



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

May 11, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Below are some thoughts from Brother Louie Sarmiento from the Philippines, which you may find of interest.

And in the spirit of having a little fun, please make sure that you click on the link below to watch and hear "The Odd Fellows Song" written and conceived by Brother Jerry Tackett of Kentucky!

Hope to see many of your at Grand Lodge sessions which begin this coming week in Modesto.

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Dave Rosenberg
Grand Warden

NEW "The Odd Fellows Song" online music video

Nearly five years ago, I have questioned why a great fraternity such as the Odd Fellows is unknown to many people. And that why are most of its fraternal services, products and activities seem unappealing and outdated to people of my generation or even those aging in their 50's? At that time, I barely can find articles (other than news articles of lodges closing or lodge hall on fire) about the Order. I barely can watch a video about the Odd Fellows online. So, I volunteered to start-up a youtube.com channel, wikipedia.com entry of IOOF and facebook.com page.

Majoring in Industrial/organizational psychology, it also seems that the organizational commitment of IOOF members are lower. Many IOOF lodges are showing "low morale" as compared to those other four leading fraternal organizations and civic clubs. IOOF in North America only have a total of about 80,000 members left while membership in these four other groups are still in the half million to one million membership mark. It also seems that younger people are more interested to join these four other groups than the Odd Fellows. Why? The



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answers are many but one answer is obvious: "Any organization that fails to provide something new is bound for extinction."

Admittedly, IOOF is at least 50 years behind (or more?) as compared to these four leading organizations in terms of its products and services. The other groups have excellent and updated websites, IOOF website is circa 1900's in terms of design. They provide a wide variety of fraternal arts, logos and emblems while IOOF in North America is stuck with its 19th Century designs. Worst, some lodges and members have taken secrecy out-of-context that they have made IOOF a secret to the public for many years. These four other fraternal groups sell car emblems, shirts, hoodies and other fraternal products that coincide with the 21st Century, IOOF still offer products offered over 20 years ago or more. They print attractive and colored quarterly magazines filled with interesting articles about their organization while the Sovereign Grand Lodge in North America is still stuck with its old newspaper. While these are just materials, psychology suggests that these can increase or decrease the organizational commitment (even loyalty) of members (our customers in this fraternity). Moreover, it seems that IOOF in Europe even surpassed the quality of services offered by the Sovereign Grand Lodge. The organizational commitment of the members in Europe seems higher than those in North America.

While our rituals tell us IOOF is progressive, it seems that IOOF today is backwards. No offense but this is something we all should REFLECT ON. It seems that many of our leaders are more focused on creating "restrictions" on what new things can be done rather than delivering new results to its members. Our traditions are important but most of us accept that we have to also adapt to times. We talk about change but we have failed to deliver changes.

There were times when I was frustrated of this fact and just thought that IOOF is just a waste of time. I have spent hours and years promoting an Order that needs help but do not want to be helped. For years, I found out that there are nearly thousand of members like me who are also frustrated of the quality of services of IOOF. Quite a number of them are already leaving the Order or have left the Order. Yes, it is easy to quit and just join other groups with better services and leadership. This is something IOOF have to start thinking - we are not the only fraternal organization in this world, we are also competing with many other groups. If we do not provide excellent services, of course, we will be left behind.



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To members who are in the point of quitting or have lost their interest in Odd Fellowship, may this new music video hopefully light-up a new spark in your heart and will make you become proud Odd Fellow again. To watch music video, click this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sseKZ2pwHR0&feature=youtu.be>

The Odd Fellows Song Lyrics

Written by Brother Jerry Tackett of Kentucky

In a world of pain, what can I do?

The needs are many, and answers are few.

People turn away, and I wonder why.

If I can help somebody, then I want to try.

People may think that it's odd that I believe in friendship and love.

And truth is always the best way. To the world that may seem odd.

I'm an Odd Fellow!

I'm an Odd Fellow, woah woah

I'm an Odd Fellow!

If we stand together, we'll never fall.

We can make a difference, and answer the call.



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You know that time's a wasting, every day.

And we can help somebody along the way.

People may think that it's odd that I believe in friendship and love.

And truth is always the best way. To the world that may seem odd.

I'm an Odd Fellow!

You're an Odd Fellow, woah woah

We're all Odd Fellows!

In Friendship, Love and Truth,

Brother Louie

Warden