



INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

The Three Link Fraternity Worldwide

WHAT WE DO?

The fraternity are involved in various charitable causes and humanitarian endeavors:

* Global Relief and Disaster Fund spends over \$775 million in relief projects annually.

* Educational Foundation gives scholarships and low-interest student loans every year since 1927.

* Living Legacy program focuses on planting trees and enhancing the environment and has planted more than 8 Million trees worldwide.

* The United Nations Pilgrimage of the Youth sponsors High School students on a one-week trip to the United Nations since 1949.

* Donates to Arthritis Foundation, Visual Eye Research Foundation, American Heart Association and several other foundations every year.

* Manages more than 80 low-cost homes for the elderly, Children's home and family recreation camps and parks.

* Sponsors S.O.S. Children's Villages which houses orphans and aids victims in Cambodia and several other countries.

* Sponsors a float in the Rose Parade every year.

* Annually conducts a Pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, DC and in Canada.

* Local lodges regularly organize various benevolent activities that would benefit the unfortunate, the orphans, the youth, the elderly and environment.



FRIENDSHIP, LOVE & TRUTH

We pledge ourselves in Fellowship, united in one band,

To serve each others interests, extending heart and hand:

With Friendship's warm acceptance, with the Love that conquers strife,

With the Truth that favours justice, and brings respect for life,

So in Faith and Hope and Charity we journey through life's length,

Ever linked in solidarity - our Unity is strength!



Qualifications:

16 years old and above

Male or female

A sober minded person not given to illicit drugs or excessive drinking

Tolerant of faiths and beliefs other than his/her own

Loyal to his or her country

Honest and known for his or her integrity in all his /her affairs

Made decision to join by own free will and not for any personal gain or reasons of idle curiosity

ODD FELLOWS WORLDWIDE

Republic of the Philippines

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Fraternity, unless linked with acts of humanity, is an empty name.

"Visit the Sick, Relieve the Distress, Bury the Dead and Educate the Orphan"



WHO WE ARE?

One of the oldest and largest fraternal, philosophical and service-oriented fraternity dedicated to improving and elevating the character of mankind by practicing the principles of fraternal friendship, genuine charitable love and the pursuit of truth in all our dealings. We aim to help make the world a better place to live by aiding the community, the less fortunate, the youth, the elderly and the environment in every way possible.



- **FRATERNAL** because we promote the universal brotherhood and sisterhood of man and woman. We start from the principle that all people, irrespective of race, skin color, social status, gender and religious denomination are brothers and sisters. We propagate this idea and show it in the way our members associate with our fellowmen. For Odd Fellows, fraternity is not an empty notion, we experience this brotherhood and sisterhood on a large scale in the our communities and around the world.

- **PHILOSOPHICAL** because we have certain standards of living that govern our thoughts and conduct according to the principles of practical wisdom and are advocates of truth. While we are not a religion, all members are expected to believe in God because without faith, fraternity can be misled. Our applicants undergo dramatic induction ceremonies portraying practical teachings and imparts to each member to renew his or her life by leaving away vices and selfishness, to practice real friendship, to live a life of unfettered love by helping people in need and to always speak and stand for the truth. We believe in imparting principles that will serve as basis for thought and action and will help make an individual into a better person and create peace and harmony among men and women.

- **SERVICE-ORIENTED** because all our members meet for the sole purpose of helping out where help is needed, organizing charitable and benevolent projects that would benefit the people and community at large. For many, being an Odd Fellow means living a life of making friends and helping people.

The name itself signifies something different or out of the ordinary. It is ODD, because it endeavors to enlighten the mind without taking privileges. It conforms to Law, Religion and sound Morality without usurping the rights of the church or that of the courts. It creates a brotherhood and sisterhood and not a division among men and women. It presents life in all its fullness, through degrees, so linked together that each one receiving the degrees may broaden his or her mind and elevate his or her character.

THE HISTORY

Because the fraternity existed very long ago, "mystery of long-past ages enshrouds the origin of Odd Fellowship" and that the exact date of its first founding is "lost in the mists of antiquity". Members in the United Kingdom trace its roots back to the Medieval Trade Guilds of the 12th and 13th centuries. Others believe that there is a document in Scotland that will prove that the fraternity may have arisen in the 1500s. Some authors claim that Odd Fellowship dates 'sometime before 1650'.

There are many theories about how the fraternity first started and got its name but the generally accepted belief is that it emerged in England when a group of working men who were involved in "odd trades" and "odd jobs" banded together to form their own brotherhood. At that time, there was still no welfare state, National Health Insurance, or even trade unions, so this brotherhood of ordinary people found it necessary to group together and contribute some of their hard-earned wages to a common fund which they could use for unfortunate times such as sickness, losing a job and even death. They would work together to help each other and the unfortunate families back on their feet, whether it was rebuilding a barn that had burned or putting in a new crop after a devastating season. Such brotherhood came to be known as "Odd Fellows," said to be named by the general population who thought they were "an odd bunch of fellows" who would behave in such a selfless and seemingly impractical fashion. The group then adopted the name.

By year 1700s, there were numerous Odd Fellow organizations in England. The oldest surviving document of an Odd Fellows lodge dates back to March 12, 1748. By 1798, there were about 50 lodges in England and its environs. In 1810, a number of lodges in the Manchester area organized an "Independent Order of Odd Fellows" with the title "Manchester Unity". With their improved system, they were able to persuade other Odd Fellow organizations to join their Unity and encourage other members to establish the organization in other countries.

On April 26, 1819, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was founded in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A, by Thomas Wildey and four other members of the fraternity from England as one way of facing the effects of both a yellow fever epidemic and mass unemployment that occurred in that year.

On September 20, 1851, Odd Fellows became the first fraternal organization to accept women when it adopted the Rebekah degree based on the story of Rebekah found in the Bible and written by U.S. Vice-President Schuyler Colfax (1869-1873).

Today, there are about 12,000 lodges and nearly 600,000 members in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belize, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela.



Structural Impact

First fraternal organization to establish homes for the elderly and orphans. In the past, many of its lodges also built cemeteries for descent burials for the deceased. Many of its structures are now considered historical landmarks in many parts of the world.



Unity

American Odd Fellows was the first to reunite the North and South after the American Civil War. Members of both sides marched together side by side and gave an account of the laying of the Thomas Wildey Monument just before the American civil war ended.



Pioneer Organization

Odd Fellows played an important role in establishing the State of California, Texas and many other states. It is the first organization of any type in many cities and a large number of its lodges have completed its first 100 years of service to their communities.

IN THE PHILIPPINES

According to the book History and Geography of the Philippine Islands, "the awakening of the Filipinos to a deep sense of injustice being practiced upon them by the colonizers was the introduction of 'fraternal' societies in the Islands". It was mentioned that the Society of Odd Fellows first spread in the country in 1872 during the Spanish-American war. Many of those Army men who fought the war were said to be members of the brotherhood. The Idaho Regiment even presented to the Odd Fellows, Bay City Lodge no.71, in San Francisco a gavel made of wood from a Spanish garrote and a silver badge of the Odd Fellows Association of Manila upon their return.

In 1903, an official lodge of the Odd Fellows was instituted in the City of Manila. However, the existence of the fraternity was shattered during the Japanese occupation in the Philippines in 1941. When the war ended in 1944, the City of Manila was left in ruins and the Odd Fellows ceased to operate in the country and was never heard again.

On August 2009, majority of the members of Watchdog Committee felt the need to revive the real purposes of fraternaiism and envisioned a group that focuses on caring for our fellowmen and helping those in need. They decided to revive the Odd Fellows in the country. This was made possible when officers of the Sovereign Grand Lodge from the United States visited the country and revived the organization by instituting Watchdog Lodge no.1 in Dumaguete City on November 21, 2009. Months after, Mindanaon Lodge No.2 was instituted in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.

WHAT CAN ODD FELLOWS DO FOR YOU?



- * Enduring Friendships, a worldwide network of brothers and sisters and a warm welcome in distant countries

- * Self-improvement, leadership trainings and gaining the ability to effectively work with others

- * Community activity participation and opportunities to help others

- * A broadening of your mind and improving oneself into a better person

- * Learning to handle challenging responsibilities which can give you an inner satisfaction that money cannot buy

"A brotherhood and sisterhood succoring the needy, cheering the despondent and protecting the helpless."