

OFFICE OF THE SENIOR GRAND LECTURER

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and
Accepted Masons of the Philippines
1440 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila

**SGL Directive 2018 -
March 25, 2018**

ATTENTION: ALL JGLs, DDGMs, DGLs, GLIs,
SUBJECT : MASONIC EDUCATION FOR THE
MONTH OF APRIL 2018
TOPIC/S: RESPECT DUE TO THE GRAND MASTER

What is a Grand Master to our Fraternity?

Section 1, Article IX The Grand Master provides:

*“Sec. 1. The Grand Master, between Annual Communications of the Grand Lodge, shall exercise **all** its executive powers, except the granting of Charters, all its judicial powers, and such legislative powers as may provide needed legislation that shall be harmoniously complementary to this Constitution. His actions are effective immediately.”*

Landmark Fourth talks about the Grand Master and is hereby quoted as follows:

*“The government of the fraternity by a presiding officer called a Grand Master, who is elected from the body of the Craft, is a Fourth Landmark of the Order. Many persons ignorantly suppose that the election of the Grand Master is held in consequence of a law or regulation of the Grand Lodge. Such, however, is not the case. The office is indebted for its existence to a Landmark of the Craft. **Grand Masters are to be found in the records of the institution long before Grand Lodges were established;** and if the present system of legislative government by Grand Lodges were to be abolished, **a Grand Master would still be necessary.** In fact, although there has been a period within the records of history, and indeed of very recent date, when a Grand Lodge was unknown, **there never has been when the Craft did not have its Grand Master.**”*

How do we therefore treat a Grand Master of all Masons in his jurisdiction?

The pertinent portion of the article on Masonic Etiquette by J. Kirk Nicholson, Jr., PGM, Grand Lodge of Georgia is hereby quoted as follows:

*“A number of the niceties of Masonic etiquette deal with the reception of, and respect due to, the Grand Master. The man chosen to lead the Masons in a Jurisdiction has the distinction of being in a position peculiar to the Masonic fraternity. In no other organization is there such an **authoritarian figure**. In the broadest terms, he is the representative of King Solomon, and as such, there **devolves upon him the rights, privileges, respect and power usually reserved for royalty.**”*

*Upon his election to the office of Grand Master by his Brethren, the man is no longer a private person, **he is the Grand Master**. The private man with his partialities and prejudices must disappear in order that only the officer may remain. To be Grand Master is one of the most humbling and exacting of all the duties which the position places upon the person in the office. It means that if his closest friend deserves a reprimand, he must reprimand him; it means that if he must give instructions to those far wiser than himself, he must never-the-less instruct them; it means that whatever limitations, whatever sense of failing and short-coming he may be conscious of, he must sacrifice to the demand of his position. (To a some-what lesser degree, these same characteristics also apply to a Worshipful Master.)*

The responsibility of the Worshipful Master and every Freemason is to maintain toward the Craft and toward the Grand Master a respectful attitude, not for the sake of the man in that high office, but for the maintenance of its supreme importance. Whether a man is personally liked or disliked . . . the office of Grand Master should always be held in high regard.

*When this man visits a lodge, it is not the person of Grand Master which should be honored, but the honor that is paid to the Grand Master. **The honor that is paid to the Grand Master is to the office, the highest which Freemasonry may bestow upon any of its members, yet one which carries with it the heaviest responsibilities.***

A visit from the Grand Master should be one of the highlights of the year for any lodge. This is the case whether the lodge invites the Grand Master for a special occasion or the Grand Master arrives for other reasons.

If a lodge wishes to invite the Grand Master for a special occasion, the Grand Master should be written to as far in advance as possible. His time is in great demand and the sooner an invitation is sent the more likely he will be able to accept. If possible, give him a first choice and second choice date. Be specific in your invitation. Give him the exact time the meeting is to begin; whether dinner will be served and if so, at what time; where the meeting is to be held, (i.e. Lodge Hall, First Methodist Church) and the street address. If the meeting place is not on the main street, directions should be given on how to reach there. Give him information on the kind of program; if you wish him to speak (and if on a special topic, give him the subject), whether awards are to be presented, if the meeting is a family meeting, open but for men only, or tiled; time you expect him to arrive. (See Short

Talk Bulletin, July, 1978 - "The Masonic Speaker.")

*No lodge should ever feel that they cannot invite the Grand Master or that the Grand Master would not visit them. No lodge is too small or too far away for the Grand Master. He will be pleased to accept the invitation if a convenient date can be worked out. He feels that each lodge is equal, regardless of size, distance or what has been traditional. **He is Grand Master of all Masons in his Jurisdiction.***

A committee should be appointed for the Grand Master's comfort. When he arrives, the Worshipful Master should be available to greet him along with the committee. If for some reason plans for the evening have changed (the award recipient cannot attend, etc.) the Grand Master should be advised immediately of changes.

If it is a dinner meeting, formal or picnic style, the Worshipful Master and committee should see that a head table or proper seating is arranged for the Grand Master. The Grand Master and his party should be afforded every courtesy and he should be escorted to his place at the head table or to the head of the line if the meal is to be served buffet style. The Worshipful Master's committee should be able to introduce the Brethren to the Grand Master and to generally make him feel welcome.

During the meeting (open, closed or family) the Worshipful Master should have an outlined program. He should have done his homework and know who will introduce the guests, who will present the Grand Master at the Holy Altar, etc. If it is a closed meeting, he should carry out the order of business in a correct manner according to the Code of his Jurisdiction and have the meeting begin and end on time.

"The Worshipful Master who carefully plans his meeting for the reception of the Grand Master, who takes his officers and members into his confidence, who appoints the necessary committees and gives each of them proper instruction in the details of his part in the ceremonies, and who, last, but not least, builds his program so that it will serve to accent the message of the Grand Master, will be amply rewarded. His will be the satisfaction which always comes from a well-planned and well-executed meeting." (MASONIC ETIQUETTE, by John A. Dunaway, PGM, Ga.)

*One important thing to remember when the Grand Master visits your lodge. Regardless of the type of meeting (family, open, closed) when the Grand Master has **finished speaking, there should be nothing to follow him except the closing.** No other speakers should be permitted to address the lodge when he has concluded. As one of our late Grand Masters so aptly expressed it: "**When the Grand Master finishes speaking, even the dogs quit barking.**"*

When the Grand Master is unable to visit a lodge and he sends his personal representative, the representative should be given every courtesy. He should be accorded respect and should never be addressed by his first name during any part of a closed lodge ceremony." (underscoring for emphasis)

The above-quoted Masonic etiquette has long been practiced and observed in our jurisdiction. But recently, a handful of Masons commit a breach of Masonic etiquette by way of disrespectful and malicious criticisms of the Grand Master's official actions in social media and even in a public masonic occasion. We may disagree with the wisdom of the Grand Master, but hindi mo dapat nilalait lait ang Pinaka Marangal na Guro.

The Brethren should bring back the respect and courtesy due to a sitting Grand Master because he is the Grand Master of all Masons in his jurisdiction. We should extend to the sitting Grand Master the same respect and courtesy just like the respect and courtesy that we have extended to the earlier Grand Masters.

We all have the duty to respect the Grand Master.



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