



FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND COMMANDER

SK Sean M. Tomasic
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June 7, 2020

TO: Elected and Appointed Grand Officers; Past Grand Officers; Division Commanders; Officers and Members of the Constituent Commanderies of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania:

COMMUNICATION NUMBER TWO

GREETINGS:

Sir Knights:

As I mentioned in Communication Number One, Sir Knights are permitted to meet online/virtually.

I hope that all the Constituent Commanderies of our Grand Commandery will take this opportunity to meet accordingly.

Although Grand Encampment GO 12 permits us to meet virtually, it does not permit us to perform ritual or confer Orders. There have been questions about what exactly is ritual. To have clarification on those questions, our Grand Officers have created a script for each Commandery to use for its' virtual conclave-please review the attached script.

The 167th Annual Conclave was held online and used a similar script with success and thus we modified it for Constituent Commanderies to use. Essentially you can conduct business – take roll, pay bills, propose motions, and act on motions, present and vote on petitions, have prayer, etc. But you cannot Open/Close in the normal manner, 'pass the word' or perform similar ritual that is in the Short/Full Opening and Closing of a Conclave in our Drill and Tactics Manual. Simply follow the provided script for conducting your Conclave and we believe you will have success.

We believe that the direction of prohibiting the conferring of Orders virtually is clear and thus does not need any further explanation.

There is no directive given for the preference of the software platform (GoTo Meeting, Zoom, etc.) to use for conducting a virtual Conclave. Both GoTo Meeting and Zoom currently offer free usage of their product, but with some limitations. Those include, number of attendees (100), time (40 minutes) and no recording of the virtual event.

Our Grand Commandery currently has 2 accounts with GoTo Meeting. Each has a seat license of 250, unlimited time and offers recording/transcript of the event. Our Grand Officers have been meeting successfully in this manner for the past year.

Meeting virtually poses some challenges as well. With several people on video and some on the phone, communication is key. The script we present to use will help solve a lot of issues, but an adherence to online etiquette is equally needed. The other attachment identifies rules to follow that will not only enhance your virtual experience, but for everyone attending the meeting.

One of my goals this year was to open virtual meeting ability for Sir Knights to meet with Section officers, Division Commanders, Grand and Constituent Committees, etc virtually/online. I felt this would benefit the communication process that is needed for discussing issues. Obviously, the pandemic has enabled that plan to accelerate and now allows for Conclaves to be virtual.

Again, I encourage each commandery to meet virtually - even during the months of July and August – or until we are given permission to meet in person. Please contact your Section Offer/Division Commander if you would like to use the Grand Commandery’s “GoTo Meeting” Account to hold a virtual conclave/meeting. There is no cost for its’ use.

Yours in Templary,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean M. Tomasic". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue dot above the letter 'i' in "Tomasic".

Sean M. Tomasic
Grand Commander

Attest:

Douglas M. Rowe,
Grand Recorder