

EXEMPLIFICATION OF CHARITY, UNITY AND FRATERNITY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) Why have these changes been made?

The future of our Order depends upon growth, and true growth can only be accomplished by providing an entry path that is inviting and accessible to prospective members and their families. Efforts to create a combined ceremony focused on removing the barriers of secrecy and commitment of time that inhibited so many from joining our ranks. It also eliminated redundancies and focused on presenting the lessons of Charity, Unity and Fraternity in a more clear and convincing way. It is designed to be held in a parish with family and friends seated in the pews. All can now witness firsthand the organization their loved ones are joining, its principals and values, and why it matters. The new Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity stays true to our traditions while addressing the needs of our times.

2) Can we continue to conduct the old degree?

State Deputies are directing the implementation of the new ceremony and the phase out of the old ceremonies within their jurisdictions. The old ceremonies may still be conducted if your State Deputy allows. For now, the Supreme Council has not announced a final date for the complete termination of the old ceremonies. This will be determined by the Supreme Board of Directors.

3) I am vehemently opposed to changing our degrees. What can I do?

Please view the following link in its entirety which contains the Supreme Knight's address at the midyear State Deputies Meeting (videos.kofc.org/exemplification). He presents the detailed reasons behind this change. The link also includes a video of the ceremony. You will see that the principle lessons have been preserved and that they are presented in a manner much more appropriate to our times.

What you can do is support our Order's efforts to give more men the opportunity to live their faith in action by using this new ceremony to recruit, advance, and retain new members.

4) Where should the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity be conducted?

The ceremony was designed to be performed in a church setting with a large audience. If a Church facility is not available, it may be conducted in a dignified and solemn manner as best determined by the Grand Knight and council officers in cooperation with the District Deputy.

5) What if my pastor doesn't approve of the ceremony being conducted in church?

Each Pastor or Chaplain will take into consideration the respect of the space, use of the Altar space, and interference with the Tabernacle. If they believe the ceremony is inappropriate for the space, respect their wishes and find an alternate location. A church hall, assembly space, meeting room, or council chambers will also be appropriate spaces to conduct the ceremony.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

6) Is the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity to be delivered from memory?

Teams are permitted to read the script. Performances from memory are encouraged but not required.

It is imperative that all aspects be done in a highly professional manner, and with the utmost decorum. First impressions are lasting ones. All team members must be skilled readers and public speakers, fully comfortable with the wording, pronunciation, transitions and tone. Whether the ceremony is done from memory or read from the script, it must be done with theatrical flair and passion. Teams should view the online video and practice many times before conducting any exemplifications. Particular attention should be given to how their performances will be perceived and to their impact on candidates and guests.

7) What about the online video? Can we use it?

The online video currently circulating among members was meant to raise awareness of the new ceremony and solicit comments. It was not intended for showing to candidates and the public. As an interim measure, however, councils may show the video on a limited basis to candidates who cannot attend a scheduled ceremony. In such cases, the Grand Knight and two other members should preside over the ceremony, dressed in dark suits with ceremonial baldrics. The location should be formally setup with all ceremonial materials on hand.

8) Will there be a DVD?

While we prefer that the ceremony be performed live, we do plan to provide a video that can be used to initiate candidates. The video is still being developed from the finalized script.

9) Where can I find the script and instructions?

The script can be found on Officers Online. If you are not a Grand Knight, Financial Secretary or District Deputy, please ask one of them to acquire the files from Officers Online for you. You can also send an email to Ceremonials@kofc.org, to ask for a PDF copy.

10) Who should be the presenters?

All team members must be skilled readers and public speakers, fully comfortable with the wording, pronunciation, transitions and tone.

11) Who should be the investing officer?

The preferred investing officer is the Grand Knight, accompanied by the highest-ranking officer present. With large classes additional high-ranking officers can be used to present the rosaries and lapel pins.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

12) What if the pastor or chaplain is not available for the opening and closing prayer?

If there is no priest or deacon available, the Presiding Officer should lead the Opening and Closing prayers. However, the “final blessing” should be omitted, as noted in the script.

13) Who should speak to the new Third Degree members following the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity?

The script identifies the desired speakers and talking points. Speakers must be brief and focused.

14) How often should the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity be conducted?

Schedule them as often as you can. It would be ideal to do large exemplifications in church on important occasions, such as Founder’s Day on March 29, or Columbus Day on October 12.

15) Can a council take members to another council?

Yes. This is permitted. However, the impact on new members will be longer lasting if the candidates experience the ceremony in the familiar surroundings of their own parish.

16) Should First and Second Degree members participate?

Encourage First and Second Degree members to participate in the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity. These members should also be invested with a rosary and lapel pin, even though they received them at their first degree ceremony. At the conclusion of the ceremony, they are Third Degree Members.

17) Should we give the Rosary and Lapel Pin to advancing members again?

We recommend that all candidates in the new ceremony be treated the same. Separating members to only install the new members with a rosary and pin could be awkward.

If cost is an issue, remember, the individual Second and Third Degrees would probably cost more than the rosary and pin.

18) Will there be changes to the Membership Cards?

There is no change to the Membership Cards. Councils will still have some First and Second Degree members who have not completed the requirements of the other degrees. The members who take the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity have completed the requirements to be Third Degree members.

19) Are Online Members allowed to participate?

Online Members can participate in the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity, and then transfer into your council. The transfer details can be handled afterwards. If an Online Member wishes to remain in the Online Division (Council), his wishes should be respected.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

20) Can an online member take the degree and remain unaffiliated to a council?

An Online Member may take the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity and remain unaffiliated to a council. The member's record in the Online Council would need to be updated to reflect his three degree dates, and that could only be done by informing the Membership Records Department (there is no local Financial Secretary to update the degree dates online).

Once his record is updated, if he decides to join a local council at a later date, his transfer into a local council would be seamless and would not require attending the ceremony again.

21) How can we be sure an Online member is an appropriate candidate?

Online members must pass the same admission protocol as any other candidate/member that wants to join or transfer into a local council. This vetting process protects the council from any unwanted members, either through the admission process or the transfer voting process.

22) What should people wear?

This is not a casual event. However, no candidate or guest should be scrutinized or turned away due to their attire.

CANDIDATES: Let them know that they can wear a suit and tie, but a collared dress shirt with dress pants is also appropriate.

PRESENTERS: The preferred attire is suit and tie with ceremonial baldric. At the very minimum shirt, blazer, and slacks with ceremonial baldric.

COUNCIL OFFICERS: The preferred attire is suit and tie with Medal of Office. Matching, branded Knights of Columbus Council shirts would also be appropriate.

23) How should candidates be greeted and assembled?

Candidates should be greeted by the Financial Secretary and assembled in an area that will be conducive to reviewing the pledges and signing the Constitutional Roll. Encourage your Field Agent to assist. Add assistants based on class size.

The Warden escorts those to be exemplified to their reserved seats in front of the assembly. For small classes, they may be escorted as a group. For large classes, they may be escorted in small groups as they finish signing the Constitutional Roll.

Candidates should be seated on the side of the presentation space that is directly facing the presentation podium.

24) There is no mention of keeping dues current. When should that be done?

Administrative items such as this should be done during the council on-boarding process or can be done when collecting dues prior to the ceremony.

Ceremonials Department

25) When and how are membership cards distributed?

The Financial Secretary will distribute membership cards following the ceremony. Because the Financial Secretary does not have a member number for the new members, these cards take time. Existing members achieving the Knighthood degree could be given cards immediately after the ceremony.

26) There is no mention of being visited by the Field Agent. When should that be done?

Field Agents will continue to make appointments with new members. The agent's first role in the ceremony is to meet and greet candidates, so that they can start developing a fraternal bond (see reference in the script instructions). In order to keep the ceremony brief, the agent is not called on at the end of the ceremony. However, the agent should be invited to say a few words of congratulations at any post-ceremonial celebration. The Field Agent and General Agent must be notified of the ceremony, and they should attend when possible. In the absence of a post-ceremonial celebration, one representative agent can be called on for brief remarks at the appropriate time.

27) Following the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity, what steps should the Financial Secretary take?

1. Deliver Third Degree Membership Cards to the newly advanced members.
2. Submit documents to the Supreme Council
 - a. New Member - Form 100 (New Member) with the degree date in all three degree fields.
 - b. eMembers - Form 100 (Transfer) with the degree date in all three degree fields. If the eMember is listed in the council's prospect tab in Member Management, the eMember can be accepted there, and the degree dates can be updated in Member Management.
 - c. 1st and 2nd Degree Members - Use Member Management to update their degree dates or send form 100 (Data Change) with the degree date in the second and third degree fields.
3. Ensure the member is receiving council communications.

28) What forms need to be filed to report the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity?

The Exemplification Report (#450) has been updated to reflect the changes in the degree. It can be used for either the stand-alone ceremonies, or the new combined ceremony. The new form is currently available on the Knight of Columbus website as a pdf. Please encourage the use of the new Form 450.

Here is a link to the forms page: www.kofc.org/forms

29) Should Councils continue to assess an Initiation Fee?

Since the Candidate Kit is now the only cost to councils, lowering or eliminating the initiation fee are both acceptable options and can be accomplished through a change to your Council By-Laws. Councils can vote to change to their By-Laws and update them online through "By Laws Online."

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

30) What props/supplies are needed for the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity?

Script – The script for the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity is now available through Officers Online, as are the training video and FAQs. Once you have logged in to Officers Online, they are listed under “Urgent Messages.” (these are accessible to the Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, District Deputy, and any other officer that has access to Officers Online)

Printed copies of the script, and a DVD, are NOT currently available. Announcements will be made when they are available.

Ceremonial Baldrics – The Ceremonial Baldric may be ordered directly from one of the official suppliers of the Knights of Columbus:

In the U.S.: The English Company, 1-800-444-5632, or www.kofcsupplies.com

In Canada: Entreprises Roger Sauvé, at 1-888-266-1211 or www.roger-sauve.com

Cable and Fibers – also available through The English Company or Roger Sauvé

Constitutional Roll – Supplies Online (#343)

Candidates Kits (rosaries and lapel pins) – Supplies Online (#531)

McGivney Prayer Card – Supplies Online (#10502-A)

Large hand-held wooden crucifix with corpus – KnightsGear

The crucifix should be large enough for demonstration purposes. It is preferred that the crucifix be wooden and large enough for all to clearly see the corpus – the body of Jesus Christ. A wooden crucifix is available from Knights Gear and similar crucifixes are available from The English Company or Roger Sauvé.

31) Will the Candidate’s Kit change?

A new candidate’s kit (#531) is available through Supplies online. Any existing candidate’s kits in your council’s possession can still be used, but new kits have been pared down to the following items:

- Rosary
- Lapel Pin
- How to Pray the Rosary Card
- Father McGivney Prayer Card
- These Men They Call Knights
- Shining Armor Award Card

Additional Father McGivney Prayer Cards (#10502-A) may also be ordered from Supplies Online.

32) When will the new Constitutional Roll be available?

A new Constitutional Roll, which will have new text and will be presented in a hard cover “journal” style book, is being developed. We expect the item to be ready by July of 2020. Until they become available, use of existing Constitutional Rolls (#343) is appropriate.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

33) How many ceremonial baldrics should a council purchase, and where can they be purchased?

If your council chooses to wear ceremonial baldrics (they are not mandatory), six would be enough for all presenting roles except for the Chaplain.

The ceremonial baldrics are available from the official suppliers.

In the U.S.: The English Company, 1-800-444-5632, or www.kofcsupplies.com

In Canada: Entreprises Roger Sauvé, at 1-888-266-1211 or www.roger-sauve.com

34) Can officer medals and pins be worn with the Ceremonial Baldrics?

None of these items would be an issue, if worn along with the Ceremonial Baldric: Name badges, Miniature Medals, Officer jewels and KofC Emblem pins on their suit jacket lapels

35) Can the Baldrics be worn at Mass before a degree held in church?

It would be completely acceptable to wear the ceremonial baldric during the Mass, as the baldric carries no prohibition on public view. The use of the Ceremonial Baldric is encouraged for wear at council functions, parish activities, and community and civic functions.

36) The Ceremonial Baldrics are slick and tend to move, how are they kept with the Emblem of the Order positioned over the center chest area of the wearer?

There are different lengths of ceremonial baldrics to help accommodate members of different sizes, which need to be notated at order from the Official Ceremonial Suppliers. Small golden safety pins affixed in the back and near the right shoulder will help the ceremonial baldric stay positioned. Others may need additional pins near the left hip. Position the safety pins so that they are as hidden from view, as possible.

37) Are translations of the Script available?

The French and Spanish translations of the scripts and FAQs can be found in Officers Online, on the Knights of Columbus website. NOTE: you must sign in to Officers Online first and then switch the language of the website to French or Spanish.

Please contact the Ceremonials Department (Ceremonials@kofc.org) for information on the progress of translations for Polish, Ukrainian, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese.

Other Translations:

The Board of Directors have not approved any additional translation, since the Order is not active in any countries. However, this would not prohibit local knights from providing their own interpreters for the ceremony or translating it for local use.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

38) Why does the degree need to be translated?

The Knights of Columbus is a global organization, with councils in many foreign countries, not just the United States. Furthermore, the French and Spanish degrees are necessary to support French and Spanish speaking councils throughout the United States.

39) Should there be a Class Honoree?

Class Honorees are encouraged. Following the ceremony, due recognition of the Honoree should be mentioned. Honoree Scrolls and Certificates are available from Supplies Online.

40) Will there be updated New Member Certificates?

A new certificate is being developed. In the meantime, your council officers should determine what fits your situation best. Since the new combined degree completes the requirements for the third degree, it would be acceptable to provide all three certificates, or just the third degree certificate. All certificates can be ordered separately online – Item #268 for the First Degree, #269 for the Second Degree, and #270 for the Third Degree.

41) But the old certificates say Admission, Formation and Knighthood.

At the moment, the certificates from the stand alone degrees are what we have to offer. We are currently working to produce a certificate that will reflect the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity. Further information will be forthcoming, when it becomes available.

42) There is no “pledge of secrecy” in this ceremony. How do members handle the “promises” they made during the original ceremonials?

Promises made in previous ceremonies should be honored.

43) Are guests allowed to attend the old degree ceremonies?

No. There have been no changes to the existing single-degree ceremonies. They are not appropriate for guests. The promise of secrecy in those degrees must continue to be honored. The new Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity is the only exemplification that may be shown to guests.

44) If the degree is held after Mass, may parishioners stay to view the exemplification?

Yes. All are invited to witness the new knights as they are welcomed into the Order.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

45) If there is no secrecy at the degree, will guests be allowed to attend council meetings?

While there has never been anything secret in the meeting setting, there have been no changes to meeting admittance protocols.

A business meeting is meant for the members of the council and visitors carrying a membership card from their council. It is not open to those who are not members. Councils are encouraged to conduct officers' meetings to prepare for a quick and orderly meeting. Councils are also encouraged to hold open meetings which non-members and families could attend, and have a family, spiritual, charitable content that would engage and attract members.

46) Why is the knighting no longer conducted using a sword?

Knighting with a sword will be reserved for Exemplification of Patriotism, when the member becomes a "Sir Knight."

47) Can music be added?

No ceremonial elements may be added or removed for the ceremony.

48) Do teams need to be certified?

No.

49) Should priests take the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity by observation?

It is the priest's decision to participate in the ceremony or to observe. The Warden should talk to priest candidates before the ceremony to explaining the candidate seating, pledges and investitures. If the priest candidate declines to participate, he can join the Order by observing the ceremony.

50) What will be the role of the Conferring Officer and Ceremonial Team members?

They should all be mentors and guides for the implementation of the new ceremony for the Good of the Order. Their guidance and coaching will be invaluable in helping every council in the Order to conduct the exemplification and welcome their own members.

51) Has the role of the District Deputy been diminished?

Not in the slightest. The District Deputy provides a teaching and mentoring role helping his councils to succeed. Specifically, the District Deputies should privately discuss any deviations from the approved script with the Grand Knight or Team, so that corrective actions can be taken.

52) What should be done with robes?

Use of the ceremonial baldrics has replaced the use of the ceremonial robes in all cases. Since the use of ceremonial robes is no longer needed or encouraged, they should be discarded or saved as historical keepsakes.

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

53) Will the booklet “*These Men they call Knights*” be updated?

The booklet “*These Men they call Knights*” will be revised. However, the current version should still be distributed, as it will be useful to new members.

54) What will be the role of the Carolingian Crucifix and the Membership Medallion from the prior ceremonials?

The Carolingian Crucifix and the Membership Medallion are not part of the ceremony but could be appropriate gifts from the council. Distribution cannot be done during the ceremony, as no ceremonial elements may be added or removed. Existing supplies should be used in a meaningful way.

55) What should we do with paraphernalia?

It is not necessary to dispose of all the degree paraphernalia. The following Items will be useful to councils and teams that are performing the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity:

- Cable and Fibers
- Ceremonial Baldrics
- Constitutional Roll
- Lapel Pins
- Rosaries
- These Men They Call Knights

The following items can be appropriately displayed or used in a Council Chamber:

- Anchor
- Columbus Picture
- Compass
- Council Banner
- Cushion/Pillows
- Flags
- Watchword Banner

The following should be destroyed or disposed of in a manner that does not harm the environment (these items should not be burned):

- Degree books - should be shredded
- DVD Presentations
- Robes
- Skull and Crossbones

March 9, 2020

Ceremonials Department

56) Why were the instructions for meetings left out of the degree?

The instructions for council meeting protocols were left out of the exemplification in order to focus all attention on the lessons of the degree. These instructions can become a regular discussion during the “Good of the Order” portion of a council meeting. If done as a “teaching moment” in the council setting, there is more opportunity to reinforce the instruction. The Lecturer can use the information in the “How to Conduct a Council Meeting” pamphlet (#10318) and plan instruction during the Good of the Order when the council feels it is appropriate.

57) Why has the Pledge of Allegiance been removed from the degree?

We are not suggesting that the Pledge of Allegiance is banned from use. Since the Pledge of Allegiance is not used in Canada, Philippines, and other countries, it was not included in the printed text. Councils in the United States are free to add the Pledge before the ceremonial begins, if performed in a church, and would have already included the pledge if the ceremony were conducted in the council meeting setting.

58) Can the presenters wear Fourth Degree Regalia?

Since the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity brings new and advancing members to Third Degree status, the regalia would not be appropriate dress for the presenters of the degree.

It would be proper for the Fourth Degree Uniform to be worn to observe the new Exemplification, or to attend a Council Meeting. It is also permissible for members of the Color Corps to be present at the new Exemplification. However, it should be noted that the Ceremonial Baldric is not a part of the Fourth Degree uniform; it cannot be worn with the regalia.