



## Newsletter n° 198 – October-November 2024

Dearest Brothers and Sisters,

At the start of this month, regardless of our metaphysical conceptions, we have turned our thoughts to our departed loved ones, and also to those whose sacrifice we cannot forget, our human brothers and sisters who still lose their lives in all too numerous wars.

All those ceremonies give meaning to the necessary duty of remembrance which we must share by honouring all of our dead, including in our masonic meetings and funeral ceremonies.

Need we be reminded that death is everywhere in our Scottish Rite degrees, beginning with the chamber of reflection which replicates the grave? It is manifested through myths, legends, murders, sacrifices, battles against ourselves; through epic narratives and crusades against the ills that beset humankind; in the rebuilding of Temples destroyed in past wars; it is still there when we wage war for the freedom to cross bridges which were forbidden to us.

Those battles, Hiram's death and all those symbolic deaths followed by so many new raisings, our knightly epics, our personal as well as collective fights, open new doors for us to attain our individual freedom, to reach a better understanding of our Being.

*“One wants death in order to escape a state of non-being, or of insufficient being, one pretends to seek death in the hope of really acceding to Being”* as our Ill. Br. Jean-Pierre Villain reminded us in his intervention at our symposium in Bordeaux “Death, that taboo!” which more than 300 brothers and sisters attended in Montaigne's home town.

Confronting the question of the “grim reaper,” of the “*Sickness unto Death*”<sup>1</sup> is one of our first human duties. Beyond the masonic, spiritual, philosophical, and scientific aspects examined at the symposium, we, by way of our shared reflections, have brought our contribution to the broad debate on the end of life which concerns the whole of our society. That termination of life, not symbolic in any way, but instead a sad reality which often ignores human dignity.

Although Montaigne ceaselessly reminds us, just as our rituals do, that “*philosophizing is nothing other than getting ready to die.*”<sup>2</sup>, death is only the end of life, not its aim.

We must, here and now, make the “*good life*,” our aim by knowing how to serve well, by trying to be in the world modestly, naturally, all the while thinking of others.

The end of the month will soon arrive. It is that of the lights which already shine in the horizon, as the winter solstice is getting near. Those lights are the bearers of hope. It is the cycle of that renewal, always hoped for, beyond all and every belief. It is that epiphany which I wish you with full fraternity. That which consists in enjoying the lights of the heart, which you will share and transmit<sup>3</sup> to all your brothers and sisters in all our Lodges, as well as to your loved ones.

I also wish those Lights for the world. They are the symbol of our hope and of our faith in man.

With my most fraternal feelings, I embrace you all, my beloved sisters and brothers, in full equality, and I send you my best wishes at the close of this year.

M.II.Br. Christian CONFORTINI, 33°  
M.P.S.G.C, GCDRE-GODF



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<sup>1</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness unto Death*. 1849

<sup>2</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *Essais* I.19.

<sup>3</sup> Lucretius. *De Rerum Natura*, II, 76 79. “As mortals by eternal give and take.... In a brief space the generations pass, and like to runners hand the lamp of life one unto other.”