



# Knights of Columbus

SUPREME OFFICE • 1 COLUMBUS PLAZA • NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06510-3326 • (203) 752-4000

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: VICE SUPREME MASTERS**

**FROM: JOSEPH P. SCHULTZ  
SUPREME MASTER**

**RE: FOURTH DEGREE INFORMATION**

**DATE: Initially Issued May 23, 2005  
Reissued July 31, 2007**

There has been much discussion and confusion on several subjects. The following will establish the current guidelines which must be adhered to by all Fourth Degree Knights and will remain in effect until modified or cancelled. It is imperative that this information be disseminated throughout each district and in each assembly.

1. Regalia/Uniform: "Regalia" is the term used to define the official dress for members of the Fourth Degree. The current issues of the Laws and Rules Governing the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus and the Color Corps Drill Manual clearly describe the official dress. It should be noted that the "black tie" should be a black bow tie and the "plain white tuxedo shirt" should be a plain collared white tuxedo shirt. In cases where a black vest is worn, the baldric will be worn outside the vest. Accessories worn with the official dress include:
  - a. Pins: The plain, unadorned fourth Degree pin (of the style approved by the Supreme Council for new members) may be worn on the left lapel of the jacket. The only other pin authorized to be worn is a small pin of a size comparable to the Fourth Degree pin depicting the wearer's national flag. The flag pin will be worn above the pin of the Order.
  - b. Jewels of Office: Jewels of office may be worn with regalia by Knights currently holding those offices in either the Third or Fourth Degree. When the jewel of office is worn, the baldric must also be worn.
  - c. Baldric: A social baldric with the appropriate national colors must be worn by all Fourth Degree Knights when in regalia. This baldric will be worn under the coat (and over the vest, if worn). The only exception to this rule is for Supreme Officers and Directors, who are not required to wear a baldric when in regalia. The wearing of a Third or Fourth Degree jewel of office does not excuse the requirement for wearing baldric.
  - d. Miniature Jewels: Past and Former miniatures provided by the Supreme Office Supply Department and those awarded in Papal Orders are the only ones authorized. No other miniature jewels, medals, devices or awards may be worn with Fourth Degree regalia.

2. **Color Corps Regalia/Uniform:** Members of the Color Corps must strive for the ultimate in uniform appearance. As an example, if a Fourth Degree pin and/or flag pin is worn, all members in that Color Corps wear the same pin and flag; if some are missing pins or flags or if they are not all of the same size and shape, then none should wear a pin or flag. Uniformity in appearance is paramount. The official dress for those serving in the Color Corps is the same as the official dress for members with the following additions:
  - a. **Chapeau:** A black Navy type chapeaux with a plume of appropriate color for the office held and an emblem of the Order on the right side. The emblem may be cloth or metal depending on the supplier.
  - b. **Cape:** A black cape with liner of appropriate color for the office held with a Fourth Degree patch on the left shoulder. The patch will not have a black background and no other devices or patches will be worn with the cape.
  - c. **Gloves:** Plain white gloves
  - d. **Service Baldric:** A service baldric with the appropriate national colors must be worn by all Fourth Degree Knights when in Color Corps regalia. This baldric will be worn over the coat and under the cape. The sword is suspended from this baldric. When a sword is not permitted for any reason, the service baldric shall be worn nevertheless.
  - e. **Sword:** A silver sword is the standard sword for Color Corps members. Vice Supreme Masters, Masters and former such officers only shall be permitted to bear the gold sword. The sword shall not be embellished with painting, enameling or other decorations other than as originally issued.
  - f. **Jewels:** The same rules apply as above for wearing jewels of office, present or past.
  - g. **Personal Grooming and Appearance:** Good standards of grooming must be observed at all times. Eccentricities in hair styling or in facial hair grooming are not acceptable. No earrings will be worn by members of the Color Corps.
3. **Drill:** The standard drill procedures to be used by the Fourth Degree Color Corps are definitively spelled out in the Knights of Columbus Color Corps Drill Manual and the audio visual edition of The Visible Arm of the Order. These documents are the basic guide to which all Assembly Color Corps will adhere. Some additional rules concerning drill include:
  - a. **Common sense and flexibility must prevail.**
  - b. **The exact Color Corps protocol in specific ceremonies cannot be foreseen because of the differing procedures in local dioceses and parishes.**
  - c. **Without exception, the policies of the Ordinary of the diocese and/or the pastor of the parish shall prevail and shall be carried out totally.**
  - d. **No additional drill movements or embellishments are desired or authorized.**
  - e. **Changes to the drill procedures will be promulgated when approved. Until then, the manual and the film are the basic guide.**

4. **Exemplifications:** The exemplification ceremony will be conducted as published in the Masters Degree book (1354-4-04). Well rehearsed, well practiced, well executed and well organized exemplifications are extremely important since they are the first general impression a new Sir Knight gathers about the Fourth Degree.
  - a. **Exemplar Teams:** At the present time and at the discretion of the District Master, exemplar teams are authorized to make a choice between wearing the official robe or conducting the Fourth Degree exemplification in tuxedos. This is a temporary trial period and is not to be construed as a final decision. If tuxedos are worn, the exemplars will wear a service baldric over the coat.
  - b. **Candidates Dress:** Dress for candidates will be in accordance with the Color Corps Drill Manual. Contrary to the beliefs of some jurisdictions, white gloves are not required or authorized for wear by candidates.
  - c. **Other Paraphernalia:** No robes or paraphernalia other than Fourth Degree shall be worn in the chamber by team members, guests or spectators.
  - d. **Military:** Members of the active duty military shall be authorized to wear their full dress uniforms in lieu of tuxedo during Fourth Degree functions. During exemplifications, active duty military in uniform shall not be required to wear the social baldric or the pin of the Fourth Degree on their military uniforms.
  - e. **Civil Servants:** Full time police and firefighting officers shall be authorized to wear their dress uniforms at Fourth Degree functions with the same considerations as for active duty military.
5. **Knighting Ceremonies:** These ceremonies are an integral part to the exemplification of the Fourth Degree and will be conducted in a closed chamber as part of the overall exemplification.
  - a. **Non Fourth Degree Spectators:** No spectators will be allowed into the exemplification chamber other than duly qualified members of the Fourth Degree.
  - b. **Other Venue:** At the discretion of the District Master, a second knighting ceremony may be staged for the sake of families and spectators. This will not preclude the official knighting taking place in closed chambers as part of the official exemplification.
6. **Reception of Holy Communion:** The procedures for reception of Holy Communion are spelled out in the current drill manual. This is for reception of communion on the tongue. However, in some areas, the Ordinary of the Diocese has specified that he prefers that the Color Corps receive communion in the hand.
  - a. **Communion on the tongue:** If this method is used, Sir Knights should not receive under both species. Taking the cup with a gloved hand while holding a chapeau with the other could lead to a disastrous accident involving the Sacred Blood.
  - b. **Communion in the hand:** Where this is the case, on the silent command of the Color Corps Commander, chapeaus and gloves will be removed and will be left in the pew. The Sir Knights may now receive Communion under both species if they so desire. After Communion, when the tabernacle is closed, the Color Corps Commander will give a silent command for the gloves to be replaced.
  - c. **Uniformity:** Whichever method of reception of Communion is practiced, the entire Color Corps should receive the same way.

7. **Assessments:** In accordance with the Laws and Rules Governing the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus, October 2002, Article VII, Section 21, (c), "No assessment by an Assembly shall be valid until approved by the Supreme Master, both as to purpose and amount." Further, there is no provision authorizing Masters to levy assessments on Assemblies within their jurisdiction.

Cc: District Masters  
Faithful Navigators