

1 Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Florida  
2 Long and Short Range Plan Initiatives  
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5 Sir Knights:  
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7 The Long and Short Range Plan Committee, read, discussed, and gave their  
8 recommendations on the present document. We now have the pleasure to present our  
9 final document for the consideration of this 2010 Grand Conclave. It is our upmost  
10 desire that this document reflects the vision and guidelines for our Grand Commandery  
11 in the coming five years. We hope it expresses the vision and commitment of our Grand  
12 Line Officers towards our constituent Commanderies and their leadership. Your  
13 approval of this document will lay the foundation as a guide for our future incoming  
14 Grand Commanders.  
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16 We want to thank our Right Eminent Grand Commander, SK Ideal Baldoni II, for the  
17 confidence in placed in us.  
18

19 Thank you.  
20

21 Fraternally

22 **S.K. David A. Aponte - Eminent Grand Generalissimo – Chairman**

23 **S.K. Arthur J. LaRose - Eminent Grand Captain General - Member**

24 **S.K. Henry A. Adams - Eminent Grand Senior Warden - Member**

25 **S.K. Robert G. Stearns - Eminent Grand Junior Warden - Member**  
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# Grand Commandery of Florida

## Long and Short Range Plan Strategic Initiatives

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Winds of change blow 'round my door  
Is this the year I've been waiting for?  
Worlds in motion endlessly  
Cosmic ocean flows into my heart

There's a wind blowing through Freemasonry and York Rite. It is a wind of ideas, thoughts, and progress. It is the wind that brings light to the dark recesses of stagnant positions. It is the wind that motions us to re-visualize our actions and goals. It is the wind of change. We live in a time of change. The winds of change are blowing. Change is inevitable. Something that isn't changing isn't alive. Life is about change.

Changes can only be beneficial by recommending and continuing programs which have more than a one year life span. That is why the Grand Commander tasked the Long and Short Range Planning Committee to reevaluate the Long and Short Range Plan. In addition, this long range plan needs to have the continuous support of the upcoming elected and appointed Grand Line Officers.

### Vision Statement

Before any plan can be conceive, our Grand Commandery needs a Vision Statement that addresses the following elements:

1. What type of organization do we want to be or recognized as?  
Do we want to be recognized as a relevant and respected organization and Fraternity?
2. What type of members do we want to attract and retain?  
Do we want all men of high quality?
3. Why do we want to attract them?  
Do we want to give them an opportunity to make a positive difference in their respective Commanderies and communities?

The vision statement is the foundation of our 5 year plan.

Here's the recommended Mission Statement

The Knights Templar of Florida will be recognized as a vibrant and relevant Masonic organization committed to attracting and retaining skilled and committed men of high quality and leadership who strive for self improvement, and unified with a Christian and knightly code of honor, truth, and values to make a positive contribution and difference in their Commanderies and communities.

1           In the same way each Sir Knight wields his sword to defend a Sir Knight, we need to  
2 wield our sword to develop several areas that will support our goals. Several swords wielded  
3 together form an Arch. An arch is a structure that spans a space while supporting weight. In the  
4 same way, we need to develop our Swords of Progress to be that Arch which will be the support  
5 leading to the achievement of our Vision. The Swords of Progress are:

6           Grand Commandery Organization

7           Education and Training

8           Membership

9           Local Commanderies

10          Technology

11          Family Involvement

12          Community Involvement

13          Communications

14          Public Relations

15          Masonic Unity

16           With these Swords of Progress as the focus, the Long and Short Range Planning  
17 Committee is tasked to assess where we are as a Grand Commandery, what each Sword will  
18 offer to the Long Range Plan and what it wants to achieve. We hope through our local  
19 Commanderies, our present and future Chivalric Masonic leaders will have the opportunity to  
20 discuss and voice their opinions and ideas on this plan. This plan is intended to be updated on an  
21 annual basis. It needs inputs from all Chivalric Masons. Remember, this is a living and evolving  
22 document.

23          **Why:**

24           Why do we need a plan? We spend hours at our usual vocations which include  
25 commuting time. We have family responsibilities. We have less time for participation in  
26 activities outside the home. What moves an individual to join Freemasonry, in general, and  
27 Knights Templar, in particular? An individual's interest in joining the Knights Templar must  
28 surely be to fulfill a personal want or need. The reason why is as diverse as the individuals who  
29 join. No matter what the reasons, our Masonic and Chivalric activities must be worth the  
30 expenditure of their limited time. In short, his participation in our organization must be relevant  
31 to himself.

32           The Grand Commandery leadership recognizes that to be successful, it must begin with  
33 itself and then the constituent Commandery. There are several ways the Grand Commandery can  
34 and should assist each constituent Commandery. The function of this plan and its execution will  
35 be to make this a reality.

1 **Swords of Progress:**

2 Each Sword of Progress is essential to the attainment of strategic initiatives proposed by  
3 the Grand Commandery Grand Line Officers and adopted by the body of the Grand  
4 Commandery at its Annual Grand Conclave. Each Sword of Progress has broad objectives,  
5 which encompass several concepts or ideas. Within these objectives, there are measurable goals  
6 or actions. In addition, time frames to reach these goals or actions can be delineated.

7 Even though each Sword of Progress is numbered, it does not establish a sequence of  
8 priorities. Each Sword is an important and integral partner in achieving the vision of this  
9 organization. We must place equal emphasis on all the goals and actions to accomplish each  
10 objective.

11 **Swords of Progress**

12 **Sword No. 1** Grand Commandery Organization

13 **Sword No. 2** Education and Training

14 **Sword No. 3** Membership

15 **Sword No. 4** Local Commanderies

16 **Sword No. 5** Technology

17 **Sword No. 6** Family Involvement

18 **Sword No. 7** Community Involvement

19 **Sword No. 8** Communications

20 **Sword No. 9** Public Relations

21 **Sword No. 10** Masonic Unity

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## Sword No. 1: Grand Commandery Organization

We need to review and update our organization, and the way we do business. This will allow our Grand Commandery the capability to respond timely to the needs of constituent Commanderies and leadership development of its Officers.

### Objectives:

- Identify and evaluate how the Grand Commandery can be more pro-active.
- Identify what leadership, administrative and financial skills our Grand Line Officers need to promote a more competent, effective and pro-active leadership.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Grand Commandery in responding to changes and develop the means to respond to new opportunities.
- Assess the talents of individual Sir Knights and develop a database as a pool of resources, to be placed in strategic leadership positions/roles.
- Assess and alter, if necessary, the structure of the Grand Commandery, where needed, to insure an efficient implementation of the Vision Statement and Swords of Progress.
- Evaluate how to better our district meetings.

### Actions:

- Develop roles and responsibilities for each appointed Grand Line officer.
- Review the Grand Commandery Committees in existence and see if they respond to the needs of our Grand Commandery and local Commanderies.
- Review the membership of the Grand Commandery committees to ensure that the members have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be effective in their respective committees' duties.
- Develop, maintain, and utilize as a talent bank, a data base of Committee assignments that Grand Commandery members have held.
- Develop and maintain a leadership program to train and enhance the skills of the Grand Line Officers.
- Review and develop an efficient and motivating district meeting.

## Sword No. 2: Education and Training

Education is a priority in our Organization. The delivery of courses in education, instruction, newsletters and any other media that will enable Commandery Officers and members to gain a profound understanding of Templary, its values and history; increase their interest and involvement in obtaining knowledge; and motivating them to share that knowledge with their fellow Knights.

### Objectives:

- Establish and implement educational programs designed to teach and apply Chivalric and Masonic knowledge to the daily lives of the membership.
- Identify areas and provide Chivalric leaders the necessary training.
- Develop and implement a continuous program on floorwork and tactics.
- Develop and implement a curriculum for an on-line York Rite University.

### Actions:

- Task the Committee on Work, with assistance of the District Instructors, to develop and conduct regional programs that include floor work and symbolism.
- Task the Committee on Work, with assistance of the District Instructors, Drill Master General, the Educational and Communication Committees, to develop and conduct regional programs on drill and sword tactics.
- Task the Educational Committee to develop and conduct training workshops for the Deputies of the Grand Commander, as directed by the Grand Commander.
- Task the Educational and York Rite University Committees to develop a curriculum to provide leadership education.
- Task the Education Committee to maintain an educational newsletter regarding the history, philosophy, values, and other related items on Templary.

### **Sword No. 3: Membership**

Membership has long been a priority in our organization. Through a series of well developed courses of instruction, pool of leaders available to assist our local Commanderies, Commandery Officers and members will gain an understanding of what it has to do to get members, retain members, and increase participation, which in turn will stabilize the downturn of membership, especially NPD. The Grand Commandery needs to provide, if requested, the necessary tools for the survival of our local Commanderies.

#### **Objectives:**

- Develop, establish and implement programs designed to attract and retain membership and decrease the number of NPD.
- Identify areas of membership problems and provide the local Commanderies the necessary tools and training to resolve them.

#### **Actions:**

- Task the Membership Committee to develop and conduct regional programs that emphasizes how to attract new membership, retain members and how to avoid NPD.
- Task the Public Relations Committee to develop and print materials regarding Membership.
- Task the Membership Committee to analyze the causes of membership decline during the past 5 years for each Commandery.
- Require each local Commandery to achieve and surpass the minimum of 10% increase of membership each year.
- Require each local Commandery to reduce the NPD's by 50% or more.
- Task the Public Relation Committee to produce a PowerPoint presentation for membership recruitment directed to men of high quality and guided to present the philosophy and Masonic and Christian values of a Knight Templar.

## **Sword No. 4: Local Commanderies**

Commanderies need to be proud of their Masonic and Chivalric heritage. We must develop and implement activities that will cultivate and instill pride in being a Knight Templar. Our Commanderies must also be proficient in ritual and drills. In the same way we take pride of our ritualistic work in Blue Lodge, we must also take pride in our ritualistic work. Poor ritualistic work could translate into lower retention of membership. Leadership development and education should be one of the priorities on our list. Our Commanderies need to need to work beyond the walls of the Asylum and be true reflections of Christian Masonry in our Asylums and communities. Our public presence and work outside of our Asylums will provide an avenue of satisfaction and reinforcement to our Sir Knights and become a field for potential membership. Our Grand Commandery needs to be an active participant with our local Commanderies and help them reach their goals.

### **Objectives:**

- Identify areas where the Grand Commandery can assist constituent Commanderies.
- Evaluate and recommend areas of improvement to our local Commanderies to make them pro-active to changes and new opportunities.
- Assess the talents of individual Sir Knights and develop a database as a pool of resources, to assist local Commanderies.
- Evaluate and identify resources for more economical Knights Templar regalia.
- Identify areas where the leadership, administrative and financial skills of our local Commandery Officers can be enhanced to promote a more competent, effective and pro-active leadership.
- Solicit and incorporate suggestions and comments from the local Commanderies in developing future plans to enhance the growth and stability of the Grand Commandery.
- Identify and develop future leaders for the Grand Commandery Line.

### **Actions:**

- Create a Commandery Assistance Committee with the task to assist the local Commanderies, especially those with problems.
- Develop, maintain, and utilize as a talent bank, a data base of Committee assignments that Grand Commandery members have held.
- Develop and maintain a leadership program to train and enhance the skills of the local Commandery Line Officers.
- Develop and maintain links to economical Knights Templar regalia.
- The Grand Commandery will assist the local Commanderies in the development of festivals or short of time classes, if requested, for all 10 districts.
- Encourage the local Commanderies to use their new Sir Knights as part of the cast for their next festival or degree work.
- Assess and increase communications between the Grand Commandery and the local Commanderies.
- Establish a program to solicit a resume from the current and past Commanders interested in Grand Line appointments. Maintain a database for the use of the incoming Grand Commanders.



## **Sword No. 5: Technology**

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3           Commanderies need quick access to membership statistics, easier methods of  
4 communicating with the Grand Commandery and their own membership. They also need better  
5 and easier methods for managing their finances, minutes and data. At the same time, provide  
6 Masonic, Leadership and Chivalric education to their membership using on-line courses,  
7 depository of e-literature and other mediums. They also need to have accessible membership  
8 information and petition for Master Masons as potential York Rite Masons.

### **Objectives:**

- 10           • Utilize technology to improve administration and education.

### **Actions:**

- 12           • Identify and create interactive forms for Annual reports.  
13           • Create and issue electronic formats of all ritual work as authorized by the Grand  
14           Commandery.  
15           • Develop interactive Masonic educational programs.

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## Sword No. 6: Family Involvement

To attract men of high quality, Chivalric Masonry must develop and implement programs, which are of interest to the whole family. We need to assure that the time spent in Chivalric Masonry should, to a certain extent, fulfill a Sir Knight's needs as a York Rite Mason, while at the same time satisfy his wishes to be with his family or to meet their needs through his association with Chivalric Masonry.

### Objectives:

- To develop a closer tie between individual Templary families by well-planned activities within the Chivalric Masonic framework that will include all family members.

### Actions:

- Task the Membership Committee to form a focus group composed of a cross section of Sir Knights from throughout Florida, and their wives, to identify those family oriented activities/events, which could be conducted at Grand Commandery functions, such as the Grand Conclave or district meetings. The composition of the focus group should be broad-based in terms of age and experience.
- Task the Membership Committee to develop a database of family-oriented activities accomplished by local Commanderies as ideas for their use for other Commanderies.
- Recognize the opportunities that Masonic youth organizations provide for family oriented activities and encourage active participation by Grand Commandery and local Commandery members in their support, especially DeMolay in our respective districts.
- The Grand Commandery will actively participate and support the annual DeMolay Cotillion of Col. Nick Rowe Priory and present a program or other activity, time permitting at said Cotillion.
- Develop and implement an award program for our Masonic Youth organizations.

## Sword No. 7: Community Involvement

To be relevant in today's society, our Commanderies must recognize the desire of the Sir Knight's to use their personal and collective talents to promote the basic tenets of our Order outside the walls of the Asylum. We must be involved within our communities to promote the principals and values of Chivalric Masonry through example and commitment.

### Objectives:

- Develop and foster positive relationships and partnerships within Florida as a community at large.
- Analyze and recommend ways how the Grand Commandery and local Commanderies can become significant and meaningful participants in the health, growth, and enrichment of their local communities.
- Develop a program to recognize organizations and/or individual members of the community, who espouse Templary ideals and values, for their outstanding service.

### Actions:

- Under the direction of the Public Relations Committee, develop, implement, and expand a speaker's bureau throughout Florida to build awareness of Templary/Masonry among key community organizations, government and community leaders.
- Task the Public Relations Committee to coordinate with service organizations, on a statewide level, to identify those areas of common concern where constituent Commanderies may partner to be of greater service to the community.
- Through the Public Relations Committee, sponsor/support community events statewide which enhance a positive image of our organization. Identify appropriate local fairs, festivals, and celebrations throughout the state. Encourage Commanderies to participate in them through booths, participation in parades, youth sports team sponsorships, etc.
- Evaluate and encourage local Commanderies to establish an award to recognize members and/or organizations in our communities that espouse the ideas and values of Templary in their service to the public. Develop media contacts to publicize such awards and activities.
- Encourage Commanderies to identify and participate in local community service opportunities.

## Sword No. 8: Public Relations

The perception the public has of Chivalric Masonry affects our ability to be of service to our communities through our philanthropic projects, as well as, our ability to attract new members for Masonry, in general, and Chivalric Masonry, in particular.

### Objectives:

- Develop, publish, and execute a Long Range Public Relations Plan.
- Participate in local community events.
- Encourage and assist the constituent Commanderies to develop good working relationships with the local media in their communities or geographical areas.

### Actions:

- Task the Public Relations Committee to develop a Long Range Public Relations Program. The program should include as a minimum, the identification of the target audience, media they use or observe, and a proposed budget for at least a three-year time period.
- Task the Public Relations Committee to develop and deliver to the constituent Commanderies a comprehensive training program, including how to write a press release, on the media available to them, and ways to publicize events.
- Task the Public Relations Committee to submit positive examples of public relation successes for publishing on the Grand York Rite web site.
- Create a historic Knights Templar unit to journey within this jurisdiction to promote Chivalric Masonry.
- Task the local and or district Commanderies to participate in their communities' Veteran's Day, Christmas and 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades.
- Task the Grand Commandery Line to present the colors at the opening of the State of Florida Legislature or major community event.
- Task the local Commanderies to present the colors at their local Board of Commissioners' initial meeting or other community events.

## **Sword No. 9: Communications**

Communication is essential in any organization. As Knights Templar, we must be knowledgeable in Chivalric Freemasonry, its values, principals and philosophy. We need to provide the necessary educational materials to the Sir Knights and local Commanderies. Ideas that make a positive impact in our Commanderies need to be known. We need to provide a medium for communication, ideas and feedback to flow among the Sir Knights and Commanderies in our jurisdiction.

### **Objectives:**

- Educate our Knights Templar in the history, values and philosophy of Templary.
- Maintain an active presence on the Internet.
- Maintain a magazine publication as a presence of the Grand Commandery throughout this jurisdiction and beyond.
- Use the Internet to publish documents, forms, newsletter and

### **Actions:**

- Continue and continue to develop the Grand York Rite website to its maximum potential.
- Continue the publication of the Florida York Rite Magazine.
- Continue the publication of the Temple of Solomon as the educational arm of the Grand Commandery.
- Evaluate and create other means to educate and train the Sir Knights within Florida.

1 **Sword No. 10: Masonic Unity**

2 Membership requires a Sir Knight to be a Master Mason, Royal Arch Mason and Royal  
3 & Select Master in good standing. As Master Masons, we all share the same basic tenets and  
4 share in another avenue to continue our participation in good works and fulfill the desire to make  
5 a difference in our communities. Our Grand Commandery and local Commanderies must  
6 develop strategies and programs to foment Masonic Unity. All our Masonic organizations must  
7 strive to work together, in harmony, towards the same goals.

8 **Objectives:**

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- 10 • To communicate the meaning and importance of Masonic Unity.
  - 11 • To promote programs encouraging visitation and cooperative activities between  
12 Commanderies and Blue Lodges.
  - 13 • To promote unity between the Grand Lodge of Florida, the Scottish Rite and other  
Concordant Bodies.

14 **Actions:**

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- 16 • Task the local Commanderies to designate a Sir Knight or York Rite Companion as a  
Blue Lodge Ambassador.
  - 17 • Task the closest Commanderies to a Concordant Masonic body to coordinate and  
18 designate a York Rite Companion as the Ambassador to that body or bodies.
  - 19 • Task the Ambassadors to see in what way the local Commanderies can assist the Blue  
20 Lodge or Concordant Masonic Body, e.g. Color Guard, Honor Guard, Master Mason  
21 degree team, etc.
  - 22 • Task the Grand Commandery to see how they can assist the Grand Lodge of Florida.

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