

Love, Commitment and Responsibility

By Archon Franklin Ojeda Smith, Delta Epsilon Boulé

Archousai, we Archons want to talk to you about love, commitment and collective responsibility. We never know the day, the hour or the minute. We don't want regrets, so we open our hearts this evening to say some of what we never say enough. We've been loving you for five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, forty, forty-five, fifty years, and we gonna keep on loving you!

What is this love we've got? The rustic eye offers that love is just love. The rational mind signifies love as the magnetic flow of energized attraction or impulses between and among entities. Love, rustic or rational or other, endures only by dedicated nourishment and effort. Love needs reciprocity, yes. Love grooves on impulsivity. But love blossoms most brilliantly in the cocoon of ever-evolving *romance, romance and more romance*. Our hearts tell us that love is an anointed gift sanctioned by God. Our love, this energy, this impulsivity, this "thing" between us is like a consecrated Messenger Sparrow flowing wingless and flightless between God and us. Our hearts are in the *Sparrow that connects us to you and to God*.

It's this Sparrow that wakes us up early in the morning to watch you sleep and makes us fret and shudder at the thought of you not being there. This Sparrow that tells us to call and say hi in the middle of the day, tells us to get home early and not to forget the "goodies." Oh, we've been loving you so long!

In the beginning, we didn't know love the way we know it now. We thought we did, but we knew lust more

than love. But over the fifty-odd years, our love has grown exponentially. You are our blessing sent by God.

We are proud of what we've built, and we know all too well that what we've created under the anointment of God has come so much from your sacrifice, from your giving, your doing. So often, we Archons were short on our promises. We don't want you to be disappointed, and we know you would never admit such thoughts, and we thank you for your grace. There have been so many times when the outside world has intruded on our families and we were not there, but you were, being all things to everybody, holding everything together, enabling the dreams of others to the sacrifice and diminishment of your own.

So often we've been blinded by toys, materialism and achievement, but over time, we've come to know that those are but illusions. The toys rust, the plaques become dusty relics. The house is empty without your smile, your laughter, your footsteps; without your "good morning," your "how you feeling," your "you look tired." Dearest Archousai, there is nothing more satisfying than seeing you in the actions and values of our children and our children's children. We are so grateful to you for carrying our crosses with such dignity, grace and elegance. Straight up, after all these years of *loving you*, we wouldn't know life without you. No, we never know the day, nor the hour, so we here declare to you our love and our hearts, and we bow to your everlasting power.

As we look back across the years, we thought our civic work was forever done. Hallelujah, we say, our promised reprieve has finally come. Time to play, have fun, close our doors and travel to distant shores on long-planned tours.

**But oh, in these times of sorrow and distress
Who among us is allowed to rest?**

**In these hours of dismay, the Sparrow calls on the Boulé
to advise, to have a full say.**

For as we look across our land, disenfranchisement is at hand.

**Fruits of Jim Crow are being newly hung
from New York to Sanford to Oakland to Ferguson,
and that's just some.**

**Our children and children's children must have that talk,
Daughter and son.**

They are targets on display, the objects of minds in disarray.

Oh, it's not easy being Boulé – charged with leadership responsibility each and every day.

Our Fraternal Elders did not rest when put to their test.

They used hope and prayer in conquering despair.

**Dare we do less? On our watch, will we portend
Achievement protects us from this fray?**

Oh no, we say,

**We join our children
in the challenges of today.**

So, hands up, Archousai.

Hear the Sparrow's cry.

Hands up, Sigma Pi Phi.

Hands Up . . .

