

68th Triennial Convocation
of the
General Grand Chapter
Royal Arch Masons, Internacional

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**Most Excellent General Grand High Priest, Officers and
Companions of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch
Masons Internacional**

Before anything I must thank the honor of being part of such a great team. An honor indeed and an opportunity to open a new Masonic window for Masons in many Latin American countries. I'd like to mention and thank the American Officers responsible since 1993, when this journey began, for their orientation and support - not mentioning their sorely tried patience!

In Latin America - particularly in South America - the *Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite* is worked in over 80% of the Symbolic Lodges because of traditional French influence in local culture. In Brazil, for instance, before the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Brazil received its Charter in 2001, six different Rites have been worked for more than a hundred years.

From France came the Adonhiramite (since 1801), The the French or Modern Rite (since 1822) and the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite (since 1829) are of French origin. The English Craft ritual

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Proceedings of the General Grand Chapter Triennial arrived in 1837, the German Schroeder Rite in 1841 and finally the Brazilian Rite in 1914. All are worked in the Grand Orient of Brazil, first Brazilian Masonic Body. Grand Lodges work the A&ASR, "York" (in fact the Emulation ritual) and the Schroeder.

The American Rite as worked in the Blue Lodges was but briefly worked in mid-19th century Brazil by American refugees from Southern States following the Civil War. Its rebirth and steady growth owes much to the support of the Brazilian Grand Chapter RAM, which translated, illustrated, printed and offered the Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason American Blue Lodges rituals. Such an arrangement works both ways: from the Grand Lodges side they have low-price rituals made available on demand without the toil and costs of publishing them. For the York Rite Bodies it means a bridge for the immense DeMolay generation pool now going into the Blue Lodges. They now know that the natural sequence of their ritual is now available in Brazil - and they're coming strong.

But the Supreme Grand Chapter RAM of Brazil wouldn't grow to 60 Chapters and well over a thousand Companions in such a short time by cultivating or promoting strife. The friendship and sympathy from Masons and Bodies of all Rites, particularly the Supreme Council 33°, allowed development and integration without the rivalry so common in many countries.

Also supporting and working close to the Confederación Masónica Interamericana - CMI (the Interamerican Masonic Confederation) made for easier approach to Grand Masters and their Officers, for both the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America and the **CMI** are doing a superb job in regularizing Latin American Masonry.

I do think that even considering the particularities of different countries, we may try such a strategy and blueprint. But that's in the near future.

I've travelled twice to Paraguay (Assuncion and Ciudad del Este) and three times to Mexico (Mexico City, Michoacan and Puebla), to attend Grand Chapters convocations, and once to Guatemala, to visit Guatemala Chapter. Even without going to

Peru strong ties are maintained with Lima Chapter. Out of necessity on account of its growth and necessities, most of my trips occurred throughout Brazil, where Chapters are present in 20 out of 27 States, most with several Chapters, but also to attend many international events hosted by the *CMI, Supreme Council 33° for Brazil* and other regular Masonic Bodies.

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Crossculturating may be sometimes hard to achieve. To understand the particular needs and traits of different people - even they being Masons - take a lot of toil and patience. Through our General Grand Chapter RAM International a new and fascinating world has been opened for Brazilian Masons Brazil and it may so do for Masons of other Latin American Countries. Perhaps it's not readily perceived for American Masons used for more than two hundred years to their rituals and institutions, but for us it's a Brave New World.

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