

# **Grand Master's Inaugural Address**

**“Glory be to God on the Highest”. We can once again thank the Great Architect of the Universe for bringing us together, it has been quite sometime since we have had a gathering of this nature. This is the opportune time to share ideas and go forward sharing the ideas to those that are not present today. The Grand Council Officers who earlier today were invested into elected and appointed offices are to carry forward the Grand Master's Message for more education. Throughout Freemasonry today, there is a now a greater need, now more than ever to bring about education, to enlighten the mind and render the soul pure.**

**We are living in turbulent times and now more than ever we are need to live by the principles of Freemasonry, not only in Freemasonry but in the general population throughout the world, and NO this is NOT a platform for Freemasonry to take over the World. We are lucky sometimes if we can look after ourselves.**

**As your Grand Master it is hoped that our Councils and membership will take it upon themselves to bring some excitement back into the Councils so that there is a real want to be to belong and be in attendance at all our future meetings. We have heard from many that the meetings are boring, well then, let's look at the other end of the spectrum and bring about that excitement. A. controversial presentation sometimes helps bring about good debates, try it and see what happens and always remember it's a debate with opinions, and no fights please!!!**

**Some key initiatives that we as a Grand Council of Cryptic Rite Masons of Western Canada need to embark upon is the updating of some our rituals, making the rituals user friendly and easier to read. The intent is to breakdown the main degree ritual into three groups with three separate groups each assigned either the RM, SM or SEM Degrees. We will be looking for ritualist volunteers and these appointments will be confirmed before the fall of 2023. The way it appears at the moment we keep old habits onward to the next print, when in essence there are many mistakes that need to be attended to.**

**Some topics for consideration for education maybe:**

- The Ritual and the three degrees,**
- How does the Cryptic Rite ritual compare with other Masonic ritual and where does it fit with respect the time lines,**
- Examine the Sacred Writings, read and discuss the biblical references in the ritual,**
- Research the various biblical characters referenced in the ritual, it is always interesting the role they played in biblical times and how they fit into Freemasonry,**

- Use the search engines of the Websites, and yes, it is okay to pull negative items to discuss, it only encourages a good debate.

Companions, on the surface, it would appear that our Grand Council of Cryptic Rite Masons of Western Canada is in good order. We have noticed some areas of concern and they need to be addressed, if we are expected to survive as a fraternity. Our numbers in the last few years have dropped considerably and if they keep dropping, we will drop out of sight. Now, we cannot entirely blame that on ourselves, because the Craft Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters are all experiencing the same thing, and they are the very source, where our membership is derived from. How do we deal with the membership crisis?

Secondly, each year we gather together as a Grand Council, greet our visitors, greet our incoming and outgoing Grand Officers, approve the transactions for the year, and invest our new Grand Officers. Mark the event with social functions, where we can reacquaint with those that we have not seen for a couple of years. So, you ask, what is the problem? We realize the last four or five years have not been good years to any of our fraternities, with restrictions placed on gatherings or travel, because of that nasty COVID 19. COVID 19 has not totally been responsible for the down turn in attendance at the Annual Assembly. We find that some of the Grand Officers, whether appointed or elected are not attending. This leaves the Grand Council in an awkward situation, as the appointed or elected are still being given their rank and title. We are not able to properly assess whether the elected officer has performed his duties as outlined in the Constitution and General Regulations. We have noted that some of the elected officers have not submitted their required reports, which makes it difficult to prepare a proper Report on the Condition of Cryptic Rite Masons. So, what is the solution? Some Concordant Bodies are denying the rank and title to those who do not attend, not a good solution, considering several factors, including the expense involved. Let's face it, nothing is cheap anymore, we doubt if gasoline or airfares will ever drop, or even the cost of hotels and meals.

With the concerns expressed in the previous comments, we have discovered that the Grand Council has lost total control of our Grand Officer Regalia. With some Grand Officers not attending for several years, we are unable to determine whether the regalia was ever transferred to the replacement officers. This has led to the lost of regalia and needless to say it has to be replaced, what another expense? The Grand Recorder is not able to assess the condition of the regalia, and we know that there is a likelihood that the regalia looks like rags, sorry state to say the least. For this reason, it is important that Grand Officers whether elected or appointed need to be in attendance so that a proper assessment can be made of the regalia.

**Lastly, on a much lighter note, as Grand Master, I am deeply honoured to represent you and your Councils for the next year and will give the support needed, as they say in business jargon, “my office door is always open”.**

**Thank you to the Elected and Appointed Officers for coming forward and serving this Grand Council, and we look forward to seeing you out to represent the Grand Council of Cryptic Rite Masons of Western Canada. Congratulations.**

**Thank you to MI Comp Gerry Tetzloff for accepting the position of the Installing Grand Master and his team. It’s not that long ago that MIC Tetzloff was your Grand Master, and yes now I am filling some big shoes or should I say “big boots”, inside joke. Thank you, Gerry, you have done us proud and you are definitely a great mentor.**

**It is now time to move on, and spread the word, enjoy yourself and we will see you next year in Red Deer to close this Grand Master’s Chapter and open another Chapter for the upcoming Grand Master,**

**Thank you. Companions**

**Jerry W. Kopp, Grand Master 2023-2024**