "a pearl of the sea of the Orient" – a nation imbued with the priceless principles of pagkakaisa, pakikisama, pagsasarili, pagkabayani, and pakikipagkapwa-tao.

Speaking through Elias in Chapter 63 of his immortal *Noli Me Tangere*, entitled "Noche Buena," Bro./Dr. Jose Riza said, "Mamamatay akong di man nakita and ningning ng bukang-liwayway sa aking Inang Bayan! Kayong makakakita, batiin ninyo siya... at huwag kalilimutan ang mga nalugmok sa dilim ng gabi!"

No, we must not forget Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal and other Filipino forebears who labored and fought hard for our country and people to be free and independent. Rather, we must remember them for their noble deed of giving their lives for our nation's welfare and happiness. No, my brethren, we must not forget their supreme sacrifice!

Selected Statements of Bro. Rizal

- I now more firmly believe in the existence of a creative being through reasoning and by necessity, more than my previous belief through faith.**
- No one can pass judgment on the beliefs of others using his own beliefs as a norm.**
- I believe in the redemption by the Word, and humanity rising again triumphant and glorious.**



COLUMNS

Rough and Rugged Road

by VW Victor A. Yu, PSGL

VERY WORST-OF-ALL

One of the most frequent issues sowing disharmony among the brethren nowadays is the struggle for positions in our fraternity. In some cases, such contention has allowed passions and prejudices to excessively overwhelm Masons causing them to utterly disregard those moral duties we have been taught in our lodges and repress any memories of an obligation we all took, which is never to harm a brother in whatever manner.

The frequent rationale given by those who covet high positions in our Craft is that they would want to serve the brethren and they can only do so if the purple of the Fraternity rests upon their shoulders. But can a brother only serve if he has a high position in the fraternity, most specifically one with a title of "Very Worshipful"? If so, how come we have those low-profile brethren in our honorable institution who labor consistently and truly provide the stability for their respective lodges and districts as well as for the Grand Lodge? Most of such "really big people" and worthy brethren never become Grand Lodge Officers or District Officers but are generally honored and widely respected within and without Masonry.

In reality, the less-informed brethren are blindly seeking the recog-

niton or honors arising from the offices they covet. Specifically, they would like to be addressed as "Very Worshipful" or even "Most Worshipful" in some cases. It is peculiar in our evolved national culture that former public officials are addressed by their former positions such as Senator, Secretary, Mayor, Kagawad, General, etc. However, "Worshipful" is not the equivalent of any position but is rather parallel to the title "Honorable," which we use to address public officials. No public official ever calls himself as "Honorable" because it is a title meant to be addressed by others to a person and not by one to himself. You cannot give honors to yourself unless something is loose in your brains. So it is the height of absurdity when a brother once demanded from a Grand Lodge staff to address him as "Very Worshipful" instead of "Mister". When one demands to be addressed as "Honorable (Very Worshipful)", he is most certainly dishonorable or a prototype "Very Worst-Of-All" who is not only misinformed but has allowed vanity to unduly cloud his common sense. Hence, every time you hear a brother addressing himself as Worshipful, Very Worshipful, Right Worshipful or Most Worshipful, he is definitely a "Worst-Of-All".

On the contrary, when a brother calls you by your name without the

lodge, it is the greatest honor because you are no longer just a brother whom our obligations require us to recognize. But rather, you are now also being considered by him as a friend by his own personal choice. Disinterested or non-mercenary friendships are the best things in life that remain even when time shall be no more. We are constantly reminded in our installation ceremonies that a time will come when all distinction, save that of GOODNESS, shall cease and DEATH, the MIGHTY LEVELER of human greatness, reduces us to the same state. I am sure we all have met and still meet friends of our grandparents and parents who treat us as their own. Such fulfilling experience is evidence that not wealth nor power; but only the values of true friendship are transmitted unimpaired from generation to generation. We meet genuine and lifetime friends which we would not have even known had it not been for Masonry. Let us, therefore, cherish to be called as friends, instead of superiors, most especially amongst our brethren.

Some brethren also covet the powers that come with the position and misuse such power and authority to cover up their insecurities in their lives. They likely have some unresolved issues in their respective families, workplaces and communities. Instead of enabling themselves to be better persons, they find it more convenient to hurt others and be self-righteous rather than face themselves in the mirror. However, we are a voluntary organization and when tyrants rule, members just do not show up until their term expires typically in a year and the lodge, district and Grand Lodge suffers from the loss of participation from worthy brethren.

After being "Worst-Of-All", some brethren are drunken with pow-

er and proceed to manipulate lodge elections and demand appointments at the Grand Lodge for their allies for mercenary purposes: be it for mammon; influence; favors; and other selfish reasons opposite to the concept of genuine service to the Craft. They proclaim themselves to be the saviors of the fraternity. However, their own lives within and without the lodge are the ones which need saving and they should focus their time and resources on rectifying themselves first. A typical attitude is not to support lodge, district and Grand Lodge if their "chosen ones" are not positioned. Where is really the love? For the Craft or for themselves?

Power in our mystic circle comes not by force or manipulation, but from mutual respect, sincerity and plain dealing. Observation of the lives of the respected brethren amidst us and the miserable and discontented lives of our insecure and self-righteous brethren will bear out this fact.

In our rituals, we are taught to cultivate a society of friends and band of brothers where we are supposed to join in promoting each other's welfare and rejoicing in each other's prosperity. In kingdoms where all men want to be kings, there will be endless chaos and perpetual conquests of some kings by another. But where men refuse to be made kings and instead do their respective responsibilities in their communities and lead by example, true kingdoms and lasting civilizations are built and their resources shared and sustained. The same goes for our ancient and honorable institution. We can make the true difference by striving to be truly better men instead of titular kings hungry for earthly powers, honors and recognition. Together, Brethren, Let Us Make the Difference **now** and start it within ourselves.



AMENDMENTS TO THE MASONIC CONSTITUTION AND ORDINANCES

During the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge in Cebu City in 2006, several substantial amendments and revisions were proposed to the provisions of our Masonic Constitution and Ordinances which were approved by the brethren. These are the following:

Part I Relating to the Grand Lodge

Article I, Section 2, On the Grand Lodge Seal, was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 2. "The Seal of the Grand Lodge And the fourth quarter (sinister base) with two of the Great Lights in Masonry WITH A LETTER "G" SUPERIMPOSED UPON THEM, which are the principal Symbols in every country and which indicate the universality of Freemasonry."

Article II, Section 2, On Officers of the Grand Lodge, was AMENDED to INCLUDE.

Sub-Section 2 (g) – ONE GRAND AUDITOR

Article XIV was AMENDED to INSERT the following:

ARTICLE XIV The Grand Auditor

Sec. 1. The Grand Auditor shall be

vested with the following powers and duties:

- a. To be the Ex-Officio Chairman of the Committee on Accounts of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines and shall, together with the Committee on Accounts, exercise the powers and functions appurtenant to such Committee.
- b. To recommend to the Grand Master the composition of and the Appointees to the Membership of the Committee on Accounts.;
- c. To act as the formal Adviser of the Grand Master in the formulation of the audit guidelines and procedures for adoption by all Lodges within the Philippine jurisdiction;
- d. To exercise such other powers and functions which the Grand Master may from time to time delegate.

An Article was INSERTED after article XIV creating the COUNCIL OF ELDERS, as provided for by EDICT 224 EBDANE, which shall read as follows:

ARTICLE XV COUNCIL OF ELDERS

Sec. 1. There shall be a Council of Elders which shall be composed of all the Past Grand Masters with the following powers and functions:

- a. The Council shall complement the Board for General Purposes in the exer-

cise of its functions and act as the adviser of and assist the Grand Master in his governance of all matters concerning the Grand Lodge of the Philippines;

b. The Council shall meet upon the call of the Grand Master;

c. It shall exercise such other powers and functions which the Grand Master may from time to time delegate to it.

Article XVIII, Section 3 (a), On the DDGM, was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 3 (a). To visit each Lodge in his District.

Article XX, Section 3, On Duties of the Grand Lodge Inspector, was ADDED/INSERTED as a Sub-Section to read as follows.

Sec. 3 (g). To submit a Monthly GLI Report to the District Deputy Grand Master.

Article XXIV, On the Powers and Functions of the Grand Historian, was INSERTED as follows:

ARTICLE XXIV Grand Historian

Sec. 1. It shall be the duty of the Grand Historian to prepare annually a report of the more significant events, that are worthy of inclusion in a printed history of the Grand Lodge. Two copies of the report shall be filed in the Office of Grand Secretary under the heading "Grand Lodge History" so as to maintain the history of the Grand Lodge current at all times.

PART II Ordinances

Article VI, Section 3 and Article XVII,

Section 14 were DELETED.

Article VI, Section 29 was REVISED to read as follows:

Sec. 29. No Lodge shall INITIATE A PETITIONER UNLESS ALL THE REQUIRED DEGREE FEES HAVE BEEN FULLY PAID.

Article II, Section 3 (w) was AMENDED/REVISED to read as follows:

Sec. 3 (w) To instruct its delegates to the Annual Communication as to how to vote on any matter, EXCEPT ON THE ELECTION OF GRAND LODGE OFFICERS.

Article VI, Section 10 was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 10. All petitions for degrees and affiliations shall be referred to a Committee of Three (3) who shall INDIVIDUALLY AND SEPARATELY make a strict examination into the moral, mental, physical, and other qualifications of the petitioner and report thereon to the Master at the next stated meeting, unless further time be granted.

Article VI, Section 15 was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 15. The ballot box shall contain as many white balls as there members of the Lodge present together with THREE (3) or more black cubes... After inspection it shall be placed on the west side of the Altar with the open compartment to the West and the handle to the East.

Article VII, Section I, On Fees, was AMENDED/REVISED to read as follows:

Sec. 1. The Grand Lodge may charge fees of such amount as may be fixed by

the Grand Master and duly approved at Annual Communication on the following:

- a. For a Dispensation to form a new Lodge;
- b. For a Charter to perpetuate a Lodge;
- c. For a Dispensation to hold an election of officers other than at the prescribed time;
- d. For a Dispensation to receive and act upon the petition for Degrees of a person whose petition was rejected within less than twelve (12) months;
- e. For a Dispensation to receive and act upon the petition for Degrees of a person belonging to the Armed Forces of the Philippines or of the United States or other diplomatic agencies in the Philippines who has fulfilled but does not fully possess the residence qualification;
- f. For a Dispensation to confer any Masonic degree upon more than five (5) candidates at any one meeting or to confer degrees collectively on more than one candidates;
- g. For Dispensation and other documents for which to specific Fee is fixed, expect that there shall be no fee when issued for the widow or children of a deceased brother. No diploma shall be issued until the Secretary of the Lodge has made a formal request to the Grand Secretary;
- h. For each copy of its printed proceedings for the current year except the three (3) copies sent to each subordinate Lodge and those required for transmission abroad, and for the use of the Grand Lodge at its next Annual Communication;
- i For publication or supplies by the office of the Grand Secretary.
- j. Such other charges and fees which the Grand Master may deem justified and appropriate

Article VII, Section 2, Concerning Dues, was AMENDED/REVISED to read as follows:

Sec. 2. Each Lodge, whether chartered or under dispensation (U.D.), shall pay such annual dues of such amount as may be fixed by the Grand Master after due approval at the Annual Communication, on the following:

- a. For each Master Mason listed in its Annual Report, except life members by longevity (LML);
 1. Per capita assessment,
 2. Cabletow Subscription fee,
 3. Masonic Charities for Crippled Children,
 4. Youth Fund,
 5. Building Fund,
 6. Charity Fund,
 7. Grand Guild of Past Masters,
 8. Library and Museum.
- b. Each petitioner for degrees:
 1. Conferral fee for three (3)degrees,
 2. Temple Fund.
- c. Such other accounts as the Grand Master may deem justified and appropriate.

Article VII, Section 3 was AMENDED/REVISED to read as follows:

Sec. 3. In the event that a Master Mason is a regular members of MORE THAN ONE (1) LODGE, he shall pay to his first Lodge all annual dues and assessments as enumerated in Sub-section 2.a. of the preceding Section, while he shall pay to his OTHER LODGES only the per capital assessment and other dues peculiar to said Lodges.

Article IX, Section 2(d), On Reactiva-

tions of Lodges was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 2 (d) Payment to the Grand Lodge of a reactivation fee of SUCH AMOUNT AS MAY BE FIXED BY THE GRAND MASTER AND APPROVED AT THE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION.

Article XXB, Section 4, On Definitions – A Subsection was ADDED to read as follows:

Sec. 4 – Residence – This shall mean to refer to his actual place of residence, or to his place of business, or to his workplace, or to his workplace, or to his place of birth.

Article XXB, Section 4, On Definitions. A Sub-section was ADDED to read as follows:

Sec. 4. Charter Member – is one whose name appears in a Dispensation of From a New Lodge as one of its Petitioners. After a Charter had been issued he ceases to be a Charter Member and could either demit or be a regular or plural member of the Lodge after complying with the membership procedures.

Articles XXB, Section 4 (s) was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 4(s) Plural Member – A plural member means a Master Mason who is a regular member of more than one but not exceeding five (5) Lodges other than his Mother/Parent Lodge. Membership of more than one Lodge is called Plural Membership.

Article XX B, Section 4 (t) was AMENDED to read as follows:

Sec. 4 (t) Regular Membership – This shall refer to Master Masons who went

through the process of membership in one or more Lodges, termed Plural Membership. A regular member pays annual dues and assessments as provided for by Law, and enjoys all the rights and privileges of membership in a Lodge. Those raised as Master Masons by Lodges Under Dispensation (U.D.) shall be deemed regular members.

Section2 (j), Article III, was REVISED to read as follows:

j. To Submit to the Grand Lodge its annual report for the preceding year within the first fifteen (15) days of January of each year and remit the required dues, fees and/or other charges for the current year within the first quarter of the current year.

Any dues, fees and/or other charges not paid within the prescribed period shall be charged such interest and charges as the Grand Master may impose.

The more important amendments in the Constitution are the insertion of a whole Section on the Grand Auditor and the Council of Elders and the duty of the Grand Historian.

In the Ordinances, the more important amendments concerned the following:

1. Section 29, Article VI providing that "No lodge shall initiate a petitioner unless all the required degree fees have been fully paid;
2. Section 3, Article II.(w) on the power of the Lodge to instruct its delegates to the Annual Communication as to how to vote on any matter, EXCEPT ON THE ELECTION OF GRAND LODGE OFFICERS;

3. Section 10, Article VI on the referral of petitions for degrees and affiliations to a committee of three (3) who shall INDIVIDUALLY AND SEPARATELY make a strict examination into the moral, mental, physical and other qualifications of petitioners.

4. The added provision as Section 4, Article XX B defining residence to refer to Place of residence, or to his place of business, or to his workplace, or to his place of birth.

The Masonic Light

by VW Robert O. Asuncion, SGL

ON MASONIC CHARITY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In November we focus our attention on one of the principal tenets of the Fraternity, namely, Relief. This tenet was understood by our early brethren to mean the alleviation of the suffering of a brother and his dependents. In modern times, however, we see Relief in its wider context of Masonic Charity, which means not simply providing money or material assistance to relieve distress, but rather caring for, as well as giving our time and talents in the service of, the residents of our communities. The practice of Charity has been so inextricably intertwined with the Institution that if it is taken out, it would materially alter the essence of our Institution. In fact, it has been considered one of the important aspects of Masonry, the others being its ritual, its symbolism; its philosophy, creed, and spirit of friendship; its history; and its jurisprudence. Charity is considered the cornerstone of all Masonic virtues; it is the "conscience" of every Freemason; without it, Masonry would be a different organization. Therefore, let us renew

5. Article XX B a subsection was added defining a plural member as a Master Mason who is a regular member of more than one lodge but not exceeding five lodges other than his Mother/Parent Lodge.

It is good practice to be updated on amendments to the Masonic Constitution and the Ordinances, in order to avoid mistakes in the operation of the Lodges.

our commitment to put the principle of Relief into meaningful action. We must not pay lip service to this monitorial declaration: "To relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on Masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To soothe the unhappy, to sympathize with their misfortunes, to compassionate their miseries, and to restore peace to their troubled minds is the great aim we have in view. On this basis we form our friendships and establish our connections." We have to put the principle of Relief into meaningful action because, as we avow, the hurt of one fellow man is the injury of all men.

... AND LODGE ELECTIONS

December is when we elect the brethren we believe will be able to take our respective Lodges to greater, if not unprecedented, heights of achievement. Before we cast our ballots, we must seriously look upon the impor-

tance of each position to be filled. We should elect the most qualified brethren of our Lodges to occupy the positions of Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary, and Auditor, as well as Harmony Officer. We have to elect those who will take their respective tasks to heart; we must make sure that they are true and trusty, of good repute, held in high estimation amongst the brethren, well skilled in the work of the Craft, and possessed of a zealous regard for the interest and welfare of the Fraternity in general and of our respective Lodges in particular. We must make sure, too, that the brethren we elevate to dignified positions in our respective Lodges are exemplary in conduct, as well as steady and firm in principle.

We have to elect a brother who is well qualified to discharge the impor-

tant duties of the Master's Chair. The fulfillment of the duties of Mastership requires much personal inconvenience and sacrifice of time. The interest of the Lodge and its immediate welfare and prosperity depend upon the skill, wisdom and assiduity of the Master; the general peace and harmony among the members of the Lodge take their tone from his conciliating courtesy; otherwise, the Lodge will suffer from his lack of so vital an attribute.

If the Fraternity is to gain strength and vigor, it needs leaders who have vision and possess the ability to get things done.

May all our Lodges have inspired and inspiring, as well as disinterested and dedicated, leaders who best can work and best agree among themselves. So mote it be.

More Insights into the Nature & Mission of Masonry

by J. Flor R. Nicolas, PM (#42)

Looking Further into the Spirit of Masonry

In the special edition of this publication, we directed our attention to improving our metapersonal relationships – that is, our relationships with God and with the universe. In this issue, we take a close look at our interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships – that is, our relationships with our fellow-souls, particularly brothers in Masonry, and with our own selves.

Our Interpersonal Relationships

The world in which we live and work is, clearly, still fraught with enmities and inhumanities. There still exist among men much suspicion, uncharitableness, and hate; much warfare,

waste, and woe; much faction, feud, and folly; much separation, division, and fragmentation due to barriers of color, creed, and caste, as well as habit, interest, and training. That is why Masonry has issued the clarion call for us, its initiates in every country throughout the world, to make our respective Lodges "oases of equality and goodwill in a desert of strife, working to weld mankind into a great league of sympathy and service." We should, therefore, exert a little more effort than before to appeal to our fellowmen, particularly our countrymen, to get well acquainted with, as well as love, one another, deeply impressing upon them the ne-

cessity of filling our relations with our fraternity's spirit of friendship.

Individually and collectively, we can help Masonry create and make prevail (1) in our homes, communities, schools, and workplaces an atmosphere of sincere affection, true friendship, unity of purpose, cooperation, and mutual support; (2) in the religious world an atmosphere of tolerant ecumenism, open-minded dialogue, and friendly discussion, so that the various sects will, at long last, put their feud or wrangling to an end, and unite upon things most worthwhile and the least open to debate, such as the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the moral law, the golden rule, and the hope of a life everlasting; (3) in the realm of commerce and trade an atmosphere of friendly competition and human service, so that the law of the jungle (i.e., the survival of the fittest) will cease to hold sway therein, and businessmen and traders will, instead, work together toward building a social order in which all men have opportunity "to live, and live well," which is, according to Aristotle, the purpose of society; and (4) in the domain of politics and governance an atmosphere where rules the principle of pagkabayani or heroic because dedicated public service; for, after all, the motivation of government officials and employees should be "Bayan muna, bago pamilya, bago sarili."

Yes, as individual Masons and as Masonic Lodges/Districts, we can do a lot of things to help Masonry widely spread its spirit of friendship. We must do all within our power to make Masonry victorious because, as Ill. Joseph Fort Newton, 33^o, has optimistically stated:

"When that spirit has its way upon the earth, as at last it surely will, society will be a vast communion of kindness and justice, business a system of human service, law a rule of beneficence. The home will be more holy, the laughter of childhood more joyous, and the temple of prayer more mortised and tenoned in simple faith. Evil, injustice, bigotry, greed, and every vile and slimy thing that defiles and defames will skulk to the dark, unable to bear the light of a juster, wiser, more merciful order. Industry will be upright, education prophetic, and religion not a shadow, but a Real Presence, when man has become acquainted with man and has learned to worship God by serving his fellows. When Masonry is victorious, every tyranny will fall, every bastille crumble, and man will be not only unfettered in mind and hand, but free of heart to walk erect in the light and liberty of the truth."

Let us, therefore, look forward with Ill. Newton to the dawning of the day "when nations will be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, humane in the practice of wisdom; when no man will ride the rights of his fellows; when no woman will be forlorn, no little child wretched, by bigotry and greed."

Such is Masonry's vision of the meaning of life and the mystery of the universe. It has urged us, its initiates, to help in its tireless labor to "weave all the threads of human fellowship into a mystic cord of friendship, encircling the earth and holding the race in unity of spirit and the bonds of peace, as in the will of God it is one in the origin and end."

Masonry has also enjoined us

to help in the achievement of its aim, namely, "to bring men – first the individual man, and then, so far as possible, those who are united with him – to know and love one another."

We Freemasons must help our fraternity achieve its vision, bring its tireless labor to fruition, and attain its aim.

Since Freemasonry is "an activity of closely united men," we should also periodically renew our promise to fulfill our charge to be our brethren's keepers. We must not lose sight of the fact that we are Brothers of the Mystic Tie, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection, as well as enjoined to be true and faithful friends and brothers with one another. If we are such, then the non-Masonic world will readily recognize us to be "a sacred band, or society of friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist but that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who best can work and best agree." But if we are not, we cannot – and should not – expect other men to believe that we are a veritable microcosm of the universal league of mankind which Masonry has been seeking to bring about through all the ages.

How important, then, it is for us to review our duties as well to our brethren as to the Craft, and then to discharge those duties more faithfully than ever before! If we cannot improve our interpersonal relationships within the Craft, we cannot – and should not – expect to effectively spread our fraternity's spirit of friendship widely among our fellowmen, particularly fellow Filipinos.

Our Intrapersonal Relationships

Perforce, like charity, friendship begins at home; for unless we are true friends with our own selves, we cannot be true friends with other men. We should, in fact, be our own best friends; for to paraphrase the great Companion's precept, "Be friend with your neighbor as (you are with) yourself."

We must, then, periodically renew our resolve to faithfully discharge our duties to ourselves, which include observing such a prudent and well-regulated course of discipline as may best conduce to the preservation of our corporeal and mental faculties in their fullest energy; thus we will better able to exert the talents wherewith God has blest us as well to His glory as the welfare of our fellow-souls.

We must, moreover, periodically renew our commitment to do what we came here to do, namely, to learn to subdue our passions and to improve ourselves in Masonry. Taming the tiger in us and bringing our wild passions into obedience to the will of God requires us to make proficient use of the Square and Compasses, the Point within a Circle, and other related symbolical forms borrowed principally from the mason's trade and from architecture. By these symbolical forms we are reminded to exert all-out effort to make the divine and spiritual in us have control over the sensual and earthly – or to circumscribe our desires and keep our passions within due bounds toward all mankind.

Improving ourselves Masonically entails, among other things, avidly studying Masonry's tenets and teachings and consistently practicing these in daily life. Realizing this task to be an

uphill one, we invoke God that He be pleased so to influence our minds and hearts that we practice out of the Lodge those great moral duties which are inculcated in it, and with reverence study and obey the laws which He has given us in His Holy Word.

The moral ideal of Masonry is, indeed, high. We have to give ourselves to it if we are to ennoble and exalt ourselves and, through us, the residents of the communities in which we live and work. But we often fail Masonry by falling far below its high moral ideal. In this case, we try to make excuses for ourselves, and the most convenient excuse we make is that we share in our degree in the infirmity of mankind: "Hindi ko nagawa ang dapat kong gawin sapagkat

ako ay tao lamang." Instead of resorting to such a rationalization, we must tell ourselves: "Because I am a human being made in God's image, I must aim at higher and higher standards toward becoming as perfect as my heavenly Father."

Yes, we must earnestly endeavor to transform ourselves from rough to perfect ashlar, from slaves of our own passions and prejudices to Inward Masters – men of sterling character and unimpeachable integrity like the GMHA; men of honor, virtue and charitable feelings, to whom others may look for example and inspiration; men whose influence over others brings beneficial result.

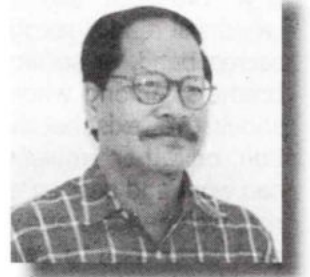
Square Cor. Compass Streets

by WB Celso B. Hilbero, PM (#270)

The Forgotten

Josephine...

Last December 30, 2009, the entire nation observed the 113th death anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Rizal. For many years, Filipinos have paid tribute to the supreme sacrifice of Dr. Rizal in that fatal morning of December 30, 1896. Many are unaware what ever happened immediately after the martyrdom of the hero. Where were the Katipuneros when Dr. Rizal faced his death? Where were his loved ones when he took his last breath? Maybe, at the back of Dr. Rizal's head, there would be a group of armed men who would not allow his death to take place, but, faith against faith, the people who were supposed to save his life were busy attending a conference in Cavite, including Andres Bon-



ifacio, Emilio Aguinaldo and many others. Only the immediate members of his family were within the premises of the execution site. Among them were his brother Paciano, sister Trinidad and his dulce es-tranjera – Marie Josephine Leopoldine McBride Bracken.

After the execution of the hero, a group of young men carried the body of the hero to the Paco cemetery by means of a caruaje. Not far behind the horse driven cart, was a young woman with tears in her eyes patiently running to catch up until she could no longer see it.

In our history, it was Dr. Rizal who dominates its pages. Almost nothing was mentioned about the contributions of the most loved and source of inspiration of the hero, Josephine or Josefina, as she was affectionately and fondly called by Rizal and Filipino patriots.

I would like to tackle Josephine's participation in the unfolding of our history because like her husband, Josephine lived a very dolorous life. She was born on August 9, 1876 to Irish parents, Cpl. James Bracken, of the British Army and Elizabeth Jane McBride in Victoria Barracks, Hong Kong. Josephine was the youngest of five children. Her mother died on September 2, 1876, a few days after giving birth to her. Her father being a military man, could not attend to all of his children, especially to Josephine who was so small yet. So, her father asked her childless godparents, George Edward Taufer, a German-American boiler engineer and his second wife, a Portuguese, to adopt and take care of Josephine. She never saw her real father again, who had left Hong Kong after retirement from the Army and died at the hands of robbers in Australia.

When Mr. Taufer got married to his third wife on November 12, 1891, Josephine ran away from his house on December 12th and went to the Italian convent because she could not get along with the new wife of her foster father. However, on February 3rd of that year, her foster father came begging her to go home because his wife was starving him. On September 14, Josephine had another trouble with Mrs. Taufer and forced her out again in the house. In 1893, Mr. Taufer got very ill and had sore eyes despite consulting many eye doctors.

Josephine was 18 when she went to Manila at the advice of a Cebuano, Julio Llorente, to see Rizal about the worsening cataract of Mr. Taufer.

When they arrived in Manila on September 5, 1893, they could not find Dr. Rizal. They stayed at 5 Ylaya Street, Tondo for about six months, and finally went to Dapitan to see Dr. Rizal. Josephine and Mr. Taufer arrived in Dapitan on March 14, 1894 in the morning at 7 o'clock. They stayed there for a week. After diagnosis, Dr. Rizal said that the eye condition of the old Taufer was hopeless. Hence, Mr. Taufer decided to return to Hong Kong. However, from the first time Josephine set on the shore of Dapitan, Rizal immediately fell in love with her. Josephine learned about that affection and in due time, they fell in love with each other. Josephine did not join Mr. Taufer for Hong Kong and stayed in the house of Narcisa, a Mason and member of Logia de Adopcion, while in Manila. She could not stay in the houses of the other siblings of Rizal because she was suspected by them as a spy of the Spaniards to monitor the activities of Dr. Rizal in Dapitan.

Dr. Rizal finally asked his mother to allow him to marry Josephine. His mother yielded to the request. But faith against faith, when the couple approached Father Antonio Obach of Dapitan, he did not celebrate the marriage but instead advised them to ask dispensation from the Bishop of Cebu as a prerequisite of the marriage ceremony. They got no approval from the bishop because Rizal was a Mason and his recantation from this would be a requirement for the granting of dispensation. Since Rizal thought there was nothing wrong for being a Mason, the wedding was called off. So, they looked for two witnesses and knelt before the

altar praying to the Great Architect in the Universe that they be given the graces of matrimony. The union blessed them with a stillborn baby, Francisco, named after his father as suggested by Narcisa. This was despite the fact that Josephine wanted to name the child, Peter. The young Francisco died few hours after birth.

When Dr. Rizal volunteered as physician in the revolution in Cuba, he was arrested by the Spanish authorities and charged him of rebellion and sedition. He was sentenced to die at the early day of December 30, 1896. At exactly 7:03, the martyred hero expired. One of those who were with Dr. Rizal was Josephine. While the lifeless body of Dr. Rizal was being carried by several Filipinos to bring his body to Paco Cemetary, the poor Josephine was running trying to catch up with the speeding-away caruaje carrying Rizal to Paco Cemetary.

Josephine, together with Paciano and Trinidad, proceeded to Cavite immediately after Rizal's death and passed amidst the cartel of Spanish soldiers. They arrived in San Francisco de Malabon, now General Mauricio Trias, Cavite, at about one in the afternoon. They were welcomed by Mason Andres Bonifacio who was in Cavite attending the convention of the Magdalo and Magdiwang factions of the Katipunan, in the house of Mrs. Estefania Potente. Bonifacio requested for a copy of *Mi Ultimo Adios* because he wanted it to be translated into Pilipino with the assistance of a Cavitenos Mason, Diego Mojica, president of Popular Council Magtiis and local poet and writer in Tagalog.

Josephine stayed at the Tejeros estate which she converted into a field

hospital for the revolutionist. She later organized the women of San Francisco de Malabon, and put up a hospital catering to the medical requirements of the Katipunan. She served in the revolution under the leadership of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo. In one of the clashes with the Spaniards, Josefina, as she was fondly called by Rizal and the patriots, killed a Spanish officer with her own rifle.

When San Francisco fell in the hands of the Spaniards, Josephine was given refuge by several Mason brothers until she decided to go home to her place in Hong Kong. While traversing the dense and narrow road of Maragondon mountain in Cavite from April to May 1897, she walked barefooted. Sometimes she rode on a carabao to rest her weary blooded feet while Paciano was pulling the work animal on their way to Laguna. The Rizals, together with some women of San Francisco de Malabon, were welcomed by the leader of the Katipunan and a Mason, Venacio Cueto in Bay, Laguna who discreetly found means to bring Josephine in Manila enroute to Hong Kong.

Josephine lived a sad life in Hong Kong. Her loneliness ended when she met another Filipino, Don Vicente Abad, a Cebuano who was then working in a Tabacalera factory in Hong Kong and became her second husband. They got married on December 15, 1898. They bore a child named Dolores (nicknamed Pichay) who was born on April 27, 1900 and who, later in her life married Don Salvador Mina from Ilocos Sur.

The Abads were balikbayans to the Philippines. Josephine taught English in a school in Cebu where the future president of the Philippines, Sergio Os-

mena, as her famous student.

The dulce extranjera de Rizal expired on March 15, 1902, a victim of tuberculosis of the larynx and buried at Happy Valley Cemetery. Her remains could not be ascertained anymore because the cemetery is now a bustling park in Hong Kong.

Today, not even the shadows of Josephine were given importance by the government; her name had been soaked in oblivion. Not even Masons

paid tribute to the contributions of Josephine to the Philippine revolution or her being the sweet inspiration of a brother – Dr. Rizal. Maybe, we should praise her sacrifices and contribution to the revolution during and after her husband's death. But her accepting another man as her second husband exhausted the privileges of being a wife of a great man. Being married to another man defeated the concept of mutual respect and love which bonded them during the lifetime of Dr. Rizal.

As I See It

by Bro. Frank Stevens

Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth Caring For Our Brothers But It Will Cost Money!



Our basic tenets of Masonry are often quoted, but are they understood?

Truth is the noblest quality of man and he who possesses it carries with him a force that is irresistible. He is a strong influence for all who know him to do good deeds and resist evil. He can be relied upon. He gives his word and it can be relied on. In fact, it is easier to be a truthful man than a liar. If a man tells lies, he has to have a fantastic memory to be able to recall what lie he told to what person. If a man always tells the truth, he does not have such problems.

Relief is misunderstood also. We should care not only for our Brother Masons, but for all mankind. It does not mean that we should give money to beggars who will then buy shabu or rugby.

It also means supporting our Lodge in its projects. Some of our members cannot give generously to our medical missions because they must make provision for their families first and they have only a modest income. One thing they can do is go on the missions and assist where they can. There is always a need for members to look after the medical supplies, help in preparing food for the medical team and provide security to control the crowds that often attend.

How often has a member stopped attending the Lodge and no one knows why? No one visits him to see if he is sick.

I heard of one sad story where a member did not attend for three months and when a brother went to find out the reason, was told that the brother, who had no family, had died three months previously and was interred already. Could that happen in your Lodge, my Brother?

And so we come to Brotherly Love – the most often abused of our tenets.

Brotherly love should be given all the time.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you is a good saying. If you think how you would feel if the roles were reversed and it was you that was the victim. In other words, how would you feel if it were done to you?

If you talk about a brother in derogatory terms in his absence, is that demonstrating brotherly love? Of course not. It is called back stabbing and it is unmasonic and has no place in our Lodges or fraternal gatherings.

If you disagree with a Brother and it is something that cannot be forgotten by you, then you have to discuss it with the Brother. And that means face to face and on the level.

There is nothing wrong with having a disagreement with a brother but if it cannot be settled amicably, then you must agree to disagree and get on with your lives. You disagree with your wife and get past it and so it should be easier to do the same with a brother.

After all, you have more in common with a Brother than you do with your wife!

In another jurisdiction, there is a rule that if you have a disagreement with a brother in your Lodge, you should both withdraw until the matter is settled between you.

It is an extreme measure but it works!

Many of our members do not have money problems. They have everything they want. Nice family, house, cars, golf club membership, medical insurance, etc. The one thing they do not have is time.

They work long hours and still find time to attend their Lodge, appendant body and Shrine.

They make generous donations to Lodge projects, such as medical and humanitarian missions and they support a local school project. Without assistance from these good-hearted members, many of our projects would fail.

A good friend recently suffered a stroke. He was very active in 3 Lodges and in his district. When he was struck down, he was taken into hospital and stayed there for more than a month. He is now at home and recovering slowly and every night I pray that his recovery will be complete.

His life has changed. Not only has he stopped smoking, he pleads with his visitors to stop also because he would not want anyone that he knows to suffer the same fate.

If only the clock could be turned back and he had taken an annual check up. His high blood pressure, high cholesterol and carbon dioxide in

his blood and many other problems would have been revealed. It may be that he would have rejected the doctor's advice to change his lifestyle but what if he had taken the doctor's advice? His stroke would not have happened and he would still be living a full life. He is missed by his lodges and they all hope he will return to him.

What about his family? Our sister is a lovely woman and is devoted to our Brother. He has children who suffer seeing their father in such a tragic situation.

If we increased our Annual Dues by as little as P1500 a year, a contract could be secured to carry out medical checks on every one of our members. Maybe we could afford to

equip and staff our own medlab.

Many brethren would still not take their medical check claiming they do not have time but if it was made part of the annual due renewal requirement, we would soon have a much healthier membership.

We need healthy members who will be around for a long time and so do your families.

It is better to have happy memories of Brethren who are now over 80 and no longer attend Lodge due to frailty than sad memories of so many who died in their 40s and 50s and never saw their grandchildren.

Do we have the will for this?

MW PETER U. LIM LO SUY: "Even the brethren will also find it helpful to attend the required Orientation of Candidates and Members after their Degrees to improve themselves continually in Masonry as they usually gain insights during such orientations. It will be better still if the brethren can also equip themselves in heart and in mind to give such an orientation."

DR. ALBERT G. MACKEY: "The candidate...is to be viewed in our speculative system as 'material brought up for the building of the temple'. The act of investigating the fitness or unfitness of that material constitutes a part of Masonic labor and when a Lodge has commenced that labor, it is discourteous for any other to interfere with it."

What Else Are Members of Our Masonic Family Doing?

180 DISTRESSED MEMBERS OF MASONIC FAMILY RECEIVE RELIEF FROM GLP

Some 180 members of the Masonic Family, all victims of Typhoon Ondoy and subsequent typhoons, received relief assistance, both in check and in kind, from the Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of the Philippines (G.L.P.).

Hereunder is a partial list of the recipients of relief assistance:

NCR-A (VW Arnel M. Ofendo Reyes, DDGM):

Bro. Roderick L. Henares, WB Edgardo E. Santos, Bro. Sherwin Enriquez, Bro. Danilo P. Carrasco, Jr., VW Fernando F. Mariano, WB Joselito L. Dela Cruz, Bro. Crisostomo M. Gaerlan.

NCR-B (VW Antonio G. Lim, DDGM):

Bro. Antonio B. Curitana and WB Alberto O. Morales.

NCR-C (VW Victorino A. Floro, III, DDGM):

VWBs Reuben M> Abenojar, George Hernandez, Edward D. See, Alfred T. Li, VW Benjamin T. Araniego, Jr.; WBs David S. Chua, Jose Jonathan R. Atienza, Edgar P. Ustarte, and Marcel Agustin P. Pañares;

Bros. Divino E. Endoso, Wilson K. Sia, Jay J. Miguel, Cesar M. MAGpayo, Teodoro B. Endela, Alexander P. Nanong, Antonio G. Dela Cruz, Wilfredo G. Cayetano;

Bros. Cristito J. Perez, Melito S. Villar, III, Vergel H. Villasper, Rolando S. Villacarlos, Reydante E. Ariza, Oscar L. Santos, and Siegfred A. Sumicad.

Petitioner Arnulfo B. Macatangay.

NCR-D (VW Lorenzo P. Reyes, DDGM):

Bros. Sandy Demdam, Narciso C. Pineda, and Ernesto K. Dela Cruz; WB Rodolfo L. Tan.

NCR-E (VW Elpidio S. De Chavez, DDGM):

VWBs Dennis T. Gabionza & Arnold V. Garcia;

WBs Orlando T. Salita & Juanito R. Angeles;

Bros. Reynaldo A. Garcia, Sergio O. Jamila, Charles Wee, Ronan Rex D. Ramos, Procopio P. Lipana, Reden C. Salita, Roy V. Pangilinan, Ruel M. Ladio;

Bros. Martin N. Tanchuling, Jose S. Chu, Joseph D. Abrena, Jonathan J. Catubig, Romeo L. Manalaysay, Marvin B. Oakes, Romeo D. Aninag, Allan Paul O. Balatibat, Jeffrey C. Dagdag, and Frenel B. Bautista

NCR-F (VW Jose Edimar P. Jaen, DDGM):

VWBs Jose A. Balite III, Delfin B. Del Rosario, Jr. ;

WBs Arnel V. Querubin, Gustar Joseph O. Bocek, Eduardo M. Alfonso, Freddie O. Paner, Feliciano Romero, Jr., Leopoldo C. Romero Jr.;

Bros. Ferdinand B. Delfin, Ronald L. Dela Rosa, Protacio N. Rivera, Manuel G. Dato, Edgardo A. Cariaso, Antonio B. Arriola, Domingo S. Angel;

Bros. Paulo B. Mariano, Josefino F. Cruz, Cipriano M. Cruz, Cirio Ernani T. Cruz, Pedro R. Acierto, Richard M. San Juan, Carlito B. Jimenez, Ariel Benjamin Q. Taluban, and Edgardo P. Peralta.

NCR-G (VW Sim M. Canonero, DDGM):

VWBs Felix D. Mendoza, Hernani B. Lopez, Sr. and Sim M. Canonero;

WBs Reinaldo A. Cedeno. Diomedes G. Visaya, Edito C. Granada, Servando U. Topacio;

Bros. JOvencio E. Reyes, Omar U. Obias, Anotnio M. Radovan, Joseph C. Añonuevo, Bennett S. Zingapan Jr., Fernando Romeo Z. Austriaco, Alexander R. Bergman;

Bros. Renato A. Florancio, Benjamin G. Padre, Samuel B. Bagasin, Loreto G. Rirao, Alan A. Tan, Ramil A. San Miguel, Dominador D. Ellazar Jr, and Petitioner Karlo Matthew P. Perez.

RI-A (VW Rex Alvin A. Bilagot, DDGM):

VWBs Benjamin S. Benin, Mariano N. Meneses, Rodolfo C. Carolino, Roderick Emmanuel R. Mina Jr.;

WBs Cesar L. Villamil, Perigrino G. Cornel, Jr., Felipe C. Siapno, Edgar M. Rabang ;

Bros. John T. Lee, Jovencio N. Daroya, Jr., Mariano E. David, Danilo P. Fernandez, Alfredo U. Quinto Sr., Jose Netu M. Tamayo, Elybert A. Agor, Teodorico T. Villena;

Bros. Manolito L. Movida, Alberto R. Ubando, Jonathan L. Calilim, January E. Ragudo, Restituto C. Basa, Carlo E. Carpizo, Mario A. Conwi, Arthur P. Bilagot, Conrado G. Gaerlan, Balthazar V. Servito, Gilbert E. Sanchez, Marlowe G. Garantoza;

Bros. Virgilio D. Cruz, Rizalino B. Suarez, Ferdinand S. Lopez, Carlito A. Diatre, Rex S. Balanon, Pedro C. Belen, Peter M. Cresencia, Benjamin O. Limos Jr., Jeonel M. Aurelio, Garie Noel B. Pascua, John E. Mangonon, and Ronald L. Sarthou;

Petitioner Rolly T. Reyes.

RII-D (VW Dennis M. Siclot, DDGM):

Bro. Demetrio C. Reyes, Jr. of Ganano #313.

RIII-A (VW Alfrito D. Mah, DDGM):

Bro. Rafael B. Malamug of Pam-panga #48.

RIII-E (VW Dick C. Guzman, DDGM):

WB Ernesto R. Carandang, Bro. Maynard R. Luciano, and Bro. Gil S. Garcia.

RIII-F (VW Felix R. Ronquillo, DDGM):

WB Alfredo F. Leybag, Jr. of Eulogio R. Dizon # 321.

RIV-B (VW Antonio Justo M. Zuñiga, DDGM):

VWBs Edwin C. Tan, Narciso O.

Infante;

WBs Onofre L. Reyes, German T. Jara, and Nelson G. Tolentino; Bros. Antonio K. Lo, Ruperto N. Ching, Kerwin T. Haw, Mark Paolo D. Pesigan, Oscar G. Villanueva, Pablo V. Del Mundo, Jr., Ramon B. Edra, Allan N. Tan, Gerardo D. Gauna, and Nelson M. Magcalas;

Sisters Leticia Alcalá (widow of VW Romulo Alcalá), Nelly Nequinto (widow of WB Mauro Nequinto), Ruperto Soriano (widow of VW Rodolfo Soriano), Adoracion Magcalas (widow of Bro. Jaime M. Magcalas), and Annalita Del Rosario (widow of Bro. Antonio L. Del Rosario).

RVI-A (VW Arthur M. Young, DDGM):

Bros. Roberto C. Villanueva, Eduardo A. Santos, and Rodolfo C. Pura.

RVI-B (VW Leo Rafael M. Cueva, DDGM):

Bro. Ariel A. Alejandro of Ernesto S. Salas Mem. #280.

RVIII-A (VW Constante A. Sabate, DDGM):

Bro. Floro Y. Velarde of Mt. Huraw # 98.

The GLP was able to extend relief assistance to the foregoing brothers and sisters because Master Masons throughout the world gave magnanimous donations to relieve the distress of members of the Masonic Family victimized by Ondoy and succeeding typhoons.

“Amidst the prevailing atmosphere of despair in the aftermath of typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, we drew inspiration from the compassion which the brethren whithersoever dispersed demonstrated as they shared their resources and exerted efforts to alleviate the sufferings of our fellowmen.

“The Craft has indeed turned events of misfortunes into opportunities for exemplary kindles. The total amount donations received was Php 5,234,288.00. Of this amount Php 4,080,000.00 was distributed to help at least 199 brethren and five widows of Masons rebuild the lives of the families, as well as to provide affected indigent families with assistance in the form of goods...”

**MW PETER U. LIM LO SUY
Grand Master**

Grandsec Reynold S. Fajardo Lodge No. 383

Donates Relief Goods to Typhoon Ondoy Victims in Valenzuela City

by Ricardo Ricmar C. Enriquez
Councilor & SK Federation President

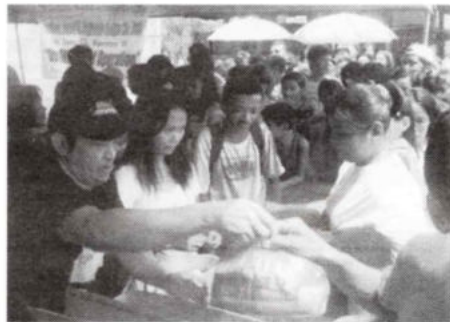
LED BY THEIR WORSHIPFUL MASTER, WB Tomas G. Rentoy III, the officers and member of Grandsec Reynold S. Fajardo Lodge No. 383 conducted OPLAN RELIEF OPERATION in Barangay Coloong, Marulas, and Wawang Pulo, Valenzuela City on Oct. 4, 2009. They gave out bottled mineral water and grocery items like rice, noodles and canned goods worth P50,000 to some 550 families – 250 in Barangay Coloong, 100 in Barangay Marulas, and 200 in Barangay Wawant Pulo.

Shortly after the conduct of OPLAN RELIEF OPERATION, the SK Council of Barangay Coloong, headed by SK Chairwoman Noraiza R. Caunda, passed Resolution No. 09-007, Series of 2009, thanking the brethren of the said Lodge for providing relief goods to the typhoon victims in their barangay.

The Jacinto-Tullahan Street Neighborhood Association, headed by its President, Ms. Mary Grace G. Matus, also wrote a grateful letter to the brethren of the said Lodge.

Finally, Vice Mayor Eric M. Martinez, together with the City Councilors, passed Resolution No. 344, Series of 2009, thanking the brethren of the said Lodge for their assistance to typhoon victims in their city.

Given hereunder are some photos showing the brethren of Grandsec Reynold S. Fajardo Lodge No. 383 in action.



Mt. Huraw 98 & Magueda Chapter, OES, Play “Good Samaritan” Roles

by VW Joselito Yulo, DGL

Led by our Worshipful Master, WB Rufino Estrada, our GLI, WI Gilbert Hilvano, and this reporter, the officers and members of our Lodge, Mt. Huraw No. 98, together with members of the Maqueda Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star (OES), in Catbalogan, Samar, donated hospital supplies and equipment to the Samar Provincial Hospital on November 22, 2009.

On the same day we conducted a Medical Mission in Barangay Baclayan, Daram, Samar. Philippine Navy personnel were there to give us a helping hand.

Our Lodge's continuing project is to reach out to our indigent non-Mason brothers and sisters.



MAGAT NO. 68, GUILLERMO MEM. NO. 330, SIERRA MADRE COURT NO. 43 REACH OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

The hermanos of Magat Lodge No. 68 and Guillermo E. Bongolan Memorial Lodge No. 330, together with the hermanos and hermanas of Sierra Madre Court No. 43, conducted a free medical consultation, tooth extraction, operation tuli and diabetic screening at Brgy. La Torre South, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. Some 282 residents of the said barangay and nearby areas were given medical treatment, including antibiotics, vitamins, analgesics, pain relievers, and anti-allergies; 99 were given dental care; 23 elementary school youths were circumcised; and 27 underwent diabetic screening. Of the 27, seven were found diabetic, while three were at the borderline.



The residents of the said barangay, led by Hon. Joaquin B. Istalilla, were very grateful to the Masons and the Amaranth.

Earlier, the brethren of Magat Lodge No. 68 and those of Guillermo E. Bongolan Memorial Lodge No. 330 conducted free anti-rabies vaccinations on dogs in three barangays of Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya – La Torre South, La Torre North, and Masoc. A total of 150 dogs were injected with anti-rabies.

Below are some photos of the community outreach projects of the Masonic Family in Nueva Vizcaya.



THE PAST OF SHRINEDOM IN THE PHILIPPINES: PROLOGUE TO ITS PRESENT AND FUTURE

by Noble Victor Antonio "Ace" Tan Espejo

In 1903, Nobles belonging to different Temples, most of whom were members of the U.S. Armed Forces and few were American civil government employees stationed in the Philippines, banded themselves together, conducted a ceremonial and then organized the Bamboo Oasis in Manila.

Thus started Shrinedom in this country.

In 1914, through the efforts of Noble A George "Jerry" Henderson, the purser of S.S. Minnesota, with the expressed desire of two pillars of then Bamboo Oasis, namely, Noble General John Pershing and Noble William F. Gallin, Jr., Nile Temple undertook its first

pilgrimage to Manila. The Divan of Nile Shriners Temple arrived at Manila in that year for the first Far East Ceremonial Pilgrimage. There were 142 novices who made an arduous journey on the hot sands of the desert. This was the biggest class ever recorded in any pilgrimage. Among them were top-ranking U.S. Navy and U.S. Army officers; a Supreme Court Justice; officials of the Departments of Education, Agriculture, and Public Works; Officials of the Bureaus of Customs, Auditing, and Internal Revenue; the Post Master General; and many top businessmen of the country.

Subsequently, having been encouraged by the success of the Nile Shriners Temple ceremonial pilgrimage, the Afifi Temple and the Islam Temple made



MW Illustrious Pablo C. Ko, Jr. with the DATU SUMAKWEL Class

their own pilgrimages in this country.

Later on the three Shriners Temples agreed that thence they would conduct ceremonials alternately every year.

Several other Shrine Oases were created in different regions, such as Saigon, Mt. Arayat (formerly Clark), Mabuhay, Cordillera, Maginoo, Makati, Cavite, and Maharlika. These Shrine Clubs held their monthly stated meetings – and even special meetings when necessary. This time they were supervised by the Philippine Shriners Association (PSA).

The Aloha Shriners later conducted ceremonials in the Visayas and Mindanao. Thus, the Filipinos Shrine Club and the Mindanao Shrine Club were formed.

Although its membership was rapidly increasing in number, Philippine Shrinedom strove to maintain the high quality of its leadership. It became a potent force for good in the Orient's governmental and economic life. Its Nobles were in the forefront of charitable movements geared toward helping Filipino indigent children.

In 1999, the Imperial Council of North America gave to the Aloha Shriners (Temple) full authority to govern the Philippine jurisdiction. Several other Shrine Clubs were established. But certain problems cropped up. Hence, there were attempts to request for a dispensation to form a Philippine Shrine Temple. But those attempts were not successful mainly due to lack of proper

coordination among the Nobles dispersed throughout the archipelago, as well as due to inadequacy of communication facilities.

But on December 19, 2008, the Philippine National Shrine Club (PNSC) and the Luzon Shrine Club (LSC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) at the Plaridel Masonic Temple, in which they pledged to forget past animosities and, instead, to form themselves into the United Shriners Group (USG). The signing of the MOA was witnessed by then Grand Master Pacifico B. Aniag.

Filipino Nobles are expected by the Imperial Council to be united in both spirit and purpose, and in providing the highest quality care to children with special health care needs...

The unification pointed to the dire need for unity among all Shriners in the Philippines toward a renewed request to the

Imperial Council of North America for the grant of dispensation to form our own Philippine Shrine Temple. This endeavor entailed diligent submission of pertinent documents, hard work, less sleep, more frequent meetings. It was agreed upon that the Philippine Shrine Temple yet to be formed would be denominated "MABUHAY."

The USG was able to submit the signatures of more than 400 Nobles and Master Masons battling for the establishment of our own Shrine Temple. Next, it submitted its proposal for the establishment of the Mabuhay Shriners (Temple). Finally, ably represented by Noble Victor Antonio "Ace" Tan Espejo, the USG presented the said proposal before the 135th Imperial Council Session held at San Antonio, Texas. The Imperial Council of North American at long last, gave its approval on July 7, 2009 that the Mabuhay Shriners (Temple) be

granted a dispensation. This, therefore, became the 193rd Temple under the umbrella of the Imperial Council. The Philippine Flag is the sixth waving with pride in Shrinedom.

Hopefully, the Mabuhay Shriners (Temple) will get its Charter during the 136th Imperial Council Session to be held in Toronto, Canada on July 3-8, 2010.

The first Divan of Mabuhay Shriners is composed of these Nobles: MW & Ill. Pablo C. Ko, Jr., Potentate; MW Hermogenes Ebdane, Jr., Chief Rabban; MW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy, Asst. Chief

Rabban; Rafael Roxas, High Priest and Prophet; Enrique Y. Co, Oriental Guide; Emmanuel Sanico, Treasurer; and Victor Antonio "Ace" Tan Espejo, Recorder.

We Filipino Nobles are now expected by the Imperial Council to be united in both spirit and purpose; for, after all, we are all Masons "linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection," and should be closely united in providing the highest quality care to children with crippling conditions, burn injuries, and other special health care needs within a compassionate, family-centered, and collaborative care environment.



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