

## Brother Franklin Delano Roosevelt The Most Beloved President

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945) had a rare distinction. He was so popular that people virtually “loved” him—much the same as with George Washington, but in a much more populated country. When Roosevelt died, people grieved as though they had lost a family member, and in many ways he was exactly that. Where does he rate among the country’s presidents? Scholars put him in the top three, along with Abraham Lincoln and George Washington.



Brother Roosevelt had to contend with the Great Depression and the Second World War (WW II). In addition, we need to keep in mind his personal challenge—he had been paralyzed from the waist down in 1921 as a result of contracting polio. He died 5 months before the end of WW II—he virtually worked himself to death.

He became a Freemason in 1911 at age 29 and he was highly active in the Masonic Order, including the AASR. We can reason that his greatest qualities were associated with the Masonic virtues of “relief” and “fortitude.” In the first instance he came to the rescue of millions of Americans, and indeed millions of people world-wide in ending the Great Depression. In the second instance, he essentially guided the allies through WW II using the strength and resources of the United States. His great British counterpart, Sir Winston Churchill, was also a Freemason, and there can be little doubt that this “helped” both men.

If we as Freemasons need to look for Masonic inspiration, Brother Roosevelt is at the top of the list of great Freemasons with George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. That they all chose to become Freemasons is beyond an endorsement for the Masonic Order; it is a recommendation.

What these men saw in Freemasonry was a great hope to end world strife and suffering. What the Masonic Order stood for during their times is still the same today. All that has changed is our desire to redirect ourselves to keep it strong and vibrant.

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