



RITE NOTES
Membership and Recruiting
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida
15 March 2017

The Necessity of Action To Strengthen Templar Manpower

Companions and Sir Knights,

No York Rite Body can rest on its laurels or past accomplishments. We are living in a different era that demands modern techniques. **Unless a York Rite Body is alert and anxious to succeed. It will not attract new members.**

The purpose of this newsletter is to suggest a definite plan:

- a. Recruit Christian Masons to become Knights Templar
- b. Re-activate the interest of our present members, and
- c. Restore and reinstate former members

No institution in all Christendom has any more vital mission than our loyal cadre of Knights Templar, Founded upon the Christian religion and the practices of Christian values, Templary should attract all Christian Masons to join our ranks. To often York Rite members take for granted that we do very little to attract new members or hold the interest of present members. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is imperative that every York Rite member takes a personal responsibility for growth and retention. We have a place for Masons and their best interest lie with us.

The invitation to Blue Lodge Masons should come from York Rite Masons. Ye should not be smug or stand idly by and assume that Blue Lodge Masons will storm our doors to join, simply because our cause is noble, even though we have something they need. We should be the ones to initiate to selective process, by extending an individual invitation to each Mason. If he becomes sufficiently interested, he will find a way to accomplish it.

The objectives of York Rite Masonry are the same as they have always been, but times have changed. Our whole approach to the problem of membership must be reviewed to keep abreast of the times. Old cliches such as “we have always done it that way” must yield to up-to-date methods of the 21st Century in which we live. Our whole scheme of life has changed, and we must adapt ourselves to the fast-paced age in which we live. We need not sacrifice any of our principles, but we do need to alter our methods if we would attract new recruits and grow.

This necessitates a sense of urgency and a realistic approach to the whole manpower problem. In these times of boundless choice and world-class quality products and services, men need to be continuously “sold” on the most essential things in life in life, and York Rite is no exception. We need to create new ways to win men to our banner. We need not become undignified; we do need to adopt an “approach” that will get successful results. In short, it is vital that we modernize our thinking in recruiting members for York Rite. It is also absolutely necessary that we readjust our attitude with respect to holding the interest of our present members.

We cannot wish away our declining membership; we must be individually accountable for growing our business. Don't wait for somebody else to do what you can do **now**.

In my travels to various Commanderies throughout the South East, I find that by advertising the degree festivals outside of our district, it becomes easier for a candidate to receive the degrees. We cannot hope to build our membership if we cannot provide weekend degree programs within a reasonable time period and distance.

One or two Sir Knights should visit the other Commanderies within your District and discuss ways in which this can be accomplished. Each Commandery should provide the teams for two or three different degrees. If this cannot be accomplished within the district, pursue a neighboring district, until all degrees are filled. No candidate should have to drive 100 miles to attend the degrees. This is how we lose candidates. Finally, a set date and location each year should be established well in advance so candidates can properly plan. If Scottish Rite and the Shrine can do it, and they are successful, we should also.

**There is no substitute for an all-out campaign to strengthen and build our membership.
New Membership by District 2017:**

DIST	LOCATION	#	DIST	LOCATION	#
1	West Palm Beach	2	6	Cocoa	2
	Fort Lauderdale	6		Melbourne	2
	Miami	5		Fort Pierce	6
	Florida Keys		7	Jacksonville	
2	Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity			Duval	
	Sarasota/Venice/Trinity	3		Fernandina	
	Everglades			St. Augustine	
	Fort Myers	8	Palatka		
3	Tampa (Ivanhoe)		8	Lake City	
	St. Petersburg (Sunshine)	4		Lawtey	
	Clearwater (Springtime)			Gainesville	
4	Lakeland			9	Inverness (Ocala)
	Plant City	4	Tallahassee		1
	Sebring (Highlands)		Marianna		
5	Daytona (Halifax)		10	Panama City	1
	Lake Sumter			Fort Walton Beach	
	Sanford			Crestview	
	Orlando			Pensacola	

EXCERPTS FROM THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT CONSTITUTION:

SECTION 190(a) Membership

A Knight Templar may be admitted to membership in any Commandery regardless of his residence but cannot be a dais officer in more than one Commandery at the same time. (1937, p 355)(1954, p. 18 & 449-452)(1982, p.156-157 & 268)

DECISIONS FROM THE GRAND MASTER:

A Grand Commandery may not require residence in the jurisdiction from an un-affiliated petitioner for affiliation. (1913, p. 61, No. 21, Melish)
A Subordinate Commandery may accept as one of its members, a member of a Constitute Commandery without the permission of the Constituent Commandery. (1940, p.65 & 288, No 0, Norris)
A Constituent Commandery may accept as one of its members, a member of a Subordinate Commandery and remain a member of the Subordinate Commandery.(1940, p.65 & 343, No. 12, Norris)
A member of a Subordinate Commandery, wishing to join a Commandery in the States, although his residence will remain where the Subordinate Commandery is located, is entitled to a Demit if he is not in arrears in dues and if no charges are pending against him. There is no residence requirement as to petition for affiliation and no waiver of jurisdiction is required. (1961, p.. 45, No.13, Wieber, 1988 digest - 93 & 321)

New Membership by York Rite Body 2017:

DIST	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1	Slow class		
2			
3	4-11 Mar	Tampa: Plant City(4), Ft Myers(3), St Pete(4), Trinity(3)	14
4			
5	11 & 18 Mar	Eola (Orlando)	
6	3-4 Mar 17	Box Ranch: Melb(2), Cocoa(2), WPB(2), Ft Pierce(6), Miami(5), Ft Laud(6), Ft Myers(5)	28
7	21-24 Mar 17	Jacksonville	
8	7,11,21 Feb, 3-4 Mar	Gainesville (Cancelled)	
9	28 Jan, 5 or 11 Feb	Tallahassee (1), Panama City (1)	2
10	25 Mar, 8 Apr	Pensacola	
TOTAL 2017 KNIGHTINGS			44
TOTAL 2016 KNIGHTINGS (May 2015-May 2016)			85

Finally, a reminder to each Secretary/Recorder, you must submit your changes in your MONTHLY REPORT to the Grand Secretary/Recorder and Recorders must report all changes to YRIS. Remember, if your new members are not in Y.R.I.S., they will not receive the Knight Templar Magazine. First line signers should be included on all new companions on the monthly report, in the line of OCCUPATION (Commandery).

Please send me a roster or completed Data Sheets of each new member from your festival whether they were knighted or completed Chapter/Council. This includes all members, not just those belonging to your body.

We cannot excuse our declining membership and we must be individually accountable for growing our body. Don't wait for someone else to do what you can do now.

If any of the above dates are incorrect OR if you have dates or numbers that should be changed, please let me know. Also, as soon as your area determines the dates for the Fall Festival, PLEASE let me know so they may be included.

Fraternally,

Henry A Adams

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AEvery Christian Mason Should Be A Knight Templar®

some excerpts, from Guidelines for Membership, published by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States, reprint from Aug 2009, intro. and Grand Commandery of Florida, Beaderstadt, Jon L. Making Members, also ANew Life for Dying Lodges and Chapters, 2004, pg75-77, and from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006