

*GRAND COMMANDERY
KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF VIRGINIA*



*Building and Sustaining Templar
Membership
Essential Element to Future Prosperity
2020*

FREEMASONRY'S LOST WORD¹

A down the winding stream of time,
In sweetest song and old-time rhyme,
There comes the story of a WORD,
Most powerful word man ever heard,
The NAME of HIM who only spoke
And worlds on worlds to life awoke.

This word so runs the ancient tale
Spoken behind the Temple's Veil
By High Priest's lips but once each year,
By chance was lost to tongue and ear.

From day of loss through ceaseless time
Strict search was made in every clime,
In valley low, on mountains high,
Where rivers run, where wheat-fields lie,
Through forest deep, o'er trackless main,
That man might speak that WORD again.

The ages came; the ages went.
And men, on fruitless search intent,
Forgot the voice that sang the song,
Forgot the hand that led them 'long,
Forgot the dawn that broke the day.

Long years had come, long years had gone,
When came a bright and golden dawn,
When voice with sweetest note was heard,
"The Royal Arch has found the WORD!"

To Royal Arch Masonry has been given, the WORD.
To the Knight Templar is given the INTERPRETATION
Shall we say more???



¹ Rev. J. H. Miller, *Freemasonry's Lost Word*, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alberta, 2009

FORWARD

My Fratres:

Congratulations on your election or appointment. You have been chosen because you are a leader among Sir Knights, and I applaud each of you for your dedication and devotion to Templar Masonry. Fratres like yourselves are the reason our Chivalric Fraternity has remained so strong through the years. Because of your zeal and devotion to our Fraternity, you have been chosen to serve the Templar Craft.

We have all heard “EVERY CHRISTIAN MASON SHOULD BE A KNIGHT TEMPLAR.” We have a duty to ensure the continued success of Templar Masonry in Virginia; each of us must take a personal responsibility to preserve it.

I am calling upon your zeal and devotion in assisting our Grand Commandery in making expanding membership in our Constituent Commanderies the preeminent goal of every Sir Knight—just stemming the flow of losses is not acceptable, our Commanderies must grow and personal involvement and commitment are minimum requirements for any successful membership program.

Membership is a complex problem; we have faced this problem for years with little success. What was done in the past does not necessarily work or apply today. Keeping in mind that “the only constant is change”, the Grand Commandery Membership Committee and Constituent Commanderies must refocus our approach to be successful and to keep our Commanderies growing.

In revitalizing their Membership Plan and as presented at the 2019 Mid-Atlantic Departmental Conference, the Grand Encampment plan contained **3 R’s of Membership: Recruitment, Recognition, Retention.**

RECRUITMENT is the lifeline of every Commandery. Without a dynamic membership base, we cannot reach the heights our Valiant and Magnanimous Order so richly deserves.

RECOGNITION means awards are good for competition and motivation. In every measurable way, Commanderies that utilize recognition and award programs experience higher membership loyalty and attendance, increased goal achievement, and higher self-esteem. Sir Knights who feel good about their abilities and their contributions to the Commandery are more likely to be happy, loyal, and motivated. When recognized for their efforts and achievements, they historically elevate their desire to excel.

RETENTION is perhaps the most important and hardest to achieve; we must retain our current members as well as the newly created Sir Knights. A wavering brother needs encouragement. We can turn the tide of NPD's with a friendly call or visit, informing the member of the importance of his remaining in the Commandery. Keep members informed on activities and events; show the Commandery values members' service.

So, we need to bring our efforts into concert with the Grand Encampment. This may not be easy, but with the leadership qualities you have shown, I have the utmost confidence that *WE* as a *TEAM* can accomplish this task and help ensure the strength of Commanderies and Virginia's Templar Craft.

Membership is a local issue became clear with the success of Sir Knight John Kendrick and his Membership Team in Southwest Virginia in 2019. So, the Grand Commandery of Virginia Membership Committee has been reorganized as a Standing Committee designed to achieve the membership goals established by the Grand Encampment and the Grand Commandery of Virginia Long-Range Plan. The Constituent Commanderies must reorganize and refocus their membership efforts to be successful.

Our world is ever changing, and Templar Masonry in Virginia must change as well. We must be resilient with eyes wide open to change and reality. In the words from Socrates: ***"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."***

Building and Sustaining Templar Membership must be an active guidebook, with regular updates to shape the future of Templary membership and develop effective goals and strategies. It must provide motivation, streamline communications, and keep our Commanderies growing.

So, "Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be afraid . . . for the Lord thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Deuteronomy 31:6 KJV)

Courteously,

J. Jeffrey McClelland, KCT
Grand Commander
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many writers and thinkers have tried to define Freemasonry, but it really defeats definition. It is too complex, too profound in conception, to easily expressed in words. Perhaps the simplest and best definition of all is the phrase "the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God." Our Masonic forefathers understood human needs and human aspirations. They may never have dreamed of the mindless computer which governs our lives, or the fission of matter which threatens our lives, but they understood human nature and what motivates the spirit of man. Thus, from a simple process of using stone and mortar for building they progressed to the most important of life's functions, the building of character. -- Louis L. Williams

The message from Sir Knight Jeffrey N. Nelson, Most Eminent Grand Master 2018-2021, was noticeably clear: Membership is our highest priority and it is the second and third highest priorities. To this end, this Guidebook was conceived as an answer to one of the problems of Virginia Templar Masonry—the production of interested Masons by means of the **3 R's of Membership: Recruitment, Recognition, Retention**.

This Guidebook could not be written without the efforts of the numerous people who served on Grand Encampment Committees and their products:

1. Grand Encampment Membership Committee *Guidance for Grand Subordinate and Constituent Commandery Membership Committees* and the "TOOLBOX"
2. Building and Sustaining Templar Membership
3. Guidance for Membership: How to Develop and Effective Membership Program
4. Guidelines for Publicity and Public Relations
5. Manual of Public Ceremonies
6. Guidelines for Religious Activities
7. Guidelines for the Junior Officers of a Commandry

Sir Knight Wilber M. Brucher, Most Eminent Grand Master 1964-1967, set the "*Charting the Course*" during the 49th Triennial with a concise description of Templar's structure and purposes—its committees, its aspirations, its exemplification of Christian Masonry. Its information is as relevant to today's Commanderies of Knights Templar as it was when first published.

Stephen R. Covey's books "*The 7 Highly Effective People*" and "*Principle-Centered Leadership*" have inspired people meeting the world's changing challenges and personal and interpersonal effectiveness as leaders. Dr Covey offers insights on how to increase quality and productivity, and an appreciation of the importance of building personal and professional relationships—both needed if we are to achieve our membership goals.

The Craft of Power, by R. G. H. Siu, is an exposition for those aspiring to be effective leaders. Dr Siu provides insights on vision, how to build credibility, demonstrate integrity, and effectively communicate to lead change in a dynamic world.

Mentoring is a reciprocal and collaborative relationship for the purpose of the mentee's growth, learning, and development. The Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F. & A.M., *Mentor's Manual, Key to Freemasonry's Growth* by Allen E. Robert, and The Virginia-Pilot of July 21, 2020, article *8 Qualities of a Great Mentor* by the Young Entrepreneur Council emphasize organizational goals, culture, and advice on personal development for mentors and mentees alike.

Material has been freely borrowed from the above sources in the preparation of this Guidebook. Credit has not been directly made in each case for the desire to limit the text as much as possible and to maintain continuity of thought for the benefit of those who will use this Guidebook.

Remember the words of Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes in *Don Quixote*: "*By the street of By-and-By, one arrives at the house of Never.*" In other words, if you are content to do nothing, then nothing will happen.

Of all the fraternal organizations that mankind has formulated over the millennia, none are as magnificent as ours. Reflect upon that, Sir Knight, and at once our hearts are filled with pride. And in no better manner can we emulate the great historical truths and triumphs our Order stands for than in the respect we generate for our beloved fraternity. A Templar's work is never over, so be vigilant in seeing that there are no impostors from among the workers of the Chivalric Quarries of Freemasonry. Walk uprightly before God and man, acting upon the square and on the level and search for wisdom and understanding

Stress Fratres' membership is not only valuable to the Commandery, but to him, and that we want him to remain among our number. Be personally involved in Templar activities, be visible in uniform, set the example, be positive, be proud to be a Knight Templar and others will want to be identified with our "team." Attend conferrals of Degrees in your Symbolic Lodge and Royal Arch Chapters and bring at least two Royal Arch and Commandery petitions with you always.

"Faith begins where reason sinks exhausted."

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CHAPTER I ESSENTIAL ELEMENT TO FUTURE PROSPERITY

Introduction

Manpower is Templar Masonry's greatest asset; membership and retention are the key indicators by which the progress of our Magnanimous Order is judged. A growing membership shows a healthy condition: it means Masons are being attracted to become Knights Templar and present members are anxious to retain their membership in our Commanderies.

Templary strength comes through increased manpower. As a blood transfusion injects new life into the body, so does the "new blood" of Templar candidates furnish new life to our Commanderies. Securing candidates who are ready, willing, and able to take an active part in the ranks of our Order is vital to our continued viability.

Our world is ever changing around us and Templary is changing with it. Today's Templary is not the same as our Father's Templary; it is not even the same Templary as when you took your knighthood vows. Masons are busy people and need to be convinced that time and talent to a Knights Templar Commandery has value.

Prior to his installation as our Grand Master for the 68th Triennial, Sir Knight Jeffrey N. Nelson shared some of his "random thoughts" on membership:

Every Grand, Subordinate and Constituent Commandery must have a membership committee that is active and held accountable for results – What gets measured gets done.

Must focus on the three R's – Recruitment, Retention and Restoration. Some commanderies focus all their efforts on recruitment and neglect retention and restoration.

Make conclaves interesting and educational.

Communicate with members. Never issue a demit or suspension without **PERSONAL** contact.

If we do lose someone, conduct an **EXIT INTERVIEW**.

The Most Eminent Grand Master's message is clear: "Membership is the #1 highest priority for the 68th Triennium. It is also the 2nd and 3rd highest priority." To this end, today's Membership Campaign has been organized by the Grand Encampment of

Knights Templar U.S.A. and the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia. It started with an evaluation of the situation and adopting an overall plan.

Organizing the Membership Committee

Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of U.S.A. The Most Eminent Grand Master charged his Grand Encampment Membership Team with the responsibility to develop a full blown program that will assist others in achieving the all-important goal of reversing the downward trend in our membership numbers that has plagued the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar for too many years. By General Order No. 5 (dated March 27, 2019), he ordered:

Every Grand Commandery shall appoint a Membership Chairman and Membership Committee in each Grand Jurisdiction.

Every Eminent Commander shall appoint a Membership Chairman and Membership Committee in each Commandery.

Membership Committees shall implement those membership development initiatives advanced by the Grand Encampment's Committee on Membership.

Membership Committees shall report their activities and progress to their appointing authority and Grand Encampment's Committee on Membership periodically on forms developed for this purpose by the Grand Encampment's Committee on Membership.

Grand Encampment Membership Committee. The Grand Encampment Membership Committee leads the Grand Encampment's 68th Triennial Membership Campaign and provides direction, support, and assistance to Grand Commandery Jurisdictions and Subordinate or Constituent Commanderies Membership Campaign based on the three R's:

Recruitment – The lifeline of any organization is built upon new members. Without a new base of membership, we cannot reach the heights that Templar Masonry so richly deserves. The Grand Encampment Membership Committee intends to present a workable, viable recruitment program that is a time-tested tool that works.

Recognition – Many of our Sir Knights receive other Masonic awards worthy of being recognized at our monthly Conclaves. Make a concerted effort to learn both the recipients' name and the award. Then ensure that this individual attend your next Conclave and have a knowledgeable member make a presentation to him West of the Altar. Folks love hearing their names. Find a way to accommodate this phenomenon.

Retention – Often, the only thing a wavering brother needs is encouragement. We can turn the tide of NPD's with a friendly call or visit, informing the member of the importance of his remaining with the York Rite. A phone tree can do wonders in keeping members informed and teaching them that the York Rite has value for them.

Grand Encampment Department Commander Mid-Atlantic. The Grand Encampment Department Commander Mid-Atlantic is appointed for planning or conducting a Department meeting and attending Grand Commandery Conclaves. The Department Commander Mid-Atlantic assist the Most Eminent Grand Master in Mid-Atlantic matters and represents the Grand Master or Special Proxy on all Mid-Atlantic occasions the Grand Master is not present. Templar Membership is one of his major focus areas and he is a critical member of the Communication and Reporting Network between Grand Encampment and Grand Commanderies.

Grand Encampment Virginia State Coordinator. In general, Grand Encampment Virginia State Coordinator assist the Grand Encampment Department Commander Mid-Atlantic, Grand Encampment Committees, and the Grand Commandery of Virginia in publicizing and promoting Grand Encampment programs, activities, and events within the Grand Commandery of Virginia. The Virginia State Coordinator is not to usurp the duties of other Grand Encampment, Grand Commandery, nor Constituent Commandery Officers or Committees but he can provide Grand Commandery and Constituent Commandery needed support to Knight Templar Membership initiatives, Charities, Membership, York Rite Leadership, etc. He provides the Grand Encampment, via the Mid-Atlantic Department Commander, a report of his activities in July every year. Along with the Mid-Atlantic Department Commander, he is a critical member of the Communication and Reporting Network between Grand Encampment and Grand Commanderies

Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia. As Stewards of the Grand Commandery, the Grand Dais Officers have the responsibility to provide planning and direction supported by the Grand Commandery Standing and Special Committees. Membership Enhancement is the most important strategic and operational program in all levels of Templar Governance: Grand Encampment of Knights Templar U.S.A., Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia, and Virginia's Constituent Commanderies. Membership touches and affects everything Templar Masonry. The Grand Commandery of Virginia is committed to the membership goals established by the Grand Encampment and the Grand Commandery of Virginia Long-Range Plan. Increasing membership growth must be a local effort—the Constituent Commanderies must renew their commitment to the preservation and growth of the Templar Craft in Virginia. The Grand Commandery of Virginia Membership Committee consists of a State Coordinator/Chairman, five (5) Membership members who will serve as Chairman of a Membership Team), and three (3) or more members on each team. Their focus will be

within their assigned geographical area and include fulling the 3 R's of membership and assisting Constituent Commanderies in gaining recognition by them participating in Citizenship/Public Affair matters.

Jurisdictional Membership Committee Chairman. The Chairman of the Grand Commandery Membership Committee is the major advisor to the Grand Commander of Virginia on Membership and Citizenship/Public Affair planning, direction, support, and reporting matters.

Grand Commandery Membership Teams. The Grand Commandery of Virginia Membership Committee consists of five (5) Membership Teams of three (3) or more qualified Sir Knights with proven dedication to the issue of Templar Membership. The Membership Teams are based on distance between Constituent Commanderies rather than Chivalric Districts. All Membership Teams focus on both Constituent Commandery and Chivalric District membership planning needs: recruiting; presenting Masonic papers in Symbolic Lodges, Royal Arch Chapters, Constituent Commanderies, Ladies and Youth Organizations; helping with the Orders of Knighthood, Knight Templar Festivals or Knight Templar Schools; Patriotic and Civic activities; and other activities and events.

Southwest Membership Team

Lynn Commandery No. 9	Marion
Johnson Commandery No. 14	Abingdon
Clinch Valley Commandery No. 20	Tazewell
New River Valley Commandery No. 32	Christiansburg

Northwest Membership Team

Harrisonburg Commandery No. 10	Harrisonburg
Winchester Commandery No. 12	Winchester
Luray Commandery No. 19	Front Royal

Northeast Membership Team

Old Dominion Commandery No. 11	Alexandria
Piedmont Commandery No. 26	Ashburn
Arlington Commandery No. 29	Arlington
Turner Ashby Commandery No. 35	Warrenton

Eastern Membership Team

Center Group

Fredericksburg Commandery No.1	Fredericksburg
Richmond Commandery No. 2	Richmond
Appomattox Commandery No. 6	Petersburg
Penn-Neck Commandery No. 33	Urbanna

Southern Group

Portsmouth Commandery No. 5
Grice Commandery No. 16
Hampton Commandery No. 17
Virginia Beach Commandery No. 36

Portsmouth
Norfolk
Poquoson
Virginia Beach

Valley Membership Team

Charlottesville Commandery No. 3
DeMolay Commander No. 4
Stevenson Commandery No. 8
Bayard Commandery No. 15
Alleghany Commandery No. 23
Moomaw Commandery No. 27

Charlottesville
Altavista
Waynesboro
Roanoke
Clifton Forge
Lexington

Constituent Commanderies: Eminent Commanders occupy positions of responsibility and leadership in the Grand Commandery of Virginia. You are on the tip of the spear within your Commandery; it is important for you **LEAD** in revitalizing and reinvigorating Templar Membership.

Every Eminent Commander must establish a Membership Committee of qualified Sir Knights of proven dedication to the issue of Templar Membership. The Membership Committee Chairman should appoint a Chairman for Recruitment, a Chairman for Recognition, and a Chairman for Retention. The Membership Committee members are Constituent Ambassadors and be accountable to meet the goals set forth in the Grand Encampment Knights Templar U.S.A. Membership Vision and the Grand Commandery of Virginia Long- Range Plan: *The Swords of Progress: A Vision for the Future*.

Membership initiatives must be “local” in character (Commandery and/or District) to allow for accommodating the specific needs of the jurisdiction. There must be an effective system to measure and evaluate membership performance along with trends at the Commandery and District levels; constant communication must be kept with the members of the Grand Commandery Membership Team and information shared between both.

Eminent Commanders must make conclaves interesting and educational. Focus on membership enhancement efforts. Communicate with members. Ascertain why Knights are not attending Stated/Special Conclaves and Templar Festivals and other events.

Never issue a demit or suspension without **PERSONAL** contact; and if we do lose someone, conduct an **EXIT INTERVIEW**. Work toward retaining our current members as well as creating new Sir Knights.

Membership Responsibility

Membership is a personal responsibility. Each Sir Knight must take a personal responsibility to preserve Templar Masonry in Virginia. Expanding membership must be the preeminent goal of every Sir Knight – just stemming the flow of losses is not acceptable. Solicitation is not only allowed, it is encouraged!!!

“Audentes Fortnae Juvat,” “Fortune Favors the Bold.” Project an image of vibrancy, vitality, and vigor, in and out of our Asylums. Make Templar Masonry a meaningful Christian Order that has the respect and admiration of the public at large and especially our non-Templar Masons and Companions.

Mission Statement

The Grand Encampment Membership Committee will administer a campaign designed to achieve the membership goals as established by the Most Eminent Grand Master from time to time. We will do so by providing specific programs that will assist the Grand, Constituent and Subordinate Commanderies with Recruitment, Retention and Restoration of Sir Knights.

Vision Statement

By the end of this 68th Triennium (2021), the Grand Encampment of Knight Templars will have achieved an increase of at least 5% in new "knighting's" that year (Recruitment), suffered no more than a 2% loss in total membership from the number of demits and suspensions (Retention), and realized at least a 2% gain in the number of Sir Knights restored from suspension or demit (Restoration).

Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia is committed to attracting and retaining Christian Masons of high quality, who strive for self-improvement and the opportunity to make a positive difference in Templar Masonry and their community

The “ToolBox” – Developing an Effective Membership Program

The secret to a successful membership program is planning, planning, planning, then education. To be successful in obtaining and holding new members, converting inactive members to active one, there must be a reason for these men to become involved. Boring meetings, ritual alone especially poorly done, unfulfilling activities do not accomplish a desire to participate.

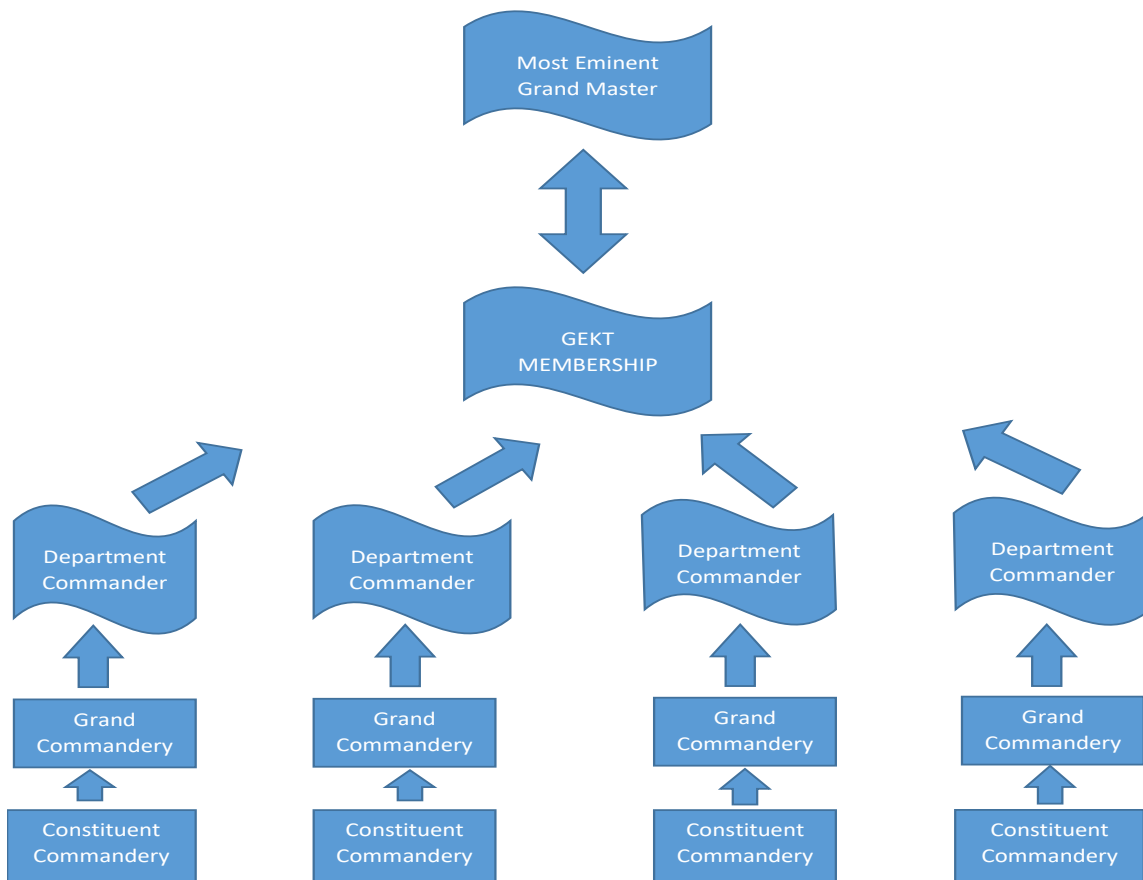
The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar “**ToolBox**” is a series of ideas for:

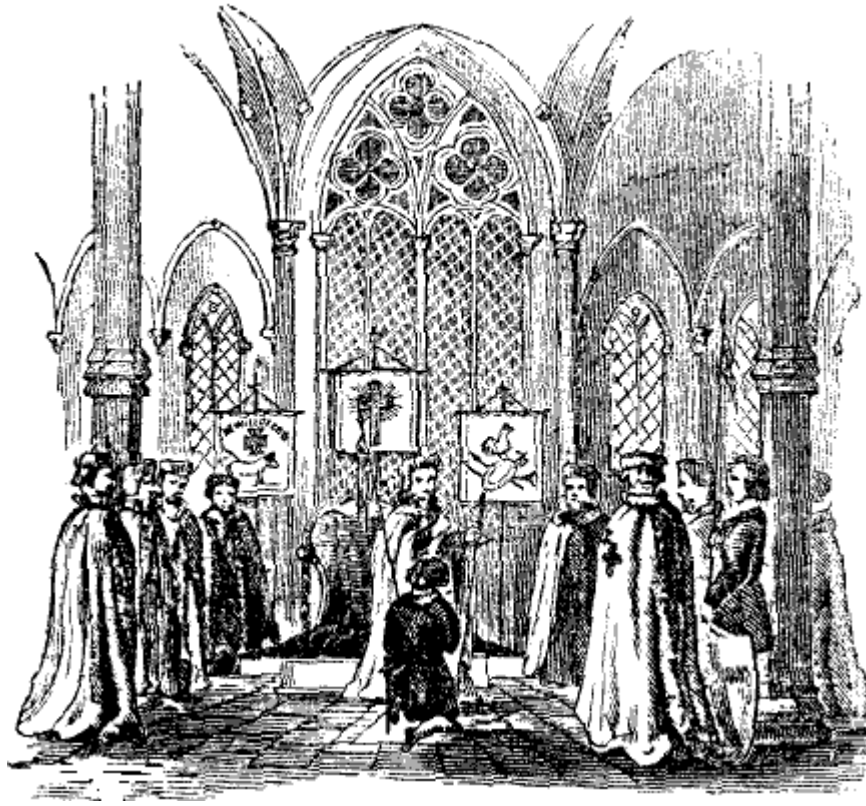
Recruiting and Retaining Members
Establishing a Member Committee

The 3 R's of Membership for Recruitment – Recognition – Retention
Who is Responsibility for Membership?
Power Point Presentations on Membership
“Three Minute Drill” on Membership

Communication -- Reporting

Constituent Commander Membership Chairmen will report membership activities to their Grand Commandery Membership Team at least twice a year (June and December). The Chairmen of the Grand Commandery Membership Teams will collate the Constituent Commandery reports with their comments and forward them the Chairman of the Grand Commandery Membership Committee. Twice a year (January and July) the Grand Commandery Membership Chairman will collate all reports from the Chairmen of the Grand Commandery Membership Teams along with his comments and forward them to the Mid-Atlantic Department Commander. The Department Commander collates the Grand Commandery reports from the Mid-Atlantic Department and forwards them to the Grand Encampment of Knight Templar Membership Committee.





CHAPTER II DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Introduction

The first step in developing an effective Membership Campaign is PLANNING, the first principle of leadership. It is the essential difference between success and failure. Planning is a necessity, not a luxury. Membership is a local issue and the Grand Commandery Membership Committee and Membership Teams must be focused on both Constituent Commandery and Chivalric District membership planning needs.

“It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.” Being prepared is one thing, but this quote is asking you to take it to the next level. In the story of Noah and the Flood (Genesis 6:5 – 9:29), Noah was tipped off the flood was coming, but life does not always work that way. You must assume that something bad is going to happen at some point in the future. The future has been here for several decades: Grand Commandery of Virginia has lost several Constituent Commanderies and all the Commanderies have lost far too many members.

The Grand Commandery of Virginia is committed to the membership goals of the Grand Encampment, the Grand Commandery Membership has been reorganized as a Standing Committee, and the Grand Commandery Long-Range Plan provide objectives and actions for each of the 3 R’s. Increasing membership growth is a local effort—the Constituent Commanderies must **“Begin Planning Now”**:

- First, identify the purpose of the plan—begin with a critical analysis of current conditions and causes.
- Next, set goals that support the plan.
- Set your objectives and determine necessary strategies to accomplish the goals.
- Define the tasks and responsibilities—remember people like to be included.

When effectively used, planning harnesses energies to smooth the transitions brought on by change. Planning gives the membership a sense of security and builds confidence in both the membership and their leaders.

Inspirational: Leadership is the Number One Quality

In the past, we have focused our efforts on Masonic Education, which is a lot like Masonic Management. Masonic Leaders talk constantly about the decline in our various organizations: Symbolic Lodges, Royal Arch Chapters, Knight Templar Commanderies,

Scottish Rite Valleys, and every other group that bases its membership on being a Mason. We have tried many different approaches to the collective problem, but the decline in our membership rolls continues.

“People visit a wise man complaining about the same problems repeatedly. One day, he decided to tell them a joke and they all roared with laughter. After a few minutes, he told them the same joke and only a few of them smiled. Then he told the same joke for a third time, but no one laughed or smiled anymore. The wise man smiled and said: ‘You can’t laugh at the same joke over and over. So why are you always crying about the same problem?’” So why are we complaining about the same old membership problem?

I am convinced to strengthen our Chivalric organizations; we must focus more on **Templar Leadership**. Not all managers are leaders, but all leaders have management skills. “Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things. Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall.” (Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, page 101)

Templar Leadership is not a position—it is a choice. Great leaders are never satisfied with traditional practice, static thinking, conventional wisdom, or common performance. They have the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, accepts responsibility, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. No one sets out to be a leader but becomes one by the quality of his actions and the integrity of his intent. Demanding work, profound dedication, and encouragement toward others are what entitle an individual to be a leader be it in a Constituent Commandery, Chivalric District, or Grand Commandery of Virginia.

Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher from the city of Ephesus on the coast of Asia Minor, said: “A man’s character is his fate...and the destiny of the led is bound to the leader.” This is a profound and potentially poignant philosophical observation. In basic and direct terms, it simply means a person's achievements and outcome will be determined by their own 'self' meaning and how they conducted themselves and co-existed with their fellow man. Every Knight Templar at one time or another as already, or will in the future, serve as someone’s example of a Christian Mason and Freemasonry, what it is and what it teaches, when we interact with others—within or out of the Asylum. The thoughts on Templar Leadership comes from *Building and Sustaining Templar Membership*, Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the U.S.A., May 2002, and *DARE*

TO BE DIFFERENT - Thoughts on increasing Lodge Attendance, by Jordan S. Levitan, P.M.
Norfolk Lodge No. 1 from the February 1987 Short Talk Bulletin of the Masonic Service
Association:

A Positive Attitude. Many agree that the success of any project begins with a positive attitude; some call it a “can do” spirit. Leaders in any organization possess this trait and display it frequently. It is a contagious spirit, and usually becomes a virtue of the entire leadership team. If the Officers or members of a Commandery believe they are not able to contribute to the membership goals then remind them the words of Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes in Don Quixote, “By the street of By-and-By, one arrives at the house of Never”. In other words, “If you keep on doing the things that you have been doing, then you’ll continue to get exactly what you’ve been getting!” If the Templar leader is willing to throw himself into Membership Campaign to recruit Christian Masons and to hold the interests of fellow Templars by giving them work to do, he will find that others will instinctively follow his leadership and give him their support.

Take Advantage of the Skills Available. We all know Sir Knights in each Commandery who have great skills and talents; men who are forward thinkers, innovative managers with a practical approach to analysis, and reduce complex issues to understandable terms. Sir Knights enjoy being asked, so ask them to become a part of the Membership Campaign, it can use their skills and talents to make a significant difference. If you can get the Ladies, you will get the Sir Knights, so include the Ladies in social event planning, especially the Ladies of the Social Order of the Beauceant.

An Effective Implementation Plan. Planning is critical to Grand Commandery and the Constituent Commanderies’ success. Simply put, planning provides a road map that describes how the various Membership Committees and Teams executes its Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives, and sets measures of effectiveness. It is a tool to help better focus on membership programs, set realistic goals and objectives, identify current strengths and weaknesses relative to major competitors, and to effectively use resources and time. It is a tool to provide motivation, streamline communications, and keep the membership programs moving in the right direction. Develop a new list of all the activities that will be needed to make the event a success. Templary is full of projects which will benefit any community where a Commandery is located. Each Commandery should select at least one Templar project and adopt it for its own

... (this year) and each succeeding year. Any leader with the will to succeed can go over a checklist of dozens of Templar projects and get things “off-center,” if he will just dare to be different.

Selling Templary. The bloodline of any Commandery starts in Symbolic Lodges and continues through the Royal Arch Chapters. It is Freemasonry – a progressive science; a system of ethics wherein moral precepts are taught by lessons based on the allegorical use of the operative craftsman's tools. Symbolic Freemasonry prepares the candidate in the use of symbolic stone for that Spiritual Temple. Capitular and Cryptic Freemasonry instructs the candidate in the allegorical use of additional operative tools of the craftsman. Finally, Chivalric Freemasonry instructs the candidate in the allegorical use of the weapons and the discharge of the duties of knighthood whereby the Moral Temple, built and restored in Symbolic, Capitular and Cryptic Freemasonry, can be defended and beatified by the precepts of Christianity. There are many craftsmen in the quarries of Freemasonry, be it in Symbolic or Capitular/Cryptic quarries. To build a high-quality Templar organization with lofty standards, the key is to focus on **Quality**. Masonry “takes good men and makes them better” — look for the inner-qualities of the man and educate him in a moral and ethical way of life. The “one-on-one” sales technique has historically been the most effective. Prepare an updated Commandery membership roster, a description of its activities, family involvement, community projects, and the benefits of joining our Christian Masonic Order. Know something about our philanthropies. What were the benefits that inspired you to join? Share them. Also, provide recognition to the Sir Knights that are successful in gaining new members or restorations.

Today's Relevance. A nationally known religious leader once said that “When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities.” How simple, and yet how profound. This is the spirit of Knight Templars today! There are many Masons that will enjoy and appreciate membership in this great Order. All you must do is tell them what we stand for and ask them to join. Let us show everyone that we are as good as we say we are! We live in an achievement-oriented society that views ambiguous programs with skepticism. Mediocrity no longer suffices. Its time Templar leaders stopped saying something should be done and begin saying I am going to do something about it. The call to the

Commander is the same today as it was when the candidates petitioned in droves: to create an atmosphere for intellectual and spiritual growth so that the members know from experience they are missing something by not attending Knight Templar Conclaves. Merely to suggest programs that others find helpful is only part of the answer. What may work for one commandery may not necessarily work for another. Templar Masonry cries out for an enlightened membership responsive to the Commander who carefully lays his designs upon the Trestleboard. The approach, therefore, includes preparing the members as well as the Commander. There are no shortcuts.

The Dragon of Change. “The Chinese have a saying that ‘change is a dragon.’ There are ways to respond to that dragon. You can ignore him and hope he goes away, but no matter how many times you tell yourself that he is not there or how much you wish he would leave, the dragon of change remains. If you continue to ignore him, he will eat you! You can try to control the dragon of change, try to force him into a path of your own choosing. Push him and pull him. But the dragon is powerful and will not go where you want him to go. He will ultimately knock you down and eat you. But, if you ride the dragon of change, you can avoid his lethal powers. You can survive; you can even prosper. ‘Accept change; constantly anticipate and adapt to it, and always take advantage of the opportunities it brings. This is the strategy we must embrace.’
“(General Charles C. Krulak, USMC, *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 1996)

Format for Establishing an Effective Membership Team

No Commandery can rest on its laurels or past accomplishments. We are living in a rapidly ever-changing environment that demands a realistic approach to the whole membership problem. The very existence of Templar Masonry depends on a strong, vibrant, and dedicated membership. The Grand Commandery of Virginia Membership Committee is now a Standing Committee and every Constituent Commandery must have a Membership Committee as one of its Standing Committees. Membership Committees should be made up of active, dedicated Sir Knights who have demonstrated their willingness and ability to undertake a Membership Campaign.

We must all remember that membership is not just the responsibility of a committee or our Recorders but is highly dependent upon the participation and support of **EVERY SIR KNIGHT**. The Grand Commander has appointed a Membership Chairman and Sir Knights to Membership Teams for Recruitment, Retention, Restoration and Masonic/Public Relations. The following are suggestions how such membership committees or teams can be structured and the duties of its several members at the Constituent Commandery level.

Qualifications of Committee Members

- Should be well known and respected within their community.
- Committed to the project and able to devote the time and efforts to support this project.
- Should be computer literate, knowledgeable and able to work with Membership Management System (MMS).
- Be active with the Blue lodges and Royal Arch Chapters and have a good relationship with the Grand Lodge of Virginia and the Grand Royal Arch Chapter.

Membership Chairman Duties

- Recruit active Sir Knights who are willing and able to undertake assigned duties.
- Organize and conduct monthly or at least Quarterly Membership meetings.
- Be himself fully trained in utilization of the Membership Management System (MMS).
- Conduct regular training sessions with his full committee.
- Work with the Grand Commandery Membership Committee Chairman and members of the Membership Team and delegated Constituent Commandery members to set attainable goals.
- Regularly communicate with the Grand Commandery Membership Team and Constituent Commandery officers and their respective membership committees.
- Submit regular reports to the Grand Commander and update Grand Commandery websites and/or publications with support material that can be utilized by all.
- Submit regular reports to the Grand Commandery Membership Chairman and Membership Team and to coordinate with the Department and Grand Encampment Membership committees as required.
- Assist with the development of future membership planning.

Recruitment Chairman Duties

Every Virginia Constituent Commandery must recognize the need for a continuous, aggressive effort to attract and bring in new Master Masons of outstanding character to fill our ranks. This requires a commitment to reach out beyond our Royal Arch Chapters and even our Blue lodges to our families, friends, and business associates, encouraging them to become members of our fraternity. By our actions and associations, we should

always be ready to demonstrate the relevance and pride in being a Masonic Knight Templar.

- Set an annual goal to recruit new Sir Knights and communicate that goal throughout the community. (This number should exceed the previous year's numbers by at least 5-6% of your existing membership numbers)
- Provide every Sir Knight with the tools necessary for approaching and recruiting new members (print materials, brochures, and suggested scripts for discussion).
- Develop and implement regular Member Referral events such as inviting prospective new members to a dinner or evening where promotional videos or PowerPoints may be presented that demonstrate what it is to be a Knight Templar.
- Regularly monitor Membership Management System (MMS) for his community, closely watching the results of each Constituent Commandery regarding new knightings as compared to the goals that have been set for new membership.
- Work closely with the Masonic/Public Relations sub-chair to jointly promote our fraternity and our charity.
- Upon request, provide membership promotion/educational programs for other Masonic bodies.
- Closely follow and communicate with all member referrals, inviting them to join in on any open events such as dinner before stated meetings.

Retention/Mentoring Chairman Duties

Retention is perhaps our most important membership asset—it should be a constant (7 /365 day) effort—we must retain our current members as well as the newly created Sir Knights. It is equally vital that we must always strive to keep the members we currently have, making certain that we give them a reason for maintaining their membership and a desire to remain active. Over the past several decades the losses we have suffered from demits and suspensions for non-payment of dues (NPDs) have far exceeded the number of new Sir Knights that we have brought in. Retention also involves keeping our Sir Knights gainfully involved from the first moment they have passed through the Order of the Temple; show the Commandery values members' service.

- Reduce demits and suspensions to a goal of less than two percent (2%) of your existing membership.

- Implement a call program to check on the welfare of those Sir Knights who have not been in attendance for some time or have suffered from some illness or malady, always encouraging them to come back to your meetings.
- Check with the Grand Recorder and Membership Management System (MMS) on a regular basis to determine what fraters remain non-payment of dues (NPD) and need to be contacted.
- Develop and implement a simple report on all contact that is made with NPD Members that records their comments, commitments and confirms their best contact information.
- Increase continuous and timely communication with all members.
- Ask members how they wish to be contacted, i.e. email addresses.
- Contact those Sir Knights who have remained non-payment of dues (NPD), preferably by telephone or in person, email, or USPS to remind them how much we value their continued membership and timely payment of dues.
- When making this call, ask them if there is any reason for this overdue payment or if there is anything that we can do to assist them.
- Always attempt to interview those members who have indicated that they wish to demit or have been recently suspended for non-payment of dues (NPD) to determine their reasons for dropping their membership.
- Develop and implement a plan to provide for the measurement of member satisfaction.
- Review existing means of communication for effectiveness. We need to communicate to persuade our Symbolic Lodge Brethren and Royal Arch Companions that Templary Masonry stands for the highest ideas of Christianity. It represents the noblest in humanity; it reveals Christianity in action!
- Develop new ways of communication, i.e. email blasts, Calling Post, Constant Contact, or effective websites. Establishing and developing effective communication is important to be heard and change your environment according to your own thoughts. No one will guess what you want or what you think if you do not tell them, and nothing is going to change if you do not propose a change.

Mentoring the new candidate starts with his journey through the Orders, carefully explaining all that he has seen and heard, even if he has an innate ability to absorb this new knowledge. It requires that we should always work to fulfill their expectations as best we can, adding new light to their lives as a Sir Knight.

- Implement an effective mentor program and provide for a follow up of program effectiveness.

- Make personal contact with inactive members to determine their needs and to further explore members' needs and desires as well as checking on the fulfillment of their expectations of membership.
- Inform them of current and future activities in hopes of increasing participation.
- Schedule quality activities for members on a regular basis, provide educational programs.
- Train a cadre of capable Sir Knights in what it is to be an effective Mentor.

Restoration Chairman Duties

This again, is one of those areas of membership where we seem to have failed almost completely. It is almost as though a rule of "out of sight, out of mind" prevails. We have spent a great deal of time and effort to recruit new members only to let them fall by the wayside as a demit or suspension for non-payment of dues (NPD). It is imperative that we make an effort to contact them and revisit their reasoning and to determine if there is anything we can do to rectify or fulfill those hopes or desires that we have failed them by. We have lost far too many members to suspension for non-payment of dues. Do not just write them a letter; pick up the phone or, better yet, stop by their homes and make personal contact. The Commander and some other Sir Knight who is personally acquainted with the former member should arrange to visit him in person at his home. Make the case for reinstatement and sell him the benefits of restoring his membership. BE POSITIVE!!! You may find yourself pleasantly surprised at the reception with which you will meet!

- Set a Restoration goal of two percent (2%) or more of your Commandery membership numbers for the year.
- Ensure that the data on suspended members is current, accurate and available to the Membership committee (can be found on Membership Management System).
- Work with the elected leadership to determine if an agreeable long-amnesty program can or should be implemented.
- Implement a program for contacting those Sir Knights who have been suspended over the past several years. Personal contact through a personal visit or by telephone is most preferable. Keep good accurate records of information gathered during these visits/phone calls.
- Recruit and train a Restoration Team.
- Make regular reports back to the Membership Chairman and the Commandery.

Masonic/Public Relations Chairman Duties

Creating and maintaining a good working relationship with our Blue lodges, the Grand Lodge, Scottish Rite, Shrine Temples, Ladies', and Youth Groups is vital to the success of this program. We should always work with them to demonstrate how York Rite Masonry and the Knight Templars can be used as a retention tool for these other organizations. If we can convince them of the relevance of what it is to be a Knight Templar, that we have a great and long heritage to follow, then we can be more successful in attracting new members. Putting forth a good public appearance will always serve our fraternity best. We should always demonstrate our commitment and support of the communities we live in and thereby attract potential new members.

- Regularly support and interact with all Masonic organizations within your area Blue lodges.
- Develop a Lodge Ambassador program for every Blue lodge within your area.
- Provide them with the training and materials they can use to promote and educate our Masonic Brethren who are not yet Knight Templars on the reasons why they should join our ranks.
- Encourage all Sir Knights to become more active with their home lodge, to lead by their example what it is to become a Sir Knight.
- Coordinate your calendars with other Masonic bodies.
- Hold joint meetings with all other Masonic bodies to determine how we can support one another with our membership numbers and programs.
- Plan and host dedicated events to honor the leaders of your Blue Lodges, Royal Arch Chapters, Scottish Rite Valley, and Shrine thereby encouraging more cooperation among our entire Masonic family.
- Participate in public parades, memorial services, Veterans' events as a unit displaying your Beauseant and uniforms.
- Provide honor guards for officer installations or official events of any other Masonic Bodies.

Commitment, Empowerment, and Accountability

It is imperative that every Constituent Commander and **every** Sir Knight should be absolutely committed to the welfare and growth of our overall membership. We took an oath that we would find all good men and true who might apply and whom we find worthy and make them better men. Now is the time when we must keep this in mind and take up the challenge to bring our fraternity back to its previous strength and numbers. We have been charged with looking out for our membership. We have been empowered by our Grand Master and strengthened by the means to accomplish this.

Recruitment

Encourage all Sir Knights to assist with membership development. Stress that it is important to recruit new members into our ranks as Knight Templars. Be visible; wear a Knights Templar lapel pin and your Commandery name badge; be a knowledgeable Mason; and above all, be positive, be proud to be a Knight Templar. Always attend conferrals of Degrees in your Symbolic Lodge and Royal Arch Chapters and bring at least two Royal Arch and Commandery petitions with you. Volunteer to teach catechisms and otherwise mentor newly raised Master Masons. We all can attest to the fraternal bonds that we developed with our coaches and how greatly we were influenced by our mentors in the Craft. We should utilize our coaching and mentoring talents by promoting the Craft in all its forms to the new Master Masons.

- Implement an effective program to attract new candidates and to reach out beyond your existing Masonic family in doing so.
- Develop a referral program for prospective new members that can be followed by your Membership committee.
- Plan for a "Prospect" night or event, inviting any new prospects.
- Track and assist all new prospects through your Blue Lodge and Royal Arch Chapters as they continue their journey to becoming a Masonic Knight Templar.
- Make regular reports to the Grand Commandery Membership Team on your efforts and progress.

Retention

Strive to make personal contact with all members who have not been in regular attendance and/or have not yet paid their current dues to determine how you can assist them. Emphasize how much we value their continued membership. Offer them an opportunity to participate in the Commandery. Committees are a sure way to revitalizing your Commandery. Consider appointing both new and old members to serve on your Commander's Attendance Committee/Telephone Committee, Transportation Committee, Sickness and Distress Committee, Program Committee, Stewards Committee, Recreation Committee, and so on.

- Mentor new Sir Knights
- Contact and survey those Sir Knights who are behind in dues or have indicated a desire to demit.
- Conduct regular surveys of all Sir Knights to determine if we are fulfilling their expectations or what we can do to improve this.

- Make certain that your programs and stated meetings are interesting and educational.

Restoration

We should not simply forget those members we have lost in the past few years due to non-payment of dues (NPD), loss of interest or personal issues that prevented them from continuing their membership. There may have been valid reasons for his leaving our ranks, but if we have shown him that we still care about him and that we have improved on whatever it was that caused him to lose interest, then there is always a chance that we can bring him back. Stress his membership is not only valuable to the Commandery, but to him, and that we want him to remain among our number.

- Contact inactive and suspended members.
- Work with your leadership to develop an acceptable amnesty program to bring back recently suspended members.

Budget Considerations

Some of these suggested programs may need some funding to make them successful. The Membership committee should identify these costs and work with the incoming Grand Commander to include these numbers in his proposed budget. Often, we need some financial support as much as we need the commitment of time and effort from our fraters to succeed in growing our fraternity.

Solicitation is not only allowed, it is encouraged!

To communicate well with another person, you need to account for hundred percent (100%) of everything that is going on.” In other words, good communication is needed for our Commanderies to be successful and the most critical element of good communications is being present, being fully aware of what is going on in the Asylums, District events, and at Grand Commandery. Being present will make all other elements of good communications possible. Remember: “*Audentes Fortnae Juvat*,” “Fortune Favors the Bold.” Project an image of vibrancy, vitality, and vigor, in and out our Asylums. Make Templar Masonry a meaningful Christian Order that has the respect and admiration of the public at large and our non-Templar Masons and Companions in particular. The sublime principles and the foundation of strong Christian values make this Magnanimous Order stand for something of incredible value.

Substantial increases in attendance are possible provided the members of the Commandery dare to be different. This does not imply the need to experiment with so called up-to-date methodology. On the contrary, it requires stimulating those members we already have as well as those who will be voluntarily attracted into our midst with

pure and unimpaired Christian Templar Masonry. The sooner we stop blaming poor attendance on the failure of Freemasonry or Templar Masonry to modernize, the better.

Recruiting Christian Masons for Templary

Membership standards in a Commandery of Knights Templar are purposely very high, the financial and time commitments are not for everyone, and one's dedication to his Masonic and Chivalric vows requires significant expectations to be a living example of Christian values and principles that not everyone can meet. But, for those who qualify, membership in a Virginia Commandery of Knights Templar offers an unequalled opportunity to serve with Master Masons who believe in Chivalric vows and strive to exemplify the sublime teachings of this magnanimous Order in his daily life and conduct.

The honor and prestige of Templar Masonry emanates from its high standards of morality, its moral teachings, the fact that those teachings are exemplified in the lives of men, who not only believed in them, but demonstrated in their lives, morally and socially. It should be the goal of every Knight Templar to spread the good news of Templar Masonry and to encourage his Brothers in the Symbolic Lodges and Companions in the Capitular Chapters to enlist under our Banner.

Ten Reasons Why You Should be A Knight Templar

1. The Commandery offers you a grand opportunity to improve in every walk of life through the study and work in the progressively expanding light of pure Freemasonry.
2. It is the mightiest non-theological Christian organization in the world. It stands for the noblest principles in individual life and the highest standards of good government.
3. It is founded and draws its inspiration from the Christian Religion and the faithful practice of Christian Virtues.
4. As a vigorous Christian command, we wage war unceasingly in the defense of innocent maidens, destitute widows, helpless orphans, and the Christian Religion.
5. It teaches and assists you to "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify you Father which is in Heaven".
6. Its work presents an advance and liberal education to all mankind designed to bring forth their finest character and works to be shared without limit with one another.

7. It gives you the richest of fraternal fellowship, peaceful freedom of mind and a deep understanding of character enabling you to live in harmony with God and with benefit to your Country.
8. It bases all its teachings upon the fundamental truth, thereby adding greatly to your understanding of the symbolic significance of the first three degrees of Freemasonry.
9. In mastering the exalted lessons of Knights Templar, you learn by taking a full active part in the beautiful work of each Order of Knighthood. Templary has no special class for the portrayal of its truths.
10. Templary extends to you the privilege of sharing its priceless heritage from the past as Defenders of the Faith and ennobles your life through participation with the Sir Knights in the work of Freemasonry's greatest Order.



"The strongest institutional discipline, according to distinguished American sociologist, Robert Merton, occurs when the sentiments are transferred "from the aims of the organization onto the particular details of behavior required by the rules. Adherence of the rules, originally conceived as a means, becomes transformed into an end-in-itself; there occurs the familiar process of displacement whereby 'an instrumental value becomes a terminal value." Discipline, readily interpreted as conformance with regulations, whatever the situation, is seen not as a measure defined for specific purposes but becomes an immediate value in the life-organization of the bureaucrat." Individuals so indoctrinated can be relied on as the innumerable little gears of smoothly operating power machinery. Their face-to-face association and cooperation form the spirit of the organization. Their identities are fused into a "we." Each member finds his or her own will and wishes in that feeling of "our" will and wishes." (The Craft of Power by R. G. H. Siu, pages 95-96)

FIRST CONTACT TO THE NEWLY RAISED MASON

Dear Brother _____,

I congratulate you upon being raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason! Masonry is full of rich teachings and enigmatic symbolism; it is nearly impossible to receive and understand it all. I encourage you to attend Lodge and witness every degree as often as you can. Every time you attend, you will pick up something “new”, which may have escaped your notice from the time before. The teachings and knowledge from Masonic symbolism we call “*Light*” or “*Divine Truth*”. A wise man will always have a desire for the “*Light*” as you did when you became an Entered Apprentice, then “*more Light*” as a Fellowcraft, and then “*further Light*” as a Master Mason.

In the Blue Lodge, its ancient secrets and basic moral principles are only partly revealed. Even when the Master Mason degree is concluded, you are left with only a Substitute Word, but you must plan for the solution of your fraternal and spiritual problems. Remember, “*Behold the Temple is not yet completed*” and later the Master’s Word is lost, and a substitute given “*Until future generations shall find out the right*”. This means that there must be “*further Light*”. And it is my duty to inform you there is! Join the York Rite, today, and discover “*further Light*”.

From 1717, it was almost a century before the various groups in England were consolidated and the powers and prerogatives of the Grand Lodge were acknowledged and accepted. Still, the tradition that Masonry existed “*From time immemorial*” persisted. Changes and innovations were vigorously resisted. After years of negotiations and the testing of innumerable degrees that clamored for Masonic approval, the Masons of England formed the United Grand Lodge of England, December 27, 1813, and definitely defined the elements of Ancient Craft Masonry in their General Laws and Regulations as “*Pure ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, those of Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch.*” The York system is completed in the Knights Templar.

At that time, only Past Masters of Blue Lodges were qualified to receive the Royal Arch Degree. It was then deemed that this degree was so important, Master Masons, who having received the Mark Master Degree, were then able to become (Honorary) Past Masters, thus making them eligible to witness completion and dedication of King Solomon’s Temple, and receive the long “*lost Masters Word*” in the Royal Arch Degree. In Virginia, Royal Arch Chapters confer the Mark Master Degree, Past Master Degree, Council Degrees (Select Master and Royal Master Degrees), Most Excellent Master Degree, and the Royal Arch Degree.

The Commandery of Knights Templar offers the Chivalric Orders of Christian Knighthood through the *Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, Mediterranean Pass and Order of Malta*,

and the *Order of the Temple*. These Orders as they are called, are most impressive and explain the Christian interpretation of Freemasonry. Discover for yourself, “Why every Christian Mason should be a Knight Templar.”

The Virginia York Rite provides that further “Light” through the most beautiful Degrees and Orders in all of Freemasonry given by Royal Arch Chapters, and Commanderies of Knights Templar.

No doubt you have been told, or you will be told eventually, that the degrees conferred in the Blue Lodge embodies the whole of “Light”. ***That is true, but it is also misleading!*** The old idiom “**the devil is in the details**” meaning that something might seem simple at a first look but will take more time and effort to complete than expected.

Many Masonic scholars agree that the narrative of the Craft, as illustrated in the three degrees, is not the whole story. The Degrees of York Rite Masonry complete the story and provide answers to many questions that the newly raised Master Mason may have. The symbolism of the Royal Arch picks up where the Symbolic (Blue) Lodge leaves off. The symbolism of the Blue Lodge degrees emphasizes the building of King Solomon’s; the Royal Arch Masonry continues in this vein by emphasizing symbols and allegories of the Second Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, a further symbolism of Solomon’s temple completed, and the Lost Word which is given to the Royal Arch Mason. The Commandery Knights Templar Orders have a Christian orientation, their teachings are based on the crusades of the original Knights Templar and are based upon the practice of the Christian virtues, moral values, and spiritual lessons.

Freemasonry teaches us that it is a progressive science, a system of ethics wherein moral precepts are taught by lessons based on the allegorical use of the operative craftsman's tools. Symbolic (Blue Lodge) Freemasonry prepares the candidate in the use of symbolic stone for that Spiritual Temple. Capitular and Cryptic (Royal Arch Chapter) Freemasonry instructs the candidate in the allegorical use of operative tools of the craftsman. Finally, Chivalric (Commandery Knights Templar) Freemasonry instructs in the allegorical use of the weapons in the discharge of the duties of knighthood whereby the Moral Temple, built and restored in Symbolic, Capitular and Cryptic Freemasonry, can be defended and beatified by the precepts of Christianity.

The rich history of York Rite Masonry is undeniable. The York Rite is historically the oldest and purest of the appendant Rites. Every Master Mason should be fascinated by the lessons and mysteries of Freemasonry provided by the Blue Lodge

As a Master Mason, you are entitled to petition the Appendant Bodies of Freemasonry. I look forward to hearing from you soon and again welcome you as a Brother to our Fraternity. Please contact me at Phone: _____ e-mail:

Sincerely and Fraternally Yours,

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO THE NEWLY RAISED MASON

Dear Brother _____,

By now you should be comfortable in Lodge and gaining experience as a Master Mason. As the Commandery Mentor to our Lodge, feel free to ask me for any help you may need. I know it is not always easy being the “new guy”. The only conciliation I can offer is that we have all been in your situation.

As beautiful and impressive as the Lodge ritual and degrees are, they are far from being everything Masonry has to offer. While the first three degrees teach the cardinal virtues upon which the entire structure of Freemasonry is based, there is more “Light” in Masonry beyond the degree of Master Mason.

I would like to take a few minutes of your time to remind you of the opportunities waiting for you in _____ Commandery No. ____ and the rest of the York Rite. The Commandery meets on _____ at _____ p.m. in the _____ Masonic Temple and the _____ Royal Arch Chapter _____ meets on _____ at _____ p.m. in the _____ Masonic Temple.

Each of the York Rite degrees has its own distinctive character and teaches important lessons in Masonry. However, the Commandery Orders are something set apart from anything you have experienced. They are vastly different in character. The first of the Orders is the Red Cross. It takes place in the time of the Babylonian captivity before the building of the Second Temple. At the end of the evening, a new Order of Knighthood has been created, dedicated to truth. At this point the stage is set for everything that is to follow in the next Orders. Before you are created a Knight of Malta, you will be invested with the Mediterranean Pass and learn the history of this Order of Knighthood. Finally, the Order of the Temple is conferred; the only true “Christian” Order. This Order is the longest, most impressive and involved work in Masonry. It asks the candidate to examine his life in the light of his call to a life of integrity, honor and service.

The Commandery actively supports three national philanthropies: The Knight Templar Eye Foundation, The Knight Templar Educational Foundation and The Holy Land Pilgrimage for Christian Ministers.

I hope that you will consider the York Rite and specifically the Knights Templar. I am sure that our work will interest you and we would like you to join with us. We have a lot of excellent work left to do and would welcome your help.

I would like to invite you and your lady to be our guests at _____ . This will be a good opportunity to meet

some of the Commandery members informally and have a wonderful time in the bargain. As you are our guests, there will be no cost to you other than your time, which I hope will be richly rewarded with fellowship.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at: _____

With Highest Fraternal Regard,



Never Forget

by Robert Morris

*Never forget, dear Comrade, while you live,
The ties of which the Templar's vow is wound;
Never forget a Templar to forgive,
If in his breast a kindred heart is found;*

*Never forget, though rust and sin may soil,
And lewd desires your bosom's tablet stain,
There is full pardon after life's turmoil,
If we but trust in Him who rose again.*

*Never forget the sad, sad story told
This hour, of treason in Gethsemane;
Never forget the good Cyrenian bold
Who bore the Sufferer's cross so manfully;*

*Never forget the taper quenched in night,
The darkened room, the silent group around;
Never forget the jubilant delight
When in his place a worthier was found.*

*Never forget to live the Templar's life,
Though hard it may be, rough, and fraught with care;
Our work, we told you, is a constant strife, —
We promised you but coarse and scanty fare;*

*Not long the weary arm, the moldy crust,
See on Celestial plains our camps are set!
Strike and press on, brave Comrade, as you must,
"By this sign conquer!" do thou ne'er forget.*

Successful Recruiting Results in Petitions – Dynamic Leadership Is Needed

By this time, you probably realized building and sustaining a Templar Membership is about *LEADERSHIP*. Throughout this guidebook, we talk a lot about leadership because a lack of leadership results in failure, and in Templar Masonry, failure is not an option. Recruiting is a no fail mission!

Dynamic leadership is essential as we face inordinate Social and Political challenges and an ever-changing environment. These conditions are characterized by constant change, activity, and directions that create challenges for our Grand/Constituent Membership Teams and they need to think beyond traditional Masonic and Templar progressive activities. We have the critical mission of providing the strength of Templar Masonry by enlisting the best, brightest, and most capable young knights to serve on our Grand/Constituent Membership Teams.

The challenges of our recruiting mission continue to increase; dynamic leadership is critical to success. A lack of leadership or toxic leadership further exacerbates the problem and gets in the way of communicating effectively with Masons and Non-Masons alike, family members, and community centers of influence. An organization void of leadership is also void of trust and confidence. If the Sir Knights perceives a lack of leadership, they will lose trust and confidence in the ability to accomplish the recruitment mission.

Today's recruitment mission is complex and demands good leadership to accomplish our goal of building and sustaining a Templar Membership. Our leaders must remain adaptive, innovative, and resilient. Leadership is a multi-faceted topic, and each facet deserves a column of its own. For now, let me capture the broad scope of leadership in a few bullets:

- Success requires leadership engagement at every Masonic level, especially at the Templar levels.
- Our greatest assets are the Sir Knights - we owe them good leadership.
- People expect good leadership; they want leaders who embody Masonic and Christian Values and respect their unique talents and daily contributions.
- Commanderies of Knights Templar with a great ethical reputation attract the best Templar recruiters; they also attract the best Masons, candidates, and most loyal Sir Knights - in our case - Future Fratres.
- Successful leaders embrace Masonic and Christian Values.
- When it comes to ethics, leaders must set the example. Leaders never sacrifice their long-term benefit for some immediate short-term gain by compromising their ethics.
- Emphasize the importance of participation. Our leaders must be innovative, unleash the intellectual capacity of our Commanderies, and ensure every person

is involved - take ownership of their portion of the membership goals. Communication is essential; we are all responsible for the success or failure of building and sustaining the Templar Membership.

Experience has shown that in most cases it is wise to have Membership Team members go in pairs to interview each prospective candidate. The solicitation should always be kept on a professional level with dignity. It must be remembered that some prospective members are quick to respond, while others need time to think it over. Of course, it is much better to obtain a petition on the first call, **but patience is a virtue that may be required to get results.**

Each member of the team should know the answer as to fees and if the prospective candidate inquires as to the Knight Templar philanthropies, each Membership Team member should be familiar with the Eye Foundation, Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund, and Education Foundation- obtain and familiarize yourself with up to date brochures on our charities. Take copies with you to present to the prospective member. Prospects are entitled to know that that we are daily **practicing what we profess.**

It is not difficult to sell Templar Masonry. When we are really inspired, do you think for a moment we would doubt our ability to "sell" our magnificent Orders of Knighthood to a world that needs everything we stand for? To any timid soul who shrinks from the task, let us assure him that the prospective candidate will thank him repeatedly for his perseverance. After being knighted, he will acknowledge it as an inspiration of a lifetime!

Remember, the number one duty of a leader is to do everything possible to increase membership and sustain his Commander. He should make this his first duty - and follow it up **constantly!** Just to appoint a Membership Committee is not enough - they must work hard and bring in petitions! **Leadership is the number one quality** to be looked for in any new Templar Officer, and the leader must devote the major part of his time to the membership functions for which he is qualified.

The saying "leaders are created not born" is true because anyone like you, whatever your abilities are can become an effective leader if you have the right mind set and will. The following dynamic leadership characteristics can save you time and trouble from mistakes that can happen:

- **Authority in Leadership Characteristics** - An important part of effective leadership characteristics is having authority that other people respect - people recognize you as someone who deserves **recognition** and as someone who is deserving to be followed like a "role model".

- **A Vision that Moves** - Dynamic leadership characteristics require a powerful vision which is not only great but can **influence** and move people towards the objective and goal of what needs to be achieved.
- **Communication that Connects** - Effective leadership characteristics show how good and sufficient communication can determine the performance of a team. You do not need to be a great speaker or an "orator," you just need to communicate always and make a stable connection with all team members.
- **Sound Judgement** - A good judgement is reasonable, ethical and should be unbiased. How a leader makes judgement determines the welfare of the group and the results of the task or project being worked on.
- **Open Mindedness** - This is simply the ability to have unbiased opinion and the willingness to consider other kinds of ideas and alternatives.

Learning and applying these dynamic leadership characteristics makes your Membership Team function better. You can also expect better results and productivity when your Membership Team members are having good harmony with you as the leader and with each other as fellow team members.

Assimilating New Knights into the Order

Your recruiting efforts paid off with a petition and the Commandery elected the candidate to receive the Orders of Knighthood. Assimilation of each new Templar should start when he is elected to become a member of our Order. Notification of his election should be given to him immediately and he should be congratulated by his Templar friends and assured of the wisdom of his course of action. He should be given the dates at once for receiving the Orders of Knighthood. Some Past Commander or other highly qualified Sir Knight should be assigned by the Eminent Commander to act as his counselor from that time on. His advance to The Order of the Temple should be the signal for special notice to his Templar friends of the time of his Knighting.

The evening of the Knighting should become one that he will never forget. Here is the time and place when important and lasting impressions will be made. If the work is done in a dignified and exalted manner, he will respond – as thousands have done before him – and become deeply impressed. If the work is done in a careless manner, he may be forever lost to our cause.

The ritualistic work should be programmed in such a way that there be no lost motion or wasted time. Everything should be well timed. A "stage manager" should be selected whose sole job is to see that the work moves smoothly and without gaps. The ritualistic work deserves the assignment of the best and most talented ritualists available.

After all, it is the candidate who is the most important one to consider, and he is entitled to the best exemplification the Commandery can provide.

After his Knighting, the new Knight Templar should be warmly welcomed by every Sir Knight in the Asylum and made to “feel at home” at once. He should be given some small assignment – no matter how small – so that he will return to the Asylum at the very next Knighting, when he can live over again the beautiful work in which he has participated. From that time on his Mentor should give him instructions about the customs and traditions of the Order. He should “take him under his wing” until he is thoroughly oriented.

The follow-up process cements this fine relationship and secures his continued interest and involvement in the Order. If there is a Drill Team in the Commandery, he should be invited at once to join. The sooner the newly knighted Frater learns how to handle his sword and tactics, the better member he will become. The early days and weeks of membership will often be decisive as to whether the new Sir Knight will take an active interest in Templar activities, or become absorbed in other affairs and fail to come back.

Many Commanderies, at the time of the Knighting, present a new Frater with one or more of the following: A membership certificate, a Knight Templar lapel pin, an up to date roster, a calendar of upcoming events and several petitions for his friends.

Many Commanderies and Chivalric Districts have Knights Templar Festivals to share ritual capabilities and manpower. It is never too early to begin planning so Membership Teams can have a successful this year; it would be great if we could surpass this year and grow even larger next year. But we need to look back at previous years and determine what was done right and where is grounds for improvement.

Remember, **Membership** and **Retention** is everyone’s business. We cannot wish away our declining membership; we must be individually accountable for growing building and sustaining Templar Membership. Do not wait for someone else to do what you can do now.



LETTER TO THE SIR KNIGHT

Dear Sir Knight _____,

I congratulate you upon being “knighted” during the most beautiful ceremony of Masonry’s Degrees and Orders. The principles upon which the Orders of Knighthood are founded are expressed in Ritual and Symbolism and are founded upon the teachings of the Christian Religion. Templary is based upon the Holy Bible and extols the doctrine of human brotherhood and benevolence toward all mankind. It commends the reign of peace and glorifies the search for Divine Truth and magnifies Freedom under law and constitutional government. It stands unwaveringly for good morals and right living by each Knight Templar as an example of good citizenship in every community. The Grand Standard of Templary contains a blood-red Passion Cross as the emblem which inspires every Templar to the highest ideals of the Christian Faith.

We have all heard that “every Christian Mason should be in the Commandery.” But I do not believe many of our Masonic Brethren would be good for Virginia Templary.

It is not because I am any better than they are, but “Templary is not solely a fraternal brotherhood – it is vastly more than that. We are endowed with a sense of mission which transcends all ordinary fraternal objectives. The Orders of Knighthood require that we live up to the high calling of Christ in our lives; that we take our stand as Christian warriors in the fierce struggle against evil in everyday life; and that we support the Christian Church with all the zeal we possess.”

Today’s Knights Templar are focused on the Christian consciousness and the essential principles of Templar Masonry – the very soul of Freemasonry’s Chivalric Institution – that has survived throughout the centuries. They are highly motivated men of strong moral and ethical qualities. They apply Masonic and Chivalric lessons and principles learned in the York Rites and apply them to serve their fraternal family, their Masonic and Chivalric Brethren, and the public community at large.

The Medieval Knightly System had a religious, moral, and social code dating back to the Dark Ages. While there was never an authentic code, the ***Knight’s Code of Conduct*** was a moral system which went beyond the rules of combat:

- **Loyalty** – “For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice. And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offering.” (Hosea 6:6)
- **Servant-Leadership** – “Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.” (Matthew 20:26-27)

- **Honesty** – “So put away all falsehood and tell your neighbor the truth because we belong to each other.” (Ephesians 5:25)
- **Self-Discipline** – “Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives’ tales. Spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness. Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important for it promises a reward in both this life and the next.” (1 Timothy 4:7-8)
- **Kindness** – “What is desirable in a man is his kindness.” (Proverbs 19:22)
- **Humility** – “Don’t be selfish; don’t live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself.” (Philippians 2:3)
- **Excellence** – “Remember that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize. You also must run in such a way that you will win.” (1 Corinthians 9:24)
- **Integrity** – “People with integrity have firm footing, but those who follow crooked paths will slip and fall.” ((Proverbs 10:9)
- **Perseverance** – “So don’t get tired of doing what is good. Don’t get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time.” (Galatians 6:9)
- **Purity** – Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.” (1 Timothy 4:12)

Templar Masonry provides directional signs on the highway of life—Christian directional signs to cultivate men’s minds and physical senses, that Christian Knights may then return with new meanings and fresh understandings and to share the knowledge and understanding with fellow Fratres.

The honor and prestige of Templar Masonry emanates from its lofty standards of morality, its moral teachings, the fact that those teachings are exemplified in the lives of men, who not only believe in them, but demonstrate them in their lives, morally and socially. In other words, we need to take the business of Templar Masonry seriously and maintain its ambitious standards. Through my eyes, that is the Templar Ethos, the spirit, beliefs, and aspirations as practiced in the Templar Craft.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at: _____

With Knightly Courtesy,

Retention is Critical to Prosperity

Retention is probably the hardest, and perhaps the most important, aspect of building and sustaining a Templar Membership. Just as important as obtaining a new member is the retention of present members. We have witnessed an increase in demits and suspensions. This trend denotes a loosening of Knightly ties and should be a matter of grave concern to every Officer and Sir Knight in each Commandery – they are storm signals and the Eminent Commander should move swiftly to determine the Frater's motive of the action.

Reinstatement. While we must actively work on procuring new members, we must also be careful to see that once they have been knighted, the new Sir Knights do not get disenchanting and show up on the suspension list. We have lost far too many members to suspension for non-payment of dues. In many cases, we have allowed members to become so far delinquent in the payment of dues that they simply cannot justify the payment of large arrearages. Do not just write them a letter; pick up the phone or, better yet, stop by their homes and make personal contact. The Commander and some other Sir Knight who is personally acquainted with the former member should arrange to visit him in person at his home. Make the case for reinstatement and sell him the benefits of restoring his membership. BE POSITIVE!!! You may find yourself pleasantly surprised at the reception with which you will meet!

Reactivation. Every one of us needs to contact those Sir Knights who have stopped attending their Commanderies. Telephonic contact is acceptable, but face-to-face contact is far preferable. Ascertain their reasons for not attending and solicit their thoughts on how to make the Commandery more interesting and important to them. Offer to provide transportation. Stress the importance of their attendance and their participation. Make them feel valuable and make them feel missed!

Retention is critical to Commandery prosperity. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we must work toward retaining our current members as well as newly created Sir Knights. Offer them an opportunity to participate in the Commandery. Committees are a sure way to revitalizing your Commandery. Consider appointing both new and old members to serve on the Commandery Attendance Committee/Telephone Committee, Transportation Committee, Sickness and Distress Committee, Program Committee, Stewards Committee, Recreation Committee, and so on.

Personal interviews to determine the cause for demit applications are essential and may prevent further applications in the future. If the applicant for demit intends to move to another city where a Commandery exists, encourage the applicant to transfer rather than demit and then facilitate his successful transfer. If there is no Commandery in his new location, encourage him to keep his membership in his home Commandery –

as thousands have done before. Often, he will reconsider and cancel his application for demit.

The Sir Knight who moves to a new location may be a former Officer or a dedicated Frater who is only awaiting a call from the Commandery in his new location to join with them. If the demit applicant is neglected, he may never again become an active member. The responsibility rests squarely on the two Commanders of the Commanderies in the new as well as the old location. There is absolutely no need to lose any member when he moves to another location! It is our responsibility to see that this does not happen.

Let us remember that an applicant for a demit has taken the same vow we have taken, and we must treat him with that same dignity and respect that will effectively and firmly remind him of his allegiance to our Cause. If it is found that the Sir Knight is ill or financially unable to keep up his dues, then ways and means should be found by the Commandery to retain such member by remitting the dues, or even paying them out of a charitable fund for a reasonable time.

As for suspensions for non-payment of dues – this may originate in the Blue Lodge or Royal Arch Chapter. Under Templar law, it is necessary to start suspension proceedings if the Sir Knight is suspended from other bodies. Of course, the member may become delinquent in his dues to the Commandery, which likewise entails similar proceedings. However, long before any of the foregoing events occur, an alert Officer or member can learn about such impending difficulty. In the preliminary stages, it is possible to do a great deal more than after written notices have been served by registered mail and embarrassment has occurred. The ingenuity of a good Recorder is almost priceless in this field of suspensions for non-payment of dues.

No suspension for non-payment of dues should become final until the Eminent Commander is willing to take personal responsibility for certifying that everything humanly possible has been done to prevent such a suspension.

Keeping Present Members. In extolling the merits of Templar Masonry to prospective members, keep in mind those members who, because of some problem that has prevented attendance and participation, may need to be reminded of the priceless heritage of Templar membership. Awaken their pride in membership and lend our assistance in all programs and projects in which present members can add their reactivated strength and support.

A dynamic Commandery with energetic leadership and a well-organized and motivated Membership Committee or Team will interest present members and attract new members at the same time. Where there is weakness, where Commandery planning and programming are ineffectual or absent, lend your constructive support to

improving the situation. Words alone do not help; actions do. Two productive essentials are training officers and stimulating the membership.

Training the Officers. Every individual wants to do a respectable job of whatever he attempts. In many cases, an officer may miss his goal or achievements because he has not learned – authoritatively and clearly – his duties and responsibilities. It takes a trained instructor to give correct and complete information.

Every Commandery should provide a set of instructions for each officer, outlining specific functional duties of his office in the operation of the Commandery. (Obviously, those are not the duties which appear in the Ritual.) The instructions should include the absolute minimum of what is expected of the Knight holding the officer, including his committee assignments.

Secondly, all new officers should be exposed to a short, intensive training session conducted by a qualified former Commandery Officer or Grand Commandery personnel. After these two steps have been successfully completed, ritual assignments and duties can be considered.

Stimulating the Membership. One helpful stimulating communication is the *Knight Templar* Magazine distributed to every Sir Knight. *Knight Templar* Supplements are used to convey news of Virginia's Templar and/or Masonic past and upcoming events to the membership, to convey the Grand Commandery mission and goals, the Grand Commander's personal vision on how to accomplish them using limited short anecdotes and/or inspirational items. Every Frater, regardless of resident, can find news and views of Templary to help broaden his Masonic horizon, to motivate greater interest and encourage a larger understanding.

Another very stimulating communication is the Commandery Trestleboard. In ancient times the Trestleboard was a board upon which the Master inscribed designs for the guidance and instruction of the Brethren. In these modern times of Speculative Masonry, the trestleboard is a symbol, an idea. The Commander's use of the trestleboard is to inscribe designs to convey his personal vision on Commandery goals and objectives, to announce information on upcoming events, and provide guidance and instructions to the Officers and Sir Knights.

While the *Knight Templar* Magazine and Commandery Trestleboard will help increase Frater awareness and may inspire even a long-dormant Knight attendance, personal contact is still necessary and helpful in channeling that renewal interest to activity.

Communication is the tool we use to exercise our influence on others, bring out changes in our and others' attitudes, motivate people around us, and establish/maintain relationships with them. Communication is a major part of our active life, pursued verbally through speech, reading, and writing or non-verbally through body language.

Poor communication is responsible for many business failures. It also accounts for much fraternal apathy and lack of interest.” (Masonic Lifeline: Leadership, Allen E. Roberts, Anchor Communications published for The Masonic Service Association of the United States, 1992, p 29) Right Worshipful Roberts said “Communication – is it important? Yes! It’s the most important aspect of being an excellent leader.” (ibid, p 35) So, we need to strengthen our communicate skills. Communicate your own enthusiasm and lend your assistance in having a Sir Knight participate in conferring the Orders of Knighthood, if only a Guard or Hermit part, and taking part in the Official Visits of the Eminent District Deputy Grand Commander or the Right Eminent Grand Commander. The Frater should be given the opportunity to assist in the Commandery Knight Templar Charity programs, Ambassador Visits to local Symbolic Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters, and DeMolay projects and local programs. If it is not feasible for him to take an active part, he can at least be made aware of the importance of Templar Masonry and its purposes and projects, and what his Commandery is doing. He will become proud of his membership as an active and contributing instrument for good in building and sustaining the Commandery.

Every Sir Knight should be encouraged to participate in Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and Ascension Services in some place of public worship in uniform, particularly Easter Sunrise Services in Alexandria and Religious Parade Ceremony in Fredericksburg. We are solders of Christ and must carry the Banner of Faith to let all others see who and what we are as Templars. Proudly carry the flag of the United States of America and the Commandery banners, in uniform, in Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Veterans Day Parades.

Remember: “*Audentes Fortnae Juvat,*” “Fortune Favors the Bold.” Project an image of vibrancy, vitality, and vigor, in and out the Asylums. Stress a Frater membership is not only valuable to the Commandery, but to him, and that we want him to remain among our number. Be personally involved in Templar activities, be visible in uniform, set the example, be positive, be proud to be a Knight Templar and others will want to be identified with our “team.” Encourage attendance at conferrals of Degrees in local Symbolic Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters and encourage the Knight to bring at least two Royal Arch and Commandery petitions with him.



**FIRST LETTER
(TO BE SENT FEBRUARY OF THE YEAR)
DIRECTED TO MEMBERS ABOUT TO BE SUSPENDED FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES**

MY Dear Friend and Sir Knight

Fraternal Greetings.

The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia Section 27 requires that annual dues be paid by December 31 for the upcoming year.

Never in the history of this great country of ours's has it been so important for men who believe in the things that have made America the greatest country in the world, to remain bonded together in a Fraternity such as our Masonic Order. The principles and teachings of Masonry are a mighty bulwark against those who would destroy this country of ours.

You are a very important member of our Fraternity and the Commandery of Knights Templar, and even though you may not be able to attend or give the time you wish, the fact that you, by your dues, have contributed to our Knight Templar charities make you very important to all of Templar Masonry.

We find that your dues for this year have not been paid of yet. If for reason of age, illness, or financial difficult you feel that you are unable to pay your dues, we still want you as a member. Just drop me a line with the simple statement – “I am unable to pay my dues at this time” – and the dues will be remitted for this year in keeping with our Masonic and Christian teachings of caring for a worthy Brother and Sir Knight.

May our Heavenly Father bless and keep you and yours for many years to come.

Sincerely and fraternally,

**SECOND LETTER
(TO BE SENT APRIL OF THE YEAR)
DIRECTED TO MEMBERS ABOUT TO BE SUSPENDED FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES**

MY Dear Friend and Sir Knight

Fraternal Greetings.

The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia Section 27 requires that annual dues be paid by December 31 for the upcoming year.

You are in arrears for dues amounting to \$-----.

We are all proud to be members of this Commandery of Knights Templar where many friendships have been formed. We do not want to lose you, and urgently request that immediate payment be made, or that you should show reasonable cause why the dues be remitted.

Please contact me so we may resolve this matter.

Sincerely and fraternally,

How Can We Enlist Others to Save the Man?

There are probably only three people who can effectively make a difference with a man who has begun to lose interest in Templary. None of them will be effective if the man has decided he does not want to be a member. Let us begin with who can make the most immediate difference.

- **You!** As the leader of the Commandery, you can make his membership meaningful, interesting, and exciting. You and your knights working together can overcome almost any objection. If he is moving, working the night shift, totally without resources or other conditions, you probably will need to consider other arrangements. But if he is too lazy or too bored, you can overcome these objections.
- His friends can make a difference. The signers of his petition, his Fratres, those he has met since he joined and others with whom he is close in the Commandery can take him aside and be helpful in resolving his concerns. It may be as simple as needing a ride or help explaining the organization to his wife and family.
- His family: wife, children, father, mother, and relatives who understand why “every Christian should be a Knight Templar” and support his involvement in Templary can answer his questions and support and encourage his involvement.

The Key Idea: The important consideration is that his continued interest and involvement needs to be "of his own free will and accord." Just as it was when he was knighted. Pressuring a man to come back to the Commandery or asking others to bring pressure will not be as effective as learning of his concerns and needs and taking actions to increase his satisfaction. Try these ideas:

- Try to determine the single most important reason for his loss of interest in Commandery and Templar activity.
- Speak with a close friend or his wife to see where you may have missed an opportunity you can still salvage.
- If you do not know where to begin, consider saying to this member, "Look, it seems we may not have handled your membership in the Commander well up to this point. What is there that I can do personally that will make a difference in your decision to leave."

Summing it up: It may sound negative to end this Chapter with a section on losing members. But every Commandery that has members must have a contingency plan to

handle those situations when a Sir Knight no longer appears satisfied and supportive of Templar Masonry. Here are some key ideas and suggestions offered to Templar leaders:

- As the leader of a Commandery, membership retention is your responsibility.
- Members who leave the Commandery can provide valuable insights into the reasons why the Commandery or Templary is not fulfilling the expectations.
- Boredom and "sameness" are critical concerns in many Masonic organizations, even in Commanderies, and the leader must take action to eliminate both.
- The effective leader can tell when a member is not satisfied by observing his behavior, principally his attendance and aloofness.
- Cost of being a Knight Templar – particularly the cost of uniforms, annual dues, Commandery activities, etc.
- The effective leader can learn a great deal by having a one-on-one with his members.
- Taking actions when the first signs of dissatisfaction appear is critical to changing his direction.
- Other members should be asked to solve retention issues.
- Knight Templar Festivals present opportunities and challenges.
- Time plays a critical role in member satisfaction and interest.
- Members who have been inactive for years should be approached very carefully.

Delinquent Members

The increasing numbers of Sr Knights being suspended for non-payment of dues each year is alarming. While we must actively work on procuring new members, we must also be careful to see that once they have joined the Templar Fraternity, they will not become disenchanted and show up on the suspension list after a few years. The Commandery Membership Chairman assigned to RETENTIONS should obtain from the Recorder a list of all Fratres who are in arrears. This should be done shortly after the beginning of each year.

A letter from the Recorder of the Commandery to those Members on the list to advise that their dues are in arrears and to encourage remittance of same. A follow-up

letter from the Commander of the Commandery could be sent to those who have not yet responded after a certain period.

For the Members who have still not responded, the most successful method is PERSONAL CONTACT – either in person or by phone. Although the Commander, other officers of the Commandery, or a Past Commander, could contact the Sir Knight perhaps it is best for his petition signers (if possible) or a member of the Commandery Membership Committee. Preferably a Member who is acquainted with him should make contact. In some cases, a Frater is unable to pay his dues because of financial reasons. In these situations, the Commandery could remit his dues. Remember, the Masonic principals of brotherly love, relief and truth should not allow a member to be dropped from the roles for non-payment of dues. The names of those who need assistance must be maintained in the strictest of confidence.



✠ THE CALL TO SERVICE ✠

*Let me relate an experience of mine,
In a manner so valiant and sublime,
A single honor was conferred upon me,
Knighthood in the Order of Templary.*

*Now I'm arrayed in Templar black,
With stripped belt around the back,
Chapeau and crest, with plume of white,
Armed with the sword so shining bright.*

*Wearing the Chapeau with honor and pride,
Its symbol of purity never denied;
Uncovering in moments of devotion and prayer,
Kneeling before God with head bowed there.*

*Carrying the sword with a steady hand,
Obeying the order of one in command;
Always remembering that every true Knight
Draws it only in defense of the right.*

*Thus is Templary around the world,
Marching for Christ with banner unfurled,
Noted for deeds of kindness and love,
Following the example of our Commander above.*

*And so should all knights with ready ear
Hear the command of our Savior clear;
"Be true! Be vigilant!, no matter the loss,
There is not crown, without the cross!"*

(The above was written by Reverend Ernest G. Rice, Superintendent of the West Virginia Masonic Home. He is Eminent Commander of Calvary Commandery No. 3, Parkersburg, West Virginia.)

(Knight Templar, July 1969)

CHAPTER III STIMULATING INTEREST AND ATTENDANCE

Introduction

Leadership is at the heart of Virginia's Commanderies' success—so implement a well-balanced Membership Team, with differing opinions, experiences, knowledge, and dreams for the future. You will feel the Templar Spirit grow throughout your Commandery and the Chivalric Craft.

There are too many Sir Knights, for whatever reasons, who do not attend our Conclaves nor are they active in Templar events. The longer they stay away, the more difficult it becomes for them to return because of their concern that they cannot remember enough of our ritual and tactics and they are worried they will be asked to take a position on the line. Templar *reactivation* and *retention* are perhaps the two most important aspects of membership goals, and the hardest to achieve, in any Commandery. Because of the diversity of personalities among the Sir Knights in our Commanderies, you should take special pains to spread the sense of belonging to the Commandery—it is far more important than any other thing you can do for the social fabric and success of your Commandery.

Mentoring

We all can attest to the fraternal bonds that we developed with our coaches and how greatly we were influenced by our mentors in the Craft. There is an inner urge in humans to excel in whatever activity man undertakes. The journey for “Light” is an individual effort, but it is the most important ingredient in Freemasonry's stature in the community. What better way to praise the merits of the Commandery and to guide Master Masons in their journey for Masonic Light than to be a Mentor?

It is necessary that new Brethren, Companions, and Sir Knights become imbued with the spirit of Templar Masonry if we are to keep the Order strong and active. Masonic leaders have known for years that it is too much to expect a man to come into a society such as ours and take his place unless he is guided by someone with a full understanding of its aims and objectives. As a mentor, Knights Templar are professionally qualified to help new Brethren and Companions expand their understanding of the philosophical lessons found in the York Rite. Stand the challenge, aid your Masonic Brethren and Companions in preparing them to use the symbolic stone for that Spiritual Temple, teach them in the allegorical use of additional operative tools of the craftsman, and finally instruct them in the allegorical use of the weapons and tactics whereby the Moral Temple can be defended and beatified by the precepts of Christianity.

THE MENTOR

By Jeff Bresee (Inspired by Robert Frost)

1

*I paused to stand and watch a man who had come to the road's divide.
My wonder soared as I watched his stare slowly shift from side to side.
He stood as if not noticing that many passed him by.
They moved without a second glance down the road most traveled by.*

*Then as I watched he stepped full stride toward the path of lesser wear,
And soon he vanished from my view round a bend into the snare.
I soon, like him, stood center road, faced with that daunting choice.
My gaze down his road, causing fear, I quenched my inner voice.*

*For miles I walked the crowded road breathing dust from others feet,
Until in despair I stopped and stood, my heart and soul deplete.
I gazed about still holding hope, the other path I'd see.
On yonder hill I saw him there, the man who mentored me.*

*The path between us steep and rough, un-forged with dangers there,
Yet still I left my path of friends, ignoring their beware.
I pressed through hardship, pain and fear o'er rocks jagged and bent.
In time I crashed limp on that path, my every resource spent.*

*But then a warming touch I felt, a friendly voice I heard.
It said, get up and tread this path. I rose without a word.
And as I looked, I saw him there, he continued on his way.
His only words as he walked on... "you're on the path, now stay".*

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I chose in err.
But looking back, perhaps as well...all memories now seem fair.
Much time I spent on the beaten path, and what I learned, immense.
But I reached, at last, the other path, and it has still made all of the difference.*

Mentorship is a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. The mentor may be older or younger but has a certain area of expertise. It is a learning and development partnership between someone with vast experience and someone who wants to learn. While the act of mentoring is especially important to recruiting new members into our Commanderies, it is equally important to mentor new Sir Knights and Junior Officers to maintain interest in Templar Masonry and preparing Junior Officers for future leadership. Through an active mentoring program, a Commandery can achieve its recruitment, reinstatement, reactivation, and retention goals and objectives.

Each Sir Knight should have a mentor assigned whose responsibility it will be to cause the new Sir Knight to remain an active member by inviting him to all functions personally, helping him become involved in the Commandery to the extent the new Sir Knight is able, and answering all questions that he and his family pose. The mentor should provide a member packet to the new Sir Knight containing information about the Commandery and Templary. This may include a calendar, newsletter, Commandery history, philanthropies, and information on Conclaves, activities, and officers. And the mentor should assist the new Sir Knight in acquiring and preparing a uniform and equipment and assist him with proficiency in protocols and practices.

Each new officer in the line should be assigned a mentor, preferably a Past Commander or Dais Officer, to provide guidance and encouragement to the new officer and to instruct and answer questions he will have as he advances. The officer's mentor should make certain that the new officer has the proper ritual, tactics, officer's handbook, bylaws, and other information he needs to succeed.

Our Sir Knights are best stationed to mentor a new, younger generation of Virginia Brethren rising into the ranks of Master Masons. Those new Brethren are trying to understand Freemasonry while making their way along the road of life. Young Sir Knights are seeking mentors to break down Templar Masonry into smaller pieces for better consumption and understanding. There are four characteristics usually found in those who inspire others:

- Consistency*—they stay with reliable regularity. They are *consistent*.
- Authenticity*—they are real at the core. They are *authentic*.
- Unselfishness*—they watch out for themselves the least. They are *unselfish*.
- Tirelessness*—they possess an enormous amount of enthusiasm for their labor. They are tireless.

Mentors are an invaluable source of motivation and wisdom for any Brethren, Companions, and Knights Templar seeking Masonic "Light" or on their pilgrimage through the vast fraternal system called *Freemasonry*. Mentors can act as guides through uncertainty and demanding situations and as a cheerleader when you begin to realize your goals. Reflecting on the experiences of a group profession mentors, good mentors:

- Have vision
- Express positivity
- Ask the right questions
- Honest
- Listen
- Play the devil's advocate
- Great communicator

- Inspire you to leave your comfort zone

While any mentoring scheme, by its very nature, must inevitably be tailored to the needs of the new Frater, it is not only the Frater who will ultimately benefit. In the longer term, great benefits will also accrue the Commandery and Templar Masonry in terms of continuity, by ensuring active younger knights are available to pick up and carry the sword.

The main thing is to ensure our Sir Knights are enjoying their Templary so much that they not only wish to stay, but also wish to take an active part – so be a mentor. Who could possibly have gauged the impact an eighty-year old Bedouin shepherd named Moses had on Egypt when he stood up against Pharaoh? Or who could have gauged the impact when Gideon successfully led that invasion with trumpets blowing, broken clay jars, and a stern battle cry? What better way to praise the merits of your Commandery than to mentor your young Brethren, Companions, and Sir Knights Templar?

Ideas to Improve Interest and Attendance

Leadership is vitally important in all Templar activity but never more urgently needed than in the task of stimulating membership interest and attendance. The good leader finds ways of interesting men to work for the good of the Order. A good leader will display initiative and will devise and invent ways to inspire the interest of the Templar Masonry and the Commandery. The Sir Knights must be made to feel that they are “Part of the Team” – not just spectators. The best way to get them to feel that way is to put them to work as part of the team. There are so many tasks to perform and so many jobs to do that no Sir Knight ought to be left out. Just a little ingenuity will reveal many ways to put Sir Knights to work. Experience shows that men will respond and will begin making suggestions on their own part to improve the work. All it needs is a determined leader.

Every Commandery requires several Standing and Special Committees of which membership should rotate every three-to-five years to refurbish ideas and interest:

- Membership
- Mentoring
- Finance
- Education/Presentations
- Youth
- Knight Templar Eye Foundation
- Knight Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage
- Knight Templar Education Foundation

Membership on a Ritualistic Team. Every Commandery should undertake to become fully proficient in the Grand Commandery of Virginia *Tactics and Asylum Ceremonies*, especially the **Full Form** opening. This is a recurrent problem and must be addressed! Get a current copy of the Grand Encampment and Grand Commandery Tactics and Ritual—then start scheduling practices. As for the conferral of the Orders, we must do something to improve ourselves if we are to survive. The Orders are the lifeblood of Templar Masonry; it is through the Orders that we communicate our lessons. Every Commandery should undertake, as a minimum, to learn the Short Form versions of the *Illustrious Order of the Red Cross* and the *Order of Malta* and should confer them as frequently as possible. One of the greatest challenges confronting the Commanderies is that candidates are often required to wait an inordinate length of time before receiving their Knighthood. Start remedying this great evil by committing to confer the Orders at or before a Stated Conclave immediately following the favorable ballot. From experience the Red Cross and Malta can be conferred in Short Form, at a Stated Conclave in about an hour. It makes for an interesting program and will attract the attention of the Sir Knights, including some that you have not seen in Commandery in recent memory.

Sooner or later every Commandery or Chivalric District will require help with the many “Special Projects” that regularly challenges and inspire the interest of Commandery and/or District manpower:

- Centennial or Bicentennial Anniversary
- Knights Templar Festival
- Grand Commander and/or District Deputy Grand Commander Official Visit
- Religious Observance for Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day
- District and/or Knights Templar School
- “Special Nights” – Blue Lodge Evening, Royal Arch Chapter Evening, Masonic Youth Evening, Past Commander Night
- Awarding a pin on a membership anniversary (25th, 50th, 60th, 70th)

Membership on a Drill Team. "Competition has been shown to be useful up to a certain point and no further, but cooperation, which is the thing we must strive for today, begins where competition leaves off." (Franklin D. Roosevelt, speech at the People's Forum in Troy, New York, March 3, 1912) A little competition is an important thing, like friendly rivalry between individuals, economic or social groups for prestige, recognition, awards, or leadership. A Knight Templar Drill Team is a marching unit that performs routines based on military drill and tactics. It encompasses the benefits of healthy competition while teaching teamwork. The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of everyone – people working together. The size of the Drill Team depends on the size and interest. Your Commandery can start as small as five Sir Knights., a Captain and four Marchers.

Publishing a Regional Masonic Calendar or Bulletin. This is of tremendous importance because it will be the means of telling the members of coming events. It will carry the Commanders orders, and will elaborate on social affairs, entertainment, and speakers. The Regional Masonic Calendar or Bulletin provides regular and continuous contact between the Commander and the members of other Masonic Bodies. The Regional Masonic Calendar or Bulletin does not need to be elaborate or expensive; however, it should be attractive and informative. The use of the names of Companions and Sir Knights give it greater appeal. A story about Templar projects will increase the readers interest. As for finding an Editor – the average Commandery will be pleasantly surprised to see how much talent it has along this line if they only look.

Organizing a York Rite Unity Dinner. There are no arguments our Virginia Symbolic Lodges, Royal Arch Chapters and Commanderies of Knights Templar are losing membership and their structures are reorganizing into smaller footprints. Our lodges, chapters and commanderies are inextricable bounded by common vows and unity of purpose. Therefore, Virginia York Rite Unity is up to all of us. If Virginia's York Rite is to survive and prosper, we must support each other. Each Sir Knight is encouraged to aid and assist each of our Constituent Commanderies, be an Ambassador to our Symbolic Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters, be a Mentor to a new Brother/Companion/Sir Knight, and present an educational program on Chivalric Masonry.

Organize a Ladies Auxiliary or affiliation with the Social Order of the Beauceant, composed of Templar ladies. If the women attend a meeting at the Masonic Temple, it is surprising how attendance of the Sir Knights grows. Many women would welcome an organization of their own to assist Templary or to perform some useful work for the community. A lady's organization, meeting on the same night and at the same place as the Commandery has frequently resulted in doubling the attendance at the Commandery Conclave.



CHAPTER IV CITIZENSHIP AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Introduction

The Premise of the Grand Encampment *Guidelines for Patriotic and Civic Activities* says, “The true image of Templary is exemplified by deeds, not only words.” In *1 Samuel 1:13* we find that praying lips are not enough; those words are soon forgotten—they often have a hollow ring, an emptiness of meaning. The challenge is to make this world a better place for God and Man; therefore, focus on four significant areas – Christianity, Country, Community, and Commandery.

Christianity: The Order of Knights Templar is no substitute for church activity and interest. Public appearances, primarily by church attendance in full Templar uniform in a body, in Masonic funerals, and Knight Templar Memorials. We all must identify ourselves as Christian Knights, but those public appearances must be carefully planned and executed. We should appear in the largest numbers possible.

- Bring a religious emphasis to every Conclave—read a message from the Prelate or a section of scripture followed by a brief, dynamic presentation emphasizing the meaning of the message/scripture.
- It is our basic duty to assist in the Christian burial of our fallen Templars when requested, or to conduct some memorial service otherwise. Every Constituent Commandery should be familiar with the *Virginia Knight Templar Memorial Service* and have a uniformed ritual team formed and always available should the occasion arise.
- Every Constituent Commandery may annually assemble on Christmas, Good Friday, and Ascension Day in its Asylum or some place of public worship and observe the day in proper manner. Every Sir Knight is encouraged to attend the annual Religious Freedom Day activities in Fredericksburg, Virginia (second Sunday in January) and the Easter Sunrise Services at the George Washington National Masonic Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia.
- Maintain close relations with local ministers; see if there are any of the ministers’ joint projects the Commandery/Sir Knight can support. Ask a minister to speak at a Christmas Observance or other religious occasion. Annually, every Commandery should nominate an ordained Christian minister to participate in the Holy Land Pilgrimage.

Country: All Masons are patriots and fervent supporters of the United States of America, its laws, and its interests. But every Sir Knight needs to communicate his love and respect of country to his fellowmen. Fratres should strive to implant and strengthen those feelings of love and support in others.

- Visit Veterans Hospitals and Veterans Homes regularly, provide reading materials; help write letters/cards to relatives.
- Take a Veteran to dinner, help with lawn services, provide transportation for medical appointments or shopping.
- Help place flags on the graves of Veterans on Memorial Day, Flag Day, Fourth of July, and Veterans Day.
- Participate as a Commandery, in full uniform, in local Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Veterans Day parades.

Community: The Knights Templar Asylum is not just a room, not merely a place in which to enjoy fraternal fellowship. The Templar Asylum is a group of men, Christian Knights, who have dedicated themselves to a common task, and that task is to build. Fratres are Freemasons, builders; builders of character; builders of a better community—a better nation, a better world in which to live in; builders of an Eternal Temple for the indwelling of God. Our Christian character demands that we plan a project for the good of the community—something constructive and unselfish which will earn the respect and appreciation of both our members and the public. After a careful review of the list of projects available and the roster of Fratres, every Commandery should look to the busy Knights who will be the most effective and who might never have time to serve as officers of the Commandery.

- Work with DeMolay, Job's Daughters, and Rainbow for Girls and Scouting Groups on teambuilding and character development projects to prepare them for adulthood.
- Work with local Community Leaders and Groups on teambuilding and enduring visual community projects: Child Identification Programs, cleaning roadways and cemeteries, Meals on Wheels, and Home Improvement.
- Work on Community Builder projects sponsored by the local chapters of the Special Olympics, United Way, Red Cross, Food Bank, Senior First, Kiwanis International, Rotary International, and Lion Clubs International.

Commandery: We are all Masons first and Fratres second. Freemasonry is an educational institution per William Preston, Scottish author, and Freemason (1742-

1818). Therefore, Templary is an educational institution—we have an obligation to take a Sir Knight and make a better, moral Frater per the sublime principles of our Magnanimous Christian Order. The problem is there are only 15% to 20% of Sir Knights active in our Commanderies. We measure our success on the number of our knightings, how much money they have in the bank, how large our Commandery is, or how many Sir Knights are at a certain meeting. It does not mean a thing unless those few Fratres are there building new Sir Knights, unless they are building a better world, or they are improving themselves.

- Every Commandery in Virginia should have an active, alert, wide-awake committee to cooperate in the civic and patriotic activities in their Chivalric District and local communities. If civic leaders are unaware of Templary Craft and its Sir Knights, educate them and generate the enthusiasm to do something real and tangible for the community.
- Sponsor a Commandery Open House, a York Rite Dinner, or an Open Installation of Constituent Officers.
- Visit Masonic Youth Groups (DeMolay, Job's Daughters, and Rainbow for Girls) as a body; appear in uniform and offer to make a program or presentation.
- Attend and encourage others from your Commandery to attend the annual Masonic Home of Virginia Family Day (second Saturdays in October), the Grand Commander and District Deputy Grand Commander Official Visits, and the annual Grand Encampment Mid-Atlantic Department Conference.

Conclusion: Keep faith in ourselves, in our power to do well, and exert a beneficial influence by precept and example, upon our fellow man. Offer charity with a liberal hand which feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, binds up the wounds of the afflicted, protects the widow, supports, and educates the orphan. The honor and prestige of Templar Masonry emanates from its lofty standards of morality, its moral teachings, the fact that those teachings are exemplified in the lives of men, who not only believe in them, but demonstrate them in their lives, morally and socially. The more we study the lessons of Freemasonry, and especially Templary Masonry, the less we can escape the fact that each of us has assumed, in every obligation, a heavy and binding moral responsibility. We owe this responsibility not only to ourselves, but to our families, our Fratres, our church, our country, our community, and to those who come after us.

Public/Citizenship Ceremonies

Life without ceremony is like a gift without wrapping. If we are to be successful in building and sustaining Templary, people need to know who we are. Uniformed participation in public ceremonies, especially those of a citizenship focus, are the type that provide positive feelings about Commanderies and Templar Masonry.

Community Builders Awards. This program is designed to recognize and show our appreciation for outstanding community-oriented achievements of non-Masons who reside and work in our cities and towns. There are many hard working, dedicated men and women in our communities who have served others with no expectation of reward. We should continue with renewed vigor to search them out and show them that we are proud of their good works, that we are happy that they are personally instrumental in making/building our communities into a better place for all people to live, work, and play. Care should be taken in the selection of a recipient. No more than two recipients per Commandery per year are allowed.

Community Presentations. Guest Speaker at a Lion Club, Rotary Club, or Garden Club meeting; be active in youth activities of the DeMolay International, Job's Daughters International, or International Order of Rainbow Girls.

Parades. Marching Unit in Memorial Day Parade, July the 4th Parade, MOHOVA Parade

Flag Programs. Build the Flag, 13-Fold Flag, Toast to the Flag, Present the Flag in a Public Setting

Wreath Laying Ceremonies. Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Douglas MacArthur Memorial, George Washington Memorial at Mount Vernon,

Knights Templar Ceremonies

Installation of Commandery Officers. The ceremony is primarily intended for the installation of the officers of a newly constituted Commandery but with easily understood alterations it may be used for any installation.

Constituting a New Commandery. The Constitution of a New Commandery is an especially important event in Templary and provides positive feeling among the members of the new Commandery and an opportunity for the members of the community to see the Knights Templar in action.

Funeral Service of the Orders of Masonic Knighthood. Adopted by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the U.S.A. in its 38th Triennial Conclave held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 23-26, 1931, with revisions made at the 42nd Triennial Conclave held in Chicago, Illinois, May 24-25, 1943.

Knight Templar Memorial Service. When requested, the Memorial Service may be performed in the Chapel, Church, or Funeral Home.

Christmas Observation. The Knights Templar Christmas Observation lends itself to many variations. If the observation is held in the Asylum, it might be suggested that

guests assemble in the Asylum prior to the service and then have the Sir Knights march in with appropriate music. A very effective procedure is to place the Triangle with candles, goblets and Bible in the center and have the twelve Sir Knights who would normally be there remain while the other Knights seat themselves with the guest.

Service for Easter Sunday. Swords may be omitted or should remain in scabbards to avoid noise and confusion. On entering church, the Sir Knights should uncover as they pass the door and remain standing beside their seats.

Service for Ascension Day. Sir Knights should enter the church with swords in scabbards, uncovering as they cross the portal, take position in the pews, and remain standing.

Every Commandery in the country should have an active, alert, wide-awake Committee to cooperate in the civic and patriotic activity. After careful consideration of the roster to select those best qualified to plan and execute both programs and projects, by experience, ability, and influence in community affairs. Let us look for the busy men who will be most effective, and who might never have had time to serve as officers of the Commandery. Our Christian character demands that we plan a project for the good of the community – something constructive and unselfish which will earn the respect and appreciation of both the Fratres and the public.

A BETTER WAY

--Edgar A. Guest

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.
The eye is a better pupil, more willing than the ear;
Fine counsel is confusing, but example is always clear,
And the best of all the preachers are the men who live their creeds,
For to see a good put in action is what everybody needs.
I can soon learn how to do it if you will let me see it done;
I can watch your hand in action, but your tongue too fast may run.
And the lectures you deliver may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do.
For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give,
But there is no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.
When I see a deed of kindness, I am eager to be kind.
When a weaker brother stumbles, and a strong man stands behind
Just to see if he can help him, then the wish grows strong in me
To become as big and thoughtful as I know that friend to be.
And all travelers can witness that the best of guides today
Is not the one who tells them, but the one who shows the way.
One good man teaches many; men believe what they behold;
One deed of kindness noted is worth forty that are told.
Who stands with men of honor learns to hold his honor dear,
For right living speaks a language which to everyone is clear.
Though an able speaker charms me with his eloquence, I say,
I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day.

