

**From:** John Loayza

**Sent:** Thursday, July 9, 2020 12:01

**To:** Belleville Masonic Lodge; John Loayza

**Subject:** Loayza/Observations Regarding Duties Of Division Commanders

Dear VEDGC Smith:

If our commanderies are going to improve, we really need more active/dedicated Division Commanders. The position is not easy but there's so much to do:

1-Division Commanders, like all our Blue Lodge and York Rite District Deputies, need to visit each commandery more often. I.E., visit each commandery once a month because we hardly ever see them except once a year when a Grand Officer comes for an inspection. By that time, it's too late to make any corrections for improvements that should be continuously made during the year between the Division Commander and his local commanderies.

2-If a Division Commander has two local commanderies meeting on the same night, then he should alternate his visits to those commanderies every other month.

3- When visits are constant, the Division Commanders will automatically know what's happening and what needs to be done on a monthly basis, thereby helping each commandery with its commandery annual or hopefully 5 year business plans.

4- Moreover, a Division Commander's reports provide the Grand Commandery once a month or once every other month but no later than once a quarter a better understanding of the current strengths and weaknesses of each commandery and division. This statistical data should be in the Grand Recorder's files in order to evaluate and project the trends of each division and each commandery, along with taking action more than just once a year.

5-Division Commanders need to impress upon the minds of each commandery that it's basically their own responsibility to solve their local problems. Grand Commandery can't be running around trying to solve everyone's issues. However, it will provide guidance and support whenever/however possible.

6-Division Commanders should be working in concert with local lodges, chapters, councils by providing understanding of the importance/knowledge/pride of being a Knights Templar as a continuance of Blue Lodge and the entire York Rite, I.E., they should visit and do educational programs in each of the other organizations because that is really where all membership growth is going to come from.

7-Although commandery membership comes from the chapters, sparking an interest needs to come from lodges to chapters and to commanderies. Councils should be added to the process but stressing lodge, chapters and then to commanderies is essential. Perhaps wearing the Knights of Malta uniforms and talking about the Knights of Malta on one evening at lodges/chapters, then do another presentation on the Knights Templars and come in uniform or caps/mantles. Publicize

the event continuously for 1-2 months ahead of time. This helps lodges/chapters looking for an educational program and plants the seeds for joining Templary, and could be coordinated by the Division Commanders with their counterparts in lodges/chapters/councils.

8-Division Commanders can provide information about the Knights Templars to local commanderies from a variety of sources as educational nights with data from the Grand Encampment, the foreign consulates can provide historical data, travel brochures (Cyprus, Malta, Rhoades, etc.), and perhaps sources for powerpoint or films that could be obtained. The Grand Encampment may have slides to use from past trips throughout the ancient world of the Knights Templars-we see pictures of past trips by the clergy in the Knights Templar Magazines that could also be used.

9-If one or more commanderies are not able to obtain new members within a division because of lodges/chapters also being in poor membership conditions or can't do Degree Work, then perhaps the Division Commanders should look at the possibility of regrouping the commanderies into a regional commandery until such time when the regional commandery could be again redivided into multiple commanderies within the division. Although there is a risk of putting multiple weak commanderies together, there is also a possibility of strengthening a region which would be accessible to the members within a certain distance, and improving the Degree Work, as well as revenue.

10-Division Commanders need to assist the local commanderies develop their individual commandery business plans, projecting membership increases, revenue, Degree Work, social and educational programs, public relations activities, and training to become more efficient executive officers. These are the same challenges that exist throughout all Masonic Bodies because so many officers don't understand basic good business practices.

The above are just a few ideas which combine short and long range goals/planning. However, nothing spectacular is going to happen overnight which is why individual commandery 5 year business plans are so important. However, it's going to take lots of overall commitments from everyone, especially those Divisional Commanders.

Fraternally,

John  
John Loayza, EPC