

CLOSING REMARKS

Imperator Claudio Mazzucco, FRC

Once upon a time, a king called a contest in his kingdom: the one who could say the wisest sentence would be rewarded with wealth and prosperity for the rest of his life.

Many people showed up and pronounced inspirational and wise sentences. But one won, and his words were: "This too shall pass."

Those who understand that time is fleeting suddenly discover the beauty of the present moment which will never return.

I thus wish to seize the beauty of the present moment, a moment of farewells and thanks, and share with you one last experience in which I had the privilege of participating. It is a story I have already told, but since it often resurfaces in my memory, always revealing new understandings, I have decided to share it with you once more.

It was 1986 and I was the Master of a Chapter in Brazil. After the convocation, the outer guardian came to me and said he needed to speak. We went to a corner of the garden and he made the Rosicrucian distress sign. I was surprised because I had

never seen anyone make it; in fact I thought that this sign, which is explained to us in an initiation, was a symbolic gesture that had fallen into disuse.

So I asked him what was the matter. He explained that his daughter had graduated from high school and that there was going to be a celebration but he had no shoes to wear: in fact the only pair of shoes he had were the very worn ones on his feet.

That frater never asked to be exempted from the chapter dues and had never become inactive in the Grand Lodge. To him, the Order was a priority, above a pair of shoes.

By coincidence, a few months earlier I had bought a pair of dark blue shoes to attend a wedding. But since I still today regularly wear sneakers, at the age of 26, I knew I would never have worn those shoes again. However, their dark blue color went well with the master's regalia, and so I used to put them on in convocations.

Now here is the new lesson that event brought to my mind: fratres and sorores, we are all barefoot. We are all looking for a pair of shoes that can protect our feet from the stones of the path, shoes that





will not make us suffer, shoes that will warm our feet in winter. But none of us can obtain those shoes alone. We have to help one another wear the right shoes needed to walk in this life; we cannot do it by ourselves. Some people think that they can solve the problem by perhaps covering the whole planet in soft leather, but we know this is a childish illusion. However, if we all put the right shoes on, the result will be the same as covering the whole planet. But in order to achieve this, to wear the right shoes, we need one another. And so that frater so long ago actually helped me at that moment to put on a new and symbolic pair of shoes.

Now returning to the opening sentence, "this too shall pass": not everything needs to pass. The lesson, so distant in time, of our frater must now live on within us, right now, in these final farewells. The beauty of the moment that will never be again can in

truth be recalled in our hearts and minds whenever we wish, and we may relive it together with others in an exchange of affection and understanding. This means helping one another to put our walking shoes on. To achieve this, we need one another.

Thank you fratres and sorores, many thanks to those who have organized this convention because we know how much work is involved; let us also thank the God of our Hearts because through Its unfathomable ways It has made it possible for us all to be here. We will soon leave this place with new shoes to continue our journey, knowing that, if our feet are protected, we owe it to the generosity of everyone, of the community.

Wishing you Peace Profound, and I look forward to seeing you in our next activities.

