

# Foreword

So your son is considering joining DeMolay..

... and you're wondering whether it is the right thing for him to do.

Any parent who is concerned for the overall growth and development, and the general well-being of their son, and who may not already be acquainted with what DeMolay is all about naturally has plenty of questions.

Since its founding, well over a million young men have become members of DeMolay. Many have gone on to become household names in their chosen profession. However, as each of these young men began his association with DeMolay, there in the background was a concerned parent or guardian asking questions.

This booklet was prepared to give you answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about the Order of DeMolay. A few minutes to review the information provided here will give you an overview of the history, values, operation, sponsorship and activities of a DeMolay chapter. The questions answered here are generally arranged in categories. However, the answer to a question in one category might contain information that would generally fall into a different category. In those cases, to save you reading time, the information will only be presented once.

There may be questions you have other than those answered here. They may be questions of a general nature, or questions specifically related to the chapter your son is considering joining. Whatever your questions, ask them. If a member of the local chapter or its Advisory Council can't answer the question right away, they will help find the answer for you.

We appreciate your willingness to learn more about how this character-building and leadership development organization has aided the growth of thousands of boys into positive, productive men and quality citizens in their communities.

Read on.

## General Information

### What is DeMolay?

The Order of DeMolay is a character-building and leadership development organization for young men between the ages of 13 and 21. The ultimate aim of the organization is to build better sons which will, in turn, mean better men to be better citizens, husbands, fathers, friends and leaders in the future.

### How did DeMolay get started?

In 1919, while employed as the social services director for the Scottish Rite bodies in Kansas City, Missouri, Frank Sherman Land hired a teenager by the name of Louis Gordon Lower to perform odd jobs around the building. As the two became friends, Land found out that Lower's father had died a short time before and that the young man missed having the guidance that a father would provide. Lower also told Land that he had other friends whose fathers were not in the home, whether from divorce, abandonment, or death, and that these young men would also like to have an adult male they could go to for guidance. Land suggested Lower invite some of his friends to the Scottish Rite Temple to discuss starting a club. Within a few days Lower brought eight of his friends to a meeting. The nine young men agreed that the idea of a club was a good one. Soon the Order of DeMolay was born. Within three years chapters had been established in 39 of the then 48 states and the District of Columbia.

### Where did the name DeMolay come from?



The name comes from Jacques DeMolay, the last Grand Master of the Knights Templar organization. The original nine members of DeMolay selected the name the Order of DeMolay in honor of Jacques DeMolay and what he stood for.

### What is the story of Jacques DeMolay?

Jacques DeMolay was born in France in 1244. At the age of 21, he became a member of the Knights Templars, a group originally called "Poor Soldiers In Christ". Sanctioned by the Pope and the Church Council in 1128, their purpose was to guard the road between Jerusalem and Acre, the Jerusalem port on the Mediterranean. Because of the church sanction, and the fact that the Templars had fought valiantly in several crusades, they were a popular group among the people. The name Knights Templars became synonymous with heroism to such an extent that nobles and princes sent their sons to join the Knights Templars. In 1298 Jacques DeMolay was elected Grand Master of the Templars. Over the years, the Templars organization amassed great wealth and King Philip of France became concerned that they would use their power and wealth against him. False charges were pressed against DeMolay and the Templars by the King in order to brand them criminals. On orders of the King, DeMolay and hundreds of members of the Knights Templar were arrested and thrown into prison. During his seven-year imprisonment, DeMolay was tortured repeatedly in attempts to get him to betray other leaders and members of his beloved Templars. He consistently refused to betray his fellow Templars and was finally sentenced by the King to be burned at the stake on March 18, 1314, along with his most trusted aide, Guy of Auvergne. DeMolay died a martyr to loyalty.

### What are the requirements to join?

The requirements for membership are few, but each is important. To join DeMolay, a young man must:

- be between the ages of 13 and 21.
- be of good character and reputation.
- believe in God.
- petition a DeMolay chapter.

### What is the initiation like?

The DeMolay initiation consists of two "degrees," the Initiatory Degree and the DeMolay Degree. The Initiatory Degree is a solemn ceremony during which the initiate dedicates himself to uphold the virtues of love of parents, reverence, courtesy, comradeship, loyalty, cleanness and patriotism. The DeMolay Degree is a dramatic portrayal by the members of the Chapter of the trials, torture and martyrdom of Jacques DeMolay. The ceremony is intended to teach the lessons of loyalty and comradeship. To the initiate the DeMolay Degree is much like watching a play that is set in the Middle Ages. The DeMolay initiation involves no hazing or horseplay. The ceremonies are intended to be serious moments during which the initiate is acquainted with the founding principles of the Order of DeMolay.

#### The Vows of a DeMolay

##### AT MY CHAPTER'S ALTAR

Humbly and sincerely...

I promised to be a better son  
I promised to love and serve God, my country and my fellow-men  
I promised to honor and protect every woman  
I promised to slander no one  
I promised to aid and uphold the public schools  
I promised to walk uprightly before God and man

*All of these things and more I did promise!*

### What is the ritual of DeMolay?

The ritual of the Order of DeMolay is truly what sets it apart from other youth groups. The ritual is a series of ceremonies, each of which has a symbolic meaning intended to inspire the young men who belong to the organization to be better citizens, better friends and better men. Included in these ceremonies are standard ways of opening and closing meetings, inducting new members and installing officers in their offices. The DeMolay ritual was written by Frank Marshall, a reporter for the Kansas City Star newspaper in the early 1920's and a friend of DeMolay founder Frank S. Land.

### **How does the life membership process work?**

For each member initiated, a fee is paid to DeMolay International. This fee places the new member among the "life members" of the organization. No annual "dues" are collected from the member. Members are asked, however, to support their chapter's fund raising projects, since a portion of the money raised by the Chapter must be paid to DeMolay International to cover the cost of insurance, and another portion must be paid to the state DeMolay association, to cover a portion of the costs of services provided by the state organization.

### **A Comment On DeMolay**

"I feel a great sense of obligation and gratitude toward DeMolay for the important part it played in shaping my life. Its precepts have been invaluable in making decisions, in facing dilemmas and crises, in holding on to faiths and ideals, and in meeting those tests which are best borne when shared with others in a bond of confidence."

*Walt Disney  
Senior DeMolay  
Mother Chapter  
Kansas City, Missouri*

### **What types of activities does a DeMolay chapter have?**

Within certain parameters, the activities of a DeMolay Chapter are limited only by the imaginations of its members. Members of DeMolay chapters plan and hold social functions, fund raising and civic service projects, and athletic activities, among other things. Insurance restrictions prohibit chapters from engaging in certain activities. However, overall, Chapters have a wide range of activities from which they can choose as they plan their activities and projects calendar.

### **Why haven't I heard of DeMolay?**

Often DeMolay chapters become so involved in planning, organizing and enjoying their activities, they overlook promoting their Chapter within the community as they should. Even if you haven't heard of the organization, no doubt you have heard of some of its members. They include Walt Disney, creator of Mickey Mouse and Disneyland, actor John Wayne, comedians Tommy and Dick Smothers, professional football star quarterback Fran Tarkenton, news commentator Dan Rather and television weatherman Willard Scott, to name only a few. Many well-known personalities, as well as leaders of business, industry and government credit their success in part to their DeMolay experience.

### **Is DeMolay a Christian organization?**

No. Among the requirements for membership in DeMolay is the belief in a Supreme Being, but not that the Supreme Being be that of one particular doctrine, sect or denomination. A young man's religious convictions are his own. DeMolay's ranks include Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and members of other religious groups.



### **Why does DeMolay allow members of all religions to join?**

The value in having membership across the religious spectrum is in the opportunity it provides for members of one religion or denomination to understand the perspective of others. This philosophy has allowed tens of thousands of additional young men the opportunity to have the DeMolay experience—to develop themselves physically, spiritually and mentally, to develop their leadership potential, their sense of self and to determine their view of and approach to life. DeMolay is not intended to take the place of the Church in shaping a young man's spiritual life. Instead, it attempts to build on the foundation and value structure provided by the young man's own religious background to help him make decisions on the direction of his life.

### **Why does DeMolay use a Bible as a part of its Chapter-room furnishings?**

The Bible is used as a symbol of the spiritual foundation that all DeMolay members are required to have before they can join. It is not intended to represent an endorsement of the Christian religion over any others. A DeMolay's belief in a particular religious doctrine is something that is between him and God. It is something that must be arrived at through consultation with his family, his pastor or others whose opinion he values, followed by his own deep thought and prayer. Generally the holy book of the predominant religion of that nation or area is the spiritual guide book that is used in the local DeMolay chapter room. However, should a chapter's membership include members from more than one religion, more than one holy book may be used in DeMolay ceremonies.

### **Where does DeMolay have Chapters?**

Approximately 700 DeMolay Chapters operate in countries including the United States, Canada, Brazil, Australia, Germany, Japan, Italy, and the Republic of the Philippines.

### **Is there a way for the members' parents to be involved?**

Many DeMolay chapters have a Parents' Club. Working under the general supervision of the chapter's Advisory Council, this group of parents and friends of the Chapter work to support and encourage the activities and projects of the Chapter. Parents' Clubs often assist their chapter by helping maintain degree costumes, providing transportation to and from chapter and state DeMolay activities and supplying refreshments for the members to have after their meetings, among other things. They hold fund raising activities of their own to help with the finances needed to carry out their projects.

### **DeMolay Parents' Club Creed**

I believe in the glorious heritage of youth  
Its aspiration and splendid promise.  
I believe in the courage, honor and innate decency  
of our young people.  
I believe in our sons --  
I believe in the principles of the Order of DeMolay  
as exemplified in its work of guiding our boys to  
better, nobler, knightlier manhood.  
And I pledge my loyal support to the organization  
so far as I am able.

*Written by Mrs. Jennie Schirmer  
Duluth, Minnesota*

## Chapter Sponsorship and Supervision

### Who sponsors DeMolay chapters?

Each DeMolay chapter is sponsored by a group of Freemasons, a Masonic Lodge, or some appendant Masonic group such as the Scottish Rite, the York Rite or the Shrine. The responsibilities of the sponsoring body are: to provide the chapter a place to meet; to provide adult leadership and guidance through maintaining an active Advisory Council; to assist the chapter whenever and however needed.

### Who are the Masons?

According to legend, the earliest Masons were craftsmen such as stonecutters and metal workers in ancient Egypt and in medieval Europe. They formed guilds and pledged to protect and assist the families and the property of members of lands plying their trade. While it cannot be proven that this was the origin of the fraternal organization known as the Free and Accepted Masons, this is the belief that some have. Still others believe that today's fraternal order is descended from the Knights Templar, a group of Christian soldiers who guarded the highways pilgrims traveled into and out of the Holy Land in the Middle Ages. In either case, the modern Masonic Order has roots that go back hundreds of years. Today's Masons are men who have banded together for mutual improvement in an organization whose basic tenets provide a framework in which to improve themselves morally and spiritually, while giving back to the community through the conduct of various community service and charitable undertakings. Traditionally, the caliber of men who seek membership in the Masonic Order are among the most charitable and civic-minded individuals in any organization.



### Are the Masons a secret organization?

No. After all, in town after town Masonic meeting halls are prominently marked. In many locations the meeting time and day of the local lodge is published in the newspaper. Hardly a way for a "secret" organization to operate. In addition to these things, many of the ceremonies and instructional talks used by the Masonic groups are published in books that can be purchased. Primarily, three things have contributed to the impression that the Masons are a secret organization. The first is that the meetings of the local lodges are restricted to members only. The next is the fact that Masons have certain modes of recognition that are kept confidential. Not revealing the modes of recognition to the world at-large provides Masons who do not know each other personally a way to determine that the other is indeed a member of the fraternity. This identification process also helps lodges ensure that unknown men who approach the door of a Masonic Lodge to visit are truly Masons and are not simply trying to get into the meeting out of idle curiosity. The third reason that leads some to believe the Masonic order is a secret organization is the fact that, unlike most other organizations, men are not asked to join Masonry. They must express an interest in membership before conversation regarding their joining can begin.

### **How did DeMolay and Masonic Lodges come to be associated?**

The founder of the Order of DeMolay, Frank S. Land, was himself a Mason. As the DeMolay organization began to grow and new chapters were being formed in the 1920's, Land realized that each DeMolay chapter would require a group of quality men to provide guidance and supervision for the young men. He felt that requiring DeMolay chapters to be sponsored by a Masonic lodge or a group of Masons would ensure that there would always be community service-oriented men to serve on the advisory council of a Chapter.

### **Is DeMolay a junior Masonic organization?**

No. DeMolay's relationship to the Masonic order is through the sponsorship that Masonic groups provide DeMolay chapters and through the members of a chapter's Advisory Council who are Masons.

#### **A DeMolay's Ethics**

- A DeMolay serves God.
- A DeMolay honors all womanhood.
- A DeMolay loves and honors his parents.
- A DeMolay is honest.
- A DeMolay is loyal to ideals and friends.
- A DeMolay practices honest toil.
- A DeMolay's word is as good as his bond.
- A DeMolay is courteous.
- A DeMolay is at all times a gentleman.
- A DeMolay is a patriot in peace as well as war.
- A DeMolay is clean in mind and body.
- A DeMolay stands unswervingly for the public schools.
- A DeMolay always bears the reputation of a good and law-abiding citizen.
- A DeMolay by precept and example must preserve the high standards to which he has pledged himself.

### **Who supervises the activities of a DeMolay Chapter?**

Activities and projects of a DeMolay Chapter are supervised by a group of men who comprise the Advisory Council. Most often, this body is made up of Masons from the sponsoring organization. However, Masons who are members of other masonic groups can and do serve as DeMolay advisors, along with Senior DeMolays. Senior DeMolays are members of DeMolay who have passed their twenty-first birthday.



### **What do the Advisors do?**

Ultimately the advisors are responsible for overseeing all aspects of the operation of the Chapter and ensuring that the Chapter operates within the statutes set down by the International Supreme Council of the Order of DeMolay, the international governing body. The advisors help the members plan and carry out programs and activities of the Chapter. They also supervise those programs and activities while they are ongoing. The advisors are also responsible for sitting as a hearing board on disciplinary matters involving the members. In addition, they often help the Chapter by acting as the "record-keepers" and administrators of the paperwork that is required in order to keep the Chapter operating.

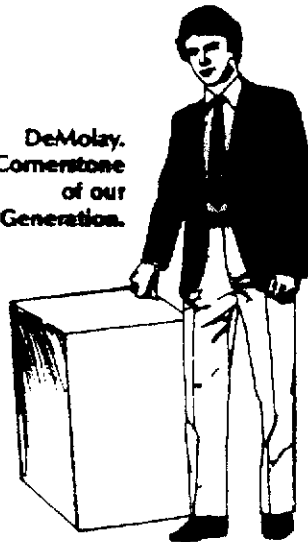


### **What will be expected of my son as a member of DeMolay?**

Your son's involvement in DeMolay is intended to be both fun and rewarding. As with any organization, there are ways for him to maximize the benefit from his membership. The "maximizers" could be considered "expectations."

1. *Become involved.* He will be expected to attend the meetings and activities and get involved in helping make decisions regarding the Chapter.
2. *Approach his involvement with a positive, helpful attitude.* His approach should include a willingness to learn, and a willingness to help others learn. Every DeMolay member has had life experiences that have taught him lessons and given him a unique perspective on issues. Together, the members and their advisors share perspectives and learn from each other as they make decisions that affect the Chapter.
3. *Put the precepts of DeMolay into practice in his daily life.* Some of the guiding principles of DeMolay (love of parents, reverence, courtesy, comradeship, fidelity (loyalty), cleanness and patriotism) may seem "out of fashion" in today's world, but that does not mean that they are without merit. A young man who builds these tenets into his life today will be "ahead of the game" as he assumes the mantle of manhood in the future.
4. *Learn about DeMolay.* Part of being a good member of an organization is being familiar enough with how it operates and being able to tell others about it. He will have books and "open book" correspondence courses, called the Leadership Correspondence Course, available to help him learn about DeMolay, so he can effectively communicate information on DeMolay to others who may be interested in knowing more.

DeMolay.  
The Cornerstone  
of our  
Next Generation.



## **What are the rules members must abide by?**

As your son participates in DeMolay activities there are some general rules he must follow for his own benefit, as well as for the benefit of others.

1. The presence and/or use of alcohol or any illegal or controlled drug is prohibited at DeMolay functions. The only exception to this policy is for substances that are prescribed by a licensed medical doctor.
2. The possession of any type of weapon is prohibited at a DeMolay function. The only exception is when the weapon is an integral part of an organized and supervised Chapter function, such as a rifle team competition or other such activity. Even then, the weapon must be placed in the keeping of an advisor until the activity begins, and returned to the advisor after the activity, until the DeMolay member leaves the function.
3. Aggressive, disruptive or destructive behavior has no place at a DeMolay function. Everyone associated with DeMolay wants to be your son's friend and to have your son as their friend. He is expected to act and respond in that manner. He is also expected to treat the facilities he may frequent as a part of his DeMolay involvement with care, as well as the Chapter property with which he may come into contact, and the personal property of others.
4. Even when your son is away from DeMolay functions, his appearance, words and actions are a reflection on the organization and on his fellow DeMolays. He should not let inappropriate dress, words or actions be a detriment to the organization and to his Brothers.
5. When attending a DeMolay function or going on a DeMolay-related outing, he should not try to be "Mr. Independent." At any DeMolay function, he is responsible to the advisors in attendance. Naturally, his first responsibility is to the Advisors from his own Chapter. However, ultimately he is responsible to all advisors. When he is attending a DeMolay function or traveling with advisors, he is expected to let them know where he is and what he is doing at all times.

While there are specific rules governing specific situations in Chapters, these few provide a general overview of what is expected of members of DeMolay. If you are like most parents, these expectations are much like what you expect of your son yourself.