



WARDEN'S CORNER

APRIL 2018

Worthy Wardens and all members of the Executive,

This letter is dedicated not only to the Wardens, but to the Grand Knights and all members of the Executive.

In today's missive I would like to talk about a very important issue – about handling the meetings of a Council, especially about discussions, speeches and motions. It is important on how we discuss issues at the meeting because the decisions we make, depend in it.

Parliamentary procedure

Knights of Columbus protocol is based on the *Robert's Rules of Order* and generally coincides with the parliamentary procedure of discussions. Basically, the human civilization hasn't invented anything better since the establishment of the British parliament about 800 years ago. So in our discussions we should follow the parliamentary rules described in the *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Controlling the meeting

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. It is very important, because not all of us know how to properly express ideas, keeping the speech concise and brief. Pretty often speakers tend to make long preambles to their speeches, explaining rather obvious things, or giving examples that are out of the point. If such is the case, the Grand Knight or another chairing person should politely interrupt the speaker, asking him to speak to the

point. It's also good to remind the speaker of the time limit that generally should not be over three minutes.

Presiding at the meeting

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.

It is essential that any speaker addresses only the Grand Knight (or in his absence the chairing Knight, such as Deputy Grand Knight, Chancellor, or Warden), because it acknowledges his Chairmanship and does not let any discussion that is not allowed by the Chairman. If a certain member wants to address another member, or ask clarifications from the previous speaker, he should ask permission from the Grand Knight: "Worthy Grand Knight, can I ask a question to Bro. Bill?" or "Worthy Grand Knight, may I ask Bro. Pete to clarify an issue?" The Grand Knight can give such a permission, or can postpone it till some appropriate time. In other words, GK should handle the discussion at the meeting in the most convenient way so that the meeting goes smooth and without unnecessary delays.

Making motions

The Grand Knight is not allowed to make a motion. Why is it so? Because, the chairman should always be impartial, not showing interest in this or that resolution. Only in such way a good and productive meeting can be held.

Any motion requires a proposer of the motion and a second to it. If no one is willing to second the motion, then the motion is not considered by the council meeting, and is treated as though it was never offered. Such a motion may be introduced again at any later time, and can be discussed only if there is a seconder to it.

Why is it so important to have a second to the motion? Because if there is only one person interested in introducing it, there is no point of sparing time and energy of the Council in discussing that idea. Hearing a second to a motion is guidance to the Grand Knight that he should state the question on

the motion, thereby placing it before the Council. It does not necessarily indicate that the seconder favors the motion.

So, the conclusion is: TRY TO FOLLOW THE PARLIAMENTARY RULES JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE USEFUL!

If anyone has any questions or comments I may be contacted at sw2017@kofc.ab.ca

Thank you for your attention...and God Bless.

Vivat Jesus!

Sir Knight Andy Soshalski
State Warden