

# The Cabletow

The Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines  
Volume 92 • Issue 4 • November - December 2015



Past Grand Masters' Day



### *-In Memoriam-*

*"A Japanese sentry was found dead at the corner of Gen. Antonio Luna Street and California (now Apacible) Street." On February 5, 1945, close to a hundred able-bodied youth and men were rounded up by Japanese troops and were tied up to this Japanese pedestal. Afterwards, they were severely tortured and killed. Their remains were burnt and none was ever recovered by their relatives. Let this Japanese pedestal be sanctified as a memorial to those who perished here and as a monument of freedom, peace and harmony among nations.*

*December 19, 2015*

JAPANESE PEDESTAL

# The Cabletow

## IN THIS ISSUE..

### I. From The Grand East

Our Vision –  
The Better Option  
By *MW Tomas G. Rentoy III*

### II. Masonic Education

Edict No. 278

Guidelines/Rules Governing The Election and  
Appointment of Officers of Subordinate Lodges

### III. Special Feature

TGR III SPEECH - Tribute to PGMs  
December 19, 2015

Views from an Outsider  
Mason  
By *Emeterio Barcelon*

Realization of Oneness  
By *VW Jesse D. Alto*

A Crimson Past  
By *VW Guillermo B. Lazaro*

### IV. Homage to Masonic Heroes

Father of Philippine Masonry  
Ka Selo "KUPANG" del Pilar  
By *MW Jaime Y. Gonzales, PGM*

Paciano Rizal, The Secret Hero  
By *Gemma Cruz Araneta*

### V. Open Lodge

An Open Letter to a Brother-to-be  
By *MW & Ill Carl H. Claudy, PGM*

A Revitalized Relevant Revered Freemasonry,  
Our Commitment, Our Covenant  
By *VW Armando G. Cazzola, JGL*

### VI. Views from the Floor

Two Modest Proposals  
By *VW Jesus Flor Nicolas*

Just Thinking Aloud  
from *Kuya Emer P Aviles, PM, DGL, NCR-D*

Terraces  
By *Bro. Dennis C. Uy*

### VII. Feature Article

Job's Daughters International

### VIII. Recent Events

Grand Lodge Activities

Library in a Box

Attendance Report on the XIV World Conference  
of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges  
By *VW Alexander B. Madamba,*  
*Assistant Grand Secretary*

Masonic Charities For Crippled Children, Inc.

Inauguration of MCCC Legazpi Unit  
By *Janica L. Caldona, MCCC Staff*

MCCI Christmas Party 2015  
By *Janica L. Caldona, MCCC Staff*

## THE CABLETOW

### EDITORIAL BOARD

MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, GMH

MW Rudyardo V. Bunda, PGM, GMH

MW Danilo D. Angeles, PGM

MW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr., PGM

VW Samuel P. Fernandez, PGC

VW J. Ermin Ernest Louie R. Miguel, SGL

VW J. Flor R. Nicolas, PSGL

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Caesar M. Ortega, GH, Editor-in-Chief

Bro. Florante P Leño, Asst. Editor-in-Chief

VW Emmanuel J. Diesta, Circulation Manager

VW Carlo Pacifico U. Aniag, Layout Artist

Bro. Edwin P. Calayag, Photographer

Ms. Jennifer C. Magallanes, Secretary

The Cabletow, the official organ of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines, is published bimonthly for and in the interest of the members of the subordinate Lodges of this jurisdiction, who are regular subscribers thereto. A member of the Craft belonging to another jurisdiction who wants to subscribe to The Cabletow should pay an annual fee of US \$40; he should send the corresponding check to: The Cabletow, Grand Lodge of F.&A.M. of the Philippines, Plaridel Masonic Temple, 1440 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila, D 2801, Philippines. Readers should send all correspondences to the Cabletow Office at the address given above. To help the editorial staff promptly deliver to them their own copies of Cabletow issues, subscribers are advised to inform the Cabletow Office of any changes and corrections in their respective addresses. Original articles are subjected to editing and, when published, become the property of The Cabletow. Any article published in The Cabletow may be reprinted in full, or excerpts thereof reproduced, provided proper attribution to the author is made, the source is given due credit, and the Cabletow Office is furnished with a courtesy copy of the reprinted material. Paid advertisements are accepted for printing in The Cabletow.

## MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND EAST

# OUR VISION – THE BETTER OPTION

From the Grand Oriental Chair, a joyous Christmas to all brethren, their families, and loved ones. May the New Year bring you all good health and happiness, prosperity and peace.

2015 is finally behind us. For your Grand Lodge, it has been an exciting, challenging, and very fulfilling year. We have accomplished much. None of which could have been achieved without each worthy brother lending his toiling hands. Thank you, my dear brethren.

By marching off the Three Guards to Reform, we have revitalized our Fraternity and set it firmly on the path towards our vision. We have secured the West Gate by adopting a more reliable document-based vetting process and setting in place measures that ensure the wellbeing of petitioners in the hands of the brethren. The Lamp shines brighter with a blue lodge-friendly, technologically advanced IMES. The selection of the next Junior Grand Warden is no longer an auctioneer's market with the adoption of the best features of democracy, aristocracy and theocracy into our electoral process.

By reorienting our civic projects to the more timely and timeless areas of public education and the environment; and by strengthening our ties with foreign jurisdictions while reinforcing our own, we have made our Craft relevant once more. We even managed to qualify for ISO Certification making the processes in the several Grand Lodge staff offices at par with world standards. Moreover, by formally honoring our brethren serving in government, we have encouraged them to commit themselves to labor for our citizens to the best of their abilities. And, by paying homage to our elders, we have enshrined their invaluable wisdom for posterity.

Yet there remains so much more to be done even as we must endeavor to sustain whatever we may have accomplished so far.

From what we have achieved, 2015 has given us hope - hope anchored on firm ground. We have succeeded in planting the seeds of reform which are now taking root. However, 2016 challenges us with this question: "Have we planted these seeds on fertile ground?"

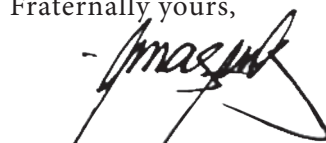
Let us pause for a while to contemplate on this question. Our answer will determine whether the reforms we have introduced will thrive or wither away; whether they will flourish or flounder, and whether they will fulfill or frustrate our vision of a Revitalized, Relevant and Revered Philippine Freemasonry.

Yes, indeed 2015 had given us enough reasons to pat ourselves in the back and relax. But 2016 is challenging all of us to sustain and institutionalize our reforms. Lest they fizzle out like just another ningas cogan, let us all ratify and vote to retain all the edicts issued implementing these reforms in the forthcoming ANCOM. Let us all prove that we all are fertile ground for the seeds of reforms planted in our jurisdiction.

Soon I shall step down from the Grand Oriental Chair. Then the challenge intensifies as the temptation to backslide becomes more appealing. My beloved brothers, keep the faith and laser in your sights on our ultimate vision – a revered Philippine Freemasonry. It is the better option.

May the Great Architect of the Universe bless us all. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Fraternally yours,



MW TOMAS G. RENTOY III  
Grand Master, 2015-2016



# MASONIC EDUCATION



## The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines

PLARIDEL MASONIC TEMPLE

1440 San Marcelino Street, 1000 Ermita, Manila, Philippines

Tel. Nos.: +63 2 524-3263, +63 2 522-2232, Fax: +63 2 522-2218, www.grandlodgephils.org.ph

**MW TOMAS G. RENTOY III**  
GRAND MASTER

**DANILO D. ANGELES, PGM**  
GRAND SECRETARY

### EDICT NO. 278

#### DECLARING DECEMBER 19 OF EVERY MASONIC YEAR AS PAST GRAND MASTERS' DAY

**WHEREAS**, the Grand Lodge of the Philippines is annually celebrating its Anniversary every 19<sup>th</sup> day of December.

**WHEREAS**, in order to give meaning and significance to the anniversary celebration, a program paying tribute to the Past Grand Masters shall be drawn up honoring their exemplary performance and unselfish contributions to Philippine Freemasonry during their respective incumbency;

**WHEREAS**, such Tribute to the Past Grand Masters should be institutionalized to coincide with the celebration of the Grand Lodge Anniversary.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, TOMAS G. RENTOY III, by the powers in me vested as Grand Master, hereby decree the creation of a Special Committee tasked to oversee the annual celebration of the *Grand Lodge Anniversary* and the program "*Tribute to the Past Grand Masters*," further decreeing every 19<sup>th</sup> Day of December as "*Past Grand Masters' Day*."

This Edict shall be read in open Lodge at the Stated Meeting next following its receipt and action thereon duly recorded in the Minutes of said Stated Meeting

Given under my hand and the seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines, this 19<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2015, in the City of Manila, Philippines.

  
**TOMAS G. RENTOY III**  
Grand Master

Attest

  
**DANILO D. ANGELES, PGM**  
Grand Secretary

TGR/DDA/ABM/vangie

  
"A REVITALIZED, RELEVANT AND REVERED PHILIPPINE FREEMASONRY:  
OUR COMMITMENT, OUR COVENANT"

# Guidelines/Rules Governing The Election and Appointement of Officers of Subordinate Lodges.

## Prescribed Masonic Education for the Month of December 2015

Brethren, this lecture consists of three parts: (1) The legal basis for the conduct of elections and appointments of officers in the subordinate lodges of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines (MWGLP); (2) Definition of important & relevant terms; and a brief explanation and discussion of “electioneering, canvassing or soliciting of votes”; and (3) Practical considerations in the conduct of elections in subordinate lodges.

### Legal Basis.

1. The legal bases for the conduct of election and the appointment of officers of subordinate lodges are found in the following provisions of our Masonic Law Book (MLB):
  - (a) Part II (Ordinances), Article X (Officers of Subordinate Lodges), Section 1, which provides: “*Sec. 1. The Master, Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary and Auditor of each Lodge shall be **elected annually at the stated meeting in December**. A **majority** of the votes of **members present** shall be **necessary to elect**.”*
  - (b) Part II (Ordinances), Article X (Officers of Subordinate Lodges), Section 12, which provides: “*Sec. 12. The Chaplain, Marshall, Senior and Junior Deacons, Senior and Junior Stewards, Almoner, Orator, Lecturer, Organist and the Tyler shall be **appointed by the Master-Elect** and **installed at the same time as the elective officers** not later than **March 31 of the same year**.”*
  - (c) Part III (Uniform Code of By-Laws for Subordinate Lodges), Article II (Of Election and Appointments), Section 1, which provides: “*Sec. 1. The Master, the Senior and Junior Wardens, the Treasurer, the Secretary and the Auditor shall be **elected by ballot** on the stated meeting of the Lodge in December. The other officers shall be appointed by the Master, except the Junior Deacon, who may be appointed by the Senior Warden, Any Master Mason in good standing, whether or not a member of the Lodge, may be appointed by the Tyler.*”
2. However, Part III (Uniform Code of By-Laws for Subordinate Lodges), Article II (Of Election and Appointments), Section 1, should be read together with, and should be considered rectified or clarified by, Part II (Ordinances), Article X (Officers of Subordinate Lodges), Section 12.
3. Thus, as far as APPOINTMENTS are concerned, and considering the prevailing practices of the different lodges in our jurisdiction; plus the fact that Section 12 is more specific in its terminology and intent, it is the latter provision that must be applied and observed and not the former. Hence, *the Chaplain, Marshall, Senior and Junior Deacons, Senior and Junior Stewards, Almoner, Orator, Lecturer, Organist and the Tylers shall be **appointed by the Master-Elect** and **installed at the same time as the elective officers** not later than **March 31 of the same year**.*

4. The rules and guidelines regarding the election of officers of subordinate lodges are contained, mainly, in Section 2, Article II, Part III of the MLB. It provides: *Sec. 2. No member shall solicit for himself or for any other member of any Lodge any elective or appointive office in a Lodge, nor shall any electioneering canvassing or soliciting of votes or support, for any member be allowed. Nominations of candidates for office shall not be made. A violation of this section shall be read in open lodge by the Master at the stated meetings of October, November and December of each year.” (Page 99, Masonic Law Book, Centennial Edition).*

*Definition of important & relevant terms; and a brief discussion of “electioneering, canvassing or soliciting of votes”.*

5. Majority – This is defined in Part II (Ordinances), Article XX-B (Definitions), Section 4(j), i.e., “**more than one-half of the members present at a meeting. A fraction shall not be considered in determining a majority. In other words, MAJORITY means a TIE VOTE plus one.**” (Illustration: 12 voting members present; the majority is 8, not 9. One-half of 15 is 7 & ½, but since a fraction shall not be considered, 7 will be considered and not 7 & ½ plus 1 would be the majority vote. In the same example, a tie vote would be 7-7, with one spoiled or invalid. Thus 7 plus 1 would be 8).

6. Electioneering. – The Merriam-Webster’s dictionary gives the following definitions of “electioneering”: The taking of an active part in an election, specifically, to work for the election of a candidate of party. It also means “Persuasion” of voters in a political campaign to vote for a particular party, candidate or proposition.

5. Canvassing. – On the other hand, canvassing has been defined as: going through an area, region or place; or going to a certain group of persons or to organizations or associations in order to solicit votes or opinions; or conducting a survey of public opinion or polling.

6. Soliciting of votes means: to seek to obtain votes by persuasion, entreaty or formal application; to petition persistently; to entice a person to vote in a particular way on a certain issue or to vote for a particular person or party.

7. In other words, electioneering, canvassing and soliciting refer to All Kinds and Forms of campaigning for a candidate or candidates. Necessarily, certain specific and related acts would easily fall under the definition and purview of electioneering, canvassing and soliciting of votes, such as: *vote buying; getting votes in exchange for cash, or paid/ waived dues or assessments of whatever nature; getting votes in exchange for free gasoline, free transportation, free lodging or hotel accommodations; endorsing a candidate or candidates through speeches, in both private and public functions, whether for a fee or for free; approaching people or organizations in order to persuade or influence them to vote for a candidate or candidates, for a fee or gratis; and all other similar acts for the same or related purposes.*

*Requirements, procedures and practical Considerations relative to the election of officers of subordinate lodges.*

**Part II (Ordinances), Article X, (Offices of Subordinate Lodges)**

8. No Master of any Lodge shall be installed unless he has served as Warden and until the GLI of the Lodge, or the DGL or the DDGM or the JGL or SGL shall have certified in writing to the Installing Officer (I.O.) that he is proficient in the work and lectures in the three degrees and those portions of the Constitution and General Regulations of the Grand Lodge which relate to the government of a Lodge. (See: Sec. 3).

9. Section 4: No SW shall be installed until after he has presented to the I.O. the **Certificate of Proficiency** signed by the GLI of his Lodge or the DGL or DDGM or the JGL or SGL, certifying that he has been personally examined by the officer issuing the Certificate and found qualified to give the work and lectures of the *First and Second Degrees*.
10. Section 5: No JW shall be installed until after he has presented to the I.O. the **Certificate of Proficiency** signed by the GLI of his Lodge or the DGL or DDGM or the JGL or SGL, certifying that he has been personally examined by the officer issuing the Certificate and found qualified to give the work and lecture of the **First Degree**.
11. Section 7: If the elected Masters, SW or JW fail to secure within 60 days the Certification of Proficiency, the Secretary shall immediately communicate this fact to the Grand master and request a dispensation to hold another election at a fixed date. Important: The elected officers of the Lodge shall be installed not later than March 31 or each year and hold office until the successors are elected and installed (Hold-Over Clause; Section 2, Article X. Part II).
12. Pursuant to the Edict creating the Masonic Internal Affairs Office (MIAO\_ a *“Certificate of No Pending Case”* shall be secured from the MIAO prior to the installation of the Worshipful Master and Wardens of a lodge. Failure to do so shall be a ground for the deferment of their installation.
13. Only members in good standing shall be entitled to vote at an election, and hold office. A plural member may hold an elective office in only one lodge. Pursuant to the Edict on Membership, a lodge member should have attended at least 6 stated meetings of the lodge within the year, excluding the election month, in order to be qualified to vote or be voted upon during the annual lodge elections.

**Part III (Uniform Code of By-Laws for subordinate Lodges), Article IX (Of Dues).**

14. Section 2: No member who shall be in arrears in the payment of dues at the time of the annual election shall be permitted to vote, or shall be eligible to any office.

*Appointment of an ELECOM  
by the Worshipful Master.*

The MLB is silent as to the appointment or creation of an Election Committee (ELECOM) at the lodge level. However, by tradition and practice; and for the sake of orderliness in the proceedings, it is highly recommended that the Worshipful Master should appoint an ELECOM which shall conduct, oversee and supervise the elections; determine the majority or “magic” number, prepare the ballots, oversee the actual voting, canvassing of votes and proclaim the winners.

The ELECOM is usually composed of 3: One Chairman and 2 members, all of whom should NOT be voting members of the Lodge.

It is the duty of the ELECOM Chairman to determine and ensure that the elected officers duly accept their election and proclaim such fact to the brethren in open lodge.

After the elections, the Lodge Secretary must secure and safe-keep the election materials and paraphernalia (ballots and tally sheet) and, thereafter, prepare and transmit to the Grand Secretary the Certification of Elective and Appointive Officers of the Lodge. (*See: Sec. 1(g), Article XIV, Part II of the MLB; Page 41, Centennial Edition*).

Brethren, thank you for your time!

# TGR III SPEECH

**(GLP Anniversary & Tribute to PGMs 19 Dec 2015)**

Salutations...

Brethren, ladies and gentlemen, if you haven't noticed yet, I am standing on virtually new ground. I am referring to this beautifully remodeled stage – a true labor of love by operative masons under the direction of an outstanding speculative mason. Thank you VW Armando Cazzola for this yet another generous gift from you, very worshipful sir, to our Grand Lodge. By the way, just this morning, the ever beautiful Ms. Gemma Cruz Araneta was very impressed by our museum and library which were renovated and improved some years back by VW Cazzola.

Our gratitude and commendation also go to VW Maui Lazaro for the successful consecration this morning of the Japanese lamppost in front of the museum. I am sure that the Filipino men who were tortured and murdered there in WW II can now rest in peace, content in the thought that their martyrdom has neither been in vain nor forgotten. Henceforth, let everyone who enters these premises know that he/she treads on hallowed ground.

Allow me also to thank and congratulate the lodges and appendant bodies who participated in today's activities:

1. The Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters for effectively managing the Masonic Youth Organizations Yuletide Fellowship.
2. The Masonic Youth Organizations for leading the Simbang Gambi.
3. The Masonic District NCR-D under the able leadership of DDGM VW Fahad Lucman for the successful and highly beneficial Medical, Dental, Optical Mission and Feeding and Blood-Letting Program.
4. The Opening and Closing Ceremonies that went

on smoothly, thanks to the efficient leadership of NCR-F DDGM VW Mike Tezon.

5. Our gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to the Masonic Masonic Youth Appendant Organizations under the leadership of Hon. Victor Antonio Espejo, Grand Master; Sis Eleanor Roque-Redor, Supreme Inspector; and Sis Lalaine Magbanua, Grand Guardian.
6. For managing the sumptuous Lunch Break, we thank Masonic Districts NCR A and B under VWs Melvin Mallo and Ed Balauag respectively. And talking about sumptuous meals, I noticed with deep respect and admiration WM Jeffrey Co and members of his lodge, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Memorial Lodge Number 398, carrying huge pots full of steaming aroz caldo and other hot meals under the heavy downpour this morning
7. For ensuring the success of the grand finals of the Ritual Olympics, I commend Masonic District NCR-E, led by DDGM VW Rey Garcia.
8. The solemn celebration of the Simbang Gabi hosted and managed by the GLP staff.
9. The Tribute to the Past Grand Masters stewarded by the Masonic District NCR-C under DDGM VW Paul Santos Estrella.
10. And of course to our event hosts, the lively VW TONY ANDAYA and the lovely, MS. GRETCHEN HO who made sure we stayed awake until now.

Congratulations also to the winners of the Ritual Olympics: in the Lambskin Apron Lecture Category, in the Opening Ritual Category; and in the Closing Ritual Category.

Special thanks and deep appreciation to our dedicated janitorial service officers, Totoy, Mel, Inday

and Elma, Pagpugayan po natin sila sa kanilang dakilang pagmamalasakit at kasipagan. Kagabi umaga na silang natulog, ala una. Lalong maaga silang nagising kanina, alas kuwatro para lang malinis at maisaayos ang bulwagang ito. Muli, maraming salamat sa inyo.

Similarly, let us thank the Grand Lodge staff for their tireless efforts and individual sacrifices without which today's celebrations would not have been such a resounding success. Let us commend them and give them a big round of applause for passing the ISO audit that earned for the Grand Lodge the Registration Certificate attesting that our management systems have been assessed by the AJA Registrars and registered against the requirements of ISO 9001-2008. In simple words, your Grand Lodge is now ISO certified!

I also wish to express my gratitude and commend the Grand Line officers for untiringly pushing forward our reform agenda and also for making today's occasion a historic success. Thank you very worshipful sirs.

Three years and a century ago today, with the heroic martyrdom, the tragic fratricide, and near genocide of masons still fresh in their minds, Filipino masons were confronted with a perplexing dilemma obstructing their journey towards an independent Grand Lodge of the Philippines. On December 19, 1912, three American lodges owing allegiance to the Grand Lodge of California constituted themselves into the Grand Lodge of the Philippines and invited other masonic lodges in the Philippines to join. The dilemma which rubs at the raw nationalist nerves of Filipino masons at that time was this: to form a grand lodge out of the surviving Filipino lodges under the Gran Oriente Espanol and face outright rejection by the dominant American Grand Lodges and inevitable repression from the American forces; or swallow their nationalist pride, amalgamate with the three local American lodges under the Grand Lodge of California, and survive.

The ultra-nationalist yet shrewd pragmatist, the late Most Worshipful Master Manuel L. Quezon, displayed his legendary Solomonic wisdom by herding the 27 Filipino lodges then under the Gran Oriente Espanol to

join the three American lodges owing allegiance to the Grand Lodge of California on Valentine's Day of 1917. By this master stroke, MW Manuel L. Quezon paved the way for the eventual assumption to the Grand East of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippine by Filipino master masons.

Brethren, on this day we make history. This morning we consecrated solemnly the Japanese pedestal on ground sanctified by the blood of Filipino martyrs during WWII. The rest of the day we strengthened through fellowship with our children the mystic ties that bind us. And tonight is a night of fulfilment.

As we celebrate the 103rd founding anniversary of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, we pay tribute to and prostrate ourselves in homage before our Past Grand Masters, all 97 of them! This we do not only to honor them but also to heed the stern warning of brother Dr. Jose Rizal, "Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinangalingan ay di makarating sa paroroonan."

Knowing our history and knowing how our ancient brethren manifested their love for our country and our Craft, should be a humbling experience for each one of us. An experience from which we can draw a great amount of inspiration as we grapple with our own Masonic lives, hardships and challenges.

Knowing our past makes it easier for us to understand and appreciate our chosen theme for the current Masonic Year:

***“A Revitalized, Relevant,  
and Revered Philippine  
Freemasonry:  
Our Commitment,  
Our Covenant.”***

Would it not be wonderful to bring back the glory days of Freemasonry in our country? Would it not bring us great satisfaction to be able to re-live and experience once

more those days **when Masonry took the lead in writing our country's history, shaping our future and defining our destiny?** Would it not be extremely gratifying to see **Masons honored, emulated and revered by the community?**

I believe so. And I know, you believe so, too.

To realize this vision, I have laid down our reform agenda at the start of my term during the ANCOM 2015 Grand Installation Ceremonies in Legazpi City last 25 April 2015. I call it OUR reform agenda because these were crafted out of the sentiments and aspirations expressed by the brethren during my visits to the lodges and consultations with our past Grand Masters during the three years leading up to my assumption to the Grand Oriental Chair. I call these our reform agenda simply because no meaningful reform can ever take root and flourish without the cooperation of our members. As you all know by now, our reform agenda consists of the Three Guards to Reform, namely:

First, guard the West Gate (both from without and from within) – by upgrading, preserving and maintaining the quality of our petitioners and candidates; and by weeding-out unworthy members of the Craft.

Second, guard the Lamp – by and through Continuing Masonic Education; and

Third, guard the Ballot – by implementing genuine Masonic Electoral Reforms.

These reforms are on-going and I earnestly enjoin all the brethren to continue to support and nurture them, for the sake of our beloved Fraternity. To the few recalcitrant brethren out there, please heed the wise counsel of the wiser among your worthy brothers. There is nothing more painful to me, your Grand Master, than to see you driven out of our lodges.

My beloved brethren, often in deep contemplation or light conversation, we end up comparing of Philippine Freemasonry then, and Philippine Freemasonry now. But

whatever the results of your comparison may be, let us always be mindful of, and eternally grateful for, the efforts, sacrifices and individual accomplishments of our Past Grand Masters – all 97 of them - whether they are still in this world, or up there in the Celestial Lodge above.

Thus, tonight as the celebration of our 103rd Grand Lodge Anniversary draws closer, please join me in paying tribute to our Past Grand Masters who were instrumental in bringing us to where we are now.

Each of them has been called upon to sacrifice something for the good of the Craft. All of them have, in their own special and unique way, contributed to the betterment of Philippine Freemasonry, by recognizing the positive qualities of their predecessors and building on them, improving on them, and capitalizing on them, in order to afford themselves the rare opportunity to make their own positive contributions to Philippine Freemasonry and, in so doing, leave behind a lasting legacy that is each uniquely beneficial to the Craft.

Brethren, words are not enough to express our deep gratitude to our Past Grand Masters. So, let us complement our words with actions.

Let us honor them by remaining true and faithful to the principal tenets of our Craft. Let us pay tribute to them by becoming better, and not bitter, men. Let us continue to respect them by improving ourselves in Masonry and by not allowing some of our wayward brethren to influence or sway us to their way of thinking.

As we turn 103 years old today, let us invoke the blessings of the Great Architect of the Universe, as we look to the future with great expectations for Philippine Freemasonry.

Brethren and guests, thank you for your time! A pleasant evening to everyone; and may the Great Architect of the Universe guide and inspire us always in all our undertakings!!

Mabuhay ang Masonerya sa Pilipinas!!!

# VIEWS FROM AN OUTSIDER

---

# MASONS

By: Emeterio Barcelon

*Reproduced entirely from his Column, "From the South", in the January 14, 2016 issue of the Manila Bulletin. Emeterio Barcelon holds numerous post graduate degrees in Business Administration from prestigious US universities. He was a professor at the Asian Institute of Management and Senior Fellow of the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP). He became Rector and President of Ateneo de Davao University in 1974 and was assigned to Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro as Academic Vice-President and later Vice President for Special Projects.*

In the Philippines and in many Catholic countries, Freemasonry has been controversial. I remember as a seminarian we used to figure out how to counteract Freemasonry. And yet Masonry is the offspring of the associations that built the cathedrals of Europe in the middle ages, meaning about the tenth and to the fifteenth centuries. After the cathedrals were built, these brotherhoods took in members who were no longer builders but followed the guidelines of the brotherhood, therefore no longer builders but free masons. The main aim was to take good men and to try to make them better. For them truth and freedom were essential so that from the 16th century on, there was a clash between them and the Catholic Church because church and state were joined in the anointing of kings. Accordingly, in the fight against kings, it was necessary to also fight the Church.

With the spread of democracy, our rulers no longer have the right to rule from divine origin and are not anointed by the Church. There is separation of Church and State. And therefore Masons did not have to fight the Church in order to fight the kings. It was logical for the Church to condemn Freemasonry because it was fighting the Church. This was the Freemasonry of the contemporaries of Jose Rizal.

But with Vatican II, the condemnation of Masonry was lifted mainly through the lobbying of the German bishops who in their life times did not have the experience of Masonry fighting the Church in order to fight regal states. Accordingly the Canon Law of 1977, the rule book of

the Church, following Vatican II, no longer automatically condemned Freemasons. Masons who insist on fighting the Church will still be condemned because of their going against the Church, not because they are Masons. Catholics can now belong to Freemasonry without guilt or qualms of conscience. The ritual of Freemasonry still uses the Bible and passages of the Bible in their initiations like the Psalms and 1Corinthians 13.

Freemasons have had a big influence on the Philippines starting from the Madrid friends of Jose Rizal down to the Japanese occupation to the present. They had to fight the Church in order to fight the state. Assemblyman Bennito Soliven (later Bataan Death March hero) passed a religious instruction bill, before WWII, which President Quezon vetoed, rumored from the Masonic influence of Gen. Douglas MacArthur. But those days are past. Freemasonry no longer has to fight the Church in its effort to make good men better. (Whether this turned out good for the Church is not clear. But one bad effect of this was and is the ignorance of Filipino Catholics about their faith so that they are easy prey to dissident evangelizers.)

As a friend of mine who is a fierce promoter of Masonry insists, there is no more contention between Masonry and the Church. They both want our salvation, although Masonry has become non-religious and accepts any faith, not only the Christian faith. Masons can be good Masons as well as good Catholics or Protestant Christians. Masonry has a strong influence in making good people better, as they proclaim.

# Realization of ONENESS

VW Jesse D. Alto

MW Tomas Rentoy III, the 2015-16 incumbent Grand Master of the Free and Accepted Masons in the Philippines has succeeded in requesting the Catholic Church to hold Sunday Mass services at the Grand Lodge main headquarters at the Plaridel Building in Malate Manila. A room is provided for the Catholic mass services. This has eradicated the several hundred years of common belief and the erroneous perception that the teachings of the Masonic fraternity is at odd with the Catholic Church.

The masonic teachings taught good man to be better and concur with the inner teachings of all religions in the spirituality of man. When man prays “Our Father in heaven...” it affirms that he is the son of the Spiritual Father which in essence makes him spiritual being too. The spiritual Father is perfect and the spiritual son is just using the material vehicles to gain experiences and mastery of its vehicles to attain perfection. The GAOTU is not seen in substance and yet eternal but manifesting through his vehicles only in innumerable limited expression in temporary and illusionary material manifestation. The use of the material vehicles is just a clothing to gain experiences and knowledge how the manifested things work and understanding the corresponding natural, moral, and spiritual laws. The story of the prodigal son is symbolic of the effort of man to be perfect as his spiritual Father is perfect. He travels in the temporary manifested universe to be perfect someday as his spiritual Father is perfect. Yet he found himself eating foods fit of the swine which means he identified himself with his material vehicles and attached

to materiality, wealth and fame. He has forgotten that the main purpose of his travel is to gain spiritual possessions like wisdom, intelligence and knowledge about eternal duration of the ever changing materials existence of things for the purpose of the evolution of matter, and spiritual growth to gain mastery of senses and forms.

## **Preparation, Purification, and Realization of Oneness**

Everyone who joins the masonic fraternity must begin with preparation and to exercise certain discipline to make his vehicles just tools in the realization of his true spiritual nature. One joins the masonic fraternity to appear naked to symbolize that the material vehicles are just temporary vestures useful only for the quest to tread the path of spirituality. It means that name, power, and fame must be cast aside and the quest for his true spiritual nature must be the main goal to travel and return back to where he came from fully attaining and realizing his true and perfected spiritual nature.

He must learn to purify his vehicles like his material body, emotion, and thought so that he can learn the ageless wisdom as expounded symbolically and with layers of hidden meanings in the holy books to understand the working of the natural, moral, and spiritual laws. Many working tools and aids are given and shared in the process. The rituals and examples in the process of purification are given and reminded the brethren to follow non-attachment

to the vehicles and clarity of the mind to realize truth. Truth is the realization of the Supreme Being, unity of all existence and beyond the innumerable light manifested in all beings as they travel the light. He learns that the use of his material vehicles aid in hastening the material and spiritual growth, learn and practice harmony with all beings, and unfold his spiritual consciousness.

The knowledge and wisdom of the truth and the attunement with all his material vehicles is the realization of oneness with all. Symbolically he is called a Master Mason. He must continue to ask himself if he has indeed attained that purity of consciousness and continue to actualize such realization in his life.

The Catholic mass services contain the preparation and maintenance leading to the purification of the faithful material vehicles. He listens to the prayer and sermon given to understand his true spiritual nature and to those who have prepared and purify his vehicles are offered to take the bread of life, symbolic of his realization with unity and affinity with God.

The homily of Pope Francis this 2015 Christmas season affirms to the realization that man is a conscious Spiritual being as taught in Masonry and Christian religion, and also with other religions. To quote few passages mentioned by Pope Francis in his homily are as follows:

He was born into the poverty of this world; there was no room in the inn for him and his family. He found shelter and support in a stable and was laid in a manger for animals. Yet from this nothingness, the light of Gods glory shines forth.

The great shines forth, the light of Jesus birth shines all about us.

Our heart was already joyful in waiting this moment; now that joy abounds and overflows for the promise has been at last fulfilled.

There is no room for doubt; let us leave to the skeptics who, by looking to reason alone never find the truth.

All sadness has been banished, for the Child Jesus brings true comfort to every heart.

The virgin offers us her son as the beginning of the new life. The true light has come to illumine our lives so often beset by the darkness of sin. Today we once more discover who we are.

Now we must put away all fear and dread, for the light shows us the path to Bethlehem. We must not be laggards; we are not permitted to stand idle.

So when we hear tell the birth of Christ, let us be silent and let the child speak. Let us take his words to heart in rapt contemplation of his face.

Saint Paul says to reject godless ways and the richness of the world in order to live temperately, justly and devoutly in a society so often intoxicate by consumerism and hedonism, wealth and extravagance, appearances and narcissism. The Child calls us to act soberly, in a way that is simple, balanced, consistent, and capable of seeing and doing what is essential.

Our style of life should instead be devout, filled with empathy, compassion, and mercy, drawn daily from the wellspring of prayer.

Like the shepherds of Bethlehem, may we too, with eyes full of amazement and wonder gaze upon the Child Jesus, the Son of God.

# A Crimson Past

By VW Guillermo “Mawi” Lazaro  
*Building Administrator*

The Japanese pedestal lantern now found in front of our Museum at the Grand Lodge of the Philippines compound used to be at the center of the quadrangle of our old temple that was gutted down by fire on 11 August 2000. Even before that fire, hardly any of the brethren took notice of it. It was drab, nondescript, lackluster. I couldn't care less about it either.

It was VW Hermie A. Palamine who first called my attention to it. He observed that Ms. Gemma Cruz-Araneta, the first Filipina to win the prestigious “Miss International” title, has been offering wreaths on that marker yearly about the time of All Saints Day/All Souls Day. What was in it, anyway?

A couple years back, in less that 5 meters away from the Japanese lantern, a Mitsubishi Adventure van without any driver suddenly turned its engine on and bumped another car parked in front of it, twice, and so strong as to mow down a lamp post in its path towards the lantern. VW Hermie was alarmed and got back to me to contact Madam Gemma.

She immediately referred us to the book “Myself, Elsewhere” written by her mother, Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil, a renowned novelist and artist. An item in that book unveiled the enigma behind the pedestal. During World War II, innocent Filipinos were rounded up by the Japanese in retaliation to the killing of a Japanese sentry by a bomb on 05 February 1945 at the corner of

what was then California and General Luna streets. About a hundred Filipinos were actually tied to the Japanese lantern, tortured, killed and burnt to ashes, and whose remains had not been found by their relatives. Is it likely that they still lie in the silent clods of our museum?

VW Hermie, who used to stay in the dorm of the old temple, committed himself to putting up an appropriate marker in remembrance of those who perished in that tragic incident. We have on our San Marcelino façade a plain historical marker denoting that our compound was once used as a garrison by the Japanese.

Hardly, however, has there been any about the lantern's crimson past that should endear ourselves more to justice and freedom, that this lantern should serve as another fitting monument and reminder for a freedom-loving people. While the idea had been there for years, even the new marker had to wait for its appropriate time, its own serendipity, so to speak.

Such timing was the pleasure of our incumbent Grand Master Tomas G. Rentoy III – he thought it wise that the sanctification of this marker spin off the celebration of our Grand Lodge's anniversary last 19 December 2015. The solemn rite was officiated by our Very Reverend Samuel Fernandez. Madam Gemma Cruz-Araneta was there with us, at the very place where her father, uncle and grandfather, together with their bosom friends and neighbours, were last seen alive.

# SANCTIFICATION OF JAPANESE PEDESTAL



(Concluding Part)

### FATHER OF PHILIPPINE MASONRY

# KA SELO “KUPANG” DEL PILAR

by MW Jaime Y. Gonzales, PGM



## Ka Selo Transfers Propaganda Activities from Barcelona to Madrid

In September 1889, Ka Selo “Kupang” del Pilar decided to transfer the activities of the Propaganda Movement from Barcelona to Madrid, the seat of the Asociacion Hispano-Filipina, the president of which was his friend, Miguel Morayta, who was at the same time the Grand Master of the Grande Oriente Español.

Most of the Filipinos in Barcelona followed him to Madrid, where he set about to reorganize or consolidate the Reform Movement.

First, he directed his special attention to strengthening *La Solidaridad*, the Movement’s official publication. He was resolute to come out regularly with issues of the fortnightly in order that it would become a more potent force in the Filipinos’ campaign for reforms than before.

In October, he entered into a contract with a press in Madrid for the printing of the paper. On November 15, he acquired ownership of the newspaper. From then on he devoted his time and energy to its publication.

Since the paper lacked funds and personnel, he himself did most of the writing, copy-reading, and soliciting of contributions. In his hands, *La Solidaridad* served not merely as a revolutionary paper, but as a medium of education

and reform as well. The fortnightly strove to secure reforms in the government and in the judiciary; representation in the Spanish Cortes; removal of the friars in the Philippines; the secularization of parishes; freedom of speech, press, association, and meetings; and greater individual and social freedom.

Indeed, *La Solidaridad* came to be the “first and last love” of L. O. Crame, Dolores Manapat, Plaridel, or Kupang. (Del Castillo and Medina, p. 161).

Next, Ka Selo focused his attention on strengthening the Asociacion Hispano-Filipina. For this purpose, also in November, he called the members of the association to a reorganizational meeting. In the meeting, Miguel Morayta was reelected president; Teodoro Sandiko was elected treasurer; Ka Selo himself was chosen to head the executive committee; and other Filipinos were given important assignments. (Fajardo, p. 78).

Ka Selo then set his sight on establishing a new all-Filipino Lodge, which should be affiliated with the Grande Oriente Español; for he was taken in by a provision in the preamble of the Constitution of that Grand Orient, which reads as follows:

“The provinces beyond the seas shall be our care for they are so much in need of justice, so hungry for their lawful rights and so desirous of equality. If there is any place where our doctrines of peace and charity are direly needed, it is

undoubtedly in those unhappy territories. There is where our Masonic fraternity must be strongly organized; there is where it must make evident its expansive, liberal and democratic character; there we must emphasize our ideals of fraternity; and there we have to show that if, unfortunately, there are men in Spain, spurious sons of greatness, who would make enemies of the people in those territories through despotism and tyranny, there are also true sons of noble Spain, that great Spain who loves equally all her sons whether from the motherland or from overseas.

“In the Philippines, where the religious orders control all power and are terrorizing the inhabitants, we must organize a Council of the Masonic order that will free the people there from the crushing yoke imposed upon them. A Masonic body that will be the advance guard of civilization and progress, prepared to give battle to these grim specters from out of the medieval past who walk side by side with ignorance, fanaticism, and superstition.”

So, on December 9, 1889, he called his compatriots to a meeting in his quarters in order to discuss his plan. But those present in the meeting frowned upon the formation of a new Lodge; they proposed, instead, that the old Solidaridad Lodge be reconstituted. Fortunately, one of the members of the old Solidaridad Lodge, Julio Llorente (Danton), was in the meeting. He agreed with Ka Selo del Pilar that Solidaridad Lodge should be affiliated with the Grande Oriente Español. Hence, on the day following (December 10), the Filipino Masons requested Grand Master Miguel Morayta to give them the old charter of Solidaridad Lodge, and the latter acceded to their request.

After its reorganization, Solidaridad Lodge No. 53 absorbed most of the Filipinos who arrived in Madrid. But its membership was extremely fluid because the Filipino community in Madrid was “always on the go.”

Jose Rizal affiliated with Solidaridad Lodge on November 5, 1890 and was invested with the degree of Master Mason.

On December 12 of the same year, the following were chosen as officers of Solidaridad Lodge No. 53: Julio Llorente, Venerable Master; Marcelo del Pilar (Kupang), First Vigilant; Damaso Ponce (Florante), Second Vigilant; Dominador Gomez (Marte), Orator; Mariano Ponce (Kalipulako), Secretary and Guardian of the Seal; Pedro Serrano Laktaw (Panday Pira), Assistant Secretary; Baldomero Roxas (Amihan), Assistant Orator; Eleuterio Ruiz (Holofernes), Treasurer; Galicano Apacible (Lanatan), Assistant Treasurer; Mariano Kunanan (Laksamana), First Expert; Jose Abreu (Lakang Dula II), Second Expert;

Gregorio Aguilera (Kikil), Almoner; Jose Rizal (Dimasalang), Supervising Architect; and Telesforo Sukgang (Apeles), Temple Guard.

Antonio Luna, Ariston Bautista, Jose Yzama, Jose Alejandrino, and Francisco Suñico were among the original members of the reorganized Lodge. (Ibid., pp. 78-80).

Upon the direction of Worshipful Master Julio Llorente, Mariano Ponce wrote a letter to Grand Master Morayta reminding him of his promise to grant them the old charter of Lodge Solidaridad. On May 15, 1890, Morayta gave them the old charter, and he consented to be the installing officer at the installation ceremonies, which would be held on May 21. Besides, he allowed Solidaridad Lodge to be housed and to hold meetings in the headquarters of the Grande Oriente Español.

The brethren of Solidaridad Lodge No. 53 in Madrid, Spain directed their special attention to three special projects.

First, they conducted of a series of lectures on the sublime teachings and lofty ideals of Masonry in relation to conditions obtaining in the Philippines at that time. No, they did not invite non-members to be lecturers; rather, they took turns in delivering lectures in open Lodge.

Secondly, the brethren of Solidaridad Lodge No. 53 waged a campaign for the restoration of the representation of the Philippines in the Spanish Parliament. They started their campaign in January 1891, when Julio Llorente (Danton), the Lodge's Venerable Master, left Madrid, and therefore they should hold another election of officers. The officers they elected included the following: Ka Selo “Kupang” del Pilar, Venerable Master; Galicano Apacible (Lanatan), First Vigilant (or Senior Warden); Eleuterio Ruiz de Leon (Holofernes), Second Vigilant (or Junior Warden); Mariano Ponce (Kalipulako), Secretary; and Eduardo de Lete (Manu), Orator.

Around June 1891, Solidaridad Lodge sent a carefully researched petition to the Spanish Parliament asking it to restore the representation of the Philippines in it. The petition was duly signed by the officers of the Lodge.

Next, the Lodge sent a circular to other Lodges in Spain asking the members thereof to support its petition specified earlier. A little later, the Lodge sent out another circular, which was addressed to the whole Masonic world, directing the attention of Masons wheresoever dispersed to the sad plight of the Philippines, a remote country languishing under the shadow of intolerance and ignorance.

The political activity of Solidaridad Lodge No. 53 united all the Filipinos in Europe and consolidated their activities.

Thirdly, the brethren of Solidaridad Lodge pursued their plan to establish Lodges in Manila and the provinces exclusively for Filipinos. They did so because they themselves were happily aware that although they had come from different regions of the country (Rizal from Laguna, Jaena Lopez from Iloilo, Del Pilar from Bulacan, Apacible from Batangas, Arejola from Camarines Sur, Panganiban from Camarines Norte, Alejandrino from Pampanga, Bautista from Manila, Llorente from Cebu, and the Luna brothers from the Ilocos), inside the Lodge, they forgot all their regional differences. They all sat together and mingled together as brothers and as Filipinos. On that basis alone, they perceived that Masonry could help unify the Filipinos and imbue them with a sense of nationhood.

The brethren were, on the other hand, sadly aware of the stark and awful state of the Philippines and its inhabitants. The Philippines was still a mere cluster of hopelessly divided tribes. Its inhabitants did not yet have a true sense of nationhood because they did not look upon themselves as Filipinos but rather merely as Tagalogs, Pampangos, Ilocanos, Visayans, and so forth. Although they belonged to the same racial stock and shared a common grievance against their colonizer, they did not embrace one another as brothers. They let tribal and regional differences predominate. Their yearning for freedom led them to stage hundreds of revolts against Spain, but all their uprisings were local in scope, waged by a divided people and thus were easily quelled.

In a caucus, therefore, Ka Selo del Pilar emphatically told the brethren of Solidaridad Lodge No. 53: "Masonry has consecrated its efforts to the task of uniting all men in brotherhood, erasing the differences of country, race and color, of banishing war, replacing the din of arms and clanking of chains with the sound of work and industry."

On his part, Mariano Ponce said, "Masonry will provide our people with models for cooperative action and accustom them to live as a collectivity. In the bosom of Masonry we have learned to live a life of association; in the midst of that brotherhood we have communicated to one another our impressions, our thoughts, our aspirations, and we have made ourselves apt to unite our desires and our acts." (Ibid., pp. 86-87).

The brethren of Solidaridad Lodge, moreover, perceived Masonry as the "universal protest against

the ambition of tyrants"; as "supreme manifestation of democracy"; and as "the organization which could redeem the Philippines and transform it into a better and happier, as well as more just and more humane, place to live and work in." (Ibid., pp. 87-88).

Ka Selo pointed out to his brethren, "The failure of the present Government, my dear brethren, proclaims the necessity of trying other civilizing means. If the despotic regime now in force in the Philippines oppresses without doing any constructive or progressive work, then it is our duty to carry beyond the seas the light of Masonry. Let us strive, therefore, to extend to the remotest corners of the Philippines the principles of our august order, teaching the people, by precept and example, if not by legislation, the love of liberty, equality and fraternity."

Tomas Arejola, on his part, emphatically and eloquently enunciated, "If Masonry then the supreme manifestation of democracy, for in democracy are found Masonry's principles, teachings and tenets combined, there can be nothing more profitable and logical for us – children of a forgotten country on the other side of the world – than to adopt those principles for our own and to become strong advocates of reform if we truly wish to see the land of our ancestors redeemed and transformed from a neglected and downtrodden Spanish colony, poor and sickly, without rights or liberties, into a dignified, free and prosperous nation on the horizon of which the sun of justice and civilization will rise in full splendor."

In addition, he urged the brethren not to entertain any doubt about their plan to establish Masonic triangles or lodges in the Philippines; for "a Fraternity that, like Masonry, has existed and will always exist through the centuries, paying unremitting homage to the eternal verities, consecrating its efforts to the redemption of humanity, is the destined liberator to bring freedom and right to the Philippines."

Jose Dimasalang Rizal then talked on the role of universal Masonry, pointing out, "Masons should not rest so long as the world nurtures a tyrant, so long as the night gathers in its echoes the moans of the oppressed, so long as there are slaves, so long as there are oppressors. And this work is perhaps the greatest that Masonry has imposed upon itself and the only one worthy of its universal name."

The brethren of Solidaridad Lodge unanimously approved the project of establishing Lodges in the Philippine archipelago exclusively for Filipinos.

# PACIANO RIZAL

## THE SECRET HERO

by Gemma Cruz Araneta  
2015, Rizal "Women of Malolos" Awardee  
Chairperson, Heritage Conservation Society

In the Philippine-American War Museum in Tanauan, Batangas, located beside Mabini's house and inaugurated during his sesquicentennial, Gen. Paciano Rizal appears in the roster of Filipino Revolutionary fighters who defended the First Philippine Republic against the American invaders.

The caption of his picture reads:

- Paciano Rizal, 1851 - 1930
- Born in Calamba, Laguna, rank, Brigadier-General
- Part of General Pio del Pilar and Gen. Miguel Malvar's forces in the south of Manila
- Led the attack against the Americans in San Pedro Macati, February 1899
- With Gen. Juan Cailles, headed the forces in Laguna
- Contracted malaria in the Sierra Madre, captured and surrendered in Los Baños in 1900
- Swore allegiance to the USA under the condition he would not face the American flag, but his only flag, that of the Philippines.

Needless to say, the stories I heard from the family grapevine were not included, maybe because there is no body of evidence to prove their veracity. They are delightful stories, nonetheless, and because this is not a conference of historians, I shall tickle your collective imagination.

There are a few stories from the family grapevine about General Paciano Mercado Rizal, the elder brother of the national hero, Jose Protacio Rizal. Since these were told by grandparents to their grandchildren, no specific dates nor context were given. The moral of these stories are of primordial importance. .

The first I heard was about two Spanish priests who went to Laguna, sometime during the early years of American conquest and colonization. Their car broke

down in front of a lakeside chalet in Los Baños so they instructed the driver to knock at the gate and ask the owner for assistance. When they learnt that it was the house of a certain Don Paciano, the Spanish priests hurriedly told their chauffeur to drive on and look for help elsewhere.

The storyteller, my grandmother, said the Dominicans knew Paciano would never help them because of what they did to Rizal. I suppose it was too difficult to explain to a child that there were aggravating circumstances which began with terrible land disputes in Calamba, Laguna, (the leasees, the people of Calamba led by the Rizal family fiercely objected to pay increased land rentals) versus the Dominicans order who owned the land. The Rizals lost their home and everything in it, Paciano the eldest and his brothers-in-law were exiled to the Visayas, to Jolo and Basilan.

There is another story involving Don Pedro Paterno an ilustrado from Quiapo, the self-styled Maguino, a friend of Jose Rizal, they were in Europe at the same time. He was an unexpected guest at the Los Baños chalet, and the manservant ushered this well-dressed aristocratic-looking man to the living room without first informing his *amo*, Ñor Paciano. He was about to serve refreshments when Lolo Paciano called him aside. Why all the fuss? Is it because the man was shod and well-dressed? Would he have been as amiable if the unexpected guest were a barefoot farmer? (I suppose the servant came to his senses.) Besides, Lolo Paciano disapproved of the Federalista Party of which Paterno was a co-founder because it advocated US statehood, not independence.

After he was captured by the American invading forces, Gen. Paciano returned to farming and established a mutual-benefit association of farmers to jumpstart agricultural development. That was after all, one of the lofty objectives of his younger brother's **La Liga Filipina**. #

# AN *Open Letter* TO A BROTHER-TO-BE

(This “open letter,” which was adapted from “Preparations,” an essay written in 1925 or approximately 90 years ago by MW and Ill. Carl H. Claudy, PGM, 33°, is in line with the Craft’s reform agendum: Guard the West Gate. We suggest that a copy thereof is given to each candidate for the first or Entered Apprentice degree.)

Dear Brother-to-Be:

CLEARLY, YOUR AMBITION IS to put on your breast a tiny pin representing the Square and the Compasses, which are, together with the Volume of the Sacred Law, referred to as the great lights in Masonry. Although you know very little of Freemasonry, our ancient and honorable fraternity, you fervently desire to become an active member of it. We fondly hope that you do so because you have a favorable conception of Masonry, and not because you have mercenary motives or because you have been unduly influenced by your friends to seek our fellowship and join in our assemblies.

The biblical passage “*Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you*” applies to your situation. Desirous of realizing your ambition to be made a Freemason, you asked your friend, whom you knew to be a member of the Craft, what Freemasonry is all about, and how you would proceed. Most probably your friend told you certain things about the Fraternity; for he is supposed to be a zealous and enthusiastic public relations agent of it. Indeed, as a Master Mason, he must be able to confidently, clearly, and confidently tell you, as well as any other non-Mason who sincerely inquires about our fraternal order, the truth about it: what it is, what it is not, and what its mission,

objectives, and accomplishments are. Later he gave you a petition to fill out and sign.

As you answered the questions contained in the petition, you found out that you had to declare your belief in God. Probably your friend explained to you that no atheist could ever be made a Mason, and that although we in the Craft generally refer to God as the Great (or Supreme) Architect of the Universe, you can call Him by any other name. He may be to you God or Jehovah or Adonai or Buddha or Allah. Your friend might have told you that to us Freemasons, it makes no difference by what Name you call the Most High. What really matters is that there is within you the humble acknowledgment that you are His creature, and that He reigns over the heavens and the earth.

It is all very simple. The other questions on the petition are of a practical and mundane character. They give you no hint, however, of what a degree may be, in what sort of a ceremony of initiation you will participate, and what kind of a fraternity Masonry is.

Nor was there any hint given you in the paper you signed as to what sort of preparation you should make to become a Mason. Masonry jealously guards its name or reputation, and it does not advertise itself. While its contacts with the world are numerous and commonplace, it works so silently, so quietly, that the world knows little of its labors. You seldom hear Masonry discussed in public, and references to it in the literature of all countries are so cunningly concealed, that you, as well as all other non-members of the Craft, have almost nothing to guide you as to what you should do to and for yourself before you take your Entered Apprentice degree.

Your friend took your petition into his Lodge, which is his Masonic home. Around it cluster all those happy memories, all those beautiful thoughts, all those heart-searching experiences, which go with the word "home." You asked him, therefore, to pay you the complement of taking you into one of the sacred places of his life; in the hope that it will be, and the implied promise that if you will be admitted into the fellowship of the Craft, it shall be, to you, one of the sacred places of your own life.

It does not take a very clever man to see that with such a beginning – the belief in God, the call of fellowship and friendship, and the sacredness of home – Masonry is not a joke, not a foolish fun organization, not a club of "good fellows"; not an organization to join as one would a Board of Trade, for business purposes. It is obvious to anyone who thinks that Freemasonry must be dignified, beautiful, impressive, and that it must have a real meaning, a real part to play in a man's life.

Therefore, our Brother-to-be, make your preparations to become a Freemason as you would prepare for any other great and ennobling experience of life.

When your petition was signed and delivered, the matter was out of your hands. The Master of the Lodge assigned a committee to ascertain if you are worthy, from their standpoint, to be of the Lodge. Your name was voted on in due time. You were elected. Now you are notified to present yourself for initiation. You will be prepared to become a Mason at a room adjacent to the Lodge hall. Then you will be caused to knock at the door of the preparation room, which is often referred to as the west gate, the gate to the Lodge hall.

Go to the west gate clean in mind, in body, and in heart. Take from your mind and cast away forever all thought that there is a "lodge goat" awaiting you, or that your friends are going to "have fun with you."

There are fun-loving organizations which cast aside solemnity and spend most of their evenings in laughter and play. But a Masonic Lodge is unlike any one of those organizations! There is not a word spoken, an action performed, which can hurt your dignity or your feelings; there is no torture, physical or mental, to degrade you or Masonry. There is no "horse play" or other unhappiness that awaits you.

What is done with you has a meaning; the part you play is symbolic, and intended to make a "deep and lasting impression on your mind" of truths, the full understanding of which will help you transform yourself

into an increasingly better man. Put all fear from your mind. Remember that you go to a place where you will find friends who voted favorably on your petition; that the first question they asked you was of your belief in a common Father; and that men do not start thus who begin to play a joke.

Yes, dear brother-to-be, go to the west gate clean in mind, in body, and in heart as you would go clean to a christening or a baptism. Don't resent this instruction here; there is intended no insinuation that you are not always clean, but go made clean expressly for this ceremony; though you have but just come from the bath for the evening, go once more and bathe with the thought that you are preparing now for a great step, that the water which laves your body is also, symbolically, cleansing your mind and your heart. Put on your freshest linen, and let its spotless surface symbolize that spotlessness your thoughts should have. For if you neglect these things, you will be sorry, afterwards; what Masonry does to you is done to you, not your brethren that will be, and Masonry will mean more to you as you approach her Altar humbly and purified.

Finally, our Brother-to-be, go with a humble and contrite heart. If it is in your power to do so, put from your heart all evil. If you have an enemy, make an effort to forgive him before you enter the portals of the Temple. If you have done a sin, do your best to honestly regret it before you pass through the West Gate. If you have wronged any one, make up your mind to right the wrong; you will be the happier man later in the evening if you do.

And just before you leave your home, go alone in a quiet room, and, all unashamed, get upon your knees before that God in whom you believe, and ask His blessing upon what you are about to do. Pray humbly for the wit to understand what you are about to hear. Ask that it may be given to you to be a good Freemason: to be a brother to others who will be brothers to you, a real workman in the quarry, erecting to Him a Temple not made with hands.

So shall you become an Entered Apprentice with the greatest benefit to your brethren, and real joy to yourself.

Fraternally,

MW & . Ill. Carl H. Claudy, PGM, 33°

# A REVITALIZED RELEVANT REVERED FREEMASONRY, OUR COMMITMENT, OUR COVENANT

VW ARMANDO G. CAZZOLA, JGL (SL)  
*Chair, IMES Department of Liturgy Rituals and Ceremonies*

A Commentary of the Theme chosen by MW Grand Master Tomas G. Rentoy III for his term as GM.

Our Fraternity is an ancient Institution, and in our present form of purely Speculative Masons, we go back half millennium. No institution can last that long and grow in good name and continue to attract men of goodwill, unless it is endowed with timeless good moral values and the capacity to continually inspire and attract, throughout the centuries, good men from all walks of life.

However, our glorious Institution is like a beautifully ornamented monument of antiquity, it has to be continually carefully and skillfully maintained, or age, weather and environment will cause it to progressively crumble down until it is reduced to dusty ruins. No matter how glorious are the history and the traditions of a great institution like our Craft, relevance of it and the reverence it inspires, have to be nurtured and renewed by the performance of good deeds, and greatly depend on contemporary circumstances.

Freemasonry, has shined as brightly as a supernova star in the firmament, when it promoted and pursued independence and democracy in the Philippines, at times when being a Mason required great courage and readiness to sacrifice everything a person had, including life itself. Masons promoted and created Philippine Nationhood among the inhabitants of this 7000 islands' archipelago and, thru single-minded dedication, hard work and the blood of countless Masons-Heroes, independence was proclaimed from Spain in June 12, 1898 and the first Philippine Republic (1898-1902) was created with General Emilio Aguinaldo (a Mason) as president, with a democratic Congress, and a Democratic Constitution approved by Congress. The FIRST Republic came to an end with the capture of President Aguinaldo. Eventually, again thru persistent and able Masons' work, the Second Philippine Republic was proclaimed in 1935, having won self-government as part of the American Commonwealth.

In 1935 during the administration of USA President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a **Mason**, elections for President were called in the Philippines, three great Masons run for election, Emilio Aguinaldo; I.P.I. O.M. Gregorio Aglipay and Senate President Manuel L. Quezon PGM : Quezon, won the elections and was proclaimed President. Manuel L. Quezon was Grand Master of (Philippine) Masons in 1918.

Subsequently Masons provided, at the cost of their lives, the core of the resistance against Japanese occupation during world war II; C.J. Jose Abad Santos, among others, a Mason, died a Martyr for Philippine Freedom, killed by Japanese firing squad. After the end of the second World War, Masons relentlessly continued to pursue independence and eventually Masons brought the Country to full independence from the American Commonwealth, by peaceful means on July 4, 1946, with a Philippine Mason, President Manuel Roxas on the Philippine side, and two Masons in the American side, General Douglas Mac Arthur, and President Harry Truman, PGM of Missouri. [General Mac Arthur was made a Mason at sight by the Philippine Grand Lodge]. Masonry is enshrined everywhere in this Country, the National Flag, the Symbol of the Nation is a Masonic flag made by Masons with a Masonic Apron Design, a Masonic Sun, three Stars (Lights), eight rays representing the 8 provinces which had joined the Revolution inspired and fought by Masons; the nationwide schooling system was instituted by Masons, and so are most of the greatest institutions of the Country, among which are the first democratic Constitution approved by Congress on November 29, 1898 in Malolos and promulgated by President Emilio Aguinaldo on January 21, 1899; the 1935 Constitution approved by a popular plebiscite on May 14, 1935 and other countless examples. The First EDSA Revolution of 1986 saw again Masons in action to reclaim Democratic Freedom for Filipinos, and bloodshed was avoided by Masons Officers of both sides talking to each other as Brothers.

Among so many past glories Our target for this Masonic Year is, among others, to call the attention and efforts of all well-meaning Masons of our Jurisdiction on the need to focus on the true meaning of Brotherhood, and its profound implications on the screening of petitioners. We oftentimes talk about “mercenary masons” and the damages they cause to our Fraternity: we shall then define what is intended when labeling a Mason as a mercenary Mason, but let us first take a look at what makes a Brother a true Mason. A true Mason is a Brother who has joined the Fraternity for the purpose of becoming a better man, he not only attends, but actively PARTICIPATES Lodge Meetings, and events, he strives to become proficient in our rituals, and to be a “well informed” Brother, participating, whenever available, Masonic Education Classes and Lectures, in order to know better and deeper the teachings and the moral–philosophical basis of our Craft, the meaning and purpose of symbolism, our Constitution, Laws, Rules, Regulations and everything else which makes us “well informed” brethren. A true and worthy Mason thinks and act in terms of “WHAT CAN I DO FOR THE FRATERNITY? HOW CAN I BE OF GOOD USE AND HELP THE FRATERNITY?”; while a mercenary or unworthy Mason thinks and acts in terms “HOW CAN I USE THE FRATERNITY FOR MY PURPOSES?” “WHAT CAN THE FRATERNITY DO FOR ME?” had knocked at the door of a Lodge, had filed a petition after being (irresponsibly) endorsed and recommended by two brethren of the Lodge, has been only carelessly or not at all investigated by the three brethren of the investigating committee, and eventually he has been admitted into the Lodge Hall, thru the West Gate, after having been pronounced by brethren to be “worthy and well qualified” “properly vouched for” “under the tongue of good report” “and coming well recommended”.

With concern to proper screening of petitioners, and consequently to refrain from recommending to Lodges candidates unless the candidates’ pure motives and good moral qualities have been satisfactorily verified, always keeping in mind the fundamental question “do you know so well the personality and circumstances of the candidate you are recommending to your Lodge, and do you repose in him the level of trust and confidence indispensable to accept this person as your own Brother in your home as part of your own family?” It is only when a Brother can honestly answer that question in the affirmative that he should decide to recommend a petitioner. We shall always bear in mind that “Masonry gets GOOD men and makes them BETTER”: Masonry is a Fraternity, not a correctional Institution, in selecting petitioners we have to be guided by that qualifying word, “GOOD MEN”, i.e. men of good

moral character and spotless background, financially sound and capable of sustaining themselves and their families, contribute to charity as mandated and firmly believe in God and the eternity of human soul. It is in fact the indiscriminate endorsement of petitioners unfit for the duties and privileges of Masonry, coupled with a perfunctory, or lax, or no background investigation at all by the Lodges, which opens the west gate, with disastrous consequences, to those unworthy of being made Masons. This in turn puts in motion the kind of chain of events that brings discredit to the Fraternity as a whole.

What makes an institution to be relevant and revered is the kind of image it projects to the world at large, its public image. In the case of our Fraternity, its public image is the cumulative image of all its contemporary members.

When MW Danilo D. Angeles adopted for his term of office the theme “**By my actions shall Masonry be judged**”, he had chosen a “truism” which still points us Masons to the right direction. All of us know how damaging it is to our Fraternity’s image to have members who behave unmasonically. It appears that some of our Lodges have become somehow careless with regard to the investigation of petitioners: unfortunately the result of unguarded west gates is becoming more evident by the day, with brethren causing serious embarrassment to the Fraternity .

Masons who have entered the Fraternity for mercenary or ulterior motives might look inoffensive on the surface but are, in reality, like termites, who hidden inside the timber posts and beams of a house, devour them totally from the inside, leaving only the face of the beams and columns intact, making them empty shells with only the appearance of (structural) integrity, but in reality ready to crumble down in total ruin, suddenly and unexpectedly; they are time bombs with unknown time setting.

The “unworthy” are a small minority of our membership, but they have the potential to tarnish the reputation and good name of our Fraternity as a whole, because, as it is well known, bad news of any kind sell newspapers and increase viewership to TV news programs. Good news are taken for granted and are not given attention,

The great majority of brethren are hardworking family men of good will, good reputation, with sincere love for the ideals of Freemasonry“ and their acts reflect honor upon our ancient Institution” and contribute

towards maintaining our Fraternity “a revered Institution” positively relevant in our Communities as it has been for one and half century. They are the kind of Masons needed by our Lodges, and think in terms of “what can I do for the Fraternity?”, and not “ what can the Fraternity do for me?”, brethren who sincerely love Freemasonry, spend quality time and resources to sustain their Lodges and Masonic activities, and yearn to learn more about our Craft and its teachings. We shall not let go to waste the labor of love of worthy brethren because of the unworthy who have been able to enter our lodges thru unguarded west gates. We shall clean our ranks and it is not too late to start a careful watch of the west gate and never forget that before being raised a Master Mason, kneeling at the altar of our Lodge, with our hands on the Volume of the Sacred Law, Square and Compasses we have taken the Sacred Oath to obey and support the Constitution, Edicts, Laws Rules and General Regulations of Freemasonry, .

What is needed in order to keep our Fraternity’s relevance in contemporary society and inspire the Reverence that our ancient glorious Institution has enjoyed over the centuries among brethren and the public at large, is first and foremost the vigilance of all sincere and well-meaning brethren, to properly screen petitioners. Masonic Education shall then become the steady companion of every Mason, so that the teachings of our Craft will “make good men better”. Our target of maintaining Freemasonry to its High Moral Ground is achievable, it is not too late, past mistakes can be corrected, BUT it is necessary that the West Gate be, from now-on, well guarded, by having exhaustive investigation conducted on Petitioners, by continually reminding the brethren of the CHARGE we received in the first degree ...”**Be faithful to the trust committed to your care**, and manifest your fidelity to your principles by a strict observance of the Constitution of the Fraternity; by adhering to the Ancient Landmarks thereof; AND BY **REFUSING TO RECOMMEND ANY ONE TO A PARTICIPATION IN OUR PRIVILEGES, UNLESS YOU HAVE STRONG REASONS TO BELIEVE THAT, BY A SIMILAR FIDELITY, HE WILL ULTIMATELY REFLECT HONOR ON OUR ANCIENT INSTITUTION”**.

Strict background and character investigation of Petitioners is a sacred duty of : 1) Each and every Brother who is sponsoring a Petitioner to his Lodge; 2) The Worshipful Masters; 3)Each of the three brethren (secretly) chosen by the Master for the Committee on Petitioners’ background investigation; 4) Every Brother who may have knowledge of real reasons for the disqualification of a Petitioner.

Once the good petitioners have been selected, they shall be masonically oriented and masonic education shall accompany them throughout degree conferrals and their entire masonic life.

Preventing “Cowans and Eavesdroppers” from entering the Fraternity is a must, but it is not the only step to be taken toward renewed relevance.

To be relevant in the eyes of the outsiders we shall first put order in our “house”. Therefore it is necessary is that the Lodges be entrusted to “Lights” who can truly project the correct “Light” to their brethren. To achieve this target, it is necessary that the lodges elect their best qualified members to the South, the West and the East , brethren with a spotless record, proficient not only in our Rituals, but also and foremost in the tenets, principles, the teachings, laws, rules and regulations of Freemasonry, and in possession of the necessary managerial skills to properly run the Lodge. Likewise, whatever position given by the Grand Lodge to brethren shall be based not on “politics” but on the sound principle of management of requiring of candidates, competence, sound judgment, maturity, dedication, flawless track record. On the other hand brethren invested with the honor of serving the Craft in Official capacity shall not take that honor lightly, like a sinecure, but as a “trust” that they have to demonstrate they fully deserve, by showing strict adherence to the letter of our TENETS (Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth), by practicing the kind of humility which allows men to graciously serve others, by having or endeavor to achieve that competence and good knowledge of all aspects of our Craft necessary to proficiently lecture the brethren about it, by being good, parsimonious and judicious administrators of our Lodges’ resources, by possessing a deep seated sense of justice, and the capacity to develop and maintain Harmony among the brethren under their care, all of which are qualities needed to lead brethren by example.

Our target is achievable. It cannot be completed in one masonic year, but it is important to start with the right reforms and inspire those who will come next, to continue to carry-on with it, always remembering that reformation has to start from ourselves, we have to symbolically let the Compasses control, correct and calibrate the Square, as our ancient Operative brethren used to do to assure the correctness of their work when laboring in their Lodges to square the rough rocks from the quarries, in their endeavor to produce “Perfect Ashlars”.

# TWO MODEST PROPOSALS

By VW Jesus Flor Nicolas

WE ARE GREATLY GLADDENED by the following declaration of the present leadership of our M.W. Grand Lodge:

*“To keep the Masonic fire fiercely burning, priority will be on broadening the scope of our intensive Masonic education programs. We will democratize our materials by maximizing opportunities offered by information technology. We will make available online and in hard copies all handbooks on rituals, primer on Edicts, lectures reference materials for all qualified brethren to access. This dual approach is expected to fast track the Masonic learning process as more brethren study collectively and individually at the same time.*

*“To address the current paucity of qualified instructors, we shall task the IMES to train a cadre of instructors. In line with this, an Edict will be issued to rationalize the number of JGLs and DGLs to maximize efficiency and optimize effectiveness. Newly-appointed SGL, JGLs, and DGLs will undergo intensive training to enable them to conduct IMES classes in their respective areas of responsibility. Accordingly, IMES classes will be conducted by Regional IMES Offices that will be established. IMES will be administratively and financially audited regularly.*

*“Our aim in democratizing Masonic education is not to impose dogma but to encourage free-flowing discussion on Masonic topics and other subjects in the arts and sciences in a harmonious, brotherly atmosphere. Our goal is not as much to imprint knowledge as to nurture it, to internalize the Masonic lessons and not simply commit them to memory. We must draw out the artists and scientists among the brethren*

*“We will therefore encourage the brethren to write in-depth philosophical treatises. We will revive the brethren’ interest in esoteric studies. And, within the limits of our cabletow, we will support or sponsor scientific research and the application of established scientific studies by Filipino scientists. IMES will be tasked to spearhead this new thrust in Masonic education.*

*“We will not sing the same song nor dance to the same tune. But we will calmly listen; we will speak in the same tone and act in the same rhythm so that as we shine our lights to the outside world, they will be clear and bright as day.”*

The foregoing declaration reminds us that early in the second section of the ritual of the Fellowcraft degree, the Senior Deacon informs the candidate that our ancient brethren were both operative and speculative, while we latter-day Craftsmen are speculative only.

Indeed, Masonic historians inform us that:

- Our ancient brethren not only taught Entered Apprentices and Fellows of the Craft the mason's art and shared with them their knowledge of the improved art of architecture, but also gave them instruction and training in good morals and the tenets of the Craft, particularly Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, and they deeply impressed upon the minds and hearts of their wards that the Craft's self-imposed mission is to attain human solidarity or to unite men of diverse countries, sects, and opinions into a true brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God, so that the purpose of humanity which He dictated, to wit, the universal peace and harmony among His creatures, would soon be realized.
- Early in the 1600s, however, the Craft metamorphosed into an "experimental" search for the Light (or Truth). Most, if not all, of the members of Masonic lodges at that time were speculative men – men who observed, sought, examined, and meditated or speculated on the facts or knowledge already known; men who shared the results of their experiments, studies, or investigations with one another.
- In the 1700s, Masonry became all the more a Speculative Craft; it placed a very great emphasis on "experimental philosophy" and knowledge of Truth, to which all learning leads.
- One of the outstanding Speculative Craftsmen in the second half of the 18th century was William Preston, whose writings were characterized by his lengthy lectures and his famous illustrations of Masonry. His writings served as the basis of much of the "work" produced in the United States of

America by Thomas Smith Webb and Jeremy L. Cross.

- Preston studied the existing lectures, rituals, and ceremonies in the Masonic lodges, and then embellished these with what he knew about classical art. His works appeared in London in 1772. He strongly stated, *"Without much instruction, and more exercise, no man can be skillful in any art; in like manner, without an assiduous application to the various subjects treated in the different lectures of Masonry, no person can be sufficiently acquainted with the true values of the institution."*
- In Preston's day, members of Masonic lodges got sufficiently acquainted with the true value of Masonry because their leaders provided them with instructions through the "give and take" method of intellectual exercise; that is to say, leaders and members of Masonic lodges exchanged ideas on Masonry not only while the lodge was at work but also at refreshment, the table lodge being an integral part of every meeting. For example, the Master or the Lecturer asked a member of the lodge to explain the symbolism of the tyler's sword, not because the member was expected to give the "correct" answer, but rather to afford him a chance to exercise his speculative skill or his ability to explain his insight into the meaning of a particular working tool or hieroglyphic emblem. At the same time the other members were given the opportunity to make sure that the brother asked realized that in Masonry the sword is always a defensive, and not an offensive, weapon. In this way they would help improve his speculative skill and Masonic understanding.
- Down through the centuries, this kind of intellectual "give and take" has become the image of Masonry – an image that has attracted outstanding men of every station and walk of life into its ranks.

Filipino Masonic historians and scholars also inform us that the same image of Freemasonry attracted the intelligent young Filipinos engaged in the campaign for much-needed reforms during the latter part of the Spanish colonial regime in the country to join the fellowship of the Craft; impelled the courageous leaders of the revolution against Spain to knock on the door of Masonry; and motivated the patriotic Filipinos who participated in the Philippine-American war, as well as the Filipino statesmen engaged in the struggle for the independence of the Philippines from the neo-colonial rule of the United States of America, to become members of Masonic lodges here and abroad. The same historians add that our Masonic forebears loved the healthy exchange of ideas in the Lodge so much that they looked forward with much anticipation to attending it; were generally interested in the pursuit of Light and Truth, as well as sincerely tried to observe in daily life the moral principles which Masonry's working tools, implements and emblems had been selected to illustrate or symbolize; persistently pondered the application and uses of these symbolic or emblematic objects in their intellectual, moral, and spiritual activities; enthusiastically acquired moral and spiritual knowledge through study and contemplation; and really speculated on ways to accomplish the mission of Masonry mentioned earlier.

No, we are not saying that we latter-day Masons are no longer working at speculative Masonry. On the contrary, we are well aware that:

- A great many brethren are proficient in the Craft's ritualistic and ceremonial work.
- Many members of our Lodges religiously rehearse for the exemplification of Masonic degrees.
- District leaders spearhead the conduct of periodic Lodges of Instruction for the brethren's further education and training.
- Grand Lecturers eloquently deliver informative, and enlightening Masonic education lectures during stated meetings.

- Senior members of the Craft gladly serve as mentors to their junior counterparts on the various aspects of Masonry.
- The Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES) is doing a splendid job in preparing worthy and well-qualified brethren for responsible leadership at all levels of the Craft.

We do believe, however, that members of the Lodge should be provided with more opportunities to exercise their speculative power. For example, newly-raised brethren should not merely express their appreciation for their admission into the Craft's fellowship, but rather articulate their reactions to their initiatory experiences. Besides, during stated meetings, brethren of the Lodge should not be made to merely listen to their better informed or more knowledgeable fellows but rather be given the chance to explain what they believe they have learned about any of the various aspects of Freemasonry. There can be no doubt that if ordinary members of the Lodge are given opportunity to verbalize what they think they have learned about Freemasonry, they will feel that exhilarating flow of achievement for being able to contribute, and they will feel that they are important and needed and therefore really belong to the Lodge and to the Craft.

We strongly suggest that every one of our Lodges organize discussion or study groups that would meet outside the lodge hall at a designated venue on an appointed time and day.

Fundamentally, Masonic charity means that we aid and assist one another understand the essence, mission, creed, philosophy, symbolism, ritual, history, jurisprudence, and other aspects of Masonry. Guarding the Lamp means, at least in part, that we Craftsmen help one another improve in Masonry. The spirit which was exhibited by our brethren of yesteryears is that of really working in Speculative Freemasonry. It is high time we, their latter-day brethren, recapture that spirit.

Many of us, after all, joined the Craft because we were inspired and edified by the good example set by

a great number of Filipino reformists and revolutionaries who embodied the invaluable and imperishable ideals of Freemasonry and who founded our nation on the pillars of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, as well as on the columns of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and because we knew that the brethren who came this way after them were likewise committed and dedicated to promoting the welfare of the society in which they lived, discharged with utmost faithfulness and conscientiousness the duties and obligations incumbent upon them, and made optimal use of their talents and resources for the welfare and interest of the people they lived with and served.

A careful study of the history of Freemasonry in the Philippines will reveal that countless men and women who affiliated themselves with Freemasonry fearlessly fought Spanish colonialism, North American neo-colonialism, and Japanese aggression; courageously championed hope and solidarity, as well as unity and empowerment, for their own people; and patiently, perseveringly, and persistently pursued the “impossible dream” of freedom.

Clearly, a great number of our Masonic forebears, both reformists and revolutionaries, were passionate advocates of a just society for all Filipinos.

That is, indeed, the unquestioned legacy of Freemasonry and Freemasons in the Philippines. Generally, however, the history books used in Philippine educational institutions do not acknowledge such a legacy. Besides, there is a dearth of books and periodicals that deal with the history of Freemasonry in the Philippines.

Past Grand Master Teodoro M. Kalaw’s book entitled *History of Philippine Masonry, Its Origin, Development, and Vicissitudes up to the Present Time* (1920), published in 1956, is still regarded as the most authoritative history of Masonry in the Philippines.

Another Past Grand Master, MW Reynold Smith Fajardo, who served the M.W. Grand Lodge of the Philippines for many years as Grand Secretary, wrote several books and articles on Philippine Freemasonry.

Brethren at the district and lodge levels have come out with publications containing Masonic articles, particularly those dealing with the history of their respective Lodges and Districts.

We believe, however, that there is a dire need for the writing of an updated history of Freemasonry in the Philippines – one that highlights the contributions of Masonry and its members to the contemporary history of the Philippines; one that shows to all and sundry that Philippine Freemasonry is an institution of educational advancement, moral and intellectual leadership and philanthropic endeavors, and that it is a fraternal organization that helps us, its members, to transform ourselves into “*a band of men to whom others might look for example and inspiration – men who other will say are men of honor, virtue, and charitable feelings*”; a band of men committed and dedicated to practicing the various moral and social, as well as domestic and public, virtues; “*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*”; a band of men who are faithful to our covenant to work together in close coordination and cooperation toward bringing about a universal league of mankind or toward establishing upon earth a true brotherhood of men of diverse countries, sects, and opinions under the Fatherhood of God, who created humanity in order that men everywhere, despite their differences in color, country, creed, socio-economic condition, and political persuasion, would dwell together upon earth in peace and harmony.

That belief of ours has been bolstered by the declaration of the present leadership of our M.W. Grand Lodge cited earlier.

Assured that our incumbent Grand Master, MW Tomas G. Rentoy III, and his set of Grand Lodge officers will “calmly listen,” we modestly propose that the defunct Philippine Lodge of Research be revived, and that, like the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES), it be eventually regionalized.

# Just Thinking Aloud

from Kuya Emer P Aviles, PM, DGL, NCR-D

## WHO IS MW TOMAS G RENTOY III?

Eight months into the stewardship of our Grand Master Tomas G. Rentoy III, I still see pockets of resistance from some quarters, questioning his leadership style. I shall not attempt, though, to opine on what their reasons or excuses are for it. That's not my business. But why? Is it, maybe, because some of us do not know him? It is, probably and simply, that we do not know him. Maybe, that's why.

But to me, it does make good sense to get to know the caliber of one's leader. I, for one would be reluctant to follow a supposed leader if I were clueless as to what he is made of. And so I ask:

## How well do we know this man, this man we now address as our Grand Master?

To be honest, I did not know the guy. My personal information index of him was zero. Nada. Zilch. I knew only what I had read about him in our Cabletow, which is to say, quite limited.

My association with Kuya Tom started at the Legazpi City AnCom when I was sworn in as a District Grand Lecturer.

One day in April of this year (2015), from out of the blue, a piece of paper dropped unto my lap saying I had been chosen as one of the "select few". Wow! Me! A District Grand Lecturer. And would I, please, sign my name to signify my assent?

As I was reading the letter, my mind was telling me: "uh, oh, you old fool, don't even think about it, you do not even know the man, and has he ever even spoken to you at all?, don't you have enough problems as it is?,"

heck, you probably don't even have the vaguest idea of what you're getting yourself into, at 75, you're almost at death's door, what's the matter with you – you big shot you - Emer P. Aviles?"

And I reacted: "Really?," I said to myself and added, "75 and at death's door?" "Not hardly, buddy", I arrogantly told my mind.

But that was my mind speaking, though. Not me – I had far more sense than my own mind. Or so, I thought.

But I guess, my love for my brothers and the Order that brought "order" to my not-so-orderly life, took hold and ordered me to shut up my mind. And I did! Easy me - I said, yes. Even went ahead and signed my name in.

After thirty-five years of only Blue Lodge actions and a stint as the WM of Noli Me Tangere Lodge No. 42, incidentally, the only lodge I belong to, the title of Very Worshipful was conferred upon me in Legazpi City. Great, I said. The feeling was grand - "top of the world". "Whew..... baby, look at me now!"

The euphoria was fleeting, though, and it vanished as soon as I was hit with the thought that I did not really know the man - Grand Master TGR III, whose Edicts I were to obey and implement, to lecture on, my Exemplar brother - to be emulated. Add in the thought of the job ahead - 12 months! – my mind was going, "what have you gotten yourself into?"

And how was I to follow the marching orders of one I hardly knew at all? And so I set out to get to know him more, that is, up close.

At the onset, I liked what I read about him. Admittedly, reading what is written about a man greatly helps one to know of him. But I wanted to uncover for myself those covert demeanor – stuff, that the printed

word, at times, will fall short of conveying the full minutiae of a person's inner self - his motivations and the driving force that impels him to pursue daring courses of actions, that to him, will benefit the greater number over the few, of the Craft; to look deep into his eyes, if you will, to seek and, hopefully, understand his feelings and some of his inner thoughts, of his aspirations and dreams for our Order.

I am not a person easily impressed, but he made an impact on me. I guess, that's just me. But let me tell you why:

In 1992, we allowed a petitioner, Tomas G. Rentoy III, entry into our Brotherhood. He was passed and then raised to be one of us: a brother Master Mason. That was 24 years ago or almost two-and-a-half decades ago.

Over time, he had proven himself well enough, to be sure, as a MM.

He ascended our Mystic Stairs, as PM, was appointed numerous Grand Line positions, then JGW, SGW, DGM and, finally as our Grand Master.

During this period, he had proven his mettle, as well, as a Police Officer, under combat circumstances - almost losing an arm in a skirmish against lawless elements. I'll say - the man is **undoubtedly courageous**. "Matapang".

The man's academic accomplishments add up, too - first PNPA graduate to finish a course at the Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA - by no means, an ordinary feat. An alumnus, even, of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). He used these training/knowledge to become an excellent administrator in the various departments/agencies he was assigned to manage. As far as I am concerned, this man is also **intelligently brilliant**. "Matalino".

Which altogether earned him the title of **Chief Superintendent** with a star ranking.

His official police postings in the different sectors of the country allowed him the opportunity to visit various masonic lodges and acquainted himself with the brethren and their concerns, both local and issues concerning the GLP. He heard and he listened. And he took notice. Along the way, there were numerous masonic honors/titles, here and abroad, that he earned and got awarded for. I, do not think, however, that these honors, though, deserved and appreciated, really mattered that much to him.

Got himself zealously active in the different masonic appendant bodies: a Shriner, past Illustrious Potentate, a charter or regular/plural member in other lodges, a Scottish and York Riter, is in the Order of DeMolay and President Emeritus of a Square and Compass club. Many memberships in different organizations requiring a lot of time and attention. He is either here and there or elsewhere, doing this and some other tasks. Does the man ever sleep?

The guy is **INDUSTRIOUS**. "Masipag".

And let us not forget that he also has to make a living as a police officer. Not to mention his duties as a loving husband to a wife and a doting father to his children. **AFFECTIONATE**. "Mapag-mahal".

Throughout those 24 years, across the broad masonic landscape that he traversed, he met with the brethren, here and abroad. He heard and he listened and took notes of their concerns; made consultations with and sought the advise of the elders as well as from the younger generation of the brethren.

Over the years, he saw what had gone wrong with the general membership. Things that we, too, saw and experienced ourselves. We even went so far as to make a few changes in our Masonic Landmarks!

**You and I know - there is nothing wrong with Freemasonry! It ain't broken, never was, therefore, it needs no fixin'.**

He promised to introduce reforms, given the right time and place. Reforms to correct malpractices that, seemingly, grew roots and, consequently, got accepted as tradition among the rank and file. Reforms with attendant penalties for non-compliance - a necessary measure, hard to accept and bitter to swallow, even, but arguably a necessity, because how do you enforce a law without the corresponding penalty/ies? His Edicts were a validation, too, of his promise and strong response to the brethren's clamor for change.

So determined was he that his first act upon assumption of the Grand Oriental Chair in the Legazpi City AnCom was the simultaneous issuance of a number of edicts (even I have lost count) and other circulars. These he knew would find disfavor from some quarters but he forged ahead. The man is obviously **DECISIVE** and willing to accept the consequences for his actions. He

rang “general quarters” and went “hell-bent for leather” on his Edicts believing as he did that these will mean the realization of his and our dream of a “**REVITALIZED, RELEVANT, and REVERED FREEMASONRY**”.

And so brethren, I ask: how well do we know the man?

As we now look up to him as our Grand Master, some of us may wonder whether he had truthfully answered in the affirmative, the following questions:

“WAS HE DULY and TRULY PREPARED, WORTHY AND WELL QUALIFIED?” “HAD HE PROVEN HIS PROFICIENCIES IN ALL THE PRECEDING DEGREES?”, “IS HE ZEALOUS IN HIS REGARD FOR THE INTERESTS OF THE CRAFT and the WELFARE OF THE BRETHREN?”.

And if all his answers are a positive yes, then let us all be one in declaring that he deserves to sit in the Grand Oriental Chair - to lead us. If so, for our own sakes and our beloved Fraternity, let us all support the man for what he believes in and stands for.

Relative to Kuya Tom and his Edicts, allow me to equate these to an oceangoing vessel:

“A ship does not sink in spite of the oceans of water around it; it sinks because of the water that gets into it”.

The point is – Kuya Tom as our Grand Master has become the **Captain** of the **M/V GLP**. As Captain, he has studied the ocean maps and have chosen a course of Edicts that to him is the safest and the best sea lane to steer us through the tumultuous sea to avoid the storms.

**WE**, the brethren, on the other hand, are the **engineers**. We plug the leaks, man the pumps, keep the engines tuned-up and running, do the maintenance and repairs, fix what’s broken, even maintaining order among the crew. We are the ones that keep our ship, the M/V GLP – afloat.

## **Captain Tom steers; we bail out the water off the boat.**

Concededly, he needs us as much as we need him.

So brethren, let us link arms with our Most Worshipful Tom that he may navigate this vessel and

deliver our ship and everyone else in it to a peaceful harbor – our own jurisdiction - the Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines.

We are running short of time to effect these changes. Let us not tarry.

Before I close, just between you and I, let me tell you of my own evaluation, if you will, of the man.

I am almost 75 years young (sorry, I meant 51), and have spent pretty much of those times studying people. I observe and I make mental calibrations of the people around me. Not to judge but to better understand how to deal with them, as we say - ON THE LEVEL.

I have seen and felt this man’s honesty and sincerity. Oftentimes, I look at him when he is among us, and it gladdens my heart, to have seen the genuine affection reflected in his eyes for each one of us. In the few fellowships I have attended that he was present in, he looked most happy having fun among us - being with us - just being a brother. He loves to sing, as well, which I think is his way of serenading his brothers. A fun guy, fun to be with. A simple brother to his brethren. No more and no less. I say, “What a guy!”

He never misses a workday as MWGM, too. He keeps his doors open to us. I encourage you, my brothers, to enter those doors. Visit with him. He loves visiting brethren. Talk to him. Or just to simply, “shoot the breeze” with him - the guy loves to talk. He’ll appreciate you for it. You see, he does not only hear but he listens as well. And be assured that he will do something about your issues, if you have any.

And finally, with what I have come to know of him, still limited as it is, I say this to you, from my heart:

If I were made to choose a man to watch my back, in any given situation, without any second thoughts, I would choose Kuya Tom. Similarly, I would gladly be the person to back him up – anytime, anywhere!

Thank you my brothers, for your time and attention. God bless us all and our beloved Fraternity.

Drive safe going home tonight. And do not drink too much.

# TERRACES

By Bro. Dennis C. Uy

Running, specially trail running, has brought me to a lot of interesting places. Places of beauty and natural wonders. In my most recent trail race, the Miyamit Falls Trail Marathon, I was able to run through the mountains of Porac, Pampanga, along trails inhabited by our Aeta brothers.

The natural beauty of the mountains was truly stunning. But the same cannot be said about the living conditions of our brother Aetas in the area. Although the mountain side is beautiful, the Aetas subsist only on kamote and banana hearts harvested along the mountain side. These are about the only edible plants growing along the mountain slopes and the Aetas harvest them by the bags full and sell them at meager prices to traders. Banana hearts are not too desirable to consumers, thus the low price for them.

Similarly, I have also experienced running in the mountains of Benguet, especially in Bakod and Kayapa towns. Here, I see the same kind of majestic mountains, not unlike in Porac, Pampanga. However, in Benguet, the Igorots have a higher standard of living. Some of them can be considered silent millionaires: owning houses, large tracks of land and trucks. This is drastically different from the lives of the Aetas.

If both live in similar settings and conditions, why then the difference in lifestyles?

The difference, I observed, lies in the way they used the land and mountains that God has given them. I have observed that in the mountainsides of Benguet, the Igorots have changed the landscape, carved and built terraces to enable them to better catch the rains so they may be able to grow crops alongside the mountains. While in contrasts, the Aetas have not changed their mountains and thus, any rain that comes will just wash down the mountains, and in most cases, bring the rich top soil down with it.

Our lives can be compared to the Aetas and Igorots. God has given us all similar blessings. He has given us all life, strength, intelligence, compassion, logic and the ability to love. But why are some people more successful and happier with their lives?

The reason lies with how we change our “landscape” and our mindset to be able to “catch” God’s blessings. If we work hard enough like the Igorots in building “terraces” in our hearts and minds, we will be able to “grow” more blessings, the fruit of which would be happiness, love, prosperity and contentment!

It takes a lot of work for the Igorots to build the terraces along the mountainside, but without it, their lives would not be as abundant as they are now. The same thing is true in our lives. If we make the effort and take the time to build “terraces” in our lives, no matter how difficult it may be, we will soon reap the benefits and live a life full of God’s abundance!

## FEATURE ARTICLE



Founded in 1920 in Omaha, Nebraska, by Mrs. Ethel T. Wead Mick, Job's Daughters International®.

It has over 10,000 members in the United States, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, and Brazil.

Girls who wish to join Job's Daughters must be 10–20 years old. Job's Daughters International is no part of the Masonic Fraternity, but is closely tied to the Masonic Order. Girls must have a Masonic relation or sponsor, or be related to a Majority Member to be eligible for membership.

In Job's Daughters we learn important skills for life, and the importance of fulfilling individual responsibilities within a group. Its activities provide opportunities for young women to develop confidence, good character, life-long friendships, moral and spiritual values, and leadership abilities.

We work to help our community through visiting hospitals and homes for the elderly to offer friendship to people who might be lonely and sad, we also have food drives and other activities to provide for those in need.

We honor a rich tradition and heritage of our community. But most importantly, we have fun doing these.

In the Philippines there are 25 active Bethels founded in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao with 518 members.

### Luzon:

- Bethel 1, Olongapo
- Bethel 8, Cavite
- Bethel 9, Bayombong
- Bethel 13, Orani Bataan
- Bethel 15, Santiago Isabella
- Bethel 22, Manila
- Bethel 25, Baguio
- Bethel 27, Bontoc
- Bethel 31, Naga City
- Bethel 32, Palayan
- Bethel 34, Las Pinas
- Bethel 35, Taytay
- Bethel 36, Makati

### Visayas:

- Bethel 3, Dumagete
- Bethel 4, Iloilo
- Bethel 11, Cebu

### Mindanao:

- Bethel 5, Iligan
- Bethel 6, Davao
- Bethel 10, Ozamiz
- Bethel 14, Kidapawan
- Bethel 19, Cagayan de Oro
- Bethel 21, Cotabato
- Bethel 23, Malaybalay
- Bethel 30, Oroqueita
- Bethel 33, Kabacan

Members of Job's Daughters would not be where they are today without the support and commitment of Masons, from whom they receive their heritage. Members of the Masonic family are invited to recommend girls for membership in a local Bethel today!

**“And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job;  
and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.”**

**Job 42:15**



## RECENT EVENTS

# Grand Lodge Activities

### RIZAL'S 119<sup>TH</sup> DEATH ANNIVERSARY



### PACO PARK



# Grand Lodge Activities

## CERTIFYING AND ACCREDITATION BY ISO



# Grand Lodge Activities

## PAST GRAND MASTERS' DAY



## AWARDING RITUAL OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS



*Ritual Olympic Champions*

*Opening of the Lodge - RX-B*

*Closing of the Lodge - NCR-D*

*Apron Lecture- NCR-C*

*Bro. Avy Yenka,  
Jose Rizal Lodge No. 22*

# Grand Lodge Activities



## NCRD SPONSORS PGM DAY MEDICAL MISSION



## PGM DAY PARLOR GAMES



# Grand Lodge Activities

## INVESTITURE OF PAST ILLUSTRIOUS POTENTATE'S JEWEL



# Grand Lodge Activities

## SOUTHERN LUZON MULTI-DISTRICT CONVENTION



## CENTRAL LUZON MULTI-DISTRICT CONVENTION



# Grand Lodge Activities

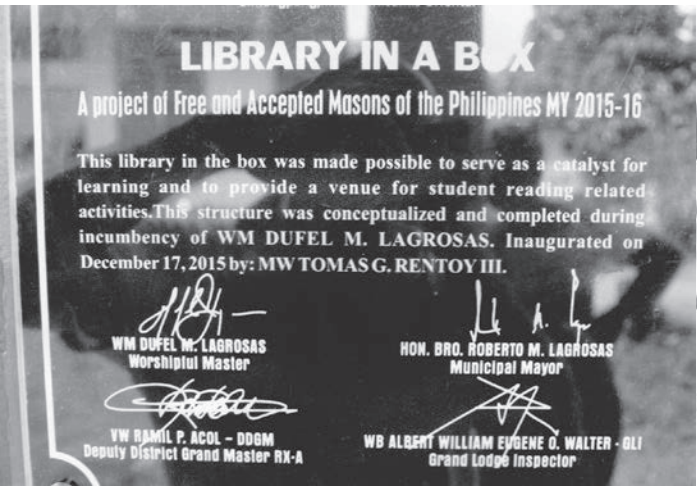
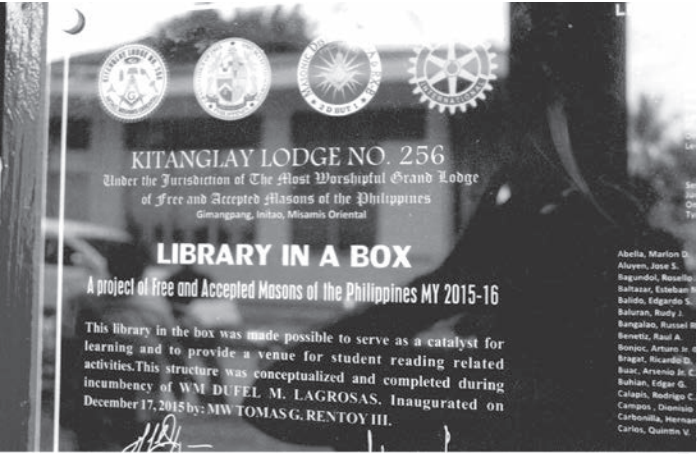
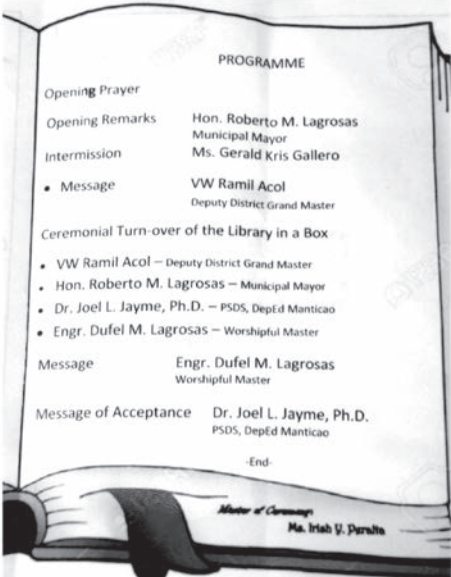
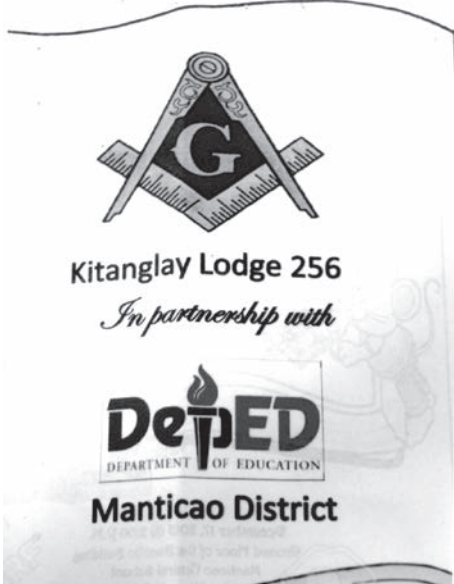
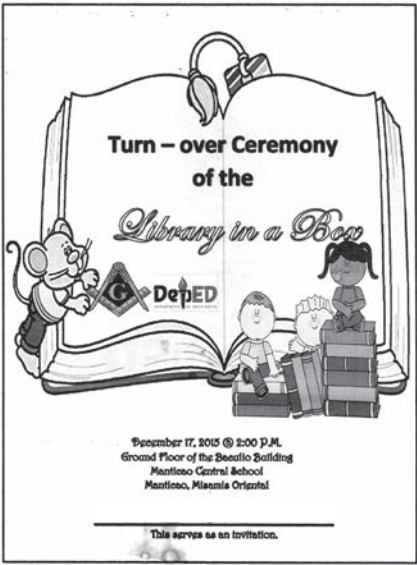


NCR MULTI-DISTRICT CONVENTION

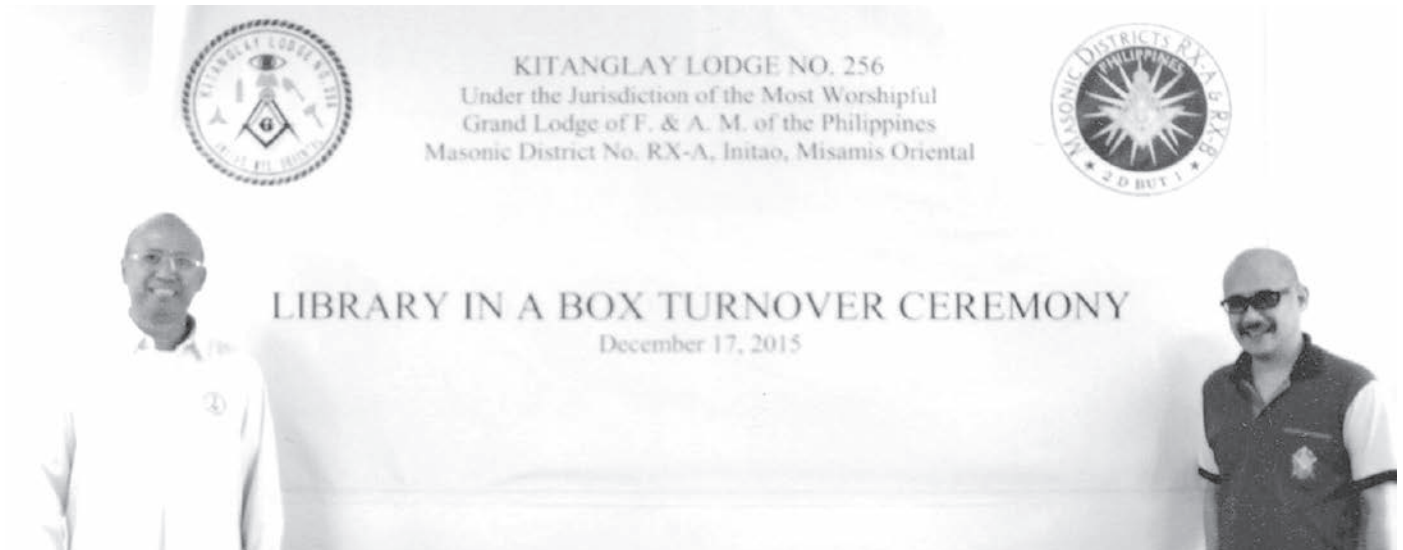


# RECENT EVENTS

*Photo of the Invitation Program of the Ceremonies Turn-Over in a Box at the Manticao Central Elementary School.*



*Selected School Children*



***WM Dufel Lagrosao of Kitanglay Lodge 256 and DDGM VW Ramil Acol pose for posterity after the ceremonial Program.***



***Presidential Table – from left to right WM Dufel Laguasas, DDGM VW Ramil O. Acol, the School Principal, and the District Supervisor, Dr. Joel L. Jayme, Ph.D***



***DDGM VW Ramil P. Acol delivers his message emphasizing the importance of the project of GM MW TG Rentoy III.***



*Photo-ops after the ceremonial turn over inside the library room.*



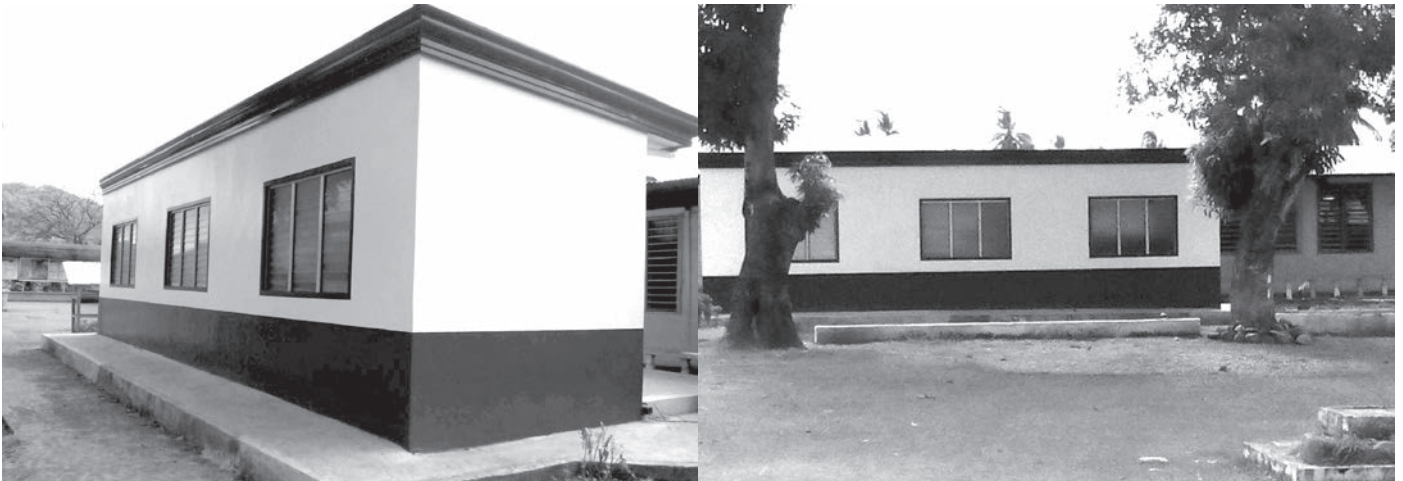
*Teachers and school children beneficiaries enjoy the new books from donors.*



*Ceremonial unveiling of the Library in a Box marker.*

## RECENT EVENTS

### PICTURES OF LIBRARY IN A BOX BUILT AT KITCHARAO CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT KITCHARAO, AGUSAN DEL NORTE Agusan Valley Lodge No. 160



## RECENT EVENTS

# Attendance Report on the XIV World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges

held on November 18 - 21, 2015

at the Grand Lodge of California, San Francisco CA

*By VW Alexander B. Madamba  
Assistant Grand Secretary*

## INTRODUCTION

The above-mentioned World Conference, with its central theme, “The Chain of Union: Strengthening Fraternal Bonds in a Changing World”, was hosted by the Grand Lodge of California. There were more than thirty (30) participating countries and a thousand brethren from several Grand Jurisdictions who attended the Conference.

Nov. 18, 2015 was the date of registration, Welcome Addresses were delivered at the start of the Conference on Nov. 19, 2015 by MW M. David Perry, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of California and Presiding Officer, and MW Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania and Co-Presiding Officer. It was emphasized that the purpose of the event is to strengthen the bond that unite Grand Lodges as a worldwide fraternity. In the process, the participants from the various Grand Jurisdictions in attendance shall be able to collect and share information from the universal

## TOPICS PRESENTED

There were eight (8) papers/topics presented and discussed, viz.:

### 1. A World Wide Connection: The Role of the World Conference

Discussants:

- a. Ranko Vujacic, Grand Master of the Regular Grand Lodge of Serbia

- b. Rudy Barbosa Levy, Executive Secretary, Inter-American Masonic Confederation
- c. Christoph A. Bosbach, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Germany
- d. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania

### 2. Quality VS. Quantity: Membership Standards in the 21st Century

Discussants:

- a. Michael A. Halleran, Past Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Kansas
- b. Jacques Francois, Grand Master of Regular Grand Lodge of Belgium
- c. David J. Cameron, Past Grand Senior Warden, Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario
- d. John M. Hinck, Grand Chaplain, Grand Lodge of California
- e. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania
- f. Angel Jorge Clavero and MW Nicolas Breglia, Past Grand Master and Grand Master, respectively, of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Argentina

### 3. Tools and Implementation of the Information Age: Technology and the Fraternity

Discussants:

- a. Sebastien Taveau, Former Inspector, Grand Lodge of California
- b. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National

Grand Lodge of Romania

- c. Jeffrey M. Schimsky, Grand Bible Bearer of the Grand Lodge of California

#### **4. On the Level? Tolerance in Contemporary Masonry**

- a. Jean-Michel Mascherpa, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Swiss Alpina
- b. Philipp Durell, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon
- c. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania

#### **5. Legacy of Liberty: Masons and the Path to Freedom**

Discussants:

- a. Clayton J. Borne III, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana
- b. Thomas W. Jackson, Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania
- c. Avi Baranes, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of the State of Israel
- d. Marcos Hans, Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Rio Grande de Sol, Brazil
- e. Goran Rafajlovski, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Macedonia
- f. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania
- g. Jean-Pierre Serval, Grand Master, French National Grand Lodge
- h. Hasina Rakotobarison, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Madagascar

#### **6. Universal Benevolence: The Charity of Modern Masons**

Discussants:

- a. Mansour Hatefi, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia
- b. Armando Torres-Gomez, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mexico
- c. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania

#### **7. Family Ties: The Relationship with Concordant and Appendant Bodies**

Discussants:

- a. R. Stephen Doan, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of California
- b. Radu Balanescu, Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Romania

#### **8. Reflections on the Theme**

Discussant: The Grand Lodge of Gabon

### **CONTENTS OF THE PAPERS PRESENTED**

The papers related to the subject matters presented by the discussants contained relevant items and matters pertaining to history, lessons, opinions, suggestions, quotations, etc. The undersigned thought it wise to select those salient items, points, lines or paragraphs that are considered worth reporting, which would also in a way summarize the papers - thus:

#### **1. A World Wide Connection: The Role of the World Conference**

- Masons have an important task to fulfill, both in Freemasonry and in the development of civil society; and as part thereof, it is the duty of Masons, as it has been in the past, to be always in the forefront in the evolution of civil society. Masons must actively engage in dealing in social challenges. In this manner, the world at large will take notice of our Brotherhood which has the capacity to benefit the whole world, capable of working in unity and reaching across continents.
- World Conference should serve as regular channel of communication between and among world Masonic leaders to be able to monitor the progress and accomplishments of Masonry in general. Likewise, personal dialogues and sharing of experiences during the world conference will produce powerful relationships and generate mutual understanding.
- In the past 50 years, there was a dramatic reduction in the membership of Lodges in many countries. All evidences indicate that Masonry is in a slow path to its extinction. Masons should now think

differently, it should think of a participatory projects with full of innovations and transparency so the fraternity can move forward to a new higher level otherwise it will further dissipate in time. Masonry should take the risks, learn from failures and assume costs. Sacrifice is needed to reverse and find ways to stop or reverse the current declining trend.

- There is relevance in globalization vis-a-vis the World Conference. The term “globalization” refers to the growing interdependence of different regions across the globe. “Globalization in the context of Freemasonry, and drawing upon its principles, also requires expanding the view on relevant social and philosophical considerations”, World Conference therefore is a venue where one could find reliable partners and networks can be built. The advantage of World Conference in the 21st century is, there will be a shared, communication dominated and forward-looking strategy among the grand masters of all grand lodges and countries.
  - By having the masonic leaders together with their respective members in World Conference will lead to a certain “progress of the universal masonic chain”.
2. Quality VS. Quantity: Membership Standards in the 21st Century
- Membership in all jurisdictions practically declined by the 1960s. In the mid-1990s, grand lodges recommended outright solicitation. In 1992, the District of Columbia had its first mass raising. In 1989, Grand Lodge of Missouri passed a resolution allowing solicitation. In 1994, the Grand Lodge of Kansas experimented the one-day conferral, issued a number of special dispensations and shortened the time required between degrees.
  - It is conclusive that the efforts made such as recruitment and solicitation failed particularly in North America. During the 20th century, Freemasonry in North America indulged in the

construction of lavish temples and engaged in charitable works which developed a problem on sustainability that required continued growth in membership. All these have “created problems of their own which may require yet another doctrinal shift to repair the damage”.

- Grand Master James R. Vannice, Grand Master of Washington in 1992, in his address he stated: “xxxxxxxxxxxx Numbers and quantities without substance, without quality, will not, cannot, enhance the status of Freemasonry”.
- To teach the importance of duration or retention of new members or generation is to have smaller lodge with about 30 members within which each Mason from Apprentice to Master Mason, will be supported or under the guidance of mentors designated to ensure that these members will be given the opportunity to immerse themselves in the values of the fraternity. This is a proposal if only for the member stay longer or permanently to the Lodge or Masonry. Retention of members should be done by making them feel that they are part of something bigger than themselves; that they are different in communities and that they are trusted and valued.
- The Lodge’s health should not be measured by the size. The truth is, there are small lodges that are healthy; some lodges purposely limit their size to small numbers.
- What will the future look like for Freemasonry? There will be smaller, fewer members in fewer lodges. The author says that it is not a doom prediction but it is the natural cycle that happened in the past by way of history. Lodges come and go. “Some lodges will go dark; others will amalgamate”.
- Decline in membership may be traced to four underlying causes: “changes in society, changes in technology, lack of focused attraction efforts, and poor member retention rates”. On the changes in society and technology, “Masonry has not changed with modern times, failing to delivery of its ideals

and lessons to more closely align with shifts to society and target younger age groups”

- To increase awareness among younger generations may be one way to attract membership. College students who are members of fraternities may be attracted to Masonry afterwards as an extension of their involvement in brotherhood.
- In order to determine why Masons are leaving the fraternity, it is suggested that a face-to-face survey should be conducted.
- Freemasonry must remain selective in the quality of petitioners and membership. ‘By lowering our standards, we diminish our value and image, and we contribute to our extinction.’
- Argentine Masons understand that along with our brothers in universal Freemasonry, we must be engaged in society, at the forefront of life, in order to best notice and cope with changes, and to maintain the continued relevancy and life that has allowed our fraternity’s ongoing renewal for nearly 300 years”. (underscoring supplied)

### 3. Tools and Implementation of the Information Age: Technology and the Fraternity

- The internet has provided Masonic interactions among Freemasons, who can take a tour of a Masonic Temple located on the other side of the planet, find masonic books that they can read, or participate in an audio or audio-video conference with the brethren who are living in other part of the world.
- 
- The challenges confronting Freemasonry with regard to information technology are:
- - It can make the fraternity vulnerable and exposed to conspiracy theories and bad or negative intentions

- - The values of on time videos of ceremonies and rituals may not be understood by some brethren
- - Conflicts may escalate due to misinterpretations of online text or negative remarks from anonymous message sender
- - Brethren who are not computer literate or do not possess computer may be left behind
- - Breach of our tenets or obligation of secrecy may not be taken into consideration
- 
- Study should be conducted to determine if there is a possibility for technology to destroy the fraternal binds that form the core fabric of the lodge and the fraternity.
- “Each Lodge needs to make a conscious effort to designate one or two brethren to be in-charge of on line/social media content, but also to be experienced in self-regulating commentaries for real time media”.
- One danger of the information technology is irregular bodies (clandestine grand Lodges or lodges) may pretend that they the true and regular bodies. In other words, this can cause confusion or disinformation which have serious effects especially if these bodies veer into religious or political matters”
- From the membership standpoint, the technology may be helpful to those applicants who want to join our ranks. Through websites, prospective members may look for a lodge in his area that will interest him as to the time and the average age of applicants and members.
- Attendance tracking and profiling of active members would be a good source of reference or statistics for the grand lodges.
- Masons must move forward by not holding so tightly to the past but achieving progress by

making technological changes to our processes.

#### 4. On the Level? Tolerance in Contemporary Masonry

- To be tolerant and in harmony with oneself and others is the true purpose of our search in Freemasonry”.
- Masons are taught that the central theme of Freemasonry is tolerance, which is defined as: the ability of willingness to tolerate the existence of opinions or behavior that one dislikes or disagrees with.
- “Building tolerance and trust cannot be done overnight; it takes time and commitment. Intolerance is often rooted in ignorance and fear”. Self-worth and pride are closely linked to intolerance.
- “In Freemasonry, we set a higher standard for ourselves, but unfortunately we do not
- always measure up to those standards. We can start by being more tolerant of
- contrary opinions in our lodge, our community and our country. In fact, our ritual and
- ceremonies require it”. (underscoring supplied)

#### 5. Legacy of Liberty: Masons and the Path to Freedom

- The brotherhoods growth in society is based on the advocacy of education. It is said that man is not truly free if he is not educated. Without education, man will always remain in the shackles of slavery. Through education man can hold on to the basic concepts of liberty and learn to avoid judging with bias those whose beliefs are different. Liberty comes from knowledge.
- Albert Pike believes that the concept of liberty is the “award” or “prize” of a hard-fought battle. Without a noble struggle it is impossible for a man

to acquire virtue or to appreciate the concept of liberty. Freedom that is given at no cost will be taken for granted.

- It is the duty of the brotherhood to protect and preserve the philosophy of acquiring liberty through noble struggle. This will promote an appreciation of freedom, particularly a free, disciplined society restricted only by just laws.
- “Since its earliest incarnation, Freemasonry has introduced revolutionary concepts that are still reflected in our order’s discipline today: From the equality and respect demanded by the operative brothers of the 13th century, to concept of democracy fostered within our early lodges, whose members boldly elected leaders independent from religious or government influences; from fostering concepts of human rights in which all men are valued for character rather than their wealth, to defending the rights of the workers: from the fraternity’s influence on the arts and architecture, to its support of public education and ultimately support for the health of society”. They are based on the concepts of freedom advocated by the spiritual brotherhood.
- Freemasonry is not responsible to improve the world, but it is the responsibility of Freemasonry to change the man through the making of good men better. Therefore, it is Freemason’s responsibility to improve the world; Freemasonry does not fail but Freemasons fail.
- “Freemasonry was one of the greatest promoters of democratic thinking that left behind a legacy of liberty with a defined a pathway to freedom”. It remains the role of contemporary Freemasons to continue that legacy; but they should be reminded that Freemasonry is a teacher, not a judge, of the masses.
- Many countries now experience freedom and liberty won by the contributions and leadership of Freemasons, or built on Masonic philosophy,

- Freemasons should be active in propagating the values of Masonry in the city because the world needs the active example of Freemasons in every aspect of life. “The teachings of Freemasonry and the actions of Freemasons in liberating nation, in science, in philosophy, in medicine, and in many other fields- is the legacy of liberty of our organization.’ In short, Freemasons must be the guardian of freedom.
- “As Freemasons, our passion and search for light is, in essence, the search for greater freedom. This is, our most cherished secret, and the meaning of our great work”.
- Freemasonry has projected itself to be a champion of freedom. In ancient times, Freemasons had been involved or implied revolution - ‘not because of the teachings of Masonry - but because of the historical contexts and limits”.
- “Freemasonry is a school of life, where the principle of freedom is fundamental. It provides a meeting place where constructive dialogue is possible, by respecting others’ opinions and listening to their perspectives. What unites Freemasons is a belief that each one of us can strive to be a better man, and that we have the ability to positively influence other good men. Through the work of each Mason, we can both radiate and dispense justice, tolerance, charity, and love through our free, active, and responsible behavior”.

#### 6. Universal Benevolence: The Charity of Modern Masons

- Masonic Charity maybe described as something given to a needy brother, thus the Masonic way. Masonic Benevolence has a wider spectrum of charitable acts which turns Masonic Charity into Masonic Philanthropy that means charity is an important ornamental part of Masonry being recognized by the community. Charity is an essential ingredient of Freemasonry. Although, Freemasonry is not, per se, a charitable

organization because it is not the primary purpose or function of Freemasonry, Freemasonry either is not a benefit society; however, Masonic charity is an inherent part of the Masonic system.

- In North America, it is estimated that Freemasonry spends an excess of \$1.5 million a day in Masonic Benevolence.
- Brother William Preston stressed in 1772 in “Illustrations of Masonry” that: “To relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on Freemasons, 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 their troubled minds, is the great aim we have in view’.
- The real Masonic Charity that can be given by a brother to another is by providing assistance in the learning and understanding of Masonic Truth,
- It is not easy to calculate the increased community activity on charitable works done by Masons who have been inspired to greater service by the teachings of their craft, but such a Masonic Philanthropy became international in scope reaches every walk of human life. It is maintained and applied by Masons in every country where Freemasonry is present and active.
- Masons are considered highly professional individuals, it is therefore necessary to ensure that charities being practice are excellent with high standards of professionalism. With these attributes of leadership, professionalism and civility will take the charity of contemporary Masons to new horizons, high standards and outstanding results - giving a very positive impact on our society.

#### 7. Family Ties: The Relationship with Concordant and Appendant Bodies

- For purposes of this paper, the Appendant Bodies

was defined as “Masonic affiliated groups that Masons or their relatives may join which do not enlarge or expand on the first three lodge degrees. The group would include the Shrine and our women’s and youth organizations”-

- At first, the additional degrees other than the first three, were being given by Lodges in the British Isles and Ireland. However, their respective Grand Lodges had no control over these additional degrees. Time came when Masons doing these additional degrees moved to other groups. Grand Lodges attempted to have control over these other groups with the following goals in mind: “to preserve the reputation of anything Masonic and to preserve the importance of the first three degrees”.
- The issue on the dwindling membership of these Appendant Bodies, there were questions raised: Do Grand Lodges have interest in keeping some of these organizations going? Do Grand Lodges have a similar interest in offering this help to other Masonic Organizations? This is a challenge to Grand Lodges who should be a part of the process of developing approaches to these challenges.
- The Grand Lodge and the Appendant Bodies must cooperate in harmony and without mutual interferences. They both have a common mission and that is to contribute to the spiritual and moral improvement or development of their members.
- It must be emphasized that the other degrees offered by the Appendant Bodies are not, in any way, superior to the symbolic Freemasonry. The multigrade systems or additional degrees adopted by the Appendant Bodies are sometimes called “auxiliary” degrees and not higher degrees. When someone is called a Freemason, it means that he was given the conferral of the three degrees, Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason.
- It is very important that the Grand Lodges and Appendant Bodies in amity must remember they can succeed in their endeavors if they only

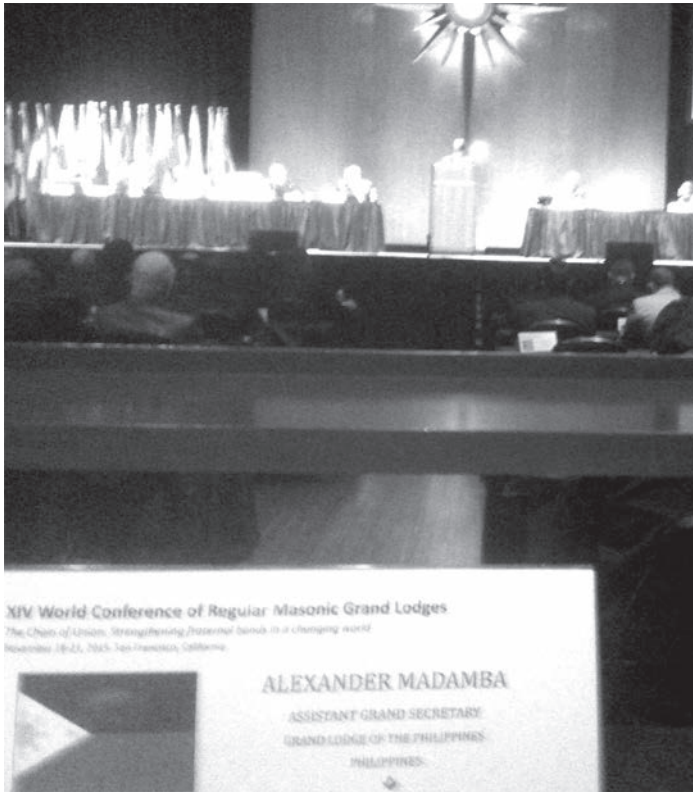
understand and treat each other as one united family.

#### 8. Reflections on the Theme (A Chain of Union: Strengthening Fraternal Bonds in a Changing World)

- A chain of union in Freemasonry is the gathering of free persons, sharing common values.
- The chain of union within the context of Freemasonry is a chain that links all brethren in a Lodge and also those brethren who are spread throughout the world. They are linked because they are men of virtue that promote the love of truth and commitment to Masonic duties.
- The world is constantly changing and full of challenges, the brotherhood should remain stronger and maintain the chain of union to remain faithful to definite values. In the changing world, ‘Masonic values have travelled down throughout the ages and will continue to stand the test of time’.
- “The only true exercise of virtue, generosity, and charity would be to eliminate the barriers of frontiers between nations and continents, as we are doing today within the Internet. Thus we will always have to strive for the center, where Freemasons should not be able to fail; moderation which will allow each of us our place; and consideration and love of others that allows all of us to live together.

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

By and large, the open forum did not offer resolutions for adoption. Most of the questions raised were mostly clarificatory in nature. As far as the undersigned is concerned, the papers presented are exhaustive and have offered relevant solutions, recommendations, strategies and approaches to the issues and concerns raised in this forum.



## RECENT EVENTS



### MASONIC CHARITIES FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN, INC.



### INAUGURATION OF MASONIC CHARITIES FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN, INC. LEGAZPI UNIT

# INAUGURATION OF MCCCI LEGAZPI UNIT

*by: Janica L. Caldon, MCCCI Staff*

In cooperation with Mayon Lodge No. 61, MCCCI has opened another extension office located at Legazpi City, Albay. It was inaugurated on December 2, 2015 by its Chairman, MW Tomas G. Rentoy III, and Corporate Secretary VW Benito K. Tan. The unit will be administered by the following officers: WB Jerome C. Lee (Unit Representative); Bro. Francis Ryan Lim (Treasurer) and Bro. Dr. Karlo Jacob (Medical Director).

On the same day, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between MCCCI, represented by the Chairman MW Tomas G. Rentoy III, and Bicol Regional Training

and Teaching Hospital (BRTTH), represented by Dr. Rogelio G. Rivera, Chief of Hospital and Medical Director was formalized.

The (2) Two entities agreed on their partnership to reach out and serve indigent differently abled children, Eighteen (18) Years of Age and below, suffering from Congenital Talipes Equinovarus (Club Foot), Genu Varum (Bow Leggedness Deformity), Osteogenesis Imperfecta (Hip Deformity), Limb Deformity, Congenital Rickets Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate, Juvenile Cataract, and other orthopaedic cases.



## RECENT EVENTS

# MCCCI CHRISTMAS PARTY 2015

by: Janica L. Caldona, MCCCCI Staff

MCCCCI Christmas Party was held on a sunny day of December 6, 2015. It was headed by MW Tomas G. Rentoy III in cooperation with Team Crissy of Concur Philippines (A SAP Company). The event was hosted by Corporate Secretary Bro. Benito K. Tan. There were parlor games such as Pinoy Henyo, Scavenger Hunt, and many more. Prizes for the Early Bird were given to Bilateral Club Foot and at the same time a Cleft Lip/Palate Patient John David Mangandi; and Blount's Disease patient Mr. Jasper Jeric Teruel.

The party was attended by 79 patients, 8 PGH Orthopaedic Doctors, 2 Nurses, Social Workers and other Masonic Dignitaries.

MCCCCI distributed Daily Planner to all MCCCCI volunteer doctors, nurses and individuals who helped and served differently abled children in the Philippines.



*FROM L TO RIGHT: Board of Trustees*

*VW Alexander Madamba, Bro. Benito K. Tan, Bro. Michael Z. Rivera, VW Lucas T. Ty, VW Sim Canonero (Proxy of RW Gazmin), MW Tomas G. Rentoy III, VW Gregorio A. Vicente, Jr. and VW Antonio F. Josen, Jr.*

*Not in picture: MCCCCI Internal Auditor VW Sonny K. Wang.*



*MCCC beneficiaries showing off their gifts from Team Crissy of Concur Phils.*



*TEAM CRISSY OF CONCUR PHILIPPINES (A SAP Company)*



*FROM L TO R:  
Corporate Secretary  
Bro. Benito K. Tan,  
Mr. Eduardo P. Teruel  
(Parent of MCCC  
beneficiary), Chairman  
MW Tomas G. Rentoy  
III and Concur Phils.  
Operation's Manager Ms.  
Roselle Junio.*



**TAGAYTAY CITY**



**nCm**  **2016**

**100th Annual Communication**

April 28 - 30, 2016

Taal Vista Hotel  
Tagaytay City



GLP TEMPLE IN BRIGHT LIGHTS