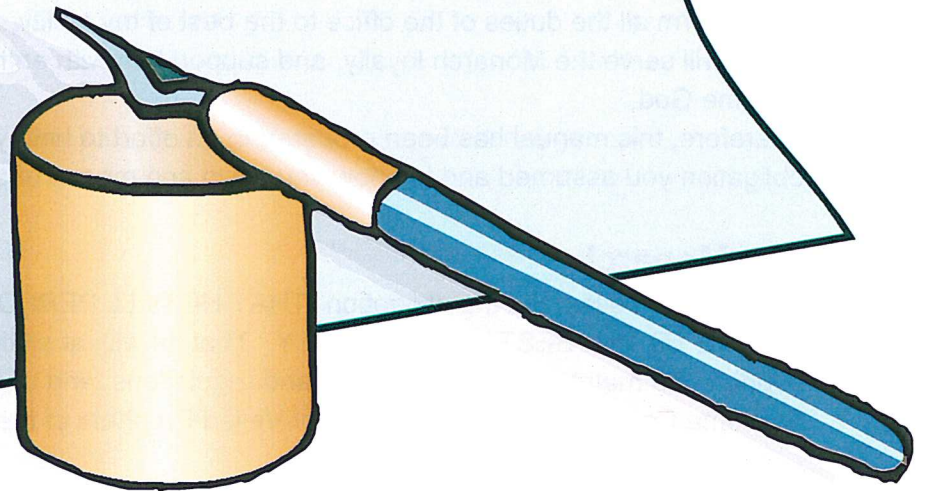




Grotto Officers' Manual

Revised 5/24/2016



The Presiding Officers

Preside . . . to occupy the place of authority, as president, chairman, moderator, etc.; to direct control or regulate proceedings as chief officer.

Webster's New International Dictionary

The first principle of successful presiding is to use authority without anyone being conscious of it.

The success of any meeting is largely in the hands of the man who wields the gavel . . . the Monarch. He reigns supreme. His conduct and action may make the meetings interesting and entertaining, or he may bungle and stumble through while the members feel that the evening has been wasted.

The office of Monarch offers you an unusual opportunity to distinguish yourself as a leader in Grotto affairs, and likewise, offers the deep personal satisfaction of a job well done when your term as Monarch expires.

The Monarch of a Grotto is in the same position as the Captain of a ship. Once the gavel is placed in his hands, like the skipper at the helm, the Monarch must steer with strong hands and a keen vision. He must keep his head in stormy weather, and hold to a charted course or the ship will drift and eventually flounder. It is the Monarch's duty to see that his organization does not flounder.

The Officers

Section 24:3 of the Supreme Council Code clearly states . . . The other officers of Grottoes shall perform the duties defined in the constitution and by-laws and general regulations, and such other duties as are traditionally appropriate to them respectively, as well as those assigned to them in the ritual. All moneys, securities and property of the Grotto shall be deposited, registered or titled in the name of the Grotto (or its state corporate title) and shall not be expended, disbursed or changed except on the signatures of at least two duly elected or appointed officers designated for that purpose by action of the Grotto membership.

Obligations of Officers

The night you were installed as an officer of the Grotto you will recall you took the following obligation: "I . . . do promise and swear that I will serve this Grotto in the office to which I have been elected, and will perform all the duties of the office to the best of my ability;

That I will serve the Monarch loyally, and support him with enthusiasm during my term of office, so help me God."

Therefore, this manual has been prepared in an effort to help you fulfill this perspective of the obligation you assumed and to show you ways and means of simplifying your work.

The Monarch

The Monarch assumes the obligation "THAT HE WILL PERFORM ALL THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICE TO THE BEST OF HIS ABILITY. That he will, at all times and under all circumstances, support and maintain the Constitution and regulations, and obey all laws, rules and edicts of the Supreme Council of the Mystic Order of Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm."

Having familiarized himself of these duties, as he should have, in previous positions of the Grotto, he should assume his duties immediately so that there be no lost motion in the change of officers. His plan should be developed prior to assuming office, and these plans immediately put into effect.

The Monarch should at all times render his rulings and decisions with wisdom, with justice and with equality. It is often said that the Monarch reigns supreme. Your attention is directed to the Supreme Council Code which clearly states:

24:2 DECISIONS OF MONARCH, A decision of the Monarch or of the Chief Justice, Master of Ceremonies, Past Monarch or any other officer presiding or acting in the absence of the Monarch, may be modified, changed or revoked by a three-fourths vote of the Grotto membership, present and voting, at a properly convened regular or special session of the Grotto, subject, however, at all times to appeal to the Grand Monarch or the Supreme Council.

A Monarch who has the ability to lead, to show proper humility and refrain from arbitrary decisions, can, in effect, reign supreme.

A good Monarch will make his meetings "snappy" . . . open the meetings at the appointed hour and transact the business of the Grotto as quickly as possible. The Monarch's program should be clean and entertaining. Nothing mars a meeting more than one that is permitted to drag with prolonged discussion and turning into late hours. Any "off color" entertainment should never be permitted.

A Monarch should see that his committees function at all times. The Monarch must assume the leadership and must work hand in hand with appointed committee members. Don't let a committee exist in name only. Regular meetings of appointed committees should be held and the Monarch at all times should have close contact in order to know what has expired.

The Chief Justice

The Chief Justice is the second highest ranking officer in the Grotto and should be prepared, at all times, to step up and take command when the Monarch is absent or finds himself removed from the scene of activity.

In the absence of the Monarch, it is the duty of the Chief Justice to preside over the Grotto. When presiding over the Grotto his powers and responsibilities are the same as those of the Monarch.

The title of "Chief Justice" lays upon him a moral obligation to familiarize himself with the Constitution and Regulations, as well as the Laws, Rules and Edicts of the Supreme Council, that his decisions in all cases of controversy may be founded on knowledge and understanding and that he be, in truth, as well as in title, Chief Justice of his Grotto.

A certain definite task should be assigned by the Monarch to the Chief Justice. This will enable the Chief Justice to familiarize himself with the duties he will be called upon to assume when advanced to the station of Monarch.

One year from now you will be accepting the nomination of Monarch of your Grotto. This is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon you. The big question is, "are you going to take the reins and express your enthusiasm by having your program for the year ready to present to your

Prophets?" Have you made plans for the committees you will need and the Prophets you feel can best serve?

The success of your Grotto will be up to YOU! Success cannot come from without, but from within. When you assume the leadership as Monarch you must show enthusiasm for your work. Only then will you be an outstanding Monarch in your Grotto. Enthusiasm is catching and the most important ingredient for success as a Monarch.

Working Tools

You should be in possession of a Supreme Council Code book and Ritual book. Secure these from your Secretary, or write to the Supreme Council Office, at 430 Beecher Road, Gahanna, Ohio 43230, for a copy. Read them carefully as it will help acquaint you with the laws of the Order and ritualistic work pertaining to the Grotto. When you become the Monarch of your Grotto . . . REMEMBER . . . you are the Captain of the Ship! Once the gavel is placed in your hands, like the skipper of the helm, you must steer with strong hands and keen vision.

The Master of Ceremonies

The Master of Ceremonies has a distinctive position. As the third office of the Grotto, it is one of singular importance. Here, in this station, the Master of Ceremonies is given the opportunity to so regulate, by his conduct, the behavior of the Prophets when attending sessions of the Grotto.

In the absence of the Monarch and Chief Justice, or at the request of the Monarch, he presides over the Grotto and when he is presiding, his powers and responsibilities are the same as those of the Monarch.

Upon the Master of Ceremonies falls the duty to see that the ritualistic work of the Grotto is properly performed and that nothing vulgar or profane is allowed to mar the harmony of the work, and that the members of the cast do their parts in such a manner as to reflect credit upon the Order.

The Secretary

The duties of the Secretary are most important in any organization . . . business or fraternal. The Secretary of a Grotto probably has the heaviest and most vital task of all the officers of the Grotto. While it is understood that the Monarch provides leadership and inspiration to his Grotto, it must be recognized that it is the Secretary who cares for all the minute details and is a vital part of the success or failure of a Grotto.

It is essential, therefore, that the Grotto Secretary familiarize himself thoroughly with his own duties and the various methods of performing them, as well as those of the Monarch, in order that they may successfully lead their Grotto to a profitable and worthwhile year.

There are several things a Secretary should not attempt to be. It is not the duty of the Secretary to initiate the program of his Grotto, nor to determine its policies. It is not his duty to lay down a program of activities for any committee. That responsibility rests with the Monarch and with the respective committee chairmen.

The line of demarcation between the duties of the Monarch and those of the Secretary are well defined. One thing he must always do is give notice of meetings of the Grotto and committees.

Through the Monarch and the committee chairmen, the Secretary should be able to give the members of the Board of Governors (if your Grotto operates under this plan) sufficient information about the problems to be considered in order for them to have discussions and opinions of the course of action to be taken.

It is customary for the Secretary to collect all dues. The Secretary is the "Spark Plug" of the Grotto. He should at all times endeavor to keep the collection of dues of paramount importance. When a Secretary permits a member to get in arrears with his dues, he should take the same position as the credit manager of any business organization . . . make the collection! A member should not be permitted to lapse in his dues any longer than necessary. Dues reminders should be sent at frequent intervals and this may take the form of a personal solicitation or letters properly phrased and worded to make the collections without resentment on the part of the members. Dues reminders can be obtained from the Supreme Council office at a nominal fee.

The Secretary should keep an accurate account of all the transactions of the Grotto. If the Secretary relinquished his office, the incoming Secretary should arrange to receive **from** his predecessor the complete records of the Grotto including the files, supplies on hand, etc.

The Secretary should arrange to send statements to all members of the Grotto due; payable upon receipt. A good Grotto Secretary sends out statements early in October for the ensuing year's dues.

The Secretary should arrange to assist the Monarch and the various committeemen in every way possible, refraining himself, however, from doing any of the work of the committees. He can work with them regarding their activities, do the secretarial portion of the work . . . such as notifying members in advance of the meetings, and help in the preparation of the report of the meeting and transmitting such report to the proper authority. It would be a mistake for the Secretary to deprive the committee members of an opportunity to serve by doing the work himself.

Chaplain

You have been appointed to the most revered office in all Masonry. You are to give the invocation at our meetings, visit and pray for the sick and afflicted and assist at our memorial services. The Holy Bible we trust to your care, guard it with all your might, for it holds for us precious teachings of freedom, truth and light.

Venerable Prophet

You should become proficient in the opening and closing ceremonies so that you could relieve any of the officers if called upon. Also, be ready at all times to carry out any order of your superior.

Note: You must receive from your Secretary of the Grotto, forms and ceremonies so you can become proficient in the opening and closing of your Grotto.

Marshal

You have been appointed Marshal of your Grotto. You are the special messenger of the Monarch and as such you are to assist him in the opening and closing of the Grotto. At the request of the Chief Justice you are to command the Captain of the Guard and the Sentinel to take up the inside and outside passwords. You are to take charge of all processions and generally assist the other officers in the discharge of their duties.

Note: It is your responsibility to see that the Captain of the Guard and Sentinel are at their stations with enough time before the meeting so they can receive the passwords from all Prophets.

Treasurer

You have been elected Treasurer of this Grotto by your fellow Prophets, who have thereby manifested in the strongest way possible, their confidence in your honesty and integrity. It is an honor which any man may feel proud.

You are the financial safeguard of the Grotto. See to it that the confidence reposed in you is as strong when your successor is elected as it is now.

Note: You must give a report at each Grotto meeting of the financial status of your Grotto and help the Secretary to fill out the proper reports for the Supreme Council.

Captain of the Guard

You are the special messenger of the Chief Justice. You are to see all who enter the Grotto are duly qualified and entitled to enter. You are to receive the inside password from the Prophets, when requested to do so by your Chief Justice, and to perform such other duties as may be required of you by your superior officers.

Sentinel

It is a position of great responsibility. You are to receive the outside password from all Prophets who enter the Grotto and see they have their annual dues card. A visiting Prophet unknown to you should be reported to the Master of Ceremonies and admitted only when avouched by him.

Guard well the outer borders of the Realm.

Important Records

Here is a list of some very important records that will be your responsibility. You should be ready at all times for an inspection of these records. It is your duty to see that the records are so well kept that you can turn them over immediately to your successor.

- A book of By-Laws local Grotto and Supreme Council
- A book of records of the proceedings of the Grotto
- A registry book containing the names of each member, his birth date, age, occupation, residence (including zip code), the date of his initiation or affiliation, the date of termination or suspension of his membership and with the cause thereof, as the case may be.
- An alphabetical list of rejections, suspension and expulsions.
- Such other books as may be necessary to present clearly the receipts and accounts of the Treasurer and Secretary.

All records of the Grotto should be kept from the time of institution date until the time a Grotto surrenders their charter, at which time the charter, all records and all moneys should be sent to the Supreme Council Office.

The Grotto Team

The foregone description of duties of the Monarch, Chief Justice, Master of Ceremonies and Secretary we believe is a very good description of a Corps of Grotto Officers working together, playing together and in general, striving as a close knit team to build their Grotto to great heights.

Cooperation is the watchword for the Grotto team, accomplishment will result.

Proficiency in Ritual

The Supreme Council Code clearly states, "At least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which nominations for office for the ensuing year are to be made, the Monarch shall appoint a committee of Past Monarchs, the number of members of said committee to be determined by him, who shall examine all of the elected officers of the Grotto as to their proficiency in the ritual. At the meeting at which nominations for office are to be made and prior to the making of such nominations, said committee shall report and if said committee shall find any of said officers not proficient in the ritualistic work, such officer shall not be eligible for nomination for any higher office." **Supreme Council Code 22.3.**

Officers' Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is the motivating factor that inspires confidence. Enthusiasm releases the drive to carry you over the obstacles which you otherwise could never hurdle, and keeps you going, even when the going gets rough.

Enthusiasm is wonderful. It gives warmth and good feelings to all your personal relationships. The Prophets will love you for it; they will go for you and with you. Joyfully sing forth the praise of "Sympathy and Goodfellowship."

The officer with enthusiasm for his work is the man who rises to leadership.

Respect

It is essentially the Monarch's business to insist upon profound respect for his office. Many a modest man refrains from correcting wrong procedure in the mistaken idea that the Prophets will think he is "pulling rank." An officer does not command respect, he earns it.

Special Committees and Units (edict)

It is important that the current Monarch and next year's probable Monarch-elect (current Chief Justice) appoint Prophets to seven (7) very important chairs as soon as possible. The appointment will be good for 12 months beginning January 1st of the current year. If the Prophet appointed last year has done a good job, please consider re-appointing him to the same chair. The Monarch shall provide this list to the Secretary so that he may report it to the Supreme Council Office by January 1st each year. The seven (7) important chairs are:

- Membership Chairman will supervise, encourage and promote the Grand Monarch's programs

- Suspension Chairman will be responsible to see that someone from your Grotto, personally contacts all members threatened with suspension prior to actually suspending the Prophet
- Doctor of Smiles will act as liaison between the families of children requiring dental care and the Humanitarian Foundation's Dentistry for the Special Needs Children Program and act as coordinator of the program at the local and/or state level
- Publicity Chairman will be responsible for public relations within their Grotto
- Toothbrush Chairman will make arrangements to hold a Toothbrush Day with local officials and enlist Prophets to help work
- Enchanted Lantern Chairman will be responsible for sending all Enchanted Lantern requests to the Supreme Council Office attention Humanitarian Foundation and maintaining the Enchanted Lantern records for their Grotto
- Youth Coordinator will be responsible for contacting local DeMolay, Jobs Daughters and Rainbow for Girls to coordinate activities between the Grotto and local Masonic youth groups to foster a better working relationship.

These committee chairmen and the committees not only perform a useful function for the Grotto but give each and every Prophet a chance to participate. Please contact each Prophet and obtain his approval prior to reporting this information to the Supreme Council office, which should be done prior to January 21st each year.

Units

Live and active units are the life of the Grotto. It is the duty of every member to help the Monarch maintain and/or establish various units such as:

Band Oriental, Band, Cast, Clowns, Drum and Bugle Corps, Revelers, Patrol,
Stewards, Bowling, Chorus, Safety and many others.

Officer Proficiency

When the Monarch raps the gavel calling the Grotto to order, the next few minutes will give the Prophets and visitors a fairly accurate assessment of the general performance of a Corps of Officers. If the opening is sloppy and slow it generally indicates that the Officers are not particularly interested in doing a good ritualistic job for the Grotto. They are sliding through the easiest possible manner toward that day when they become a Past Monarch.

If the opening is snappy and well rehearsed, it indicates that these Officers have set a goal. They may have something to offer the Grotto and its membership. They also may be looking forward to the day when they will become Past Monarchs but it will be with a sense of achievement.

It is the Monarch's duty to see that all his Officers are proficient, at least in the opening and closing. If an Officer cannot learn these parts, then, in truth, he should not hold an office.

Appointive Officers

In no way is it the intent to imply that the duties of the Appointive Officers are so small that we need not devote much time and space to them. It is our intent that this Manual be placed in the hands of each Appointed Officer as he enters into the Grotto line. Your specific duties were stated in your charge when you were installed. These duties are a very small part of your overall Grotto obligation. It is also your duty to accept any assignment which your Monarch may designate to you. The more you participate, the more you will learn better ways to serve your Grotto.

Selection of Officers

In most Grottoes, when a Prophet accepts an appointive office, he is being screened for leadership assignments. This is a good test ground and should be used as just that. No Prophet, upon entering the appointive line, should be allowed to assume that he will automatically be advanced through the elective line to the station of Monarch. This can, and has been, the source of many problems within Grotto. The general membership, as well as the appointive officers, should be periodically informed that these appointments are only for one year and that the chance of an officer advancing is relative to his abilities.

Leadership is a scarce commodity. Select your Prophets for your line officers with your head . . . not your heart. If you fail to heed this advice, the Grotto is the one to suffer.