



Application

for

Initiation

The Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Nigeria

Petition for membership of

Lodge.....

..... No.....

by.....

## **WHAT IS FREEMASONRY?**

There have been a great number of definitions of Freemasonry. Perhaps the best, and certainly the simplest, is, "Freemasonry is a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." The idea of teaching by allegories and symbols is not new. All great teachers have, more or less, followed this method.

The system of morality to which we have referred as Freemasonry is that which every Freemason is bound to profess and practise. If it includes principles with which he was familiar before his entrance into Freemasonry, he will nevertheless find these presented in new ways and in forms different from those with which he was previously familiar. If he finds in Masonic teachings nothing startlingly new, he must remember that, in some respects at least, there is "nothing new under the sun" and that the essence of morality is to be found in the utter simplicity (though not the ease) of its requirements.

The elementary principles of Freemasonry are exemplified in the three degrees worked in every regular Masonic Lodge throughout the world.

Each Lodge has its own Officers, headed by a Master; its own Committees and, in some cases, its own property. On the other hand, each Lodge is subject to the authority of the Grand Lodge of the country or state under which it holds its Charter. In becoming a member of a Lodge under the Nigeria Constitution you become subject not only to the general customs and usages of the Craft, but also the Laws and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of Nigeria, as well as to the Bye-Laws of the particular Lodge which you join. However, Freemasonry will never require of you anything which might conflict with your duty to God, to your country, to your neighbour or to your family.

In your progress through Freemasonry, which may well take many weeks or even months, you will be "initiated" as an Entered Apprentice; "passed" as a Fellow Craft and "raised" as a Master Mason. There is a ritualistic ceremony of a most serious character appropriate to each stage in your progress. You will be asked, too, to give a most solemn and binding promise never to disclose the nature of these ceremonies under any circumstances. Bearing in mind what has been said in the previous paragraph, you will not be asked to promise anything which will conflict with your religious, civil or other duties. Your first duty is to approach each ceremony calmly and solemnly, with mind and spirit attentive to the lessons which will be imparted.

## **WHAT FREEMASONRY IS NOT**

So that you may not have a mistaken idea of what Freemasonry is, it may well be to point out some of the things which Freemasonry is NOT, and which it has never claimed to be.

1. Freemasonry is NOT a religion nor a substitute for religion. It has a philosophy of its own which it believes to be compatible with the teachings of the Church and other similar religious institutions. The teachings of Freemasonry transcend all denominational and sectarian divisions. In the field of human conduct it is complementary to religion, but religious topics may not be discussed in any Lodge.

2. Contrary to the opinion held by many, Freemasonry is not a charitable institution, as such. It is true that one of the fundamental principles of Freemasonry is the practice of relief, and a Freemason will necessarily minister to the "widows and fatherless in their affliction". But these and other similar modes of conduct must proceed from that "purity of life and conduct" which is one of the great objectives of all Masonic teachings.

3. Freemasonry does not insure its members against the vicissitudes of old age; provides no sick benefits as such; issues no insurance policies on the lives of its members and pays no death benefits of any kind. Not that Freemasonry disbelieves in these and other means by which modern civilisation undertakes to reduce suffering and privation - quite the contrary. But it confines the matter of individual relief to those cases where such relief becomes necessary, in spite of all the efforts of a Brother or his family to maintain their economic independence. Your part of this work is far more likely to be that of a contributor than a beneficiary, except in the larger sense, in which every man benefits from the fact that "it is more blessed to give than to receive".

4. Freemasonry does not lend itself to the promoting of selfish or mercenary interests. Any underlying purpose of such a nature in your mind will eventually become apparent to your Brethren and you will inevitably suffer the loss of their respect. A Freemason may support any good cause that he will, but he may not persuade or try to persuade his Lodge to lend their support to his chosen charitable work.

5. Freemasonry is not connected in any way with a political creed. A Freemason's political views are his own and a Lodge may well have members belonging to many different political parties. For that reason, no discussion of political matters is permitted in a Lodge. A Brother may not seek to persuade his Brethren in Lodge to adopt this or that view in matters of government local, national or international.

### **WHO MAY BECOME A FREEMASON?**

Not every man can fulfil the requirements that Freemasonry asks of her aspirants. The primary requirement is, of course, moral character. One whose reputation in the community is in any way questionable cannot expect to become a Mason. But there are other requirements which the petitioner must have, such as :-

He must be a believer in God, the Supreme Being.

He must be a loyal citizen, willing to discharge his duties to God, to his neighbour and to himself.

He must be at least twenty-one years of age (unless his father is or was a Freemason when the age of admission may be reduced, at the discretion of the Lodge, to eighteen).

He must be in such financial circumstances that he can maintain himself as a member of his Lodge, meeting the monetary obligations imposed by being a member, without detriment to his family or himself.

You, as a potential Freemason, and like Masons in all ages before you, must come of your own accord to knock at the door of the Craft. Two Brethren must recommend you, indeed they must do more - they will have to vouch for your character and the sincerity of your motives. In a very real sense they are your Masonic sponsors. You, for your part, have the responsibility of seeing that they and others who have accepted their assurances will not be disappointed.

### **WHAT FREEMASONRY EXPECTS OF YOU**

The privileges of Freemasonry are no greater than the responsibilities of its members. Your obligations will not conflict with those you have already assumed by virtue of your membership in modern society. On the contrary, Freemasonry reiterates, reinforces and re-emphasises them.

Thus, in asking Freemasonry to share with you its past, its present and its future and all the privileges of its Brotherhood, you must bear in mind the fact that the relationship is a reciprocal one and that certain things are expected of you. Remember always :-

The calling of a Freemason is a high one and you should never suffer yourself to depart from it. Loyalty to home, to country and to the Craft is expected of you at all times.

Patriotism is a bounden duty and you must not countenance disloyalty or rebellion.

That Freemasonry recognises that all men, whether Masons or not, are Brothers by birth, endowed with the same nature, and sharing the same hopes.

That Freemasonry champions the cause of the widow, the fatherless, the weak and the distressed.

That the time honoured virtues cherished by our forefathers are still to be observed among Masons and that humility, patience, charity and gentleness are among the hallmarks of purity and integrity of character.

Extract from the Masonic Constitution and Laws relating to this Application:-

"Every candidate shall be at least twenty-one years of age at the date of his application with the exception that sons or, if an adoption order is in force, adopted sons of Master Masons registered in Grand Lodge may apply at any time after attaining eighteen years of age.

A Lodge shall not consider an application for Initiation from a deaf mute. Lodges may use their discretion as to the acceptance of candidates who are physically or visually handicapped.

A Lodge shall not consider an application for Initiation from any candidate (a) whose application for admission to another Lodge is under consideration or (b) whose place of residence is in any place where the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland, the Grand Lodge of Scotland or any other Grand Lodge has exclusive Masonic jurisdiction without first obtaining a Dispensation from the Grand Master, the fee for which shall be payable by the candidate in addition to his Initiation Fee; provided however that this restriction regarding residence shall not apply to members of Armed Forces on the active list or to applicants for admission to any University, College or School Lodge."

Name in full.....

Occupation.....

Date and place of birth..... Nationality.....

Address.....

.....

How long resident in the neighborhood of this Province?.....

If you have not resided, carried on business, or been employed within the neighbourhood of the Province in which the Lodge is situated during the past three years, please state previous permanent address .....

Have you ever made application for admission to a Lodge under this or any other Grand Lodge? .....

If so, please give, details .....

If you have made application to a Lodge and subsequently withdrawn this, please give details .....

I hereby declare that these particulars are true, that I have read the foregoing text and Laws and hereby make application for admission to the aforementioned Lodge.

(Signed)..... Date.....

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY THE PROPOSER AND THE SECONDER**

	Proposer	Secunder
1. How long have you known the Candidate?	.....	.....
2. Has he ever, to your knowledge, been convicted of a crime or offence?	.....	.....
3. Do you meet him often?	.....	.....
4. Where do you meet him?	.....	.....
(a) In your home?   (b) In his home?	.....	.....
(c) At his work?   (d) Socially?	.....	.....
5. Would you welcome him into your home?	.....	.....
6. Do you vouch for him in every respect as a suitable and desirable person for admission to the Craft?	.....	.....
7. (a) Would his home or business circumstances make it difficult for him to attend regularly at Lodge meetings.	.....	.....
(b) Do you accept the responsibility of encouraging him to make his membership effective?	.....	.....
8. Have you informed him that membership of the Craft means personal effort on his part in the service of the Lodge and of the community?	.....	.....
9. Have you informed him of his financial obligations to the Craft and its Benevolent Funds?	.....	.....
10. What reason have you for thinking Free masonry will interest him?	.....	.....

Proposer.....  
 .....

Secunder.....  
 .....

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY THE  
 PROPOSER OR SECONDER**

	Prosper	Secunder
Has he resided, carried on business or been employed within the neighbourhood of the Province in which the Lodge is situated throughout the past three years?	.....	.....
Is he likely to be permanently resident in the Province?	.....	.....

**DECLARATION**

(To be subscribed by two Qualified Members of the Lodge)

We, the undersigned Qualified Members of the Lodge, having read the foregoing text, recommend the applicant as a fit and proper candidate for initiation into Freemasonry.

Signature Proposer.....  
 Address.....  
 Signature Secunder.....  
 Address.....  
 .....

Note:-The Candidate and his Proposer and Secunder will be interviewed by the Enquiry Committee on a date to be duly intimated to them.

**PROCEDURE OF APPLICATION**

(FOR OFFICIAL USE)

**Note:** The information given at paragraphs 2, 3, 5 and 8 below should be carefully copied into the Petition Book at the meeting at which the Candidate is initiated.

1. Date Application received by Lodge Secretary.....20.....
2. Date Application read at Regular Meeting of Lodge and Remitted to Committee of Enquiry.....20.....
3. Date of Meeting of Committee of Enquiry.....20.....  
 (Application to be recorded in Petition Book and signed by Candidate and his Proposer and Secunder at or before Meeting and Candidate, Proposer and Secunder to be interviewed separately by Committee)
4. Recommendation of Committee of Enquiry

5. Report of Committee of Enquiry submitted to, and ballot taken at Regular Meeting of Lodge held on .....20.....  
(Within twelve months of Application being read to the Lodge; not less than fourteen days after date Application read; and not earlier than the day after completion of the Report of the Committee of Enquiry

6. Result of Ballot.....20.....

7. Candidate advised by letter on.....20.....  
(Decision of Lodge to be communicated forthwith in writing by Secretary

8. Date of Initiation.....20.....  
(not less than fourteen days after, and within twelve months of. date of Ballot