

I'm Glad My Son's a DeMolay

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I'm glad my son belongs to DeMolay. No, I didn't covet his membership for the pin he could wear nor for the achievement awards he might receive from the Order; neither did I scheme for the social outlet it offers him although any of the foregoing advantages might be desirable. Rather I'm happy John's in DeMolay because it sets him on the path of manliness in which I hope he'll walk all the days of his life.

What are the benefits of DeMolay for him? For one thing, when he was initiated into the Order he entered a far-reaching fellowship. Some three million men and boys have passed through the ranks of this fraternity or now hold membership in Chapters all across the world. In that number are some who are leaders in industry, the professions, the armed forces. But beyond those well-known names are the many, many thousands of former members whose chief contributions to life are solid citizenship and upright character. Yes, John need not be ashamed of the company he keeps in DeMolay.

Then he learns some great lessons in DeMolay. In the two basic degrees he is confronted with some of life's most stirring truths. The importance of loyalty to God, to home and country is emphasized to him. No one, young or old, can ever see the Nine O'clock Interpolation without his heart being stirred; and any one who hears the Flower Talk will resolve to be a better person. Through the moving drama of the DeMolay degree he learns of one of history's

most noble figures; and he learns the lesson of fidelity to freedom even though it might mean death itself. All through his life the DeMolay will be brought face to face with these challenges to which he first dedicated himself at the altar of his Order.

My son has found wonderful opportunities in DeMolay. He is encouraged to participate in various Chapter activities for which Merit Bars are awarded as a sign of achievement. In this way the DeMolay may pursue his interests in the fields of his choice, whether it be civic service, athletics, music, religion, visitation or or dramatics. No talent is despised, and each may find its use in the service of DeMolay. When a year's membership is completed, the DeMolay is eligible for the Representative DeMolay Award. And then should he aspire after further recognition and earn it, there are the Distinguished Service Awards and the coveted Chevalier degree.

Further, I'm glad my son's a DeMolay not only for the opportunities but also for the responsibilities which it places upon him. He must learn the twin lessons of being a follower and being a leader. He is taught the duty of charity, and he learns the practice of compassion exercised in works of mercy to others less fortunate. He begins to comprehend that he is "his brother's keeper" not only in the easy fellowship of the Order but also in larger citizenship.

Likewise DeMolay brings my son into contact with dedicated Freema-

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sons. Although he is told at the outset that the fraternity is not a Junior Masonic organization, he also learns that a responsible Masonic group sponsors the local Chapter and that the adult councilors are Master Masons who give a great deal of time, talent and money for the good of DeMolay. Lifelong friendship will ripen from some of the association he has with these Masons: and many a DeMolay is led by these experiences to petition a Masonic Lodge for membership because of the inspiration he has received from these fine Masonic leaders and the admiration he felt for them.

Perhaps it's selfish, but any man has personal satisfaction when his son's in DeMolay. To be sure, he was of an age to join, but there are more important requirements. He had to state his belief in God, and he had to gain the approval of an investigating committee as to his good character and reputation. When he was initiated, proficiency work was required for the degrees. All of this meant

that he as an individual had to measure up to certain minimum standards of character and work and in this he did not fail.

As an organization DeMolay is quite young, being founded in 1919 by the late Frank S. ("Dad") Land of Kansas City, Missouri. But there is something timeless in its stately ritual and in its concern for youth, believing that in them lies the foundation of future welfare. Never let us despise or neglect them. Long years ago a disciple saw the possibilities in such youth and presented a youngster to the Master of Men, "There is a lad here." In DeMolay these bright hopes for these lads are nurtured and cherished and guided. What was said of Sir Launfal?

"Tall, and shining, and fair, and straight,
As he stood by the Beautiful Gate."
This honored Order will guide my son that way. That's why I'm glad he's a DeMolay. △

(Reprinted from the Philalethes)



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