

CHAIN OF FAVOURS and CHARITY

Almost two weeks ago, by virtue of Decree No. 1282 of 12th March 2020 of the M.:W.:G.:M.: of the G.:L.:E.: Oscar Alfonso Ortega, suspended all Masonic meetings, in accordance with the effects of the Royal Decree which proceeds to the declaration of the State of Alarm by the Government of the nation, which restricts the mobility of people, the possibility of seeing us and meeting in person was suspended.

As expressed in the letter of the M.:W.:G.:M.: of 24 of the currents, these are difficult times for all of us, with a forced confinement in our homes, in which, because of our responsibility to our country, to all our Spanish brothers and sisters and those of other nationalities who live there, and to their families, we are required to wait and to be confined. As the letter of our M.:W.:G.:M.: reminds us, there are no precedents for this situation, and many of our brothers fight hard in hospitals, police stations, barracks, supermarkets and means of transport, while other brothers fight from a hospital bed or from the confinement of their home against the illness. Some of them are completely alone.

These are extremely serious times. We, the Masons, are obliged to maintain the image of strength in the face of the most adverse situations, such as the present one, constituting an example and spearhead for our society, which, let us not forget, is made up of our family, friends, clients and bosses in our most immediate surroundings, partners and neighbours, who must see in our actions and conduct, in the most difficult moments, serenity of character, courage, boldness and initiative, and the union that has always characterized the men who have preceded us in such an august Order, and who today observe us from the Mystical Bond. And this responsibility obliges us not to stand still. Confined with responsibility, but not standing. On the contrary, in continuous movement, if we want everything else to move.

Faced with these new circumstances, there is an absolute need to adapt. And this is done with energy, imagination and promptness in the face of these circumstances. Without delay, because that would lead us to the molicie, and to depression, which are the opposite of the energy of Freemasonry and the Masons themselves. What better way to claim recognition of honour than by being honourable; to behave honourably in all areas of our lives at this time. With our families, with our friends and neighbours, and also with the rest of the people around us.

We cannot remain oblivious to what is happening in our public and private hospitals, which are largely overwhelmed by the volume of patients, given the very high level of contagion from COVID 19 and the rapid spread of the pandemic. Our medical and health professionals, many of them Brethren, today more than ever heroes, find themselves without the medical equipment, machinery and materials that could help save the lives of large numbers of people, many of them Brethren or family and friends of Brethren. Given our large number of brothers and diversity of Lodges in different geographical locations and professions, we have a network of relationships between members of the Lodges, between Lodges of different Provinces, and between Grand Lodges of the Province, with respect to the G.:L.:E.:, which can and must act as a tool for the transmission of energies for the achievement of a common end, at this essential time: to help our neighbour, an expression of love and a means of realising our highest ideal, fraternity.

There are companies, which altruistically are manufacturing these materials that are needed among health professionals and in hospitals. From our homes we can and must contribute with those businessmen and entrepreneurs who are dedicated to the manufacture of integral facial screens that protect our doctors and health workers who are fighting on the front line against the virus (if they fall, the others will fall) and respirators that will save the most seriously ill patients in the NICUs of our hospitals. A generous and kind act multiplies their action in many generous and kind acts. A favor provokes a chain of favors. We are many, and the effort among many becomes less burdensome, more bearable for all, and with a superior result. Those medical professionals who do not fall ill by using these means of protection can save our lives or those of our family and friends tomorrow. Those ventilators needed in hospital NICUs can save our lives or those of our family and friends tomorrow.

In two days, and through the disinterested management of several Brothers, we have been able to verify that we are capable of articulating a **system of collaboration** to contribute to the manufacture of these safety materials for our doctors and health care providers, for the manufacture of these respirators and for the acquisition of surgical masks. In all these cases, the problem that companies and people who have altruistically put themselves to the task, faced with the market shortage in these circumstances, are facing is the acquisition of materials for their manufacture. This leads to the need to resort to chain production in a coordinated manner. We cannot do it alone, but together we are capable of doing it. And the virus does not understand of nationalities or languages, just as it does not understand geographical regions; in the same way, health protection materials and respirators will not understand nationalities or languages or geographical regions. They will serve to save us all.

It is for this reason that a **group of Brothers and Lodges of this Province** (who have signed the present document) have decided to create a **Collaboration Group of Brothers** and Lodges of this and other Provinces, if possible, that will articulate means of internal and external help, in order to contact and request the help of the Lodges and the Brothers that make up this Province:

1.- To generate a fundraising network among Brothers and Lodges of the respective areas of the Province of Andalusia, from donations from the Widow's Box contributed from Lodges and Chapters, with the aim of allocating them to **the acquisition of materials necessary for the manufacture of integral protection screens and respirators, and if necessary, the purchase of masks**, and their transfer and provision to hospitals and residences in the respective provinces (Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Málaga and Seville). It is essential at this time to begin with a great effort in the province of Malaga, whose hospitals are overflowing and without materials, due to the higher rate of the pandemic among its inhabitants. However, and unfortunately, given the statistical studies by experts, this situation may be repeated in other provinces, which is why this effort should also be distributed in the direction of the other provinces on a proportional basis. It is the Lodges of each province that should be in charge of managing the request.

2.- Use of human resources in the management of these efforts. Many of the Brethren, by their professions, trades, friendships and spheres of influence of all kinds, can contribute to the connection of the companies in charge of the manufacture, acquisition and transfer and provision of these materials. In the case of respirators, we are studying how to get the necessary materials to the companies that are in charge of their manufacture (readjustment, and mechanization), and to put them into operation. In the province of Granada there are several companies that are taking care of this, under the supervision of prestigious Industrial

Technical Engineers. It is the Guardia Civil, who will be in charge of the distribution of materials and supply to hospitals, almost certainly. In the case of the protective screens, the fire department of the province of Malaga is in charge of moving the materials to the manufacturers located in the same province. Similarly, it is more than possible that some of us may know a businessman with the technology and machinery required for the manufacture of these materials (respirators and face screens), or with the ability to acquire these masks. Regarding the screens and respirators, we can send the plans and instructions (of approved and homologated models) for the manufacture, which have been provided to us altruistically by several Industrial Engineers. Yesterday, a first batch of face screens was delivered directly to the Children's Hospital of Malaga. Included are the links that show the respirators on one side and the facial screens on the other side. In addition, a photograph of the first delivery of the latter.

3. - Organization of a group or various groups of Brothers, who, because of their professional training or their personal qualities, can lend a hand to the Brethren who need it, either because of their state of health or that of their family, or because of the legal and economic situation in which these Brothers may find themselves, as a consequence of the confinement imposed. We cannot lose sight of the fact that many people, and among them many Brothers are going to remain confined to their homes, without being able to generate economic resources, and, on many occasions, with precarious health, or with a situation of loneliness aggravated by the confinement, which necessarily will influence the strength of character required to deal with this situation. **Doctors, Lawyers, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Pharmacists, Labour Consultants, and Prosecutors, Teachers and Educators in general, Bank Employees, and any Brother with a big heart**, can be the essential and necessary support for another Brother and his family facing one of these sad situations. Legal advice, medical advice, spiritual advice, or a simple word of affection can become the vital springboard for a Brother in need. In Madrid, a project has been set up in this sense, and it can and must become the mirror in which we look at ourselves, to carry out this work of solidarity and fraternity. It can be easily articulated through Whatsapps and e-mail groups, without prejudice to opting for other telematic means in the necessary cases. Here too we can and must do it together.

4º. - Collaboration with the **Charity Boxes of the Lodges** and the Provincial Grand Lodge to articulate the material and economic help that some Brethren may require, and whose knowledge may reach us.

Changes and adaptation are necessary. And these changes must begin with our behaviour and our response to this situation. The Talmud reminds us that during the darkest and deepest night we must behave as if the morning had already arrived. Together, all Brother Masons can make love reign among men and joy in hearts, and we can bring **LIGHT** into the darkness.

You can contact any of the Brothers who sign this, either at their telephone numbers or by email, to ask any questions you may have in this regard. A copy of this letter will be sent to the Beneficiencia of the P.G.L.A. and to our P.G.M. in order to be able to articulate active and efficient means of collaboration with these group of Lodges and Masons that we put in motion, from our confinement. Any collaboration is welcome.

Health, Strength and Union.

The undersigned. Excel is joined with identification of Brothers. signatories and Lodges who support this measure.