

PROTOCOL

As Adapted from Supreme booklet #1612

Introduction

By definition, protocol is the rigid code setting forth the degree of obedience, the order of precedence, the rules of official and social behavior. We can add further that it covers anything that is proper and in good taste.

It would be impossible to cite every rule governing every situation. The following suggestions are rather common and basic. Always apply common courtesy and you will never go wrong in those situations not covered in the booklet.

We should always display proper consideration for the office represented by the person. In no way should we let dislike for a person influence our respect for the office he holds.

Council Meetings

The Grand Knight must conduct his meetings in strict accordance with the Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus, supplemented by the State Council's By-Laws, the Council's By-Laws and according to parliamentary procedure. The standard reference on the subject is *"Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised"* available from a local library or bookstore. The order of business for conducting a council meeting is outlined in the "Responsibilities of the Grand Knight" (#1937) available from the Supreme Council Supply Department. In addition to learning these rules and following them scrupulously, the Grand Knight must control the meeting politely but firmly, so that it does not get out of hand through unnecessary arguments or unpleasant wrangling. The Grand Knight should prevent any discussion from wandering from the business of the day.

The Grand Knight is the presiding Officer in the council. When a member wishes to speak, he does so by rising from his seat, addressing the chair by saying *"Worthy Grand Knight"* and saluting at the same time. The Grand Knight will return the salute and acknowledge the member.

The Grand Knight should at all times refer to and address his Officers by their proper title. He thus sets a good example for the council members to follow.

All members who are not Officers should be recognized by name as *"Brother"* All speech must be directed to the chair (the Grand Knight), for example: *"Worthy Grand Knight, may I ask the previous speaker to explain..."*

The Grand Knight always speaks in the third person such as *"The chair rules that..."* or *"Your Grand Knight reports that..."*

Members should speak of the chair in the third person: *"Worthy Grand Knight, will the chair please explain the effect of the pending motion?"*

Dignitaries at Meetings

Dignitaries, Priests or special guests should be accorded the due recognition for the office or position they hold. They should always be seated in a place of honor commensurate with their positions when attending a council meeting.

If a dignitary, Priest or special guest should arrive while a meeting is in progress, the Grand Knight should instruct the Warden to escort him to the dais. Then the Grand Knight will rap the gavel three times for all to stand. The guest will occupy a seat of honor in the front of the room, facing the membership.

However, a State Officer or District Deputy, when present at his home council, need not be specifically recognized unless he has been invited or requests to be so recognized. This will allow the State Officer or District Deputy to engage in the regular business of his home council without involving the position he holds.

When a General Agent of the Order's insurance program is present as a guest, he should be seated with and introduced with the dignitaries.

Such dignitaries may include Supreme Officers or Directors, State Deputy, Vice Supreme Master, State Officers, Masters Past State Deputies, Executive Staff members, District Deputies, Supreme Council Insurance Directors, State Directors, Chapter Presidents, State Chairmen, visiting Grand Knights, and Faithful Navigators.

At a meeting, banquet or other event, the first order of business is the invocation by a Priest if one is present. The next order of business is the Pledge of Allegiance or the National Anthem. All persons should stand and face the flag, and the right hand should be placed over the left breast for both the recitation of the Pledge and the singing of the Anthem.

When reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, there should be no pause between ONE NATION and UNDER GOD. This should be said as one phrase: ONE NATION UNDER GOD.

Dress During Meetings

The Grand Knight, in keeping with the dignity of his office, should be neatly and properly dressed. He should request his Officers to do likewise. Thus he will have set the proper dress code for the membership to follow.

Pocket Name Badge

Councils should provide their Officers with a pocket name badge. Council members should be encouraged to provide themselves with the same. Simple cardboard identification badges for the members may be provided if desired. Pocket Name Badge, gold in color with block letters and with the emblem of the order in full colors, shall be reserved for use only by those men who have served in the office of the State Board.

After the Meeting

The Grand Knight and his Officers should mingle with the members at the close of the meeting. Every effort should be made to single out those who have not attended meetings for some time. In addition, new members and those who seem to feel uneasy should be approached by the Officers and made to feel at home and welcomed. Hopefully the membership will follow this example.

Relationship of the District Deputy and the Grand Knight

Proper respect should be differentiated between the District Deputy and the Grand Knight. District Deputies are the personal representatives of the Supreme Knight and the State Deputy, and as such, the Grand Knights and Council Officers should familiarize themselves with the respect due to the important position the District Deputy holds. A good District Deputy will be the most important and valuable man that a Grand Knight will ever meet.

District Deputies should be properly attired when attending meetings, wearing a coat and tie.

When a District Deputy visits a council, he should always be seated in front, as near the Grand Knight as possible.

The District Deputy should always be called upon to speak and all members should rise when he is introduced, unless the State Deputy is present; then only the State Deputy is risen for.

The District Deputy should be seated at the head table at any council function, even if not on the speaking program.

Correspondence

There are three basic types of correspondence: letters, memos and bulletins.

Letters should be typed, when possible, on letterhead stationery. If the council does not have stationery, the name, address, with the proper zip or postal code, and telephone number should be shown in the heading.

Letters directed to the Supreme Office or the State Council should cover only one topic. If the writer of the letter wishes to present several different subjects, he should deal with them in a general manner in a covering letter and provide full details on separate enclosures. The council's full name and address as well as that of the correspondent should appear on each enclosure. The topic of discussion should be stated precisely and clearly on each enclosure. This procedure permits the recipient of the letter to forward the enclosures to the different departments or individuals who handle details of the topics under discussion.

Invitations

Guests should be sent proper invitations in writing well in advance. Invitations should be mailed at least six weeks before an event.

All invitations should be sent in the name of and signed by the Grand Knight, although he may request that replies be directed to a Chairman or committee member. The District Deputy, as the special representative of the Supreme Knight and the State Deputy, should be invited to all council functions. It should be understood that his schedule might not permit him to attend every affair, in which case he would notify the Grand Knight in ample time.

Never give a blanket invitation to anyone. Always send each guest a personal invitation. If tickets are being used for a function, they should be forwarded, suitably marked, along with the invitation.

Invitations should be in the form of a letter when addressed to a specific person. Printed cards or general invitation notices may be used if the occasion warrants. A bulletin may be enclosed with the invitation if it gives more detailed information. It should not be used in lieu of an invitation. Such bulletins should never show the name of the person invited unless he has agreed to be present.

When an invitation is extended to anyone it should contain all details such as dress, extent of participation, etc. It is embarrassing for a guest to appear and find that he is the only one at the head table not in a tuxedo, or the only one present wearing one.

State Deputy Visit

When the State Deputy is scheduled to attend a council function, always be sure that he is advised of the date, time, place, purpose, type of affair and other individuals on the program, including their function and other pertinent data.

If women are to be present, the State Deputy's wife should be invited. Advise her of the proper dress and arrange for a ladies' committee to greet and welcome her.

Always advise the State Deputy and head table guests of the proper dress for the affair.

Determine his time of arrival and arrange to greet him. On his arrival at the site of the affair, the Grand Knight and his committee should greet the State Deputy. He should be properly introduced to the other dignitaries in attendance. The committee should attend to all of the State Deputy's needs and comforts.

In recognition of his high office, special appreciation should always be expressed to the State Deputy for his visit to the council.

Arrange proper speaking facilities, including podium, podium light and microphone.

The State Deputy is the highest elected official in the jurisdiction and proper attention must be given to seating arrangements.

State Deputy Visit (cont)

If there is additional entertainment after the banquet, a special table for the State Deputy should be arranged so that he will be with the Grand Knight and other dignitaries.

The toastmaster should be provided with a resumé of the State Deputy and other head table guests so that he can make proper introductions. If glossy photographs are required for publicity purposes, they should be requested directly from the guest.

If some other high-ranking official, other than the State Deputy, is invited to attend a council function, the sponsoring organization should extend the same courtesies as those suggested for use with the State Deputy.

Greeting Your Guests

The Grand Knight should greet all guests. The Grand Knight should be assisted by a committee whose function would be to care for the guests' coats, to introduce them to others in attendance and to answer any questions they may have.

Guests should not be left talking among themselves. They usually do not know many of your council members, and therefore should not be left alone for any period of time. Various persons should be alerted to converse with and keep company with guests during their visit

Introductions

Many if not most introductions involve people of unequal or different status or position. They can differ in rank, in age or in sex, but the result is the same: an introduction often consists of presenting one person of lesser importance or status to another of greater importance or status.

In introducing someone to a group, avoid running through all the names without a break. It is better to introduce two or three people at a time, so that names can register properly. This is where use of nametags is most effective.

A form of acknowledgement used chiefly when meeting a group is repeating the name of the person to whom you have just been introduced.

Before introducing dignitaries at the head table, be certain names are spelled correctly and proper titles are used. It is a good idea to check the pronunciation of any names to be announced. The order of rank should be observed scrupulously. A person who has been elected but has not yet taken office is called by the title of that office with -- "*elect*" after the title. A monsignor is not addressed as "*Father*" and a State Officer is not addressed as "*Brother*." Remember, if you don't announce the name and title to the gathering, how can they be expected to know who the person is?

Speakers and Speeches

Whoever sets up the program should decide in advance whom he wants as speakers and the length of the speech desired. He should give ample notice to those selected that they are expected to speak. He should never ask an invited guest to speak unless the person has been forewarned. Nor should he ever ask a guest at an affair if he wants to speak. So many times a Grand Knight or master of ceremonies will approach a guest during the program and ask if he wants to speak, giving the impression that they would prefer he did not. There should be only one guest speaker -- normally the last speaker on the program. Remarks from others should be limited to a few minutes each.

A General Agent also should be accorded the opportunity to speak, particularly when he is present at official meetings of the State or a local council. If several General Agents are present, one should be invited to speak for the group.

A State Officer or District Deputy should always be given an opportunity to speak last whenever he appears in an official capacity at a function or meeting. When more than one is present then only the senior ranking Officer should speak. In any case, all should be recognized and accorded proper respect.

The main etiquette problem posed by councils is that of handling speakers and speeches. Non Knights of Columbus speakers are first speakers with Knights of Columbus speakers next speaking by rank of title. The State Deputy or his designee speaks just prior to the Honored Guest.

The Chairman owes it to all speakers to:

1. Give complete information about his audience so he will not produce boredom and embarrassment all around with an inappropriate speech.
2. Give him a definite time limit well ahead of the occasion so he can prepare the speech accordingly. Just before he begins to speak, arrange a mutually agreeable signal to tell him he has, for example, three minutes left to talk. Advance arrangements are necessary so that the pull on the coat tails will not appear to be related to the interest of the speech itself.
3. Provide adequate acoustical facilities and, if possible, give the speaker a choice between use and nonuse of a microphone.
4. Show interest in the speaker before and after the speech making. Bring members to him for introductions instead of circulating the speaker around the room. Center the conversation on the guest, not around council affairs he has little interest in. Help to reassure both the best and worst speaker alike as to the effectiveness of his speech. Introduce a speaker briefly, with only enough biographical material to establish him as an authority on his subject. Elaborate introductions deny their content. Remember: it takes only one line to introduce the President of the United States.
5. If the speaker is a woman or if the main speaker's wife attends, she usually is presented with flowers.
6. Thank the speaker at least three times:
 1. In public from the rostrum.
 2. In private before his departure.
 3. In a letter from the council the following day.
7. Toastmasters should familiarize themselves with Knights of Columbus titles and protocol.
8. Appropriate salutations to those present should always be used before speaking.
9. Jokes or comments that relate to ethnic groups should be discouraged -- one never knows who is in the audience.

Head Table

At a banquet where there is a head table, the Hierarchy, Clergy, Supreme Officers or Directors, State Deputy or his representative, Vice Supreme Master, District Deputy, Chapter President, Grand Knight, Honored Guest, special guest such as a speaker or Past State Deputy and Banquet Chairman should be seated there along with their wives. Past State Deputies, Former Masters, The other State Officers, Master, Past State Deputies, Former Masters, Insurance Representative, Executive Staff, State Directors, Chapter President, State Chairmen, visiting Grand Knights and Faithful Navigator should be seated prominently in the audience.

Seating at the head table should be arranged by rank from the middle out to either end -- with the highest ranking official seated at the middle of the head table. If other State Officers are present besides the State Deputy, they may be seated at the head table if there is room, otherwise they should be seated with their wives at a table directly in front of the head table. Guests should be introduced from right toward the middle, then from left toward the middle, regardless of rank, and no one should be excluded, including those who will speak later. Dignitaries in the audience should be introduced from the highest to the lowest. NOTE: When there is no head table, such as the Installation of Officers, and all dignitaries are seated in the audience, then introductions are made from the lowest up to the highest, who would be called on to speak.

For speaking programs, guests are introduced from lowest rank up to the main speaker of the occasion. A person of junior rank should never speak after someone with a higher office unless he has been selected specifically as the speaker for the occasion. Persons introduced from the audience should be ranked from top down as opposed to speakers who appear from the lowest up.

The Toastmaster should always be seated next to the podium and not at a seat at the end of the table. This is simply done so that he will not be running back and forth after each speaker is introduced. Toastmasters should familiarize themselves with Knights of Columbus titles and protocol. They should also know the background of speakers at the head table and should use the proper salutations for titles when they first take over the podium.

When introducing Past State Deputies or Past Grand Knights, the Immediate Past State Deputy or Past Grand Knight is introduced first and then the others are introduced by seniority, with the most senior one being introduced first and the least senior being introduced last.

All should rise when dais members enter and remain standing until they are seated at the head table. All should rise when the Hierarchy, Clergy, State Deputy and Honored Guest get up to speak and should rise again when they leave the podium to be seated.

The Chairman of the banquet should open by calling on the Chaplain to give the invocation. The Chairman should advise all to place their hand over their hearts and then lead in singing the National Anthem and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. All will then eat, after which the Chairman will introduce the Toastmaster. The Toastmaster will say, "Thank you Mr. Chairman" and will then proceed to acknowledge the dignitaries. The entire list in the order of precedence should not be given but only those who are present.

Recognizing Clergy

When more than one priest is present and a speaker does not wish to mention each by name, he should say: "*Reverend Monsignori and Fathers.*" One never should use "*Reverend Clergy*" unless clergymen from other faiths are present. At cooperative affairs, Officers of other organizations should be seated by Knights of Columbus Officers of equal rank and introduced at the same time.

Flags

The U.S. Flag Code as approved by Congress and signed by President Ford on July 7, 1976, should be strictly adhered to (Public Law No. 94-344). Your country's flag may be displayed flat, above and behind the speaker; if on a staff it should always be at the right side of the speaker as he faces the audience. The flag should not cover a speaker's desk nor be draped in front of a platform. Other flags should be at the speaker's left. The precedence of flags shall be U.S., Papal, State and Order.

When the flag is displayed horizontally or vertically against a wall, the stars should always be at the observer's left.

Jewels

All Officers should wear their current jewel of office. At council functions and socials, it is proper and fitting that Grand Knights, District Deputies, etc. wear their jewel of office. In all cases the remaining council Officers are encouraged to wear their jewel.

When a Fourth Degree member attends an official function of the Order where Fourth Degree dress is requested, he may wear the jewel of his current office around his neck, be it an assembly or council jewel, together with the social baldric. If a council Officer is not a Fourth Degree Knight, he should wear his jewel of office without the baldric. A Supreme Director should not wear the social baldric if he is wearing his jewel of office, since the jewel features both the emblem of the Order and the Fourth Degree emblem.

A Past State Deputy, Past Grand Knight, Past Faithful Navigator, Former Vice Supreme Master, Former Master or Former District Deputy is authorized to wear the miniature jewel of these offices on the left breast pocket of his jacket. No other type former Officer jewels should be worn at any time. The miniature jewels, approved by the board of directors, allow those who have served the Knights of Columbus in a position of authority to wear the jewel that acknowledges their contribution, while at the same time giving due and proper credit to the current Officer. The order of precedence is prescribed: Past State Deputy, Former Master, Former District Deputy, Past Grand Knight, and Past Faithful Navigator.

Hierarchy

At Knights of Columbus functions, dignitaries in attendance are addressed and introduced in strict order of rank from highest to lowest. The first words of any speech are usually some variation of "Reverend Father, Worthy State Deputy, ... Brother Knights, Ladies, and Children," according to who are actually present. This is known as "The Litany" and is usually presented in its complete form only once by the toastmaster or master of ceremonies, with other speakers abbreviating it to varying extents to save time and repetition.

Order of Precedence

- Hierarchy
- Clergy
- State Deputy
- Vice Supreme Master
- State Officers
- Immediate Past State Deputy
- Master of the Fourth Degree
- Executive Staff
- State Directors
- Past State Deputies (by seniority)
- District Deputies
- Supreme Council Insurance Directors or Field Agents
- Former Masters
- State Chairmen
- Wardens to the State Deputy
- District Wardens
- Grand Knights
- Faithful Navigators
- Past Grand Knights
- Past Faithful Navigators
- Council Officers
- Assembly Officers

Parade Formation

When walking in a parade formation (either two or four abreast) the higher-ranking person always precedes a lower ranking person. Usually ladies walk alongside their men on their left side. When Past State Deputies or past Grand Knights are in parade formation, the Immediate Past Officer takes precedence. The others follow in order of seniority with the most senior one being first.

Procession Formation

When walking in a procession formation (always two abreast) the lowest ranking person always precedes a higher-ranking person, with the highest-ranking person being last in line. When Past State Deputies or past Grand Knights are in procession formation, the one with the least seniority precedes the others in line, with the one exception that the Immediate Past State Deputy or Immediate Past Grand Knight will be the last in the line of Past State Deputies or Past Grand Knights, with the most senior one preceding him.

Conclusion

As has been mentioned earlier, it is impossible to cite a rule for every situation. No doubt there will be times when the Grand Knight will encounter some rather difficult and even unique situations. Under those circumstances the Grand Knight must use his judgment and simply apply common courtesy.

Mark Twain summed up the situation when he said: *"Always do right. You will please some people and astonish the rest."*