

**GUIDELINES
FOR
MEMBERSHIP**

“HOW TO DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM”

*Membership
the Lifeblood . . .*



*Committee on Membership
Grand Encampment of Knights Templar
of the United States of America*

Revised—June 1992

I: PREFACE

In 1970, the Committee on Membership of the Grand Encampment was appointed by the 1967-70 Grand Master, Sir Knight John L. Crofts, Sr., to prepare, in cooperation with the Grand Recorder, Membership Guidelines for suggested use by Grand, Subordinate and Constituent Commanderies. The Committee was composed of Robert E. Billings, P.G.C., Wisconsin; Henry J. Weisser, P.G.C., California; and, as Chairman, Gordon J. Brenner, P.G.C., New Jersey.

In 1979, Edward T. Bloomquist, P.G.C., Texas, was appointed Chairman of the Grand Encampment Committee on Membership by the incoming Grand Master, Kenneth C. Johnson. Sir Knight Bloomquist and his Committee — J. B. McQuirt, P.G.C., South Carolina, and T. Olin Gore, Jr., P.G.C., Mississippi — then proceeded to study the problem at hand. What developed was a series of letters directed toward attracting new members and retaining those already on the Commandery roles. These letters are appended to this brochure for possible use by any Grand Commandery.

II: OBTAINING NEW MEMBERS

A. Inspirational

To enlist Christian Masons, we, ourselves, must be completely "sold." And we must know "our product" in order to "sell" others. We must convince the Christian Mason that we have something he needs and deserves. Let's learn to express our own conviction to let him know that Templary stands for the highest ideals of Christianity. It represents the noblest in humanity. It reveals Christianity in action!

In Templary a Christian finds Masonry expressed in terms he can best understand and appreciate. He finds a Christian climate to match his Christian commitment. He finds a loyal band of Christian warriors with whom he has much in common. He can give service to the broad objectives of Christianity by combining his practical efforts with others of kindred minds and hearts.

Some men are so constituted that they need to be "sold" on the most essential qualities of life – and Templary is no exception. We need constantly to consult old and consider new ways to win men to our Christian Masonic fraternity.

Assure each Christian Mason that his enlistment in Templary will stimulate the good impulses and the forces of right in which he believes. Show him by our daily actions that we support the upright and moral causes in the community in which we live. By high purpose and demonstrated zeal we will be prepared to sally forth to recruit Christian manpower for Templary.

A Templar knows that no Mason can fully appreciate the depth of the work of Masonry until he has participated in the Order of Knighthood! Present members imbued with this conviction need to impart it to prospective members.

Leadership in Commanderies calls for men of the finest calibre – men who are not only inspired, but who are also diligent, active and talented.

Let us assure our Commanderies by our concerted membership efforts that we will always have men of leadership qualification to assume leadership posts.

B. Organizational

To present its membership program successfully and secure new members, each Grand Commandery should have a *Grand Commandery Membership Committee*, several *Zone Membership Chairmen* and individual *Constituent Commandery Membership Committees*. Suggested duties and functions of these Committees are:

1. *Grand Commandery Membership Chairman*

- a. Recruit and train Zone Membership Chairmen.

- b. Arrange Grand Commandery membership meetings. These meetings of various Zone Membership Chairmen must provide the initial dynamics for the entire program. General policy should be discussed and problems in the different Zones analyzed and solutions formulated. All successful methods and ideas should be considered, adopted and developed.
- c. Arrange State Festivals.
- d. Help to encourage state patriotic and civic activities, religious activities and all prescribed Committee projects, including the Knights Templar Educational Foundation and Eye Foundation.
- e. Receive all Zone membership reports, analyze, condense and present written summaries to the Grand Commander and Grand Recorder. A periodic progress report should also be sent to the Grand Encampment Membership Chairman.

2. *Zone Membership Chairman*

- a. Train and assist Membership Chairmen of the Constituent Commanderies.
- b. Hold Zone membership meetings. These meetings should develop fellowship, competition among the Commanderies and discussions on procedures and successful aids. The Zone Membership Chairman should be prepared to answer any questions which the Membership Chairmen ask.
- c. Arrange Zone Festivals.
- d. Promote and assist in all accepted projects which contribute to a favorable image of Templary in the area. Promoting and aiding these activities on a Zone basis can be more effective than a Constituent Commandery basis.
- e. Report to and cooperate with the Grand Commandery Membership Chairman.

3. *Constituent Commandery Membership Committee*

- a. Recruit Membership committeemen. Chairman to recruit at least one committee member for each Blue Lodge and/or Royal Arch Chapter within the Commandery area.
- b. Plan Membership Meetings. Chairman to keep committeemen posted on zone festivals, state festivals, zone activities and local situations. Committeemen to report on activities in their territories and what progress is being made to obtain new members. Assistance needed from Zone or Grand Commandery committees should be reported.

- c. Formulate Membership Program. Committeemen to gather trestle boards for all Lodges and Chapters in their territories. Committeemen to attend Lodge meetings on degree nights and meet the candidates. The same procedure should be followed for the Chapter meetings (and Council meetings where the Council is a prerequisite). Committeemen to supply each resident member of the Constituent Commandery with a petition and convince the member to secure one new member or to *reactivate a demitted or suspended member*.
- d. Report to Zone Committee. Each month the Commandery Chairman to furnish the Zone Membership Chairman with a list of names of candidates accepted for membership by Lodge or Chapter (or Council) in the Constituent Commandery territory. This list should show the dates on which the candidates received the Master Mason or Royal Arch degree. Also report the number of Commandery petitions secured and all other activities of the Committee. The report should include details of committee meetings held, also any requests and suggestions of the committee. Constituent and knowledgeable reporting will guarantee considerable success.

LETTER NO. 1

Directed to Members of Blue Lodge, Chapter or Council

Dear Brother/Companion:

A wise man will always have a quest for further light. Through each step along the Lodge degrees — Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, Master Mason — additional light is sought and expected. But once a frater is Raised a Master Mason, is this all the light he can receive? Masonry is so full of teachings and symbolism that it is impossible to receive and understand it all. Most of it is not found in the Blue Lodge degrees.

In some Grand Lodges we are told that “the Temple is not yet completed.” Later we learn the Master’s word is lost and a substitute is given. This is the foundation from which we learn that there must be further light and much more to learn of ancient Craft Masonry.

Some 200 years ago, most of our brethren were known as “Ancient York Masons.” When the two Grand Lodges of England united in 1813, a firm and solemn landmark was adopted and placed in the articles of union to guide all Masons: “Pure ancient Freemasonry consists of but three degrees, vis., that of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason, including the supreme order of the Holy Royal Arch. But this article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the constitutions of said Orders.”

At that time, only Past Masters of Symbolic Lodges were qualified to receive the Royal Arch Degree. But it was deemed that this degree was so important that those Master Masons having received the Mark Master Degree should be able to become Past Masters, thus making them eligible to witness the completion and dedication of King Solomon's Temple — and the Royal Arch Degree — where the long lost Master's word is found. These degrees were then taken from the Blue Lodges and established under separate bodies known as Chapters. Royal Arch Chapters confer the Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master and Royal Arch Degrees.

Royal Arch Chapters, together with Councils of Royal and Select Masters (Cryptic Masons), and Commanderies of Knights Templar, compose the York Rite.

The Royal Master and Select Master Degrees in the Council are two of the most beautiful degrees in Masonry and show why the "word" was lost and the secret of its preservation and recovery.

Templary is the Christian Body of Masonry comprised of the Order of the Red Cross, the Order of Malta and the Order of the Temple. These degrees or Orders as they are called, are beautiful and most impressive and explain the Christian interpretation of Freemasonry. Every Christian Mason should be a Knight Templar.

Further light by means of the most beautiful degrees and Orders is found in the York Rite. After any necessary interval following your third degree, ask for a York Rite petition. (In case you are interested in the Shrine, being a Knight Templar automatically qualifies you.)

Sincerely and fraternally,

III: KEEPING PRESENT MEMBERS

In extolling the merits of Templary 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 your assistance in all programs and projects in which present members can add their re-activated strength and support.

A dynamic Commandery with energetic leadership and a well-organized-and-motivated Membership Committee assisting 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 don't help; actions do.

How is this accomplished? Two productive essentials are training officers and stimulating the membership.

A. Training the Officers

Generally speaking, every individual WANTS to do a good job of whatever he attempts. In many cases, an officer may miss his goal of achievement 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, these 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 particular office, including his committee assignments.

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

Many Commanderies use the appointive officers as a proving ground for training Council Officers and for those members who wish to be active but do not want to progress in line. However, to lengthen the span of continuity, consideration should be given to selecting as Senior Warden the Sir Knight best qualified for Captain General the following year.

B. Stimulating the Membership

One helpful communication gain has been the every-member distribution of the *Knight Templar Magazine*. Now every Templar, regardless of residence, can find news and views of Templary — to help broaden his Masonic horizon, to motivate greater interest and encourage a larger understanding.

While the Magazine will help increase his awareness and may inspire even a long-dormant Templar to attendance, personal contact is still necessary and helpful in channeling that renewed interest into activity.

Communicate your own enthusiasm and lend your assistance in having him participate in conferring Orders, if only as a guard or hermit, and taking part in the annual inspection or official visit. He should be given the opportunity to assist in the voluntary Knights Templar Eye Foundation program, the Knights Templar Educational Foundation work, in 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 Templary 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 these times of uncertainty and confusion.

If you are like many of us, in all forms of endeavor, you feel that it's easier to do something yourself than to help influence others to assist in projects and

activities. But these things, ESPECIALLY in Christian Masonry, are more productive, more rewarding and more worthwhile if they are TEAM efforts. Spread the opportunity to participate; many a man is waiting to be asked. Your efforts in this direction will help make your Commandery consistently and progressively successful.

OBSERVATION

The Committee notes that some Grand Commanderies, particularly those with Division Inspector systems, already have standardized methods of training officers and improving quality and performance. The recommendations and suggestions herein presented — in all categories — are designed to direct immediate attention to membership and leadership with the hope that they will help to create productive activity, whether or not the specific points are applicable in all jurisdictions. The major purpose is to get results!

LETTER NO. 2

Directed to Constituent and Subordinate Commanders and Membership Chairmen

Dear Sir Knight:

If our Templar Membership Program is to be successful, more of our members are going to have to become involved in the affairs of our Commanderies, and YOU as a leader will have to show the way.

The first step in a successful Membership Program is to *keep the members you have*.

No man wants to be *suspended for non-payment of dues*. However, in this day and time, many of our members, because of sickness, old age or small income, are just unable to pay their dues. *When this occurs, their dues should be remitted*.

Now we have tried the *investigating committee approach* for years without much success. This was caused partly because many men are embarrassed by admitting that they cannot pay their dues. Most of the dues reminders that are sent out when a member has not paid his dues are cold and in some cases are downright insulting. Remember, when a member is suspended because of his inability to pay dues, *you not only lose the member, but in most cases you lose an entire family for years to come because his sons and grandsons will always remember that when their dad or grandfather could not pay his dues, he was turned out*. When a member pays his dues for many years and then suddenly stops paying, the Recorder should know that something is wrong.

If two months have passed and a member has failed to pay, the Secretary or Recorder should send the member *Letter No. 3a* (following), which reminds him

that he is a very valuable member and that he has probably forgotten to send in his dues; however, if he is unable to pay his dues we still want him as a member. Invite him to just write across the letter that he cannot pay at this time, then remit his dues. If he fails to reply, then two months before he is to be suspended send him *Letter No. 3b* saying his dues have been remitted and send him his card. *Very few men will take advantage of any Masonic body by not paying if they are able to do so.*

If YOU really get involved, others will follow. Try it – you'll like it.

Sincerely and fraternally,

LETTER NO. 3a

Directed to Members About to be Suspended for Non-payment of Dues

My Dear Friend and Sir Knight:

Never in the history of this great country of ours 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 great country of ours.

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

We find that your dues for this year have not been paid as yet. If for reason of age, illness or financial difficulty 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 teachings of caring for a worthy Brother.

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

Sincerely and fraternally,

LETTER NO. 3b

Directed to Members About to be Suspended for Non-payment of Dues

My Dear Friend and Sir Knight:

You are a very important asset to our Masonic Fraternity, even when you are not able to attend, because our many Masonic charities depend in part on a portion of your dues for their support. However, if our Masonic teaching means anything at all, it means taking care of our distressed Brethren.

We find that your dues for this year have not been received. If for any reason such as age, sickness or financial difficulty you feel that your dues have become a burden, we still want to keep you as a member in good standing.

At our last Stated Meeting, a list of all delinquent members was read, and it was unanimously adopted that the dues for these Sir Knights would be remitted for one year. We are, therefore, most happy to send you your dues card for this year.

We hope that you will accept this dues card as a gift from your Brethren in the spirit in which it is given because we want YOU as a member. When a member's dues are remitted for a year, they cannot be repaid because the member's account has been credited as paid for the year.

May our Heavenly Father bless and keep you and yours for many years to come, and may your membership in our Fraternity be a real joy to you.

Sincerely and fraternally,