

# Council Captain Guidelines

The following are only intended as minimal guidelines to assist in being a more effective captain for your council and your assembly. These may not be appropriate or sufficient in every case. An effective Captain is a good communicator.... on a two-way street.

## **Captain's Communications:**

*At your council meeting: Be sure to have a report ready*

1. Oral reports are good but handing out a written report at your meeting, having a copy for the Grand Knight and seeing to it that it is put into the minutes is your best tool.
  - a. Dates for honor guards can be difficult to communicate orally at a crowded meeting so the handout and newsletter are important.
2. Having an article ready for your council newsletter means every brother knight get to find out what activities are exclusive to the 4<sup>th</sup> degree.
3. Email also allows you to be specific, efficient and fast but it cannot replace personal contact for emergency response. Wakes and funeral require quick personal contact.
4. Every council should have a "call tree" and it would be especially helpful to have the 4<sup>th</sup> degree branch set aside for honor guards.
5. Every event requiring a Commander should be noted to or requested of your Faithful Captain
6. Every time you perform an Honor Guard, honor the men that partake by including them by name in your meeting report.

## **Captains Need Information:**

*Captains get most of their advance information at the Assembly meeting.*

1. Anniversaries to elections, parades to exemplifications are normally thought out far in advance.
  - a. Dates and time for these are flowing all the time during the meeting and easily timed to put into your communication.
  - b. Specific contacts, cost, location and timing ...even planned carpooling or busing can be part of your council meeting and/or email communications.

2. Church and Community plans are your responsibility to be aware of if you wish a colorful presence in either
  - a. Look regularly for your emails that indicate 4<sup>th</sup> degree information and be sure you are in the loop – either by email or phone and preferably both.
  - b. Be sure your Faithful Assembly Captain has a way to reach you both day and evening. Special events and needs arise for your Sirs to take part.
3. Be sure you have typical information at hand such as cost and source of regalia, dates of preplanned events and meetings.
4. Invite your Sir Knights to join you at the assembly meetings become active and learn what their Assembly is doing. The more ears there for you, the more you can retain.

### **Captains work as Team Members:**

*Preparation before the event is key to looking sharp.*

1. **Contacts:** Put your team together as needed:
  - a. Wakes: If an emergency arises like a wake and funeral, there is no time to waste. You will need to get your Sirs together by phone and a supplement of an email will help as the information is gathered.
    - i. Contact the Assembly Captain for assignment of a commander
    - ii. Contact surrounding Council Captains if help is needed or if the person is known to their council members
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> Communion, Confirmations, parades or special events allow you time to gather advance information before announcing the event to your general membership and to the assembly
    - i. Use email and phone calls to distribute details, attendance etc.
2. **Planning:**
  - a. Every 1<sup>st</sup> Communion, Confirmation, dedication or parade has committees or practices and your attending practices or being on the committees will allow you to prepare your group to be a sharp addition to each event.

3. **Practicing:** Practicing before the event and paying special attention to those with borrowed regalia will sharpen your groups appearance.
  - a. Regalia is key to participation so you need to know who has what and who has extra to lend out.
  - b. Teaching the proper way to stand, hold the sword, the chapeau and recognizing the calls of the person commanding the event is key to appearing as a team.

### **Working with a Commander:**

1. Commanders may be requested, may be assigned by Assembly Captain or choose to come with or without invitation
  - a. The Commander must be recognized as the ceremonial leader and decision maker invited in to be sure your act is together. He is to be introduced to all the Sir Knights as having the last word and respected for the authority placed in his hands by the Navigator.
2. The Commander expect the Council Captain or other Sir Knights to have attended any practice of 1<sup>st</sup> Communion or Confirmation to know what is expected of the Knights by the Pastor or M.C. and be prepared to explain or do a “walk through” with the Commander.
  - a. The Commander will expect the Council Captain or assigned council member to have attended the practices and let the M.C. know what respectful function an Honor Guard provides.

### **Don'ts for Honor Guards:**

*Honor Guards are not to be provided for political, non-Catholic or other than formal events unless they are present for the honoring of a bishop or clergy or as representing Catholics: i.e. parades.*

### **Tips for Looking Sharp:**

- Always carry a rag or instant shoe shine kit with your regalia
- Check each Sir that his regalia is clean, pressed and snapped
- Check that only proper pins are worn – be aware of today's dress code standards set by the Master
- Check that gloves are worn and that chains are beneath the ties.
- Before every Honor Guard, demonstrate or ask the commander to demonstrate proper handling of the sword: at carry, presenting or

sitting. All Sirs should be informed as to what commands they should expect to hear: i.e. *“Carry Sword”*. Other more unusual calls such as *“At Ease”* or *“Parade Rest”* require a special demonstration because they are infrequently used.

**Color Guards (not Honor Guards):**

- Color Guards practice should be supervised by a commander appointed by the Faithful Navigator of your Assembly.
- An experienced Sir Knight military person should be requested to assist or even be part of the Color Guard
- Formal Knight Color Guards must precede all other Knights marching in a parade but are not necessary, although the American Flag and preferably the Council flag must be carried when Sir Knights parade.

**Council Captains as Commanders:**

- Council captains, appointed annually by the Council’s Grand Knight, act as *“Commander”* when an Assembly Commander is not present.
- It will be his judgement call if a Sir Knight should be told to remain behind or to have his attire cleaned or replaced before he next stands Honor Guard
- It will be his responsibility to see that the actions of the Honor Guard bring the proper respect to both the ceremony and to the Knights of Columbus.