

# Grand Knight's Guide

*Leadership  
based on Charity,  
Unity and Fraternity*





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**"God calls, and that's what we see in the vocation of the great leaders. In our tradition, a mission always starts with a calling." Pope Francis, *On Heaven and Earth*.**

As grand knight you have been elected to provide leadership to your council. Through your example of faith, charity and good judgment, you provide the model for your council members to follow. Through your leadership, set a tone that is open and engaging, and that will ensure your council's growth in charitable outreach and membership .

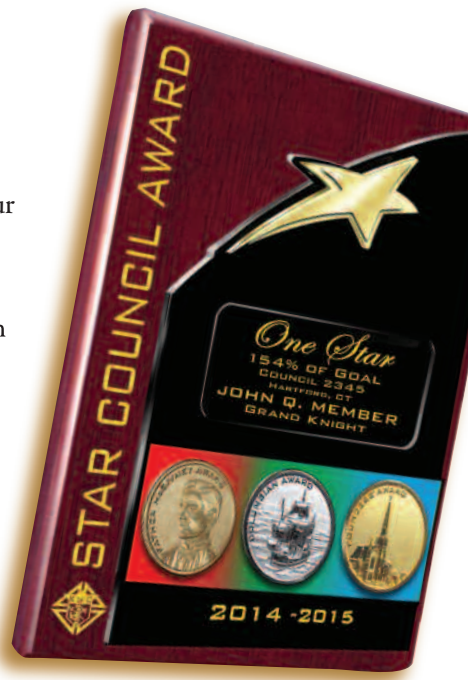
This guide is designed to help you be a successful leader. As grand knight, you need to:

- understand your duties and responsibilities
- engage your fellow officers
- form your membership into a team
- work with other councils on larger initiatives
- be the “go-to guys” for your parish pastors
- make charitable works the focus of your council
- invite all eligible Catholic men to join

Your best gauge of success as a grand knight is to ask “Is the council better now than when I took office?” If the answer is yes, then you've been successful.

## 10 Keys to Success as a Grand Knight

1. Earn the Star Council Award
2. Be the “go-to charitable organization” in your parish and community
3. Focus on offering membership and its benefits to all qualified Catholic men and on conducting frequent First Degrees
4. Promote our Order's top-rated insurance program
5. Set goals, evaluate performance, and plan for the future



6. Enlist the support of your pastor or chaplain and develop working relationships with organizations in the community to ensure membership growth and successful service projects

7. Share responsibilities

8. Use council and officer meetings to brainstorm and plan council projects

9. Generate an atmosphere where all members are welcome and valued

10. Communicate regularly with council members



### **Earn the Star Council Award**

The Star Council Award recognizes those councils that conduct well-rounded service programs (in the areas of Church, community, council, culture of life, family and youth), while succeeding in membership recruitment and insurance growth. Thriving in these three areas means that your council, and your council's leadership understand and are successful in meeting Father McGivney's vision for the Order. See Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources booklet for the requirements to earn the Star Council Award or visit [kofc.org/star](http://kofc.org/star).

### **Be the “go-to charitable organization” in your parish and community**

Bring your council to the forefront of your parish and community by volunteering the time and services of your council members when needed. By the same respect, once your council plans a service/charitable activity, invite the parish, family, friends and community to participate. When people see and are a part of your council's good works, they will want to join your council.

### **Focus on offering membership and its benefits to all qualified Catholic men and on conducting frequent First Degrees**

Membership growth is essential to the success of your council and our Order. With the addition of each new member, your council is better able to serve your parish, community and our Order. Also, when you offer a man membership in your council, you're giving him the opportunity to grow in his faith through service to God and his neighbor. Each member also gains access to our exclusive, top-rated insurance, providing protection for his family. For information on recruiting, visit [kofc.org/drive](http://kofc.org/drive).

## **Promote our Order's top-rated insurance program**

Every member and his family has access to our Order's top-rated insurance program. Our fraternal insurance society is among the most highly rated in North America and stands ready to provide for the financial security of our members' families. To ensure that members know about this benefit:

- ask your general agent and field agent to speak at council meetings
- plan frequent fraternal benefits nights
- encourage your council members and their families to consider taking advantage of our insurance products
- use the information available at [kofc.org/insurance](http://kofc.org/insurance) to learn more about our insurance products

## **Set goals, evaluate performance and plan for the future**

On a monthly basis, ask the questions: "Is the council better than it was previously? What can we do to help more people? What can we do better?" The answers to these questions will help move your council forward.

## **Enlist the support of your pastor or chaplain and develop working relationships with organizations in the community to ensure membership growth and successful service projects**

As part of your council's recruitment strategy, enlist the aid of your chaplain or pastor in asking qualified men to join our Order. An invitation from a priest to become a Knight will carry a lot of weight and be hard to turn down. Ask your pastor, "What can we do to help?" Let him know the Knights are there for the parish. Also, work with other service organizations (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, Special Olympics, food pantries/soup kitchens, etc.), officials from Catholic schools and government leaders to help meet the needs of your parish and community.

## **Share responsibilities**

You are not alone when it comes to running your council and conducting charitable and membership activities. Look at what needs to be done, consider the skills and interests of your fellow Knights, then ask them to take on some of the tasks. Once the delegation is done, follow up with each person on a regular basis to check on his progress and see if any assistance is needed. This will build camaraderie, show your trust in your fellow officers and chairmen and help

engage your members in your council's projects. Also, this helps get members ready to take on leadership roles in your council.

### **Use council and officer meetings to brainstorm and plan council projects**

Meetings need to be concise and productive, and they must serve a purpose. Schedule officer/program chair meetings (once a month or as needed) to brainstorm and set an agenda of items that need to be addressed by the membership and to start planning projects. At your regular council meetings, report on past projects, update your members on new initiatives and gather input to plan the next program. For more information, see *The Method of Conducting Council Meetings* (#10318) and the *Knights of Columbus Protocol Handbook* (#1612).

### **Generate an atmosphere where all members are welcome and valued**

Build a team atmosphere among your members by helping them feel like their opinions and services are valued. Ask members for advice, seek out their hidden talents (web design, writing ability, sales experience, etc.), regularly consult with them and keep them informed of your council's initiatives. Always make it a point to first listen and evaluate, and then be ready to explain the reasons for final decisions. Also, keep your younger members interested and engaged so they are prepared to take leadership roles in your council.

### **Communicate regularly with council members**

There are many tools available for communicating your council's news, initiatives and goals to your fellow Knights. Use or set up a council newsletter, email blasts or website. Conduct a member interest survey in your council to determine what type of programs and activities the majority of your members are interested in.

For more information on your role as grand knight and the operation of your council, please refer to the *Officers Desk Reference* at [kofc.org](http://kofc.org), the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) booklet and contact your district deputy.



