



RITE NOTES

Membership and Recruiting

15 January 2021

Building Active Members

Companions and Sir Knights,

As we begin our new period of growth within the Florida Grand York Rite, I look forward to having the best year ever. This goal is achievable if the Officers of each York Rite Body begin to plan now for developing interest in what we do and what we stand for. We cannot achieve this goal if members in all three Bodies do not participate. Yes, many Officers and Sir Knights possess good leadership and planning skills to methodically organize and coordinate the conferral of our degrees and Orders on single and multiple candidates. What can we learn from them, and how do they effectively organize their activities.

A Positive Attitude

Many are in agreement that the success of any project begins with a positive attitude. Some refer to this as 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 York Rite Body believe they may not be able to contribute to the goal then a reminder of an age-old quote might be appropriate:

*“If you keep on doing the things that you have been doing,
Then you will continue to get exactly what you’ve been getting.”*

Take Advantage of the Skills Available

We know that each YRB has Companions and Sir Knights possessing great skills and talents. Ask them to become part of this great Crusade even if they may not have attended a Stated Conclave recently. The use of their talents will make a significant difference. Don’t forget to include the ladies in the event planning, as they too will contribute to the overall success. In particular, the Chapters of the Social Order of the Beauceant have always supported the Knight Templars, and can always be counted on. Invite the Companions of local Chapters and Councils as the entire York Rite benefits from the effort.

An Effective Implementation Plan

Develop a new list of all the activities that will be needed to make the event a success. Start with reserving the Asylum for the event. A suggested “Check List” is included as a reminder, but please remember that this will be a “big event” requiring “Big Planning”.

Successful leaders experience goal attainment for a variety of reasons. One reason is that they have challenged and elevated their Officer team thinking and prepared a plan that emphasizes effectiveness more than efficiency. The following ideas, if implemented will help each Commander, High Priest and Ill. Master, ensure that his plan will increase in effectiveness.

Have you considered any of these things?

1. Send a letter on your Commandery stationary to each Officer expressing your support for the membership Crusade, and enlist his support. Tell him you are proud of him. Add a sense of urgency to your request.
2. During your next Officers Meeting secure a commitment from each of your elected and appointed Officers to get at least one petition. This sets a good example for other members. Encourage them to do the same. It also displays commitment to a common purpose among the leadership.
3. Write regular personal endorsements of the Crusade in your monthly newsletter. Request the chapter and council leaders do the same.
4. Consider establishing a unique Award for the Crusade, i.e., Most Knightings in Home Commandery, Highest Membership Gain, Most Restorations, etc. Offer special incentives, like free meals for two. Be creative.
5. Get more Committees involved! Review your Committee list, and get some inactive committees active. This spreads the leadership around and offers a chance for other Officers to show what they are made of.
6. Consider writing a letter to all of your Past Commanders. Share your plans with them, and enlist their support, and participation. They will assist you.
7. Meet regularly with your Chapter and Council leadership. Working together within the “Family of Masonry” increases cooperation exponentially.
8. Call or meet with the Deputy or Actives of the Scottish Rite, and seek their support. They might be willing to support a direct mail campaign for the Crusade, and encourage “Non-York Rite” Scottish Rite Masons to join. Perhaps you could arrange a York Rite conferral at their next Convocation in their auditorium?
9. Call or meet with the leadership of the Shrine Temples in your state and request consideration for a joint “Cold Sands” event with your York Rite Crusade Festivals. Request the Shrine help to sell the benefits of York Rite just as the York Rite should sell the benefits of Shrine membership.
10. Consider a York Rite Festival to honor the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge. Perhaps his junior Officers would join too if they were Non-York Rite Masons.
11. Assign each of your elected and appointed Officers of the Commandery, to become a “Crusade Speakers Bureau”. Request that they arrange invitations to Blue Lodges to present “York Rite Overview Programs” to promote our Christian Masonry heritage. Suggest three programs per month each.

Begin to Target New Members and Restorations

The “Crusade” targets both new Members and restorations. We know that the Symbolic Lodges provide us with the primary source for new Christian Masons. Templar membership committees should consider targeting Masons with current brochures that summarize Templary and its philanthropies.

Acquire a list of non-York Rite Masons from the Symbolic Lodge or even better (as a couple Districts have already done) Contact Grand Lodge, and in particular, MW Richard Lynn, Grand Secretary, and request a list of address labels for your Masonic District. I sent out letters to all Masons raised in the last 3 years in our District (that were not York Rite). This will work. Ask for volunteers from the Chapters and Councils to assist, and try to include Masons that you personally know on your list.

Selling York Rite

The “One-on-One” sales technique has historically been the most effective. Prepare an updated 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 and restorations.

Today’s Relevance

A nationally known religious leader once said that if you put God first, everything else falls into place. 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 have to do is tell them what we stand for and ask them to join. Let’s show everyone that we are as good as we say we are!

Membership growth and retention is a slow process. At first it may look hopeless. But persevere, and you will find it easier to build. Remember, success does breed success. Start small, publicize, be positive, and you will reap the harvest.

Remember, equip, train and send out the troops, and they will come back with results!

Note: If any York Rite Bodies plan weekend festivals, Short of Time or Slow Classes, please let me know, with the date, time, location and contact person, for the Fall of 2020 and I will put it in the next newsletter, and on the website. Remember, Membership and Retention is everyone=s business.

There is no substitute for an all-out campaign to strengthen and build our membership.

New Membership by District for 2020:

DISTRICT	LOCATION	#	DISTRICT	LOCATION	#
1	Palm Beach		6	Cocoa	4
	Ft Lauderdale	2		Melbourne	
	Miami	12		Fort Pierce	10
	Florida Keys				
2	Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity	2	7	Jacksonville	
	Sarasota/Venice/Trinity			Fernandina	
	Everglades			St Augustine	
	Fort Myers	1		Palatka	
3	Tampa (Ivanhoe)	1	8	Lake City	
	St. Petersburg (Sunshine)	2		Middleburg	
	Clearwater (Springtime)	1		Gainesville	

4	Lakeland	1	11	Tallahassee	
	Plant City	4		Marianna	
	Sebring (Highlands)	2		Panama City	
5	Daytona (Halifax)		10	Fort Walton Beach	1
	Lake Sumter	4		Crestview	5
	Sanford			Pensacola	4
	Orlando				

REGARDING THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT: CONCLAVES

SECTION 71. THE COMMANDER

It is the duty of the Commander:

(a) Of a Constituent Commandery, to see that the officers and Members of his Commandery duly observe the By-Laws and Regulations of the Commandery, the Constitution, Rules, Laws, and Regulations of the Grand Commandery, and the Constitution, Statutes, Rules, Regulations and Rituals of the Grand Encampment.

(b) Of Subordinate Commanderies, to see that Officers and Members of the Commandery duly observe the By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations and Rituals of the Grand Encampment.

DECISIONS FROM THE GRAND MASTER

The Grand Commander has no authority to grant a Dispensation to a Constituent Commandery authorizing it to elect a Sir Knight to the honor of Past Commander that has not served in the office. To become a Past Commander the Sir Knight must serve through the end of his term. The resignation of the Commander followed by the election and installation of a successor who then resigns to be replaced by the original commander does not give the intermediate Commander past rank. (1946, p. 87 & 88, No. 15, Orr. 1988 digest 99 & 299)

Any officer, who shows an utter lack of interest, doesn't attend, and is an example of gross negligence may be removed from his office by the Commander following a formal "decision" by the Commander finding unknighly conduct by reason of nonfeasance, misfeasance, and/or malfeasance in the performance of the duties of the office of the offending officer. There is no appeal to the Commandery from such "decision", but such action by the Commander shall not affect the standing in the Order of such officer or his membership in the Commandery. Such removal may also be ordered by the Grand Commander, for the same reason and within the same limitations.

The authority to remove an officer for non-performance of official duties rises from the board authority of the Grand Commander and the Commander, under the vertical axis of power and authority established by Templar laws, to govern his respective level of Templar jurisdiction. Such authority, when related to the duty of seeing that Templar laws are observed and in the absence of arbitrary conduct by the presiding officer, is practically unlimited.

(1970, p. 142 & 535, No. 4, Crofts, 1988 digest - (57- & 249)

A REMINDER: MASONIC MEMBERSHIP SOLUTIONS (MMS) RULES STATE THAT NEW COMPANIONS AND SIR KNIGHTS NEED TO BE PLACED IN MMS WITHIN 15 DAYS.

New Membership by York Rite Body 2020:

DISTRICT	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1	12 Sept	Miami	
2			
3	7 & 14 Mar	Tampa (1), St Pete (2), Clearwater (1), Plant City (4), Manasota (2), Lakeland (1), Ft Myers (1), Highlands (2)	14
4	3 Oct	Lakeland	
5	5 Aug 13 & 20 Mar 21	Eola: Mark Master, Past Master	
6	2-3 Oct	Ft Pierce Chap/Council: (10), Cocoa (2), Lake Sumter (3), Miami (12), Ft Lauderdale (2),	29
7		Jacksonville	
8	3 Oct	Gainesville	
9	6 & 7 Nov	Crestview, (5), Ft Walton (1), Pensacola (4)	10
10	4 April & 2 May 6 & 7 Nov	Pensacola (Postponed) Crestview	
TOTAL 2020 KNIGHTINGS		CHAPTER/COUNCIL	39
TOTAL 2019 KNIGHTINGS			14
			136

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
HENRY A. ADAMS, PGC, KYGCH, KCT, OPC
Chairman, Grand Encampment Membership Committee

"Every 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, Baderstadt, Jon L. "New Life in Dying Lodges". 2004, pg 31-43, and from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006

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