



Masonic Education for APRIL 2025

The Importance of Freemasonry



From the Office of the Senior Grand Lecturer

During the 107th Annual Communications, our Grand Master launched the theme of his Masonic Term based on three (3) key resources available to every Masonic Lodge - LIGHT, MANHOOD, and MASONRY. From thereon, our monthly lectures revolved around these three frameworks - with the topics for May, June, and July focused on **EDUCATION**; succeeding installments in August, September, October, and November, oriented toward **ENLIGHTENMENT**; and the next topics from January 2024 to March 2025 geared for **EQUILIBRIUM**.

Lessons 1 to 3 (May to July) are the EDUCATION Lectures, discussing Education through Institutional, Jurisdictional, and Personal approaches:

1. The Importance of EDUCATION, ENLIGHTENMENT, & EQUILIBRIUM

In his inaugural message, our Grand Master has elucidated on EDUCATION as the process of giving and receiving systematic instruction in both the operative and speculative parts of our mysteries which has always been the foundation of our Craft. Our Jurisdiction has through the years developed systems of Masonic Education as well as Institutions and devices that provide the necessary instructions whereby the Brethren may pursue their labors:

Institutional Education - refers to the various GLP establishments that imparts Education. E.g. the Institute of Masonic Education & Studies (IMES); the Cable Tow Magazine; GLP Website; and the GLP Library.

Jurisdictional Education - alludes to the Grand Lodge Masonic Education (GLME) delivered by the Corps of Grand Lecturers during Stated Meetings and Conventions each Masonic Year.

Personal Education - touches on the Educational initiative of subordinate lodges to provide additional lessons to their members on topics that are relevant to their specific needs. They can be delivered by selected Masons who will act as resource persons.

In conclusion, the success of the programs for the Masonic Year relies on the WILLINGNESS of the Brethren to: receive quality Masonic Education; to be mentored towards real Masonic Enlightenment; and to rededicate themselves to the Craft's Mission for a real Masonic Equilibrium.

2. The Importance of Masons in History

The next lecture discussed the conceptual triumvirate of Heroism, Patriotism, & Nationalism viz a viz the speculative thrust on Education, Enlightenment, and Equilibrium. The lecture indoctrinates the Brethren on the Virtue of Heroism, Devotion by Patriotism, and a Belief System of Nationalism that can be propagated through Education (Teaching by Example), Enlightenment (Application), and Equilibrium (Full Realization). When taught, applied, and realized by all Masons in our jurisdiction both conceptual triumvirate and speculative thrust can be powerful tools for Nation-Founding, Nation-Building, and Nation-Cleansing.

3. The Importance of Masonic Education

The Third Lecture is based on the teaching of Masonry as a progressive moral science, taught by degrees only. Such progression is manifested in the first four levels of Educational Programs in the Philippine Jurisdiction, namely: 1. The Four Orientation Meetings; 2. Lodge Mentorship; 3. Masonic Education in Lodge Meetings & District Conventions; and 4. The IMES Diploma Courses. Being progressive, no mason should skip any of the above levels and proceed to the next one. Each of the four levels is designed for specific students, it is equally important that those who will impart the education are qualified for the job:

- A. The Four Orientation Meetings** - to be conducted by elected lodge officers including lodge elders for Candidates for degrees in Freemasonry
- B. Lodge Mentorship** - to be handled by senior lodge members for the newly-raised Master Mason
- C. Masonic Education in Lodge Meetings & District Conventions** - to be delivered by the Corps of Grand Lodge Lecturers and duly appointed Lodge Lecturers for ALL Lodge Members (a continuing program)
- D. The IMES Diploma Courses** - handled by Grand Lodge-trained IMES Instructors for lodge members both for the young (but not new) & senior members

*This Educational Topic is one of the bases for **Edict No. 370** - Masonic Educational Reforms in the Institute of Masonic Education & Studies.*

Lessons 4 to 7 (August to November) are the Enlightenment Lectures, introducing Enlightenment through different Masonic Rituals:

4. The Importance of National Language in Masonry

Masonic Education in August introduces the Rituals albeit in Filipino, providing the Brethren with an inventory of the Masonic Rituals translated by our forebears scores and decades ago:

MW Angeles Rituals - Pagbukas at Pagpipinid ng Lohiya; Pagsalubong sa mga Kinatawan ng Gran Lohiya at mga Panauhin; Pagtatanghal ng Watawat, Kasama ang Pagpupugay sa Watawat at Pag-awit ng Gran Lohia, Mabuhay Ka

MW Quasha Rituals (Pag-gawad ng mga Antas ng Masoneriya) - Pagtanggap ng Aprendis Mason; Pagpasa ng Kompanyerong Mason; at Pagtataas ng Gurong Mason (Raising of Master Mason)

Balmaceda Rituals (Mga Galian na pang-Mason) Ritwal ng Pagtatalaga ng mga Inihalal at Hinirang na Pamunuan ng Lohiya; Rito ng Paglilibing ng mga Mason; Ritwal na Pampaglingkod Alaala

While the Rituals translated by our Grand Secretary have been adopted by the GLP and are available at the Masonic Supplies Store, the Balmaceda Rituals as well as those of MW Quasha are yet to be officialized. More than compliance with Edict No. 297 of MW Tolentino and the observance of the Buwan ng Wikang Pambansa. The Practice of Opening and Closing the Lodge in the National Language should be treated by every Filipino Mason (be he a Tagalog or not) as an opportunity to perform the Craft not just as Free and Accepted Masons but as free Filipinos who have accepted their freedom – an invaluable commodity that masons themselves have paid for in the not-so-distant past. Our National Language when adopted as the medium for our Masonic Rituals will help Filipino Masons in understanding its essence amidst the passage of time. Should the Grand Lodge adopt the various existing Filipino Translations made by our esteemed Brethren through the years, it will be a positive leap for Freemasonry in general and our jurisdiction in particular. Practicing our Masonic rituals in Filipino will help preserve our National Language with the passing of years and the changing of seasons.

5. The Importance of Masonic Rituals

Into the fifth Month of M.Y. 2024 – 2025, the spotlight focuses more on Masonic Rituals which are the heart and soul of Masonry as all our tenets, philosophies, and lessons reside in it. They are codified within the Twenty-five (25) Landmarks defined by Albert Mackey. In our Jurisdiction, Masonic Rituals are classified into three groups: **Lodge Rituals, Grand Lodge Rituals, and Rituals for Other Degrees & Appendant Bodies.**

Lodge Rituals are of two (2) purposes: for the Transaction of Business and Conferral of Degrees. The former includes the Opening & Closing of the Lodge; Balloting; Installation of Lodge Officers; Masonic Funeral Rites & Services, and other purposes. The latter is for creating masons through the Three Degrees of Masonry.

Grand Lodge Rituals also have two (2) purposes: for the Transaction of Business and for the benefit of Lodges. Rituals for Other Masonic Orders & Appendant Bodies are classified into: Bodies Rituals and Grand Bodies Rituals.

The formulation of our Rituals – like the cement that formed the foundations of our fraternity from antiquity to the Middle Ages and into the 1700s and 1800s has already been set in stone and has long since dried. It is no longer the duty of the Freemasons of our time to alter, improve, or innovate them but rather practice, transfer, and thus preserve what has been done for future Masons to practice, transfer, and preserve as well...

6. The Importance of Masonic Funeral Rites

In October, the topic became specific to the solemnities for our Departed Brethren which in the GLP Manual for Masonic Funeral & Memorial Services (MMFMS) presents the following observations: The Ritual described for **MASONIC FUNERAL SERVICES** is intended in honor of a deceased brother whose body or ashes are lying in state (nakaburo) or on the day of his funeral (paglilibing) or cremation. The Ritual of the **MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR THE LODGE OF SORROW** is intended to honor the memory of the deceased brother or brethren long buried or cremated (pag-alala). Replacing the coffin, urn, or tomb, is a catafalque. Based on Masonic Practices, the rituals and ceremonies of a **LODGE OF REMEMBRANCE** are similar to the Lodge of Sorrow except that it is traditionally held in October.

Despite the differentiating conditions, Masonic Funeral Rites for the departed have one thing in common - they are done in public (witnessed by both masons and non-masons). It is the symbolic way for Masons to offer up a brother's memory before the world, the last sad tribute of affection: thereby demonstrating the sincerity of the Brethren's esteem for the brother and their steady attachment to the principles of the beloved order of the Craft. As a fraternity that values secrecy, there are only a handful of occasions when we as Masons perform ceremonies and services in public form. Masonic Funeral Rites presents a different public expression of our Craft. Being more solemn and somber than the festive nature of the Installation of Lodge Officers and Laying of Corner-stones.

7. The Importance of Lodge Elections and Installation Ceremonies

In anticipation of Lodge Elections in December and the Installation Season in the first Quarter of 2025, Masonic Education in November tackled the importance of electing and installing Lodge Officers. On his 46-month journey to the Grand Oriental Chair, MW Ariel T. Cayanan has witnessed several deviations during Installations. In response, he required Past Masters who intended to be a part of the Installing Team to attend IMES-sponsored sessions pertaining to the Installation Ceremonies to help ensure conformity to the rituals. A total of 9 classes were conducted between September 2024 to January 2025. The lecture aims for the brethren to avoid deviations such as allowing non-masons near the Altar during the obligation and the investiture, the wearing of non-prescribed jewels, reading the ancient charges on the floor, use of the word "emcee" for the Program Host, etc. Among the defining qualities of the lecture is the delineation of authority during the Opening of the Lodge, Installation proper, and Conclusion of the Proceedings represented by the Outgoing Master, the Installation Officer, and the newly installed Worshipful Master respectively.

*The contents of the 7th Lecture were later expounded to become the basis for **Edict No. 376** – Providing Additional Regulations Governing the Conduct of Installation Ceremonies for Officers of Subordinate Lodges*

Installation of Lodge Officers is an important Masonic Ceremony as it marks the transition of leadership and responsibilities within a lodge. The event reaffirms the lodge's mission, strengthens camaraderie, and inspires new leaders to advance Masonic Ideals. In re-educating the brethren, especially the Past Masters responsible for the event, our uniform Installation Program can bring about enlightenment among those present. When done with fervency and zeal, the phenomenon can lead to Masonic Equilibrium for Masonry in General and each Worshipful Lodge in particular.

Lessons 8 to 11 (December 2024 to March 2025) are the Equilibrium Lectures, focusing on Equilibrium through the three Masonic Institutions that are the Grand Lodge, the Blue Lodge, while the 11th lecture touches on the Masonic Temple to differentiate the physical edifice from the institutions:

8. The Importance of the Grand Lodge

As the Grand Lodge of the Philippines celebrated its 112th year last December 19 – the first topic on Masonic Equilibrium was on the Most Worshipful Institution. The Grand Lodge being the highest governing body of Freemasonry in a specific geographic area, like a country, state, or region oversees local Masonic lodges; sets rules and regulations, coordinates activities within its jurisdiction; and promotes the principles of the craft. Being independent, each Grand Lodge is responsible for its governance, administration, and representation. For Enlightenment, the lecture reiterated GLP's four main goals and objectives as stated in its PREAMBLE: **A. To set forth and exemplify the tenets and teachings of Freemasonry;** **B. To promote love, foster brotherhood, and achieve harmony among Masons and men;** **C. To enhance the welfare of our Order;** and **D. To preserve liberty, equality, and fraternity.**

With its independent nature, the Masonic mechanism that helps ensure that each Grand Lodge remains true to the principles and practices of Freemasonry lies in its recognition by and affinity with other Grand Lodges. As they are mostly self-created, it is their relationship with their foreign or domestic counterparts that adds essence and relevance to their

existence. The more that it is recognized by other Grand Lodges, the wider its relationship with other jurisdictions throughout the Masonic World which is cascaded to its membership. Such recognition and affinity are based on the regularity of the principles and practices of each Grand Lodge. In deviating from the Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry, a Grand Lodge risks losing the recognition of other Grand Lodges. GLP currently enjoys the recognition and affinity of 121 other Grand Lodges around the globe. Such a wide circle gives its membership the privilege to be admitted in any of the lodges of these 121 jurisdictions.

9. The Importance of the “Blue” Lodge

We welcomed the Year 2025 by discussing subordinate Lodges through four lenses, namely the GRAND LODGE; the CHARTER; the CONSTITUTION; and the LANDMARKS: As a path to Enlightenment, the Brethren should see their Lodge viz a viz with these lenses. The creation of a Lodge depends not just on the labors of its Charter members but the evaluation and approval of its superior organization which is the GRAND LODGE. In its beginning, a Lodge is given a dispensation to be allowed to prove that it is capable of functioning as a regular masonic organization capable of making masons. Passing evaluation, its approval to be perpetuated is manifested in the form of a CHARTER which contains its mandate as a regular lodge. To help itself navigate into the labyrinthine passages of masonic tradition as well as the rough and rugged pathways of human life has at its disposal both the CONSTITUTION and LANDMARKS which it can always refer to. **Together, the GRAND LODGE, the CHARTER, the CONSTITUTION, and the LANDMARKS make up the code for the Blue LODGE to function as it is intended to be from its initial operation until perpetuity.**

10. The Importance of Masonic Districts

Compared to Lodges and the Grand Lodge which are among the subjects in our Landmarks, Rituals, Charges, and other ancient Masonic Traditions; Masonic Districts are created for administrative purposes. As the Grand Lodge is the governing body that supervises individual lodges within its jurisdiction, Masonic Districts are extensions of the Grand Lodge, covering specified areas that oversee its subordinate lodges in the said area. **As of December, 447 Masonic Lodges are working under the GLP. These Masonic Lodges are grouped into 68 Masonic Districts. Five (5) more Masonic Districts were created last February 11 through Edict No. 374 increasing its number to 73.**

Lodges within a specified location or territory exist side by side with each other and live harmoniously as Brethren, but it is only with the guidance of the Grand Lodge, through District Officers that they can truly function as a Masonic District. However, Masonic Districts are NOT super lodges and are not a separate entity between the Grand Lodge and Subordinate lodges. They are designated areas defining the jurisdiction of each District Deputy Grand Master as personal representative of our Grand Master to each subordinate lodge in the Philippine Jurisdiction.

11. The Importance of Masonic Temples

On the Eleventh Hour of the Masonic Year, our Educational Topic aims to enlighten the Brethren by differentiating a Lodge from its Temple. **The Lodge is the organization perpetuated by the Grand Lodge to work for the Craft by virtue of a Charter which encapsulates its mission for Freemasonry, while a Masonic Temple is the edifice that houses the Lodge and its members.** Masonic Temples provide a safe space for Masons to practice their rituals in private and operate their lodges. Due to the important role that Masonic Temples play in Freemasonry – two rituals exist before they can be used: first is the Ceremony of Laying Foundation Stones; second is the Dedication of Masonic Halls. Such ceremonies require a Special Communication by the Grand Lodge. Unlike Lodges whose non-tangible nature is meant to exist for centuries, Masonic Temples are subject to the natural damage or deterioration that occurs to an object or asset over time due to regular use and aging. Thus Lodges as they march forward the level of time may change Masonic Temples every few decades repeating the solemnities in the Laying of Foundation Stones and when finished, the Dedication of its Masonic Halls.

12. The Importance of FREEMASONRY

Each Masonic Year, the sitting Grand Master strives to focus the entire jurisdiction towards a specific direction epitomized in the theme adopted during his term. For M.Y. 2024 – 2025, MW Ariel T. Cayan brings to the forefront three (3) key resources available to every Masonic Lodge - LIGHT, MANHOOD, and MASONRY. As we reach the Final Installment in our Lecture Series for the Masonic Year, we discuss the most important of the 12 topics which is the encompassing lesson for our Masonic Theme deliberating on all the lessons taken up by the

Corps of Grand Lecturers following the Grand Master's ascension to the Grand East a year ago – **“Let there be more Men in the Light, and let there be more Light among Masons”**.

Inside the heart of Freemasonry are its core teachings summarized in its 10 concepts: *The Three (3) Tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and truth; the Four (4) Cardinal Virtues of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice; and the Christian Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity.* **Codified in our Masonic Rituals are the important lessons imparted by the most ancient of our craftsmen.** In our jurisdiction – **the 25 Landmarks of our Fraternity appear as guides showing the various elements of how Freemasonry should work.** To adapt to the current state of society, our **Masonic Law Book as well as the Lodge and District By-Laws are readily available for the Grand Lodge, Masonic Districts, and Blue Lodges** to observe and thus function within the confines of the extended compasses. The **Book of Holy Writings is always within arms-length inside the lodge for its officers and members to draw inspiration and reflect upon.** Finally, there is the ultimate Masonic resource – **when human strength and wisdom fail, Freemasons should ever remember that divine assistance is vouchsafed us through the medium of prayer.**

Masonic Education is akin to seeds. The germ of human potential which when planted and nurtured in an ideal environment can grow and do great things for humanity. Masons are the soil that can grow these seeds depending on the quality of how the soil was made. **The growth that transitions the seed to a plant is the act of Masonic Enlightenment.** When several plants grow steadily, healthily, and abundantly – **such a stable garden, orchard, or forest reflects a state of Masonic Equilibrium.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEMASONRY RESTS ON ITS MEMBERSHIP - of Freemasons made within the body of a just and legally constituted lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. How such Masons are made and mentored will define the state of Enlightenment and Equilibrium within a jurisdiction. Thus the importance of Education.

Quoted MW Reynato Puno, PGM – “The beauty of masonry lies in its lessons. These lessons are hidden in allegories and symbols. They have to be discovered, slowly, scrupulously. Only upon their progressive perception can one appreciate the distinctness of the fraternity. And above all, it is only by practicing out of the lodge those great moral virtues taught in it can we really deserve the honor of being called masons.”

Educated Masons elect Enlightened Masonic Leaders. Enlightened Masonic Leaders nurture more Masons through Education. Together, Educated Masons and Enlightened Masonic Leaders bring about a well-balanced or Equilibrated form of Masonry. Such a Masonic Ecosystem can only happen inside the jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge that remains true to its goals and objectives. Thank You Brethren for sitting through the entire Masonic Education Series for Masonic Year 2024 – 2025.

GUIDE QUESTIONS FOR LECTURERS

Note: DGL's answers to these questions shall be among their contributions to the Lecture:

1. In Lessons 1 to 3 of the Education Lectures;
Lessons 4 to 7 of the Enlightenment Lectures; and
Lessons 8 to 11 of the Equilibrium Lectures
– which has the most impact on you as a Freemason? Share with the Brethren your insight.
2. Cite examples past or present where Freemasons through Freemasonry made a difference in Society.
Show how it made a relevant impact.