



GRAND LODGE A.F. & A.M. OF SOUTH DAKOTA

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Dear Lady of a newly made Master Mason:

During this past year and undoubtedly very recently, your husband has received the Three Degrees of Freemasonry. He is now a member of the world's oldest, largest and most recognized fraternal organization known today. As Grand Master of Masons of South Dakota, it is my honor and pleasure to welcome him to our fraternity and you to our Masonic family.

To enable you to become more familiar with Masonry I have enclosed a small information brochure or course entitled "**The Mason's Lady**" which contains some interesting facts and information regarding the Masonic Fraternity. Please take the time to read this information and answer the questions therein. After you have done this please return this information to the Grand Lodge office.

Send to: **Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of South Dakota**
520 S. First Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-6902

Upon their receipt, they in turn will send you a certificate of completion and a "Slipper" Pin that you can wear proudly to identify you as a Master Mason's Lady.

Thank you for supporting your husband, and I welcome you to our Masonic family. If you have any questions feel free to call the office or myself at any time.

Sincerely,

Yancey P. Smith

Yancey P. Smith, Grand Master
South Dakota Grand Lodge of Masons A.F. & A.M.

“The Mason’s Lady”

INTRODUCTION:

We welcome you as a member of our Masonic Family. The wife, mother, widow, sister or daughter of a Mason is considered to be a Mason’s Lady and our most valued asset. You are the mainstay of the Mason’s family and we respect your beliefs. We also believe that you and the role you perform are directly linked to the success and continued strength of our order. This program is designed for you to become more informed of what Masonry is about and to explain some of its aspects. Every Mason feels good about his Masonic Fraternity and is proud to be a Mason. We hope that you, also, share in that pride.

Masonry is worldwide in scope and widely recognized as the world’s greatest fraternity, one that is dedicated to the welfare of humanity. The longevity of Freemasonry is attributed to its foundation of religious principles and its teachings based on the Holy Scriptures. Through its teachings of friendship, morality, brotherly love, and high ideals, Freemasonry has emerged as a great contributor to the progress of civilization. However, closer to home, Freemasonry, by its influence for good, has made a significant contribution to the communities in which lodges are located.

One might ask, “Why is this not common knowledge to the general public?” Master Masons, traditionally doing good deeds without publicity to the world, hold such acts as a virtue, giving strength to the fraternity. This silence, or “We don’t advertise” philosophy, caused individual Masonic acts of goodwill and assistance to be unnoticed within the communities as being Masonic by those not directly involved with the fraternity. Even the recipients had no idea that the Masons contributed so much to their assistance. On the larger scale, Masonic charity and benevolent acts in the communities and across the state and nation were also unheralded as Masonic initiatives, and as such were unrecorded as Masonic borne. Hence, our Masonic work and contributions to society are largely unknown by the general public.

Historically, however, our fraternity has prospered well. Still, in retrospect, we see the need to become more open, especially to you and our friends within the community. For years, the leaders of our fraternity have emphasized to us that “anything written” can be shared with the family, and we are now encouraged to be more open.

TEACHINGS:

“How do we know that Freemasonry influenced what men think and do?” “How can Freemasonry lay claim that the fraternity, more than any other single institution, is to be credited with influencing the great beginnings of this country?” The answer can be found looking at the basic teachings of the Masonic Order.

The Holy Bible is the guiding light of Masonry, and is always open on the Altar during Lodge Meetings.

Masonry is religious (but not a religion) with an opening and closing prayer during Lodge Meetings.

Masonry is not a substitute for religion and as such cannot replace the church for any person.

One must be a believer in God because the Masonic Lodge is erected to God. Therefore, no atheist can become a Mason.

Separation of church and state is paramount to sustaining harmony and peace among and between religious groups.

Respect for Womanhood is taught in every degree.

Patriotism to one's nation is essential, with our Pledge of Allegiance given before each meeting.

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press are essential to sustaining a democracy where men can express their views and beliefs.

Freedom of religious beliefs is an individual right because different religious groups vary in their form of worship to God according to their own conscience.

Every man should be free in every way to come and go, work where and when he pleases, and to think for himself.

The people should be literate and allowed to participate in self-rule; therefore, Masonry has always stood for free public schools.

Every Mason should be a good citizen and obey the law of his country, and only by peaceful means change those which he finds to be unworthy.

Masonry has only three secrets. The only information that may not be passed on to non-Masons concerns:

- I. The modes of recognition.
- II. The parts of our lectures and work which are not written.
- III. Lodge room business that is done in the lodge on conferring degrees and stated communications.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS ONE'S FAMILY OR WORK TO BE NEGLECTED FOR THE SAKE OF ATTENDING LODGE.

Attendance at lodge meetings is encouraged, however, never required to maintain membership. Masonic teachings never change. Like the Constitution of the United States, its basic rules and landmarks remain unaltered. An example is found in the Entered Apprentice

lecture, where for centuries Masonry has taught the eight-hour workday, yet it has only become a reality in this century.

To insure comprehension of the teachings and lessons of the Blue Lodge degrees, each Mason must master the principles of his degree by learning the categorical lecture and/or passing an exam for each degree. Only then can he receive the next degree. In that sense, we ask that you, the wife, be tolerant during the first few months, knowing that Masonry is as much for your benefit as it is for a husband and father. In fact, it is not unusual that while learning the categorical lectures, ne Masons relate that their wives have noticed a pleasant change in them and that the teachings have made a difference at work in how they interact with others. In actuality, Masonry is practical and lived mostly outside the Lodge Room. You may ask, "How are the teachings so strongly learned?" Freemasonry uses the tools and instruments of operative masons as symbols and emblems for teaching its high principles of conduct by which we are to live our lives. For most, the teachings strongly impact our thinking and influence our way of live.

Freemasonry is the oldest fraternal organization in the world. One can readily understand from its teachings, which can be traced to the earliest Masonic documents, that the lessons of Masonry were liberally applied to the basics established within our Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights.

We take pride in the part played by the Masons in our nation's history and development. Many of her greatest leaders are numbered among the fraternity. Masons have emerged as dominant figures in every profession and walk of life in this nation and around the world.

Membership Qualifications

Membership is limited to adult males who can meet the recognized qualifications and standards of character and reputation. A man must seek to become a member of his own free will and accord. For this reason, South Dakota Masonry requires a petitioner to be at least 18 years of age, so that he has had some time to grow both physically and mentally and is able to understand the "Masonic Obligation." In our jurisdiction, each Lodge is the sole determiner of the petitioner's qualifications. Only in this way can internal qualifications be assessed, for it is the internal qualifications that Masonry deems to be the most important.

A petitioner for the degree must, most importantly, be free born, not born in vassalage or one who has lost his citizenship. Rather he is his own master in the true sense of the word, so that he is free to discharge his Masonic duties without interference. He is also one who has a good reputation among those who know him, in his neighborhood, in his work, and among his friends. He is further on who believes in God, referred to in Masonry as "The Supreme Architect of the Universe."

Freemasonry does not interfere with duties that a man owes to his family, his neighbor, his God, his country, or himself; however, practicing the fundamental precepts of Masonry will, we

believe, make a good man a better man, father, brother or son. Masonry teaches self-betterment and improvement in all facets of life.

Organizations

Masonry is structured with the lodge as its meeting place. The lodge is the foundation of Masonry. Each lodge is a self-sufficient unit with elected and appointed officers. The Grand Lodge of South Dakota presides over the lodges throughout South Dakota. In addition to these two basic organizations in South Dakota we have what are referred to as other Masonic bodies (Masons only), affiliated bodies (Masons and Masonic related adults such as wives, widows, daughters), and appendant bodies (our youth groups). The “family of Masonic organizations” in South Dakota includes:

Masonic Bodies: Blue Lodge, Grand Lodge, Scottish Rite, York Rite and Shrine.

Affiliated Bodies: The Order of Eastern Star, Daughters of the Nile.

Appendant Bodies: DeMolays, Job’s Daughters.

Information about these orders is available to any Mason and his family and a Masonic affiliation is needed only for membership in Job’s Daughters. Generally, a brother can join any of the Masonic bodies after the date of his becoming a Master Mason. Wives may join the affiliated bodies or become involved with the appendant bodies as soon as their husband becomes a Master Mason, or you may already be eligible because of your father or other relative being a Mason.

Your children are eligible to join youth groups, which are highly recommended. The influence of our youth groups on its members is exceptional. They provide the environment and opportunity for young people to develop self-confidence while teaching them to become both good followers and good leaders. Strong values such as love and respect for parents and God, and fidelity to one’s ideals and friends are among many of the virtues taught. Many of our lodge brothers present can discuss these groups with you.

Way of Life

We all know the way in which we live our lives is determined by many things, but certainly important are our families, our God, our country, our neighbors, and our friends. Within this frame of reference or setting, we are influenced by our personal desires and what we want to achieve out of life. We are also strongly influenced by our past experiences, our work associates, and our attitude toward ourselves. As Masons, we pledge ourselves to stand strong in support of our family, our God, our Country, our neighbors, and our community. We are confident that we will earn your respect, your support, and appreciation.

We are confident that we will gain your respect for Masonry as you grow in knowledge about Masonic organizations.

We will strive for your support for the Masonic institution as we provide honorable role models for the people in our community.

We be we will obtain you appreciation by the positive influences Masonry instills in its members and by the many benevolent programs provided for our nations' people (over 2 million plus distributed daily throughout North America).

We have trust in you to support you Masonic husband, father, brother, and other men of good will to the best of your ability.

We Masons believe that our success in the community, the state, and our nation is achieved by being informed and caring, and by well thought out and executed deeds. Real progress is achieved only through such positive efforts.

The energy level in Masonry is high. The Masonic way of life has been a solid asset to the Mason. To improve upon its worth and value within the family, Masonry is becoming more open and seeking to educate the wife and family about Freemasonry. We also want you to become aware of the Masonic family of fraternal and social organizations in our fraternity. You will find them based upon the highest moral and ethical standards, and are a tribute to us all.



TWENTY-FOUR QUESTION QUIZ – BASED ON THE TEXT
“THE MASON’S LADY”

1. MASONRY IS:

- _____ (a) Unique to the United States
- _____ (b) Based on patriotic principles
- _____ (c) Widely recognized as the World’s Greatest Fraternity
- _____ (d) Dedicated to the welfare of Masons

2. MASONRY TEACHES:

- _____ (a) Brotherly Love
- _____ (b) Friendship
- _____ (c) Morality
- _____ (d) All of the above

3. MASONIC BENEVOLENCE IS:

- _____ (a) Well-Known by the public
- _____ (b) Well Publicized by the Craft
- _____ (c) Restricted by Masonic Law to individual Lodge Jurisdictions
- _____ (d) Traditionally done without publicity

4. MASONS CAN TELL THEIR FAMILIES:

- _____ (a) Nothing about Freemasonry
- _____ (b) Everything about Freemasonry
- _____ (c) Anything written
- _____ (d) Anything but the Ancient Landmarks

5. IN MASONRY, THE HOLY BIBLE IS:

- _____ (a) Read at every meeting
- _____ (b) Always open on the Master’s Pedestal
- _____ (c) The Guiding Light
- _____ (d) All of the above

6. Which Statement IS INCORRECT?

- _____ (a) Masonry is Religious
- _____ (b) Masonry is a Religion
- _____ (c) Masonry is not a Religion
- _____ (d) Lodge meetings include Prayer

7. MASONRY:

- _____ (a) Is a good substitute for the church
- _____ (b) Is a good substitute for Religion
- _____ (c) Accepts only believers in God
- _____ (d) Accepts all good men, even Atheists

8. FREEMASONRY SUPPORTS:

- _____ (a) Christianity
- _____ (b) Devil Worship
- _____ (c) The Masonic Religion
- _____ (d) Separation of Church and State

9. FREEMASONRY ALSO SUPPORTS:

- _____ (a) Respect for womanhood
- _____ (b) Patriotism
- _____ (c) Freedom of Speech
- _____ (d) All of the above

10. MASONRY HAS ALWAYS:

- _____ (a) Stood for Free Public Schools
- _____ (b) Stood for a Private School System
- _____ (c) Stood for Church Sponsored Schools
- _____ (d) None of the above

11. MASONRY HAS:

- _____ (a) No Secrets
- _____ (b) Only three secrets
- _____ (c) Always been a secret organization
- _____ (d) Its secrets encoded in a cipher

12. INFORMATION NOT FREELY GIVEN TO OUTSIDERS INCLUDE:

- _____ (a) Modes of recognition
- _____ (b) Unwritten parts of lectures
- _____ (c) Lodge room business
- _____ (d) All of the above

13. LODGE ATTENDANCE BY A MASON:

- _____ (a) Is required to avoid suspension
- _____ (b) Comes before his job
- _____ (c) Comes before his family
- _____ (d) Is encouraged

14. WHICH STATEMENT IS NOT CORRECT ABOUT MASONRY:

- _____ (a) The basic rules and landmarks are unchangeable
- _____ (b) Tools and emblems of operative masons are used as symbols and emblems for teaching
- _____ (c) It is the oldest fraternal organization in the world
- _____ (d) Its principles are based on the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and Bill of Rights

15. A PETITIONER FOR MASONRY MUST BE:

- _____ (a) At least 18 years old
- _____ (b) At least 21 years old
- _____ (c) A U.S. Citizen
- _____ (d) Married

16. A PETITIONER FOR FREE MASONRY MUST HAVE:

- _____ (a) Been "Free Born"
- _____ (b) A belief in God
- _____ (c) A good reputation
- _____ (d) All of the above

17. MASONS REFER TO GOD AS:

- _____ (a) Worshipful Master
- _____ (b) Grand Master of the Universe
- _____ (c) Supreme Architect of the Universe
- _____ (d) Jehovah

18. THE LODGE IS:

- _____ (a) A self-sufficient unit
- _____ (b) Presided over by a Grand Lodge
- _____ (c) The Foundation Unit of Masonry
- _____ (d) All of the above

19. THE LODGE ALSO:

- _____ (a) Has elected and appointed officers
- _____ (b) Has elected officers only
- _____ (c) Has appointed officers only
- _____ (d) All of the above

20. MARK THE FOLLOWING WITH "M" IF IT IS A MASONIC BODY, "AF" IF IT IS AN AFFILIATED BODY, "AP" IF IT IS AN APPENDANT BODY, AND "N" IF IT IS NOT PART OF THE FAMILY OF MASONIC ORGANIZATIONS:

- _____ York Rite
- _____ Knights of Columbus
- _____ Mason Jar Co.
- _____ Blue Lodge
- _____ Eastern Star
- _____ Scottish Rite
- _____ IOOF
- _____ International Brotherhood of Masons (AFOFL-CIO)
- _____ Job's Daughters
- _____ Daughters of the Nile
- _____ Grand Lodge
- _____ Shrine
- _____ DeMolay
- _____ Mason Shoe Co.

21. THE APPENDANT YOUTH GROUPS:

- _____ (a) Are highly recommended
- _____ (b) Teach important values and virtues
- _____ (c) Develop self-confidence and leadership skills
- _____ (d) All of the above

22. MASONS ARE PLEDGED TO SUPPORT:

- _____ (a) Neighbors and community
- _____ (b) God and country
- _____ (c) Our families
- _____ (d) All of the above

23. IN THE COMMUNITY MASONRY CAN PROVIDE:

- _____ (a) A place to worship
- _____ (b) A political forum
- _____ (c) Honorable role models
- _____ (d) All of the above

24. THE MASONIC WAY OF LIFE INCLUDES:

- _____ (a) Being informed
- _____ (b) Caring
- _____ (c) Charity and Benevolence
- _____ (d) All of the above