



**M.E. Companion Joseph J Morrow, CBE, QC, LLD**  
**M.E. First Grand Principal**

I am pleased to be able to greet you in this message. You all have been very much in my mind. The benefits of IT magic have been invaluable during this time of pandemic.

I have spent some time in lockdown remembering with fondness the many trips to your Provinces, Districts and Chapters, Lodges and Councils and Cryptic Councils that I have made since my Installation - it was a privilege to be with you all.

Here in Scotland we have now passed a hundred days in lockdown – and we are adopting a cautious approach to the easing of lockdown. The very nature of many Scots is to be cautious and prudent!

The opening of our Chapter Meetings must also be cautious and must comply fully with the laws and regulations in force in our own areas. As Royal Arch Masons we need to be seen to comply fully with the requirements of the law. As Royal Arch Masons we need to balance the return to normality and the risk of the virus which has not gone away.

The pressure on Leaders at every level in this context is immense – at a national level the burden is very high but even within our Order leadership is under pressure to emerge from the lockdown. As Royal Arch Freemasons we need to help and not add to this pressure and create an environment for understanding.

As Companions there are only three things that are needed: –***Kindness Kindness Kindness***

We continue to share the wonderful gift of Companionship online, by the telephone and in the acts of kindness we carry out. Last week for example I received at my front door a delivery in person an afternoon tea prepared and ready to eat – addressed to an older Mason from the Freemasons of Tayside which is my local area. I don't know how pleased I was to be referred to as part of the older Masonic community but I can tell you that the strawberry tarts were most excellent indeed!

Keep working at our Royal Arch links as they help us and they help others through the practice of Companionship and Kindness. They will enable us to display the key elements of ***respect, relevance and renewal*** that is key to the health of our Order.

As we come out of the pandemic lockdown – we need to focus on *our* renewal. This needs to be done as a Royal Arch Community and not left for either the Leaders or others to promote alone. Do not automatically go back to doing things the same way as we did before the pandemic – we have an opportunity to embrace the rebuilding of the Second Temple which is so central to our history and is essential for our work in the future.

As our founding Companions were dedicated to the rebuilding of the second Temple in Jerusalem and the renewal of the commitment to God and to others, let us now embrace the building of the Order of Royal Arch Freemason in our own age.

Thank you all for your commitment and your drive for Companionship marked by Kindness.

Well done!

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

***Joe Morrow***