

Official **PUBLICATION** of the  
*Pearl of the Orient* COLLEGE  
SOC. ROS. IN CIV. FOED.



# THE PEARL

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VOLUME I, ISSUE I

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For Use of the *Fratres of the ROSE+CROSS.*

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PHILIPPINES,  
*Autumnal Equinox MCMXXI Anno Domini*



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Term of June 2021 – June 2022

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Suffragan	RWF Victorino A. Floro III VIII
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Secretary	RWF Giovanni A. Villegas VIII
First Ancient	RWF Arlen P. De Guzman IX
Second Ancient	RWF Henry W. Cheng VIII
Third Ancient	RWF Jerry C. Townsend VIII (Dual)
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Conductor of Novices	WF Dominador R. Delizo VII
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AZARCON, Ruben G. III	IBARRA, Andrew James S.	TAMPOL, Nestor V. (PC 2020)
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CHUA, Jonathan Edward L.	MARANAN, Jomel Dennis L. (PC 2018)	WYS, Earl F.
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DE GUZMAN, Arlen P.	NG, Dexter L.	ARRIBAS, ISAAC F., Jr. (PC 2011)
DELIZO, Dominador R.	ORTIGUERO, Benjamin Reuel R.	DATU, Danilo C., Sr. (PC 2012, 2013)
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FLORO, Victorino A III		

# The Pearl

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
PEARL-OF-THE-ORIENT COLLEGE  
Societas Rosicruciana  
In Civitatibus Fœderatis

VOLUME I, ISSUE I  
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To contribute News, Articles, and Papers, send copies to [sonnyleviste@yahoo.com](mailto:sonnyleviste@yahoo.com). All submissions become the property of the College upon publication.

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## FIRST ISSUE

WELCOME to the maiden issue of 'The Pearl' - laid out initially in this manner and format to mimic the traditional style of 17th-Century manuscripts and pamphlets reminiscent of the Rosicrucian manifestos - the *Fama Fraternitatis*, the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, and the *Chymical Wedding*. The Pearl is meant to be the official newsletter and periodical of the Pearl of the Orient College SRICF, published twice a year - one on the Autumnal Equinox and another on the Vernal Equinox. It is hoped that this first issue would receive enough support to merit its continuance for many years to come.

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*The Rosicrucian & Masonic Symbolism of 'The Pearl'*

by James A. Marples, VIII 15

## FROM THE *Chief Adept*



Cari Fratres,

The number 12 has always held a significant meaning to all of us. We can attune ourselves to the Holy Bible that refers to the 12 Tribes of Israel, and later on in the following centuries, to the 12 Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the Roman calendar, we have the 12 months of the Year, ascribed to the Roman gods and emperors. As Rosicrucians belonging to Pearl of the Orient College SRICF, the number 12 marks our twelfth year of existence, having been chartered by the High Council of the Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis on February 11, Anno Domini 2010.

As your Chief Adept, allow me to extend my warmest felicitations and profound wishes of excellent health and well-being to each and every one of you. By the grace and mercy of our Blessed Redeemer, we will be able to weather this malady until things return to normalcy. Moreover, I would like to commend the efforts of our RWF Alvan Joseph T. Balazo IX and our College Secretary RWF Giovanni A. Villegas VIII for coming out with the maiden issue of "The Pearl". I am sure that with their combined efforts and the other contributors led by RWF Gabriel Comia Jr. VIII, we should be able to learn and enjoy the infusion of knowledge based on the esoteric and Hermetic mysteries of our Mystic Cirde.

Here's looking at better times ahead!

LVX,

*Evaristo Leviste*  
EVARISTO A. LEVISTE, IX



## FROM THE *Celebrant*



Cari Fratres,

First and above all, allow me to thank our Lord Jesus Christ for gracing us with this milestone achievement - our **FIRST EVER** Rosicrucian newsletter, called "The Pearl," produced and published by our very own Pearl-of-the-Orient College, SRICF. I would like to thank all of you for supporting and contributing to this momentous endeavor.

Today, we will be starting a bright journey - bright in the sense that we shall continuously be **STRIVING** to **SHARE LIGHT** to our members through this initiative. Continuous search for knowledge is not that **NEW** to all of us. It has already been a part of our commitment and obligation in joining the Masonic organization, most particularly the Masonic Rosicrucian Order which was beautifully and creatively inspired by Alchemy, Hermeticism, and Christian Mysticism, influencing us in the pursuit of esoteric knowledge and spiritual transformation. This project is one of the many ways in performing our duty as Rosicrucians.

We are privileged to work with the likes of RWF Giovanni Villegas VIII, our College Secretary, who is leading this shining journey as Editor of this Newsletter; and RWF Gabriel Comia VIII, our very own esoteric researcher and experienced astrologer, who is also our Fourth Ancient and Chairman for Masonic and Rosicrucian Education. With this publication, every other member is free to contribute his knowledge and talents with the rest of the College.

Since we have started our monthly Masonic Rosicrucian Education Forums, topics discussed will be documented and form part of this newsletter. Announcements, schedules of activities, and other related information about SRICF will also be included to keep members updated.

I would like to sincerely thank our Chief Adept, RWF Evaristo “Sonny” Leviste IX for his utmost support in all our endeavors, and for his untiring efforts in vigorously encouraging all members to actively participate and contribute to our prestigious Order. His valiant commitment has always been an inspiration especially to the officers past and present, including yours truly.

Our 12-year existence attests that we are not alone in facing challenges. With the creativity and resourcefulness inspired by our members, I believe that any challenge we face can not only be conquered but also prove to be a rewarding learning experience. And the Pearl of the Orient College takes great pride in being a reputable learning organization.

I would like to thank the Editorial team who gathered the pieces and persevered, vowing to initiate and pursue this initiative themselves, not just to share information but likewise to provide **INSPIRATION** to all members, revealing how great and prestigious our Order truly is. Let us all therefore be proud that we are all a part of it.

Thank you for all your support in making all of this possible!



  
**ALVAN JOSEPH T. BALAZO, IX**



**W**ELCOME to the first issue of 'The Pearl' - initiated by RWF Evaristo A. Leviste IX°, Chief Adept of the Pearl-of-the-Orient College SRICF, and executed by RWF Alvan Joseph T. Balazo IX°, Celebrant of the College. It is meant to be a semi-annual journal and periodical containing news, announcements, papers, presentations, and other transactions of the College. It hopes to serve its members for many years as it starts archiving its activities within these pages.

The Pearl-of-the-Orient College is the first and, so far, only Masonic Rosicrucian body in the Philippines. According to its Chief Adept, RWF Evaristo Leviste, its history stretches as far back as November 2009, when then Supreme Magus, MWF William H. Koon II IX°, was in the Philippines to attend the Annual Reunion of the local Grand York Rite bodies. He made four York Rite Masons as VII° grade Masonic Rosicrucians - Fratres Evaristo Leviste, Crispulo Fernandez Jr., Isaac Arribas Jr., and Victorino Floro Jr. Later, with plans to setup a local SRICF College, MWF Koon elevated Fratres Leviste and Fernandez to the IX° grade and asked who between them who should be the Chief Adept and who should be Secretary. RWF Leviste volunteered to be the Secretary as he knew that that's where he would be most capable. Thus, when Pearl-of-the-Orient College was chartered on February 11, 2010, RWF Fernandez became the College's first Chief Adept while RWF Leviste became the first College Secretary. Since then, the members of the College have grown much in number and have regularly been meeting to discuss and share with each other all matters Rosicrucian.

Although other educational materials have and are continuously being shared among members through the College's Facebook group, there was never an official compilation for circulation. Hence, this publication and archive is now herewith initiated and produced for the benefit and reading pleasure of the members of the College. Hopefully, this initiative would prove itself successful in accomplishing its intents, and worthy enough to see itself perpetuated by future leaderships of the College.

GIOVANNI A. VILLEGAS, VIII



## About Societas Rosicruciana



**T**HE PEARL-OF-THE-ORIENT College is the first and, so far, only Masonic Rosicrucian Society in the Philippines. It was chartered on February 11, 2010 by the High Council of the USA, *Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Federatis* (SRICF), with RWF Crispolo Fernandez Jr. IX° as the first Chief Adept of the College. The Society is strictly invitational, consisting entirely of Master Masons who profess the Trinitarian Christian faith, and likewise do not belong to any other type of non-Masonic Rosicrucian order. Its membership is limited to a maximum of 72 members. It confers the First Order grades of Zelator (I°), Theoricus (II°), Practicus (III°), and Philosophus (IV°); and the Second Order grades of Adeptus Minor (V°), Adeptus Major (VI°), and Adeptus Exemptus (VII°). The Third Order grades of Magister (VIII°) and Magus (IX°) are conferred by the High Council.

Masonic Rosicrucianism is technically not a Masonic body per se, but rather an academic and esoteric society for regular Masons, centered on the study and practice of Rosicrucianism and its related sciences. It began with the formation of the *Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia* (SRIA) or the *Rosicrucian Society in England* in 1867.

Between 1873 and 1876, it chartered the *Societas Rosicruciana In Scotia* (SRIS) or the *Rosicrucian Society of Scotland*, which, in turn, formed the *Societas Rosicrucianae Reipublica Confoedera America* (SRRCA) in the US around 1879, through the efforts of 3 US-based Colleges under the SRIS. These Colleges then met on April 21, 1880 to form their own High Council, which was officially recognized by the SRIA in June 1880. On September 21, 1880, the said High Council in the US was formally consecrated. In time, the society changed its name to the *Society of Rosicrucians in the USA* before being properly Latinized in 1934 into the *Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Federatis* (SRICF).



The SRICF currently exists in the Philippines through the *Pearl-of-the-Orient College*, duly recognized by the Grand Lodge of the Philippines (GLP) on March 22, 2012 as the sole and supreme authority over the grades of the order, through an *Articles of Agreement* signed between and GLP, as represented by its then Grand Master, MW Juanito P. Abergas; and the High Council SRICF, as represented by its then Supreme Magus, MWF William H. Koon II IX° KGC.

g.a.v.

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

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**T**HE COVID-19 PANDEMIC changed the face of Masonry in 2020. As lockdowns and quarantine measures swept the globe, Masonic lodges and other orders were prompted to resort to online video communication platforms such as Zoom in order to continue conducting meetings, albeit virtually. Here in the Philippines, all Masonic activities, including those of the appendant orders, were officially suspended by the Grand Master, MW Agapito S. Suan Jr., beginning March 17, 2020. They were momentarily resumed when the crisis slightly subsided, but suspended again after numerous cases of surges in local community transmissions. To this day, many Masonic orders, including our local SRICF College, still conduct their meetings online.

\*\*\*

One of the first casualties of the pandemic in our country was our very own Frater Romeo Gregorio "Greg" N. Macasaet III VII° - a medical doctor who was among the first few in the frontlines fighting the pandemic. As some healthcare workers started disappearing from duty, perhaps out of fear of this new killer disease, Frater Greg said he refused to abandon his post. Eventually, he and his wife, Evalyn - also a medical doctor - both contracted COVID-19. Frater Greg

developed severe symptoms and started writing his Masonic Last Will & Testament. On March 22, 2020, Frater Greg succumbed, and the Masonic community lost one of its most beloved brothers. His story was hailed and honored throughout the entire country, and he was eventually accorded a Plaque of Recognition by no less than the President of the Philippines himself. It was received by Dr. Evalyn Macasaet and family.



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Many local Fratres had the opportunity to attend an Annual Convocation of the High Council last November 7, 2020 as it was conducted virtually. Since it was primarily intended for US-based Colleges and thus scheduled according to their time zone, Philippine-based Fratres still patiently attended online and stayed till dawn the following day, in front of their computers and smartphones, until the closing of the Convocation.

\*\*\*

Pearl of the Orient College started conducting its meetings online, beginning with an informal Zoom session last June 9, 2020. It was on that meeting when

the Chief Adept, RWF Evaristo "Sonny" Leviste, announced that the Annual Gathering of the High Council was suspended and moved to the following year. It was also reported that the planned trip of the Supreme Magus to the Philippines, for the possible conferring of the Third Order grades and the possible chartering of a Davao College SRICF, was likewise deferred due to the pandemic.

Another informal Zoom meeting was conducted on September 21, 2020, when the revision of the ordinances and regulations of the College were reported to be under way. Then, during the Winter Solstice of December 21, 2020, the Pearl of the Orient College was formally convened in virtual form to elect, appoint, and install its new set of officers. The nominees for the Third Order grades were likewise announced. Said nominees were formally designated their new grades in the succeeding virtual convocation, which during the Summer Solstice of June 21, 2021.

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THE FOLLOWING are the Frateres recently admitted into the Third Order. As approved November 7, 2020 and declared as such by the Chief Adept, the ones who received the VIII<sup>o</sup> Grade (Magister) are Frateres Juanito Abergas, Jerry Townsend, Greg Vicente Jr., Giovanni Villegas, Victorino Floro III, Andrew James Ibarra, Henry Cheng, and Gabriel Comia. For the IX<sup>o</sup> Grade (Magus),

pending formal conferral, we have Frateres Joseph Alvan Balazo, Arlen De Guzman, Pravin Sharma, Nesty Tampol, and Jomel Dennis Maranan.

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During the virtual meeting of December 21, 2020, the Chief Adept proposed the making of a College newsletter, in light of the High Council's call for Colleges to submit their own newsletters for possible awarding for best design. He then assigned then VWF Alvan Balazo VII<sup>o</sup> to create and head a Committee for such purpose. Thus was born "The Pearl" publication of the College. Its first Execom Zoom meeting was conducted on July 19, 2021, when Frater Giovanni "Joey" Villegas was assigned and appointed as Editor.

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"THE BRETHREN *Book III*" - a project of PGM Romeo Momo - was made available for purchase at the Masonic Store of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. The book was supposed to be a continuation of the late MW Fajardo's two previously-published classic books on the history of Philippine Masonry. Whereas *Book I* chronicled Masonry during the time of the struggle for Philippine Independence, and *Book II* on the colonial and Commonwealth era, *Book III* continues to present day Masonry. The Book Committee comprised of Past Grand Master MW Reynato Puno, VW Bros. Jesus Lorenzo Mateo, Vladimir Pelaez,

Samuel Fernandez, Jesus Flor Nicolas<sup>(\*)</sup>, Alexander Madamba, Teodoro Kalaw IV, Ignacio Illenberger, Plutarco Bawagan Jr., Jose Avelino Magbanua, Joseph Harold Santiago, and our very own Frater Joey Villegas.

\*\*\*

WE ARE HAPPY TO REPORT that every member is current and fully paid in the Annual Dues as of June 2021. The College has already submitted its Annual Report to the High Council for the period June 2020 - June 2021. For our membership statistics, we have reported 43 Regular members, 1 Emeritus member, 2 Dual members, and 1 recently deceased, for a total of 45 members in our roster. At \$20 per member, we have likewise just paid the \$900 per capita to the High Council, care of our Chief Adept. Note that 1 recently-reinstated member is not yet reflected above.

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SINCE FACE-TO-FACE meetings are not yet conducted, the College has not made any recent initiation or grade elevation. Thus, the fees for each grade remain the same as follows: P6,000 for the I° Grade, P3,000 for the II° Grade, P3,000 for the III° Grade, P3,000 for the IV° Grade, P5,400 for the V° Grade, P2,700 for the VI° Grade, and P2,700 for the VII° Grade. (All amounts are in Philippine Peso. Exchange rate varies around US \$1 = Phil. P50.)

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For the information of everyone, items for sale online from the High Council website include: First and Second Order Green Jewels for Grades I°-VII° (\$20.00 each); Third Order Gold Jewel for Grade VIII° (\$20); Third Order Red Jewel for Grade IX° (\$20); Lapel Pin (\$5); First Order Ritual book for Grades I°-IV° (\$5); Second Order Ritual book for Grades V°-VII° (\$5); Combined First and Second Order Ritual book for Grades I°-VII° (\$10); *"The Rose Petal"* or the 1883 Meyer rituals (\$5); Member Certificates for Grades I°-VII° (\$5 each); SRIA Study Course (\$20); Neck Tie (\$25); *"The Art and Science of Alchemy and Lecture Guide"* (\$40). To order, visit [www.sricf.org](http://www.sricf.org).

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ON AUGUST 17, 2021, our Chief Adept, RWF Evaristo A. Leviste IX°, in his capacity as Right Eminent Past Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines, and as Department Commander for Asia-Pacific, Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the USA, attended the 68th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar in Minneapolis.

Among the matters voted and approved in that session included the reinstatement of the use of the traditional Templar apron which had fallen out of favor in the 20th Century. With the new approval, Grand Commanderies now have the option to

adopt the use of the said apron as part of their Type A uniform, together with the baldric and chapeau.



Another matter was the proposed additional “*Attestation of Faith*,” which failed to reach 2/3 votes in order to make statutory changes in the Constitution. The said Attestation was meant to implement a stricter policy in accepting only Christian Masons into Masonic Templary which have lately been purposely circumvented. The contents of the Attestation itself, however, were met with opposition as they seemed to narrow the definition of “Christian” into specific denominations. The phraseology was amended to be more inclusive of other Christian denominations, but still failed to meet the minimum votes to get approved.

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The next High Council Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held on November 5

and 6, 2021 at the Brown Hotel, Louisville, Kentucky. There will be lectures, grade elevations, and installation of Chief Adepts. Our Chief Adept reported that there is a possibility of having a one-night affair for the *Royal Order of Knights Occidental*. Those who wish to attend the physical gathering may register at [www.sricf.org](http://www.sricf.org).

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The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll upon our College, not just in terms of the disruption of our regular meetings, but in terms of the health of our members and past members. Recently, it has claimed the life of our past member, Frater Rolando “Maven” G. Biscarra VII<sup>(c)</sup>, last September 2, 2021. Our college extends its condolence to his bereaved family.

We likewise pray for the recovery of all others who have contracted the disease. As Brethren of the traditional *Rosy Cross*, our first professed mandate is to heal the sick. We shall definitely strive harder to do well in fulfilling our traditional obligation to those among you who are ill - if not in our direct capacity, then at least in our prayers. *May the Rose bloom upon your Cross.*

g.a.v.

Fratres are encouraged to contribute more news articles and important announcement for our next issue of *The Pearl*. You may send your contributions to our Chief Adept at [sonnyleviste@yahoo.com](mailto:sonnyleviste@yahoo.com).



**W**ITH THE INITIATIVE of RWF Alvan Balazo IX° as host, the College conducted its first ever online Masonic Rosicrucian Forum on the night of August 16, 2021 via Zoom. The format takes its style and purpose from early *Rosicrucian Salons*. In the 17th through 19th Century Europe, *Salons* were small and informal gatherings of intellectuals who amuse themselves with academic, artistic, and philosophical exchanges.

During the Forum, the Chairman of Masonic and Rosicrucian Education, RWF Gabriel Comia Jr. VIII, presented and discussed the I° Grade, Zelator, with the rest of the Fratres in attendance, viz: Past Celebrants Jomel Maranan IX° and Pravin Sharma IX°, Fratres Arlen De Guzman IX°, Nestor Tampol IX°, Joey Villegas VIII°, Victor Floro III VIII°, Henry Cheng VIII°, Andrew James Ibarra VIII°, Jerry Townsend VIII°, Rafael Roxas VII°, Jose Michael Sandoval VII°, Roy Azarcon IV°, Jeshar Go I°, and Ruel Ditan I°.

Aside from the symbolism of the Zelator grade, discussions also tackled

the grade structure of the SRICF and its relations to the four elements and the Tree of Life. Further discussions were then made on the Mystic Word, Gematria, Numerology, Astrology, etc. Real life exercises and polls were likewise conducted in an interactive atmosphere of mutual learning. The success of this first ever interactive forum of the College paved the way for the collective agreement of making it a monthly endeavor. The next Rosicrucian Forum is scheduled on September 20, 2021.



Rosicrucian Education is an important facet in the life of the College. In the past, we have conducted live presentations, some of them are enumerated in detail in the following page.

*g.a.v.*

**CALL FOR PAPERS** and volunteers to lecture: We are inviting all Fratres to share their knowledge on Rosicrucianism, including its related subjects, by submitting their works for possible publication in *The Pearl* and for presentation to the College through our online Masonic Rosicrucian Forum. Kindly email our Chief Adept at [sonnyleviste@yahoo.com](mailto:sonnyleviste@yahoo.com).



THE COLLEGE makes it at point to engage its members in Rosicrucian and Masonic Education whenever possible. Throughout the years, Papers, slides, and other materials have been researched, written, and shared with the Fratres, whether through actual presentations in the College or through electronic dissemination. Just some of the past materials submitted to the College include the following:



- **Aetatum Ordo** - The first original research work of the College, written and submitted by Frater Joey Villegas last 2012, and eventually published in Vol. XXI of *Ad Lucem* for 2014-2015.
- **Virtutes Secretum** - a Paper originally written for and submitted to the local AMD Councils by Frater Joey Villegas in 2014, and re-shared electronically to the College via its Facebook group.
- **Nicolas Flamel and his Alchemical Journey** - a Paper submitted electronically to the College by Dual member, Frater James Marples. It was widely distributed to the Fratres of the College via its Facebook group. Incidentally, Frater James continues to share his other works to the College.
- **About the SRICF** - a refresher course and presentation formally delivered by the Chief Adept, RW Frater Sonny Leviste, in a Convocation dated August 27, 2018.
- **The 4 Alchemical Element Symbols - The Secret of Nature** - a Powerpoint presentation submitted to the College by Frater Gabriel Comia Jr. in 2019, and formally presented in a Convocation dated June 17, 2019.
- **The Esoteric Significance of the Summer and Winter Solstices** - a Paper submitted to the College by Frater Gabriel Comia Jr. in 2019. It was widely distributed to the Fratres of the College via its Facebook group.
- **Understanding Astrology Birth Chart** - a Paper submitted to the College by Frater Gabriel Comia Jr. in 2019, and formally presented in a Convocation dated September 23, 2019 as part of his general presentation entitled "**Introduction to Astrology.**"
- **Angels and Atoms - The Rosicrucian Ideal** - a Powerpoint presentation originally prepared by RWF W. Bruce Renner, IX, KGC, Junior Deputy Supreme Magus of the High Council. The slideshow was formally shared and delivered by the Chief Adept to the College in an online Convocation dated June 21, 2021.

## *The Rosicrucian & Masonic Symbolism of 'The Pearl'*

James A. Marples VIII

**F**or some time, I have asked myself: "How are Pearls made?" The answer is fairly straight-forward: Natural pearls form when an irritant -- usually a parasite and not the proverbial grain of sand -- works its way into an oyster, mussel, or clam. As a defense mechanism, a fluid is used to coat the irritant. Layer upon layer of this coating, called 'nacre', is deposited until a lustrous pearl is formed. The ideal pearl is round and smooth. A pearl in its final form is composed of calcium carbonate {mainly aragonite and a mixture of calcite) that form within tissues of mainly molluscs as a protective coating which results in the 'nacre' (mentioned previously). The finest specimens have been valued as gemstones or objects for jewelry-pieces such as pearl necklaces for centuries.

In many ways, a "Pearl" is something not made by human-hands, but highly prized or valued by human-eyes, human-hands, and the human-heart as an Object of Beauty.

The City of Manila in The Philippines is often nicknamed "The Pearl of the Orient" for that same reason: a place of beauty. It is given that nickname as both a historical and romantic moniker....which illustrates the beauty of Manila. That, is quite a remarkable achievement, since Manila is also called 'the most densely populated city proper' in the entire World.

To a lesser-extent, Hong Kong was also given the same nickname of "Pearl of the Orient" when it was a tiny British colony. It still is, to an extent. However, after the British cessation of that status and Hong Kong now being designated a "Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China" ---Hong Kong has lost a bit of its luster by virtually being absorbed as a speck within the mainland of China.

In only a few, few references: the name "Pearl of the Orient" was used in minimal ways to reference Saigon, now the capital of Vietnam. It is usually called "Ho Chi Minh City" currently. However, as much as I try, I just cannot visualize any Vietnamese city as a "Pearl of the Orient".

To me: Manila is the "ULTIMATE" city to be known as "The Pearl of the Orient".

In his book from the year 1891, William Francis C. Wigston makes frequent references to "Rosicrucians". He speaks of "the introduction of the three caskets in the "Merchant of Venice" {which} closely resembles the parable of "The Pearl of Great Price" (Matthew XIII, 45-46). To cite that Passage in The King James Version of the Holy Bible, it reads it full: Matthew 13:45-46

<sup>45</sup> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

<sup>46</sup> Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Whereas in the play, "The Merchant of Venice" it is recorded: At Belmont, in a room in Portia's house, the Prince of Morocco surveys the three caskets — one of gold, one of silver, and one of lead. He must choose one, and if he chooses the correct one, his reward will be the "fair Portia." ... Portia informs him that the correct casket contains her picture.

We, as Masonic Rosicrucians of the S.R.I.C.F. might ask ourselves: 'Does a Pearl contain any HEALING PROPERTIES?' --- The answer may surprise you: "YES". According to leading experts: "Pearls are said to assist in calming and centering; as well as nurture your faith, loyalty, integrity, goodness, and purity". Cultured pearls and natural pearls can be distinguished from imitation pearls by a very simple test: Take the Pearl and rub it (gently) against a tooth. Cultured and natural pearls will feel slightly rough, like fine sandpaper (due to their genuineness as bestowed by Nature). Fake.. or artificial-pearls will be unusually perfect with all specimens and will always 'feel smooth as glass since they are man-made, mass-produced and merely painted' to simply deceive the human eye.

Rosicrucians and especially Masonic Rosicrucians have always prized the concept of "PURITY". The high-standards of things made "Pure" are prized higher than any counterfeits or imitations. This can apply to the purity of Gold, Silver, Copper, Stained-Glass windows, and even Pearls. Purity is symbolic of not only genuineness, but also includes hard labor, and "purity of heart". I have been inside and prayed inside the Saint John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church at Beloit, Kansas (U.S.A.) ---above and behind the Main Altar in that Church is a stained-glass window depicting "The All-Seeing Eye of Almighty God" {sometimes called "The Eye of Providence"}. It is beautiful. It reminds us that Almighty God is the Creator of All and that HE created everything "good"....and that our worldly daily walks in life, our friendships, our loving care of our families, our transactions ---meaning our avocations to generate 'incomes' to provide sustenance for ourselves and others -- is contingent upon the concept of 'Purity' and 'Honesty'.

Dr. Paschal B. Randolph, M.D. (who was considered the first known Rosicrucian in the U.S.A. by the acclaimed authority on Rosicrucian history: Frater Arthur Edward

Waite)...Frater Paschal B. Randolph wrote of primitive peoples literally seeking "PEARLS" or other items of precious value. He cites instances of exchanging leopard-skins and other peltry, for coin and other commodities; and those skins were foreign produce; Egypt having no leopards nor pearls of her own --and strings of pearls are represented. The ancient people tanned leather, blew glass-bottles, made wine, hunted, fished, farmed, were floriculturalists, tamed beasts, dyed cloth, imitated precious stones, played on flutes, harps, lyres, a sort of guitar, and, in brief possessed a hundred arts, which arts are proved to have existed, by sculptures on the monuments, and in papyri manuscripts taken from tombs, where they had lain five thousand years and more; and it is difficult to understand how such an amazing advancement could have taken place in so short a time..." Paschal Randolph uses his own analogy urging the reader to compare that to "Adam of Genesis as the first and only created man {as noted in the Holy Bible, from that point of reference} suddenly evolving into "a Mohawk Indian fresh from the woods, giving learned lecture on analytical geometry, or the calculus of variations." Thus, Frater Randolph was giving us as Masonic Rosicrucians an inspired lecture to the effect that: 'All GOOD THINGS take 'time' to develop into something more advanced, more beautiful, or more cultured --in more ways than one!!!

Just a few years ago Dec 1, 2014, I experienced a different type of "Pearl". This was my brief sojourn to visit a stated meeting of Pearl Masonic Lodge #23 in Jackson, Mississippi, (U.S.A.). After I arrived there I discovered solid, tangible evidence that the edifice is a living reminder in TODAY's WORLD of a positive example of citizens helping citizens. I drove my automobile directly to the City Hall of Jackson, Mississippi, (U.S.A.), a fabulous three-story building. I didn't go there to conduct business. I went for a two-fold reason: To study an architectural marvel and attend a regular meeting of the Masonic Lodge.

I had never been to a lodge meeting inside a city hall. Passing by an armed security guard and through a metal-detector machine was a new experience for me to attend a Masonic Lodge meeting. The second member to arrive (I was the first Mason to arrive for the meeting that evening), the next Freemason to arrive was a Messianic rabbi. Nice gentleman who knew a lot about history.

He explained that over a century ago, the citizenry of Jackson couldn't raise funds to construct that building. The two popular fraternal orders of the day, the Masonic Lodge and Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge contributed monies "for the good of the whole community, regardless of race, creed or color."

Those two fraternal orders are separate and unconnected, yet similar. I happen to belong to both fraternal groups. The two lodges agreed they'd help furnish money to build the city hall with the stipulation the lodges could meet in a room of the building in perpetuity. The Freemasons' claim to the Jackson, Mississippi "City Hall" dates back to the building's construction, which began in 1846. In that year, the mayor and aldermen of the City of

Jackson, which was still in its infancy, began to discuss governmental functions in a single building. An "Act" passed by the State Legislature, nearly a decade earlier, already granted the Jackson Masonic organizations the right to build a Lodge Hall on the same site, however.

Then at a subsequent time, representatives of the Masonic Lodge and Independent Order of Odd Fellow Lodges {I.O.O.F. Lodge} approached City of Jackson officials with an incredibly generous offer to build an "additional floor" to what was intended to be a single-story building. IN EXCHANGE {or in return} for paying for the cost of an additional floor to the proposed building, and reinforcing the fundamental lower-floor with an estimated 100,000 extra bricks, the Masons and Odd Fellows gained the "Right to use the second-floor" for "Lodge-uses in perpetuity. The I.O.O.F. Odd Fellow's Lodge in Jackson, Mississippi --that Lodge faded and moved out of the building. Even nationwide in America, the membership of the Odd Fellow's Lodge and its ladies auxiliary, the Rebekah Lodges have dwindled to drastically low numbers today. My own Odd Fellow's Lodge in Kansas is essentially non-existent (except on-paper), since so many of the older members have died. I think I am the sole survivor of my Odd Fellow Lodge.

Thankfully, my Mulvane Masonic Lodge #201 in Mulvane, Kansas (central U.S.A.) is fairly stable condition as far as membership-tally, albeit a few declines due to deaths. I was told the same was true of Pearl Masonic Lodge №. 23 in Jackson, Mississippi.

Due to my interest in history, I was presented with a lapel pin commemorating Pearl Masonic Lodge's 175th year of existence. I expressed my thanks and told the members about my late father, Bro.: John William Marples, and his grandfather, Bro.: George White, who were both active members of the Masonic Lodge and Odd Fellow lodges in their heyday. I commended the members and people of Jackson for not just building a landmark, but preserving a landmark for posterity.

As my dear father {a Freemason for 52 of his 87 years of his life} would say: "It takes little effort to tear things down, but sometimes it takes years to build things up." How true. My father would additionally tell me how so many people take too much for granted.

In many ways, the baby boomer generation, which is an American demographic term, comprises American people born from 1946 to 1964 (and includes myself), has been the most blessed generation of Americans. Yet it has been the inheriting generation that inherited the fruits of the blood, sweat, tears and toil of preceding generations, including that of the "Greatest Generation" {the sobriquet or affectionate term for the generation of Americans which included my parents and their peers}.

The question each of us needs to ask ourselves - not just individually, but collectively - is, "What will we build up?" Combined with "Who will we praise, pray for, and constructively

help?" That, is the proverbial purpose of the Society of The Rose and Cross founded by Christian Rosenkreutz. It is even outlined in the famous manifesto: "The Rosicrucian Fama Fraternitatis" published in the year A.D. 1614.

Christian Rosenkreutz was a Benedictine monk. He was born in the year A.D. 1378 and died in the year A.D. 1484 at the ripe old age of 106. Incredibly, at age 100, he undertook a voyage to make a pilgrimage to visit The Holy Sepulchre {reportedly the burial tomb of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem}. He was accompanied by a fellow monk who died en-route near the Mediterranean island of Cyprus. According to the noted Masonic scholar, Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33°, and a Knight Templar and a Masonic Rosicrucian himself holding the IX° Grade --Mackey notes that after the companion monk died --Fr. Rosenkreutz's travel itinerary was forcibly detoured to places such as Damascus, Syria, parts of Egypt and Arabia, and thence Fr. Rosenkreutz returned to mainland Europe (Spain) where he and his followers were forcibly removed. Thus Fr. Rosenkreutz had no other option except to return to his native Germany.

After his arrival to Germany. Father C.R. and other Brothers established an esoteric, but honorable Christian Fraternity: "The Fraternity of the Rose Cross". The Brothers of the Fraternity were sent in mission throughout the world, having as their first priority to use their knowledge to cure the sick free of charge (gratis); not wearing any special clothing, and met once each year in the mysterious "House of the Holy Spirit".

The Legend shows an agreement with six articles that they drew up Prior to their separation, bounding themselves one to another to keep:

1. That none of them should profess any other thing than to cure the sick, and that gratis.
2. None of the posterity should be constrained to wear one kind of habit, but to follow the custom of the country.
3. Every year, upon the day C., they would meet together at the house Santi Spiritus, or write the cause of their absence.
4. Every Brother should seek a worthy person to succeed him after his death.
5. The word CR should be their seal, mark, and character.
6. The Fraternity should remain secret one hundred years

Our generation, in this 21st Century, must curtail the prevailing winds of gossiping, heckling and tearing down without cause. Our "cyber generation" says a lot, but conveys little of value that will stand the test of time for the benefit of posterity.

Manila is fortunate in many ways. It is the Capital City of The Philippines. It also is nicknamed: "Queen City of the Pacific". In my youth, I remember a "Queen City I.O.O.F.

Odd Fellow Lodge in Wichita, Kansas (U.S.A.). It was among the older I.O.O.F. Odd Fellow Lodges in Wichita, Kansas ---and not surprisingly: Its "meeting hall" was for many years situated directly behind the current Midian Shriners Center in Wichita, Kansas. By sheer coincidence, there is a town called "Queen City, Texas" located only 67 miles from my residence in Longview, Texas, U.S.A.

In The CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA "New Advent", it speaks of Rosary beads as being "Beads variously strung together, according to the kind, order, and number of prayers in certain forms of devotion...in common use among Catholics as an expedient to ensure a right count of the parts occurring in more or less frequent repetition." These beads may range in composition to include beads made from "pebbles, knotted cords, and strings of beads or berries, as a means of counting, when it was desired to say a specific number of prayers. What was surprising for me to discover, is that the use of ritualistic beads is acknowledged in The Catholic Encyclopedia to have existed in pre-Christian eras of time. It also notes that "the military orders,, most notably The Knights of St. John {The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta} (abbreviated as the Knights of the S.M.O.M.) or simply colloquially known in later years as "The Knights of Malta" adopted the paternoster beads as part of the equipment of lay members. In the fifteenth century, wearing the beads at one's girdle was a distinctive sign of membership in a religious confraternity.". To explain, a "padernoster bead" usually refers to the UNIQUE "11th bead" which is usually LARGER in shape, size, and material from the rest, and indicating that "The Lord's Prayer" is to be said at that juncture of the rosary.

Of interesting significance, the "Mother of Pearl" rosaries are still 'hand made' in countries such as Italy and even in ENGLAND. While some suppliers offer lookalike imitations, some entities such as "The St. Joseph's Catholic Gift shop, in England" {See footnote, below} takes great pains to describe their product as "Beautiful genuine mother of pearl rosaries". As mentioned previously, the phrase 'Mother of Pearl' refers to the precious 'Nacre" --which could be likened as akin to the 'bone-marrow of human-beings. The real thing cannot be substituted by fakes or imitations, since it is the BASIS {or foundation} of ANY "genuine Pearl".

It amazed me that The Catholic Encyclopedia also notes that sects in India, Buddhists, Japanese Shintos, and even Muslims use beads. I was astounded to read in the same encyclopedia where the Moslems {Muslims} use a string of ninety-nine (or one hundred) beads called the subha or tasbih, on which they recite the "beautiful" names or attributes of Allah. Critics of the Muslim usage compare it to plagiarizing the Jewish form of one hundred blessings.....Among travelers: records of prayer beads includes a famous instance, by Marco Polo, of the King of Malabar, who wore a fine silk thread strung with one hundred and four large Pearls and Rubies, on which he was wont to pray {using it as his prayer-aid}."

In many ways, the topic of this SRICF Paper --"The Masonic and Rosicrucian Symbolism of 'The Pearl' " comes full-circle. I have been intrigued by the ancient Rosicrucian Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), a well-known Christian Mystic. He, like Christian Rosenkreutz were both born in Germany. However, Boehme was born during the time of the Lutheran movement. Although Jacob Boehme is very much associated with the Protestant Reformation, he differed significantly on various topics with Martin Luther, a former Roman Catholic Priest. Boehme's language often involves three words: "fire, light, and spirit". In many ways: "The Pearl" takes on many of these characteristics. Pearls can have a fire-like "glow". Pearls can reflect light and are often utilized as as accessory to compliment a lady's neck...as with Pearl necklaces. Lastly, as noted at the beginning of this scholarly Paper: "The Pearl" can help embolden one's existing faith or spirit by nurturing faith, loyalty, integrity, goodness, honesty....and most especially PURITY.

Jacob Boehme wrote:

"Moses writes that God made man of the dust of the earth. ... The veil would have continued still before my eyes.. but when I found the pearl, then... I found that he had wrote very right."

In closing, 'May the Rose bloom upon your Cross". And, "May the beauty, purity, and majesty of 'The Pearl' invigorate your eyes, relax your mind, rejuvenate your soul, and give you peace in your daily Walk of Faith". That, is the significance of 'The Pearl' in Freemasonry and especially in Masonic Rosicrucianism.

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#### Sources:

1. Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Regarding: "How are Pearls formed?"
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3. Francis Bacon: Poet, Prophet Philosopher..." by William Francis C. Wigston. Page 53. Year 1891 Edition.

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13. webpage citation: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/eso/cjb/cjb08.htm>
14. Mother of Pearl Rosary examples: webpage: <https://www.amazon.com/Mother-Rosary-Beads-Rosary-Italian/dp/B00BUPX42K>

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## About the Author:

Frater James A. Marples, VIII is a Perpetual Life Member of Mulvane Masonic Lodge #201 A.F. & A.M. in Mulvane, Kansas. He is a Life Member of The International Peace Gardens Lodge of Freemasons (Canada-USA) and also an Honorary Member of Golden Rule Masonic Lodge #562 in Willard, Ohio; an Honorary Member of Nelson Masonic Lodge #77, in Nelson, Nebraska, which has recently consolidated with the Superior Masonic Lodge at Superior, Nebraska; and an Honorary Life Member of Humble Cottage Masonic Lodge #19 Opelousas, Louisiana (which was the Lodge that Alamo-defender Bro. Jim Bowie belonged to) Frater Jim is also a Life Member of The North Dakota Masonic Lodge of Research. Companion and Sir Knight Jim is a Life Member of the Wichita York Rite Bodies (Wichita Chapter #33 R.A.M.; Wichita Council #12 R.& S.M.; and Mt. Olivet Commandery #12 K.T.). He is also a Life Member of the Lincoln Nebraska Scottish Rite Bodies; The Robert-the-Bruce Association (California); The George Washington Masonic Stamp Club; The Masonic Stamp Club of New York; Masonic Order of the Gordian Knot (Indiana); Masonic Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill; Kentucky Chapter #134 of National Sojourners and Heroes of '76; South Dakota Lodge of Masonic Research; Illinois Lodge of Research; North Texas York Rite College #118 of Sherman, Texas; Nebraska College S.R.I.C.F., a dual life member of Pearl Of The Orient College S.R.I.C.F. and a regular dual member of Alabama College S.R.I.C.F. He is a Regular Member of The Allied Masonic Degrees; Grand College of Rites; St. David Conclave of The Red Cross of Constantine; Shawnee County Kansas Square and Compass Club; and Holyrood Council #61 of Knight Masons (Nebraska).

## PLATES



Some officers and members of the Pearl-of-the-Orient College, circa 2019



The diffusion of light through the exchange of ideas



A society and fellowship of learned gentlemen

