

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Read More About It:
Positions and Duties

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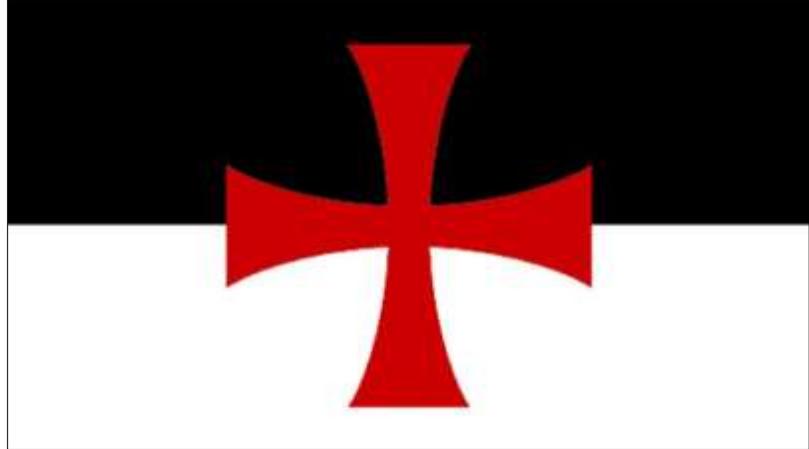
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INTRODUCTION



Positions and Duties

The Priory is the essential organizational element within the Grand Priory of the United States. Commanderies are established for the purpose of expanding the Order, as an initial step toward the goal of establishing new Priories. Priories and Commanderies operate by charter from the Grand Priory and function like branches of a corporation. Priories and Commanderies must obey federal, state, and local laws when carrying out any and all the SMOTJ-related activities in the United States. In particular, all Priories and Commanderies are responsible for compliance with local statutes and ordinances whenever conducting events. Preceptories are a structure of convenience under an existing Priory. Their purpose is to facilitate more frequent local group activities of Priory members in areas where a Priory's membership is geographically dispersed

This publication outlines the duties of Priory, Commandery, and Preceptory officers.

Position and Duties of Officers

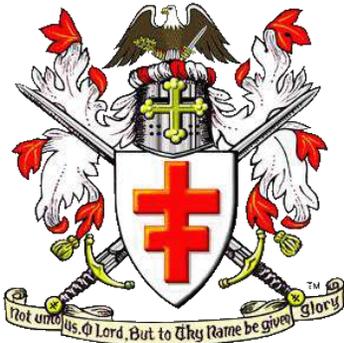
Each **Priory** has responsibilities to the Grand Priory, to its members and to all members of the Order. It is paramount to support Grand Priors goals and objectives such as continued charitable works and their financial support. It is also extremely important for priories to submit yearly reports on time, and for Priors, Chancellors, and priory leadership to attend each Grand Convent. Involving as many members in the work of the Priory keeps the membership active. Interaction with other Priors and Commanderies keeps the entire GPUSA membership active and involved.

Commanderies are established for the purpose of expanding the Order, as an initial step toward the goal of establishing new Priors. They are established at the call of the Grand Prior for the good of the Order under the protective umbrella and direct administration of an existing Priory. They may also be established as independent Commanderies under the Grand Priory, usually where no existing Priory is in sufficient physical proximity to exercise close oversight. The parent Priory (or Grand Priory Officers) responsible for oversight of the Commandery assists the Commandery in achieving the goal of attaining Priory status within 24 months after the Commandery is recognized.

Preceptories are a structure of convenience under an existing Priory. Their purpose is to facilitate more frequent local group activities of Priory members in areas where a Priory's membership is geographically dispersed.

Priory	Commandery	Preceptory
Membership (minimum) 25 active members	Membership (minimum) 15 active members	Membership (minimum) 10 active members
Administration Auspices of GPUSA	Administration Auspices of parent Priory	Administration Auspices of parent Priory
Authority Meetings & charitable activities Convents & Investitures	Authority Meetings & charitable activities Convents	Authority Meetings & charitable activities
Officers Prior Chancellor Inspector Treasurer Secretary Registrar Aumonier Armorer Avocat Chaplain Chief of Protocol Knight Protector Master of Postulants Marshall Sword Bearer	Officers Commander Chancellor Secretary Treasurer	Officer Preceptor
Reporting Priory Annual Report	Reporting Commandery Annual Report	Reporting No annual report required

Priories are led by a **Prior**. Commanderies are led by a **Commander**. Preceptories are led by a **Preceptor**.

Prior	Commander	Preceptor
Is elected by the Priory Council subject to the approval of the Grand Prior.	Is appointed by the Grand Prior upon recommendation of the <i>Standing Committee on New Priories and Commanderies</i> .	Is appointed by the Grand Prior after considering recommendations of the Prior of the intended parent Priory.
Roles and Responsibilities		
Is responsible for spiritual and temporal welfare of the Priory/Commandery/Preceptory.		
Is invested with the prerogative of leadership.		
Ensures that the Priory/Commandery/Preceptory, its officers, and all of its Knights and Dames conduct the charitable business of the Priory, its ceremonies, and all other functions in full conformance with the purposes of the Order, as stated in the <i>Certificate of Incorporation</i> , and with the corporate and other requirements stated in the <i>Grand Statutes</i> and the Manual of the Order.		
Serves at the pleasure of the Grand Prior		
Is responsible for the timely submission of all reports, oblations, and passage fees required by the <i>Grand Statutes</i> , the Grand Priory, and the Corporate Officers of the Order.	Is responsible for the timely submission of all reports, oblations, and passage fees required by the <i>Grand Statutes</i> , the parent Priory, the Grand Priory, and the Corporate Officers of the Order.	Is responsible for the timely submission of all reports to the parent Priory.
Presides at all meetings and the Convents of the Priory, the Priory Council, and the Priory Executive Committee.	Presides at all meetings of the Commandery.	Presides at all meetings of the Preceptory.
Appoints their Chancellor		
Is responsible for the accuracy of the Grand Priory Database for the Priory. If access code is shared, the Prior is responsible for the veracity of information on that portion of the database which can be altered at the priory level.		
Has the right to veto the admission of any postulant into the Order.		

Chancellor

The Chancellors is the principal executive assistant to a Prior or Commander.

Priory	Commandery
Assists in the implementation of the Prior's/Commander's guidance and agenda.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees all matters of administration for the Priory. • Chairs the Membership Committee. • Chairs the Promotion Board. • Serves as a member of the Budget Committee, the Charitable Activities Committee and the Installation Committee. • Is considered the designated successor to the Prior at the next term of office. • Performs the duties of Prior upon the absence, disability, or death of the Prior. • In the event of the death of the Prior, becomes the Acting Prior until the election of a new Prior by the Priory Council and subsequent approval of the choice by the Grand Prior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees all matters of administration for the Commander. • Arranges for and serves as the Master of Ceremonies at all meetings and convents of the Commandery. • Compiles and prepares an annual consolidated report to the Commander summarizing the financial, charitable, and other activities of the Priory. The report shall be delivered by 31 January of the year following the report period to the Commander, the Prior of the parent Priory, and the Grand Inspector. • Obtains and maintains an adequate supply of robes and insignia to support the various functions of the Commandery. • Plans and executes measures to protect ceremonies, meetings, and other functions of the Commandery from external disturbances. • Performs the duties of Commander upon the absence, disability, or death of the Commander. • In the event of the disability or death of the Commander, becomes the Acting Commander until the appointment of a new Commander by the Grand Prior.
Performs any other duties that the Prior/Commander may assign.	

The original **CHANCELLORS** were the *cancellarii* of Roman courts of justice—ushers, who sat at the *cancelli* or lattice work screens of a basilica or law court, which separated the judge and counsel from the audience.

Secretary

The Secretary keeps a record of the proceedings of the Priory or Commandery and performs all appropriate secretarial functions.

Priory	Commandery
Maintains the office of record of the Priory/Commandery.	
Ensures that all required corporate functions of the Priory/Commandery are performed correctly and in a timely manner.	
Serves as the official point of contact for all formal written communications with the Grand Priory, Priory, with organizations in the International Order, and with other U.S. Priories and Commanderies.	
Distributes the Annual Report of the Priory/Commandery.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in maintaining, in cooperation with the Registrar, a current roster of officers of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies. The preferred method for doing this is to keep the Grand Priory's data base current and utilize it for this purpose. • Assists in maintaining, in cooperation with the Registrar, a current roster of all Priory and subordinate Commandery committee assignments. • Notifies the membership of meetings and Convents. • Ensures that email communications from the Grand Priory or Priory are forwarded by mail to those members of the Priory who do not themselves have access to email. • Prepares convent scripts for use by officers with speaking parts during a convent. • Designs and prepares the Convent and Investiture Program unless this is specifically assigned to someone else. • Maintains and updates, in cooperation with the Registrar, the permanent historical records of the Priory. • Informs the Grand Editors of the Beauséant and the Templar Times of newsworthy items, including the newsletter of the Priory, special local projects, events, non-GPUSA awards to members, deaths and special concerns. • Serves as a member of the Budget Committee, the Membership Committee, and the Installation Committee. • Prepares letters of condolence and other similar correspondence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a current roster of officers of the Commandery. • Maintains a current roster of all Commandery committee assignments. • Establishes and maintains a computer database listing the names, ranks, addresses, email addresses, skills, and telephone numbers of Knights and Dames of the Commandery, and their current duties, including offices held and committee assignments. Provides this information to the Priory Secretary and to the Grand Assistant Secretary for Membership at least semiannually, or more often if significant changes occur. • Maintains a record of Priory, Grand Priory, and Grand Magisterium registration numbers assigned to each Knight and Dame in the Commandery. • Sends all notices of Commandery Meetings to the members. • Informs the Grand Editors of the Beauséant and the Templar Times of newsworthy items, including the newsletter of the Commandery, special local projects, events, non-GPUSA awards to members, deaths. • Ensures that email communications from the Grand Priory, Priory and Commandery are forwarded by mail to those members of the Priory who do not themselves have access to email. • Keeps and maintains the Commandery's ceremonial swords, Templar Crosses, and stands of colors. • Maintains and updates the permanent historical records of the Commandery.
Performs any other duties that the Prior/Commander may assign.	

Treasurer

The Treasurer administers the funds of the Priory or Commandery and keeps appropriate records of all transactions.

Priory	Commandery
Notifies Knights and Dames of the Priory/Commandery of their upcoming annual oblations in a timely manner; secures the collection of the oblations; and obtains the passage fees of newly-invested members.	
Administers accounts receivable for the Priory/Commandery, including the receipt of all money, the deposit of the received money in Priory bank accounts, and the attendant accounting and bookkeeping.	
Disburses payments for the Priory/Commandery as authorized by the Prior/Commander or his delegate.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a separate accounting for the charitable activities of the Priory. • Prepares an annual financial report for the Priory and forwards that report to the Inspector for inclusion in the Priory annual report. • Reviews the annual financial reports of subordinate Commandery Treasurers and provides the Inspector a report summarizing their transactions. • Annually provides financial and tax information on the Priory and subordinate Commanderies to the Grand Treasurer for inclusion in the Grand Prior's report to the Internal Revenue Service. • Provides guidance to subordinate Commandery Treasurers on financial and tax procedures and documentation required to support the non-profit corporation status of the Order. • Chairs the Budget Committee. • Serves as a member of the Committee on Charitable Activities. • Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects the Mite and other charitable contributions at all Commandery Councils, and Convents. • Maintains a separate accounting for the charitable activities of the Commandery. • Provides leadership on fundraising activities to support the charitable activities of the Commandery. • Prepares an annual financial report for the Commandery that summarizes charitable activities and all other expenditures, and forwards that report to the Chancellor for inclusion in the Commandery annual report. • Annually provides financial and tax information on the Commandery to the Priory and the Grand Treasurer for inclusion in the Grand Prior's report to the Internal Revenue Service. • Files all necessary tax returns in a timely manner. Performs any other duties that the Commander may assign.
Performs any other duties that the Prior/Commander may assign.	

Other Priory Officers

Inspector

The Inspector is responsible for regularly reviewing the activities of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies to ensure they are in conformance with the *Certificate of Incorporation*, the *Grand Statutes*, and supplementary Priory Statutes. The Inspector:

- Conducts an annual review of the activities of the Priory and all subordinate Commanderies.
- Compiles and prepares an annual consolidated report to the Prior summarizing the financial, charitable, and other activities of the Priory. The report shall be delivered to the Prior and the Grand Inspector by 31 January of the year following the report period.
- Serves as a member of the Installation Committee.
- Performs the duties of the Chancellor in the absence of the Chancellor.
- Performs the duties of the Prior in event of the absence from the United States or the disability of both the Prior and the Chancellor.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Registrar

The Registrar is responsible for all matters pertaining to the registration of members of the Order. The Registrar:

- Obtains the original applications of all members of the Order and forwards them for processing, retaining a copy for Priory records.
- Maintains a record of Priory, Grand Priory and Grand Magisterium registration numbers assigned to each Knight and Dame in the Priory and subordinate Commanderies.
- Initiates appropriate actions to obtain all diplomas, certificates, and/or passports associated with the registration of members.
- Maintains the Priory's portion of the Grand Priory's Membership database to include keeping fields that are the responsibility of the Priory current (full and correct spelling of names, addresses, email addresses, skills, relevant telephone numbers and their current duties, including offices held and committee assignments).
- Verifies at least semi-annually (January 1st and July 1st) that all Priory information in the Grand Priory's database is correct and current.
- Maintains, with the Secretary, a current roster of all Priory and subordinate Commandery committee assignments utilizing the Grand Priory's Membership database.
- Provides, on a periodic basis, the membership roster to the Secretary, to include full name, titles, address and email information.
- Serves as a member of the Membership Committee and the Installation Committee.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Aumonier is French for almoner. An **almoner** is a chaplain or church officer who originally was in charge of distributing money to the deserving poor. Christians have historically been encouraged to donate one tenth of their income as charity to the poor and the first deacons mentioned in Acts 6:1–4 dealt with the distribution of the charity of the early Christian churches to needy members. Popes, Bishops, and Christian monarchs and organizations have since employed their own officers to organize their donations to the poor and needy. Such donations were referred to as alms and the officers as almoners and the position was one of considerable status.

Historically, an armorer is a person who makes personal armor, especially plate armor. The title "armorer" was formerly part of several Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) designations across the services. Even where the title has disappeared, those with duties similar to those of earlier armorers are often referred to as such.

Aumonier

The Aumonier oversees all charitable activities of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies. The Aumonier:

- Provides leadership on fundraising activities to support the charitable activities of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies.
- Provides advice to subordinate Commanderies regarding the appropriateness of proposed charitable activities at the Commandery level.
- Assists the Prior, the Chancellor, and the Secretary in identifying special, immediate needs of particular charitable organizations or of members who may require the provision of confidential charitable assistance.
- Conducts annual reviews of the charitable activities of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies; provides a report summarizing those reviews to the Inspector.
- Collects the Mite and other charitable contributions at all Priory Councils, Convents, and Investitures.
- Upon collection of the Mite and any other charitable contributions, makes an accounting and turns funds over to the Treasurer for deposit in the Aumonier account
- Authorizes the disbursement of funds from the Aumonier account for charitable activities approved by the Charitable Activities Committee and the Prior.
- Maintains a complete accounting record of all disbursements from the Almoner account, including date and amount of disbursement, recipient, and charitable purpose.
- Chairs the Committee on Charitable Activities, which coordinates all charitable activities of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies.
- Serves as a member of the Budget Committee.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Armorer

The Armorer is responsible for the provisioning of ceremonial robes and insignia for the Priory and subordinate Commanderies, and for maintaining the military history. The Armorer:

- Obtains and maintains adequate supplies of mantles and insignia to support the various functions of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies, using only licensed and authorized suppliers.
- Serves as the military historian of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies.
- Serves as a member of the Budget Committee.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

In France, **avocats** were formerly an organized body of pleaders, while the preparation of cases was done by *avoués*; today this distinction exists only before the appellate courts. In Germany, until the distinction between counselor and pleader was abolished in 1879, the *Advokat* was the adviser rather than the pleader. The term has traditionally been applied to pleaders in courts of canon law, and thus in England those who practiced before the courts of civil and canon law were called advocates.

Avocat

The Avocat is the General Counsel for the Priory. The Avocat:

- Handles all legal affairs of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies in accordance with the *Grand Statutes*, and under the Guidance of the Grand Avocat.
- Ensures that all corporate legal requirements for the Priory and subordinate Commanderies are met, including State and local legal requirements; and that all corporate legal functions are performed correctly.
- Protects the intellectual property rights associated with the Order.
- Prepares an annual report on legal activities of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies and submitting the report to the Inspector.
- Maintains the legal records of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies.
- Serves as an ex-officio member of the Grand Avocat's Chamber.
- Serves as a member of the Charitable Activities Committee and the Membership Committee.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Chaplain

The Chaplain performs duties as the chaplain for all ceremonies, meetings, and other appropriate functions of the Priory. The Chaplain:

- Prepares prayers and reading of scriptures at the Convent, investitures, and other ceremonies deemed appropriate by the Prior.
- Maintains an up-to-date list of recently-deceased Knights and Dames and memorializes them during Convent services.
- Serves as a member of the Charitable Activities.
- Administratively reports to the Prior.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Chief of Protocol

The Chief of Protocol is the keeper of traditions and the arbiter of matters of protocol. The Chief of Protocol:

- Arranges and oversees all meetings and convents of the Priory.
- Chairs the Installation Committee that plans convents and Investiture.
- Serves as the Master of Ceremonies at all meetings and convents.
- Organizes and trains members assigned to conduct Priory Convents and Investitures.
- Organizes, trains, and rehearses Knights and Dames who have ceremonial roles in Convents and Investitures.
- Advises Priory members and subordinate Commanderies on ceremonies and matters of protocol.
- Arranges and manages the initial gathering of all postulants, those candidates for promotion, and those receiving the honor and dignity of the Order of Merit at Priory Convents and Investiture.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Knight Protector

The Knight Protector plans for and supervises order and security during ceremonies and functions of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies. The Knight Protector:

- Plans and Executes measures to protect ceremonies, meetings, and other functions of the Priory and subordinate Commanderies from external disturbances.
- Serves as a member of the Budget Committee and the Installation Committee.
- Reports to the Chief of Protocol.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Master of Postulants

The Master of Postulants is responsible for organizing and instructing the candidates for membership before and during the Convent ceremonies and during any additional vigils or instructional periods. The Master of Postulants:

- Gathers all postulants at Priory Convents and Investiture.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Marshal is an ancient loanword from Old (Norman) French which in turn is borrowed from Old Frankish. It originally and literally meant "horse servant", from Germanic **marba-* "horse" (cf. English *mare* and modern German *Mähre*, meaning "horse of bad quality") and *skalk-* "servant". As marshals became trusted members of the courts of Medieval Europe, the title grew in reputation.

Marshall

The Marshal ensures orderly, proper, and dignified processions and recessions during the Convents and other ceremonies of the Order. The Marshal:

- Develops and maintains standard procedures for normalizing processions.
- Works with the Chief of Protocol to ensure dignitaries are accorded appropriate recognition, honors, and placement in ceremonial processions.
- Organizes postulants, those to receive awards, those to be promoted, and those receiving the honor and dignity of the Order of Merit for entry at Priory Convents and Investiture.
- Serves as the marshal for all meetings of the Council and for Convents.
- Serves as a member of the Installation Committee, the Committee on Meetings and the Committee on Insignia, Diploma, and Supplies.
- Reports to the Chief of Protocol.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

Sword Bearer

The Sword Bearer shall carry the sword at all ceremonies of the Priory and maintain all other ceremonial regalia for the Priory. The Sword Bearer:

- Shall keep and maintain the Priory's ceremonial swords, Templar Crosses, and colors
- Presents the sword for dubbing during investitures.
- Shall present and pass the sword to Knights and Dames during the Priory Convent and investitures.
- Shall procure appropriate presentation swords and other regalia for use in recognition ceremonies, using only licensed, authorized suppliers.
- Serves as a member of the Budget Committee and the Installation Committee.
- Reports to the Chief of Protocol.
- Performs any other duties that the Prior may assign.

The local Prior may establish other Priory Officer positions to perform additional functions as necessary. The Prior should in such cases parallel the Grand Officer structure where appropriate or create new positions to accomplish the desired functions.

When new Commanderies are established, the parent Priory Officers have oversight responsibility to assist the new Commandery and its officers in the following tasks:

- Establishing their Commandery
- Training and advising Commandery personnel in the duties required of their new organization
- Accomplishing all required administrative duties until the Commandery has enough members and the infrastructure to successfully transition to Priory status.

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