

Royal Alfred Lodge 777 Guildford Masonic Centre Weybourne House, Hitherbury
Close Guildford GU2 4DR

k.a. of the Worshipful Master

Dearest Melvin,

I have been really delighted and honoured by the Lodge welcome, that I have felt has gone beyond any due formal procedure. I am actually waiting for the Grand Orient of Italy communication showing my Masonic records and including the severing declaration, as required by the UGLE constitution. Upon receipt, I'll formally ask for the Lodge membership.

I have received from Italy a nice volume, issued by Opus Minimum, that is a Masonic magazine where I often write some *tables* of Masonic argument. This special issue has been dedicated by the chief editor, Br\ Paolo Marino, to the Prince of Sansevero, Raimondo di Sangro, which is considered the first Grand Master of the Italian Freemasonry, and is broadly well known worldwide. He lived in Naples in the seventeenth century, so just at the Freemasonry sunrise in Europe. Naples has been an incredible esoteric centre, largely anticipating in Europe the Masonic thought. He dealt with alchemy, philosophy, engineering, astronomy, biology, mathematics, following the same steps routed before him by persons like Newton and Hook in England (you surely know the connection they made between Masonic thought and science, also through the Royal Society). In the ancient historical centre in Naples, his palace is currently a museum showing incredible art and science works, many of which not yet understood and explained. Due to the anticipating approach he had, he was persecuted by the Church and sometimes misregarded by the people in the next years. Only his noble status and his connection with Naples King Charles III allowed him to survive to prejudice and ignorance. We are discussing of the time when Stendhal said: two real capital towns in Europe, i.e. Paris and Naples, and Naples produced famous philosophers and scientists like Gianbattista Vico, Gaetano Filangieri and so on.

I have thought that I would like to make homage of this book to the RAL 777. Please accept it a symbolic attestation of my gratitude and high regard to you all. It has been written in Italian, but I think that the nice pictures, the reported documents, someone never issued, and the precious content will overcome the language barrier, as a further proof of the Masonic power to remove the unessential differences between the men throughout the world.

I would be glad, in any case, that this small book became a small part of RAL 777 belonging.

Renato Benintendi
redattore di Opus minimum