

CLOSING REMARKS AS GRAND MASTER

Excerpts of the Grand Master's closing remarks at the 154th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, July 16, 2009

It is with great pride but even greater humility that I greet all my well-loved Brethren for the first time through this medium. To be elected, invested and installed as the 'Chief Head and Ruler of the Craft' in this Grand Jurisdiction is the greatest honour that the Brethren can bestow. One is deeply conscious of the profound privilege and opportunity that election by the Brethren to this high office affords to serve the Brethren for the benefit of the Brethren.

It is a humbling experience when one looks back along the line of distinguished men and eminent Masons that have occupied this high office during the last century and a half. Freemasonry is a cumulative science – the whole is greater than the sum of its parts – and each incumbent benefits from and builds upon the sure foundation laid by his predecessors in office. I am very conscious that I stand on the shoulders of giants.

The Grand Secretary's Report presented at the 154th Communication indicated that during the twelve months ending December 31 2008, 1,346 men were initiated. With them resides the future of Freemasonry in Ontario. However, careful and thorough mentoring must be exercised in every lodge to prepare and equip these young Masons to assume that role in the fullness of time by developing in them a life long interest in Freemasonry. That is only prudent succession planning.

Masonic leaders around the world agree that the greatest challenge facing the Craft today is not declining enrolment, but rather the lack of understanding of what it means to be a Freemason in the 21st Century – the deeper meaning of our profound philosophy.

During the next two years, the strongest emphasis possible will be focused on enlightening the minds of our Brethren, neophyte and veteran alike, challenging every Brother to explore and discover some of that profound philosophy through discussion, reading, research, reflection.

The ancient Hebrew writings admonish us to
Get KNOWLEDGE; Get WISDOM;
but with all thy getting, Get UNDERSTANDING.

It is frequently stated that Freemasonry provides men with the ways and means to make themselves better men. As we move steadily through the first decade of the 21st Century, our Grand Lodge must also strive diligently to make what is recognized as a 'good' Grand Lodge a better, even a 'great' Grand Lodge.

Just as the medieval craftsmen studied, experimented with, and applied the architectural technology of their day to create the flying buttresses that enabled them to open up solid walls of stone into vast windows of brilliant light, so must we as Speculative Freemasons take full advantage of and utilize the modern technology of the electronic age to streamline our operations, realign our structures, and expedite our processes. Under the direction of the Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. D. Garry Dowling, as President of the Board of General Purposes that will be a first priority.

I implore each and every one to read again the Summary of the Ancient Charges and Regulations printed in Part VI of the Constitution of Grand Lodge. When you come to No. 6, pause for a moment to reflect upon what it says: “Mind your Ps and Qs.”

Let us resolve, each one of us, at all times and in all places, to “act as the dictates of right reason prompt us, cultivate harmony, practise charity, and live in peace with all men.” Then, my Brethren, Freemasonry will flourish in our Lodges and our small corner of this unsettled world will be a better place.

Raymond S. J. Daniels
Grand Master

*Excerpts of the Grand Master's closing remarks at the
155th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, July 22, 2010*

As we are about to conclude this 155th Annual Communication and close this Grand Lodge, we mark the beginning of a new year in the Masonic calendar. The newly elected, appointed and invested officers of Grand Lodge will now undertake the governance and administration of the Craft in their sphere of influence and field of service. Your loyalty, dedication, and diligence in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities you have assumed will carry us onward and upward. Working together as a team, united in peace, love and harmony,

Speaking personally, at this mid-point in my term as your Grand Master, the words of Chaucer best express my feeling: “*The lyfe so short, the craft so long to learne.*” – which being translated into the vernacular is, “*so much to do, so little time.*”

During these few days spent together, I hope that through formal and informal encounters with your brethren, you have caught something of the excitement of the times. It takes but a little spark to ignite the enthusiasm of the members of your lodge.

It is one thing to invest the future of Freemasonry and entrust the leadership of the Craft to the young men now being admitted, which of necessity we must do, as time passes and so do we. How do we prepare the next generation to assume those leadership roles. Succession planning is the challenging responsibility that rests with every senior officer in this Grand Jurisdiction.

A new world awaits us. Let us go boldly into the future and seize every opportunity to celebrate the Joy of Freemasonry, as we “*endeavour to be happy ourselves and communicate that happiness to others.*” As Freemasons, much has been given to us, and much will be expected of us. As Guardians of the Light revealed to us, we must strive to enlighten the hearts and minds of all those we encounter in the daily round – at home, in the neighbourhood, in the workplace, and in the community – not by words, but by deeds – conscious acts of thoughtfulness and kindness. Our high calling as men and as Masons is to leave our world just a little better than when we found it.

May the Most High, the Source of all and Giver of every good and perfect gift, prosper the work of our hands with Divine guidance, enrich our minds with Divine wisdom, and guide our noble principles with Divine providence.

Raymond S.J. Daniels
Grand Master