

Most Wise Master's Letters

Rose Croix Chapter

Jorge Luis Romeu, 32

Valley of Syracuse NY

AASR, NMJ

**A Compilation of my monthly Most Wise Master's Letters appearing in The Word,
The Masonic Monthly Newspaper of the Four Districts in Central New York.**

To other Lodge Masters and to my Brother Freemasons

With the hope that these letters help them in their Lodge work.

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About the Author

Jorge Luis Romeu is a Master Mason, Initiated in January, in Estrada Palma Lodge, and Raised in his Island Lodge No. 56, Havana, Cuba, in April of 1969. These were difficult times to be a Mason, in Communist Cuba, especially for a young man.

In 1980 Romeu moved to the US. The social and economic conditions of an immigrant, plus the differences between Masonic Rituals and language, made it difficult for him to join an American Lodge. However, he kept his links with individual Brethren and Masonic listserves.

After a long hiatus, where he remained unaffiliated, Bro. Romeu joined the Jose Celso Barbosa Lodge No. 106, in Bayamon, San Juan, Puerto Rico, the land of his paternal family, where he regularly visited his brother and other family members. Romeu later joined Liverpool Syracuse Lodge No. 501, in the state of New York, where he resides and teaches. He was the Worshipful Master of Liverpool Syracuse Lodge 2018-2019.

Bro. Romeu is a 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, with the Syracuse Valley, AASR, NMJ, and the Onondaga Masonic District Mentoring Chair, where he leads the North Star Mentoring Program. He wrote these Masters Letters in The Word, the monthly newspaper of four CNY Masonic Districts, when he was elected to this Office.

Bro. Romeu researches the history of Freemasonry in the Spanish Antilles: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. For his research work, Bro. Romeu has been accepted into the American Lodge of Research, NYC, Western NY Lodge of Research, Buffalo, NY, both of the Grand Lodge of New York (GLNY); Jose G. Bloise No. 113, San Juan, Gran Logia Soberana de Puerto Rico (GLSPR); The Correspondence Circle of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, Grand Lodge of England (UGLE); and the Centro de Estudios Historicos de la Masoneria Espanola (CEHME), Spain.

In these Research Lodges and Academic Organizations, Bro. Romeu has presented and published a number of papers on Freemasonry. The reader can find more information in his Masonic Web Page:

<http://web.cortland.edu/romeu/MasoneriaPage.htm>

Thank-you.

AASR Rose Croix Column (August, 2022 for the September WORD):

Greetings, Knights:

I am writing this month's column due to an illness of our Most Wise Master, Bro. Richard E. Barrett, 32° DSA. We wish him a complete and prompt recovery.

In August we had two family events: on August 6th, a picnic at the Cicero American Legion; and on August 13, a baseball game involving the Syracuse Mets. We are sure that those who participated in these events had a great time!

On September we have two important events. First, our traditional Fall Kick-off Brother Bring-a-Brother, on the 12th. Dinner reservations are required by Tuesday, September 6th. Then, the 153rd Convocation of the Council of Deliberation (COD), A.A.S.R., for the State of New York. The event will be held at the Double Tree by Hilton-Syracuse, 6301 State Route 298, East Syracuse, on Saturday, September 24, at 1:00 PM. Syracuse Valley will pay for the lunch for its elected officers attending COD Session. If you are staying at the hotel, reservations are on your own.

Traditionally, the COD has been both, a very instructive experience, and an opportunity to meet Brother Scottish Ritters from other New York Valleys, especially from New York City. If you plan to attend the COD annual session, you must first register online.

Please, keep our military and the people of Ukraine in your prayers.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu
Senior Warden.

AASR Rose Croix Column (September, 2022):

Greetings, Knights:

I am again writing this month's column due to our continuing Most Wise Master, Bro. Richard E. Barrett illness. We wish him a complete and prompt recovery, and hope to see him back in his Most Wise Master's chair, very soon.

In September, we had two important events: our Valley's Fall Kickoff & Brother-Bring-a-Brother Night, and the 2022 Council of Deliberation meeting. The first event helps us bring in new Brothers to our Valley (in addition to Internet advertising, as the Ad that automatically got in my computer screen while reading the Internet Sunday Syracuse Newspaper: [Become a 32° Scottish Rite Freemason | Expand Your Craft \(scottishritenmj.org\)](#)

On September 21 and 22 our Valley hosted the 153rd Convocation of the Council of Deliberation (COD), A.A.S.R., for the State of New York at the Double Tree Hilton, in East Syracuse. The COD, in addition to a very instructive experience, is an opportunity to meet Scottish Ritters from other New York Valleys. Our C-i-C and other Valley officers will provide the highlights of this meeting, in their articles in this issue of *The Word*.

In October we will have two degrees: the Confer for the 4th Degree, on the 10th, and the rehearsal for the 16th Degree, on the 24th. Even when the Degrees are not part of our Rose Croix Chapter, it will be friendly if some of our Chapter Brothers partake, a great experience for all, especially for the new Rite members and officers. On the 17th, we will have the Awards and Recognition night, and on the 31th, the KOSA Program. October will be a very busy month!

As an aside, I will be giving a PPT presentation about the origins and differences between the York and Scottish rituals, in my Liverpool-Syracuse Mother Lodge, on Monday, October 3rd. All are cordially and fraternally invited. If our Valley is interested, I can redo the a program here.

Please, keep our military and our country in your prayers.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu
Senior Warden.

Greetings, Knights:

This is my first column as Chapter Most Wise Master, and would like to start by thanking Bro. Richard E. Barrett for all his help and insight during his tenure, that helped me prepare for this position. I look forward to the Chapter developing a fruitful year, with the help of our Leadership: Bro. Joseph W. Flanagan, Senior Warden; Bro. Russell Beckwith, Junior Warden; Bro. Tim Page, Orator and Bro. Walter Boronow, Master of Ceremonies.

We had an eventful summer, starting with the NYS Annual Council of Deliberation, in June, with the attendance of our SGC Peter J. Samiec. Council was followed by several outings and family events, in July and August.

We now need to prepare for those ceremonies that our Chapter will develop: the 17th and 18th Degrees, on Monday January 29th, and the Feast of the Paschal Lamb, on Saturday March 23rd. The 18th Degree and the Feast are “Live”. So, we need to recruit Brethren to perform the ceremony parts, and then practice them. Feel free to contact me or any of the Chapter Leadership officers named above, to volunteer.

The main objective of performing our Scottish Rite Degrees and ceremonies is to teach us and remind us, of our Core Values: Integrity, Service to Humanity, Justice, Tolerance, Reverence for God and Devotion to Country. We should always keep this in mind.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu
Most Wise Master.

Greetings, Knights:

Last week I held a Zoom meeting with our Chapter Rose Croix (CRC) Leadership, to begin organizing our work for this year. These Zoom meetings are open to all, so if anyone is interested in attending, send me an email and I will send the link for our next one to you.

The CRC has three main activities this year, and all are after January 2024. They are: the Caregiver's Event, two Rite Degrees (one live), and the Feast of the Paschal Lamb. The CRC is actively looking for volunteer actors to work in the parts. Some parts are non-speaking, easy to learn. So, join us. This is an excellent way, for new Scottish Ritters to become acquainted with our organization, as well as with its members. If interested contact any of our CRC Leaders.

Last week I went to the State Fair. It reminded me of our Children's ID program, headed by Bro. Hank Havener. This program created computer diskettes with participating children's key information (photo, digital prints, health, and address information). We then handed the disk to their parents, all completely free. This disk served in case the child got lost or was taken from their parents. It would provide the police with the necessary information to try to find them. The program processed hundreds of kids, every year, during the State Fair. Freemasons paid the rent of the room used, electricity, rented computers and printers, and paid for the entrance of the volunteers who worked in it. Costs continued rising and the program had to be ended.

The Scottish Rite has six core values, and each of our members has their preferred ones. Mine are: Devotion to Country and Service to Humanity (especially our community). Whichever yours are, as a Scottish Riter, our organization allows you to know and befriend Brethren from different Lodges and Districts, who may also prefer these same values. And, with them, you can jointly develop some challenging project that fulfills your interests.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu

Most Wise Master.

Greetings, Knights:

As I write this column we are preparing to rehearse, with the Council of Princes of Jerusalem, the 16th Degree that they will present live this month. Council and Rose Croix Chapter have many things in common, evident in other Scottish Rite jurisdictions. So I am encouraging these two Bodies to work closely together.

In the Southern Jurisdiction, as well as in Scottish Rite organizations of several foreign countries, the Degrees 15th to 18th are administered by the Chapter of Rose Croix. Thence, the Council of Princes does not exist. The organization is different.

Degrees 19th to 30th are administered by the Council of Kadosh, and Degrees 31st and 32nd are administered by the Consistory. The Lodge of Perfection, however, with Degrees 4th to 14th, remains the same for both, the Northern and the Southern Jurisdictions.

We can learn more about the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite, and about its four Bodies, and *Orients* (equivalent to our own State Councils of Deliberation), via the web page of AASR Valley of Alexandria, VA: <https://www.alexandriascottishrite.org/about/scottish-rite-degrees#:~:text=In%20the%20Southern%20Jurisdiction%20these,of%20Sovereign%20Grand%20Inspector%20General> or the AASR/SMJ page: <https://scottishrite.org/>

Visiting Southern Jurisdiction Valleys, and their events, is a very instructive experience. We have visited the AASR Washington DC Center, on 2800 16th St., very close to the House of the Temple (HOT), on 1733 16th Street. HOT has the Main AASR Offices, the Library and the Museum, open to Masons and their families. The DC Center holds sessions every first, second third and fourth Tuesdays of the month, corresponding to the Lodge, Chapter, Council and Consistory bodies. There is an informal dinner before the sessions start.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu
Most Wise Master.

Greetings, Knights:

In October, we took part in the cast of the 16th Degree, to learn more about how such productions are put together, and be able to do a better job in putting our own (the 18th Degree). We want to thank the other Leaders of the Chapter, that attended this event.

We also want to thank RW Michael Miller, High Priest of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem, who ran this live degree, for providing us with much help and advice for said task.

We have now to start preparing and rehearsing for the live presentation of the 18th Degree that the Rose Croix Chapter will develop at the end of January. I am hoping that members of all four Bodies can participate with us in this production. We also have a video presentation of the 17th Degree, that night, and a small collation afterwards.

In addition to providing players for the cast, the Rose Croix Chapter is also responsible to organize the activity and the collation. We count on our Chapter Leadership group. But other Brothers are also welcome!

We want to congratulate our immediate Past Most Wise Master, Bro. Richard Barret, who was recently granted the Red Hat (MSA) for his excellent work.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers, and peace in the world.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu

Most Wise Master.

Greetings, Knights:

By the time you read these lines, we will be entering the new 2024. Let's hope that the new 2024 will be kinder to all than 2023 was, with its wars, deaths, and destruction. I want to take the opportunity to wish our Brethren and their families a happy, healthy and peaceful new year.

In December, we had our Holiday Celebration with dinner and entertainment.

On January 29th, the Rose Croix Chapter will put the 17th and 18th Degrees. The 17th, in Video, teaches us how the Book of Life, the Chronological history of all man's accomplishments and failures was sealed because man seems to ignore the past and often makes the same mistakes over and over again. The 18th Degree, sometimes referred to as the most profound and difficult to understand of all Scottish Rite Degrees, will be presented live. It teaches us that the New Temple is in the heart of man, and that a New Law of Love is given to us that, if followed, will allow the Sealed Book to be opened again. These two lessons are very timely, indeed!

On February 12, our Rose Croix Chapter will host the Caregiver Event, with a dinner and entertainment. If you know of some Brother who has provided care to a loved one, and may be a good candidate for this award, please contact the Secretary's office.

Degrees are interesting to watch; but they represent important lessons. If we read about them before viewing them, and we have an exchange of ideas, afterwards, we will get more out of them. And, thus, we become active participants rather than a passive audience.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers, and peace in the world.

Keep safe. Fraternally,

Jorge Luis Romeu
Most Wise Master.

The January letter was written by the Chapter Senior Warden, Bro. Joseph Flannagan, as the MWM was out of town.

Rose Croix Chapter (February, 2024)

Greeting, Knights:

By the time you read this article, our Rose Croix Chapter will have presented the 17th Degree, via video, and the 18th Degree, live, and will have hosted the Care Giver Award Dinner, with its subsequent entertainment organized by Bro. Jim Nelson.

Then, on Saturday, March 23rd, 2:30 to 6 PM, our Chapter will host the Feast of the Paschal Lamb, where we remember those brethren that have laid down their working tools during the year. As you can read, this is the busy season for our Rose Croix Chapter. And we are always looking for Brothers to participate in the production of these events.

The lesson from the 18th Degree is of cardinal importance for a Scottish Rite mason: to love one another. We can take it lightly, or we can truly absorb it. For, this is not an easy lesson to apply, either in life or within the lodge.

It is easy love those whom we like; but it is sometimes difficult to love those whom we don't. But there is where the merit lies. For, Love is more than just affection; it also includes courtesy, kindness, solidarity, etc.

The Feast of the Paschal Lamb commemorates the event of the Christian Last Supper, and we read the names of those Brethren that have departed during the year. A powerful lesson from this passage is Humility. For, during the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

Sometimes the Scottish Rite is characterized as "the college of Freemasonry", because of the many excellent lessons, such as these, that its Degrees and ceremonies present.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers, and keep peace in the world.

Be safe. Fraternally,

Jorge L. Romeu
Most Wise Master.

Rose Croix Chapter (March, 2024)

Greeting, Knights:

By the time you read this article, our Rose Croix Chapter will have presented the Feast of the Paschal Lamb, one of our most important rituals, as we remember those Brothers that passed away during the year. And now we are in the process of proposing new slate of officers for our Rose Croix Chapter, for the 2024-2025 period.

Recruiting members for Degree work as well as for Body Officers is usually a challenging task. There is a core group of dedicated Brothers that toils year after year in these endeavors. But they wear out, move away, pass away, etc., and they must be replaced.

The Rose Croix Chapter, as well as some of the other Valley Bodies, need to fill these vacancies. And we need to find Brothers that are willing and able to fulfill these positions, every year.

Several Brothers joined our Scottish Rite Valley during the recent past. Some of them are already performing a function in one of the four bodies, which is excellent! But some others are still not integrated into the work of the Valley. Joining one Body as an Officer or participating in Degree work constitutes an excellent opportunity to integrate into our Valley, as well as one of the best ways to grow as a Freemason, and to learn more about the Scottish Rite operations.

These activities, in addition to their important Masonic values, provide an opportunity to become more familiar with your Valley Brothers, thus strengthening bonds of fellowship.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers, and keep peace in the world.

Be safe. Fraternally,

Jorge L. Romeu
Most Wise Master.

Rose Croix Chapter (April, 2024)

Greeting, Knights:

Some may have noticed that I was not present at the Feast of the Paschal Lamb, one of our most important rituals, as we remember those Brothers that passed away during the year. My oldest son had a bad accident and was in the ICU at the Jackson Memorial hospital, in Miami. We were there with him. He is out, now, but has suffered severe damage and is undergoing physical therapy. I will be in and out of Syracuse for the next few months and will not be able to attend some of our Rose Croix Chapter functions. I will be, however, proficiently substituted by our Senior Warden, Bro. Joseph Flannagan, who will succeed me for the 2024-2025 period, as Most Worshipful Master.

The Rose Croix Chapter joined the other Valley Bodies for the Five Degree Festival on Saturday April 13th and for the Reunion Banquet on April 22nd. If I was not there, is it because I was out of town and was substituted, again, by our Senior Warden Bro. Flannegan.

In May, we will have the important Four Bodies Annual Meeting and Officer's Election. This is a very important Valley meeting and I encourage all our members to attend and participate in the Valley's work by joining one Body as an Officer. This is an excellent opportunity to become more familiar with your Brothers and your Valley's operations, and to grow as Freemasons.

This may well be my last column as Most Worshipful Master of the Rose Croix Chapter. It has been both an honor and an excellent learning opportunity. I leave you in excellent hands, as Bro. Flannegan will likely be elected, and will succeed me in this position.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers, and may God keep peace in the world.

Be safe. Fraternally,

Jorge L. Romeu
Most Wise Master.

Rose Croix Chapter (May, 2024)

Greeting, Knights:

I was not present for the Five Degree Festival, but I was told it came out very nicely. I was not present at the Reunion Banquet either. I was in Miami's Jackson Memorial hospital, caring for my injured son.

When I returned I attended our last Valley Exec Committee meeting, where a Brother that called himself a "new Scottish Ritter" (we were all new, at some point,), raised very important and valid issues regarding Brethren missing our meetings (sometimes, less than 20% attend). Then, he gave two instances that could explain these absences.

Firstly, he said it is challenging for a new member to participate in a group where he is not acquainted with most others. We need to facilitate introductions. We have many Body Leaders who can sit at different tables and help participants introduce themselves and break the ice.

Then, regarding Degree presentations, he said that newer members are not always able to identify the main plot and characters, or the key lesson (even some more seasoned members, find this difficult, and we need to witness the Degrees several times to get it).

In High School, I belonged to a Cinema Club and we watched movies in several steps. We were given a one-pager about its genre, plot, actors, and director. Then, after a short introduction from the group leader, we would watch the film. Finally, after a short summary of its main points, we had some questions and answers, and a discussion. It was fun, and very instructive.

I appreciate the candor of this new Scottish Ritter, whose opinions are very welcome and provide us with valuable information to help improve our meetings.

This is my last article as Most Wise Master of the Chapter. Bro. Flannegan will likely be elected this month and will surely succeed in this position.

Please, keep our military and our country in our prayers, and may God keep peace in the world.

Be safe. Fraternally,

Jorge L. Romeu
Most Wise Master.