

# Constitutions for the Government of the Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon

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Any subject not herein dealt with by these Constitutions shall be governed by the general rules of the Knights Templar, contained from time to time in the Statutes of the United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta of England and Wales and Provinces Overseas, so far as such Rules are applicable to the Order and not inconsistent with these Constitutions.

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 GRAND MASTER'S COUNCIL</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1 Governing Body	2
1.2 Ranks	2
1.3 Styles	3
1.4 Salutations	3
1.5 The Grand Master's Council	4
1.6 The Grand Master	4
1.7 Appointments	5
1.8 Executive Committee	6
1.9 Forum of Grand Preceptors	7
1.10 Discipline, Court of Appeal and Expulsion	7
<b>2 GRAND PRECEPTOR'S COUNCIL</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 The Grand Preceptor	9
2.2 Provincial Ranks	10
2.3 Provincial Appointments	10
2.4 Provincial Past Ranks	11
2.5 Additional Provincial Past Ranks	11
2.6 Provincial Returns	11
2.7 Provincial Executive Committee	11
<b>3 PRIVATE CHAPELS</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1 Petition	11
3.2 Officers	11
3.3 Chapel Installation Returns	12
3.4 Progression	12
3.5 Elections	12
3.6 Quorum	12
3.7 Chapel Effects	12
<b>4 CANDIDATES AND MEMBERS</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Qualification for Admission	12
4.2 Qualification for Joining or Re-Joining	13
4.3 Petition for Membership	13
4.4 Candidate from Outside Area	13
4.5 Court of Honour	13
4.6 Objections to Membership	13
4.7 Election of Members	13
4.8 Number of Knights to be admitted	14
4.9 Certificate of Membership and Registration	14
4.10 Rank and Offices on Re-Joining	14
4.11 Honorary Members	14
4.12 Resignation	15
<b>5 FEES PAYABLE</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Payable to Grand Master's Council	15
5.2 Payable to Grand Preceptor's Council	15
<b>6 REGALIA, BANNERS AND ALTAR FRONTAL</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 – 6.5 Regalia	15
6.6 Banners	18
6.7 Altar Frontal	19
6.8 Plates, Jewels, Badges and Collarettes	20

# 1. Grand Master's Council

## 1.1 Governing Body:

The Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon shall be governed by a body styled "The Grand Master's Council" which has supreme authority and inherent powers of enacting laws and regulations for the government of the Order taking care to preserve the traditions of the Order with the assistance of the Grand Master who shall have power to act on its behalf and to delegate daily management powers to the Executive Committee. (1.8)

All Masters and Priors (past and present) who are subscribing members of Chapels of the Order are members of the Grand Master's Council.

## 1.2 Ranks:

All Grand Officers must be subscribing members of a Chapel on the Register of the Order and Installed Masters of the Order. Members of the Grand Master's Council are entitled to the undernoted post-nominals and rank in the following order: -

Grand Master	G.M.
Grand Prior	G.P.
Past Grand Masters	P.G.M.
Past Grand Priors	P.G.P.
Knight Humilitas	K.H.
Knight Caritas	K.C.
Grand Preceptor	G.Prec. (jurisdiction)
Past Grand Preceptors	P.G.Prec. (jurisdiction)
Grand Marshal	G.Mar.
Past Grand Marshals	P.G.Mar.
Grand Treasurer	G.Treas.
Past Grand Treasurers	P.G.Treas.
Grand Registrar	G. Reg.
Past Grand Registrars	P.G. Reg.
Grand Secretary	G.Sec.
Past Grand Secretaries	P.G.Sec.
Grand Historian	G.Hist.
Past Grand Historians	P.G.Hist.
Deputy Grand Marshal	Dep.G.Mar.
Past Deputy Grand Marshals	P.Dep.G.Mar.
Grand Almoner	G.Alm.
Past Grand Almoners	P.G.Alm.
Protector of Canterbury	Prot.Cant.
Past Protectors of Canterbury	P.Prot.Cant.
Grand Warden of Regalia	G.W.Reg.
Past Grand Wardens of Regalia	P.G.W.Reg.
Grand Sword Bearer	G.Swd.B.
Past Grand Sword Bearers	P.G.Swd.B.
Deputy Grand Secretary	Dep.G.Sec.
Past Deputy Grand Secretaries	P.Dep.G.Sec.
Grand Banner Bearer	G.B.B.
Past Grand Banner Bearers	P.G.B.B.
Assistant Grand Marshals	Asst.G.Mar.

Past Assistant Grand Marshals	P.Asst.G.Mar.
Assistant Grand Treasurer	Asst.G.Treas.
Past Assistant Grand Treasurers	P.Asst.G.Treas.
Assistant Grand Secretary	Asst.G.Sec.
Past Assistant Grand Secretaries	P.Asst.G.Sec.
Grand Herald	G.Her.
Past Grand Heralds	P.G.Her.
Grand Organist	G.Org.
Past Grand Organists	P.G.Org.
Deputy Grand Organist	Dep.G.Org.
Past Deputy Grand Organists	P.Dep.G.Org.
Grand Doorkeeper	G.Dk.
Past Grand Doorkeepers	P.G.Dk.
Grand Cellarer(s)	G.Cel.
Past Grand Cellarers	P.G.Cel.
Grand Sentry	G.Sent.
Past Grand Sentries	P.G.Sent.
Assistant Grand Sentry	Asst.G.Sent.
Past Assistant Grand Sentries	P.Asst.G.Sent.
Grand Master's Award	G.M.A. (Award of Merit)

**1.3 Styles:**

The Grand Master	is styled: "Most Worthy"
The Grand Prior	is styled: "Most Eminent"
A Knight Humilitas	is styled: "Right Worthy"
A Knight Caritas	is styled: "Right Worthy"
The Grand Preceptor	is styled: "Right Worthy"
The Provincial Grand Prior	is styled: "Right Eminent"
The Master of a Chapel	is styled: "Worthy"
The Prior of a Chapel	is styled: "Eminent"

The holder of a Past Rank or Office retains the Style of the Active Rank or Office.

All other members of the Order shall have the style of "Sir ..... of ....."

**1.4 Salutations:**

Salutations shall be given as follows:

Grand Master	11
Past Grand Masters	11
Grand Prior	9
Past Grand Priors	9
Knight Humilitas	7
Knight Caritas	7
Grand Preceptor	7
Past Grand Preceptors	7
Present & Past:	
Grand Marshal, Grand Treasurer, Grand Registrar	5
Grand Secretary, Grand Historian	5
Provincial Grand Priors (only within their own Province)	5
All other Grand and Provincial Grand Officers	4

Only the most senior member present should receive salutations.

## **1.5 Grand Master's Council:**

The Annual Meeting of the Grand Master's Council shall be held on the Feast Day of St. Thomas (29th December), in each year except when it falls on a Sunday in which case it shall be held on the 28th December, and which shall be ruled by the Grand Master or in his absence by the Grand Prior.

- 1.5.1** A Motion to alter, modify, add to, cancel or make new enactments of the Constitutions of the Order shall not be considered unless notice in writing shall have been sent to the Grand Secretary prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> September and the motion has been recommended by the Executive Committee.
- 1.5.2** The Grand Secretary shall insert in the Agenda for the Grand Master's Council such notices of motion that the Executive Committee shall direct or as shall be directed by the Grand Master or the Presiding Officer.
- 1.5.3** No motion shall be made or discussed at the Grand Master's Council unless it shall have been inserted in the summons for such meeting or unless sanctioned by the Grand Master or the Presiding Officer.
- 1.5.4** No Knight shall speak twice on the same question or subject except the mover of the original proposition or resolution unless the Grand Master or the Presiding Officer so declares, and every speaker shall not be interrupted except on a point of order by the Grand Master or Presiding Officer calling him to order.

## **1.6 The Grand Master**

- 1.6.1** The Grand Master shall be formally elected annually at a meeting of the Executive Committee by a simple majority of those in attendance. He shall be Installed and Proclaimed at the ensuing Grand Master's Council.
- 1.6.2** In the event that the Executive Committee does not pass a resolution to elect a new Grand Master, then the serving Grand Master shall be deemed to have been re-elected and shall be declared and proclaimed as Grand Master for the ensuing year at the Grand Master's Council.
- 1.6.3** A Grand Master, so appointed, may serve for a term of 5 years. Providing always that the Executive Committee may, should circumstances dictate, on a voting by simple majority, extend that term, annually for a further year, but on no account for more than 3 years.
- 1.6.4** Should the Grand Master die, resign or by reason of infirmity, physical or other incapacity be unable to discharge his duties, the Grand Prior shall pro tem. exercise all powers of the Grand Master until such time as the Executive Committee is held and a new Grand Master nominated and elected who shall on election be Installed and proclaimed as Grand Master at the next Grand Master's Council.

For the avoidance of doubt the item on the summons convening the Grand Master's Council referring to the election of a Grand Master is part of the ritual of the Order and thus is purely ceremonial.

## **1.7 Appointments:**

**1.7.1** At the regular meeting of the Grand Master's Council, the Grand Master may appoint the following Grand Officers, who shall thereupon be invested:

Grand Prior  
Grand Marshal  
Grand Treasurer (upon election)  
Grand Registrar  
Grand Secretary  
Grand Historian  
Deputy Grand Marshal  
Grand Almoner  
Protector of Canterbury  
Grand Warden of Regalia  
Grand Sword Bearer  
Deputy Grand Secretary  
Grand Banner Bearer  
Assistant Grand Marshals (3)  
Assistant Grand Secretaries (2)  
Grand Herald  
Grand Organist  
Deputy Grand Organist  
Grand Doorkeeper  
Grand Cellarer(s) (6)  
Grand Sentry  
Assistant Grand Sentry

Up to 6 Grand Cellarers may be appointed.

Similar numbers of Cellarers, in Grand Preceptor's Councils and Private Chapels, may be appointed.

- 1.7.2** The Grand Treasurer shall be nominated by the Executive Committee, elected and invested annually at the Grand Master's Council.
- 1.7.3** All Grand Officers, excluding the Grand Treasurer who is elected, are appointed, promoted or replaced, at the will and pleasure of the Grand Master who may re-appoint them annually or for a number of years if he so desires.
- 1.7.4** The Grand Master may, at his discretion, confer the rank designated "Past Provincial Grand Rank" on Knights who have rendered meritorious service to the Order as members of an Unattached Chapel and who are Past Masters in the Order.
- 1.7.4.1** They shall wear the regalia as prescribed for a Provincial Officer who is not in active office.
- 1.7.4.2** Each knight may append the post-nominal P.Pr.G.R. after his nomen.

**1.7.5 Knight Humilitas, Knight Caritas**

The Ranks, Knight Humilitas and Knight Caritas are in the gift of the Grand Master, which he can revoke at any time. They are limited in numbers to 12 and 33 respectively.

**1.7.6 Grand Master's Award:**

The Grand Master may from time to time and at his will and pleasure and in his absolute discretion honour a member of the Order with the Grand Master's Award, being an award of merit for services to the Order in general. The Executive Committee may from time to time nominate members of the Order for such an Award which the Grand Master may consider but shall not be bound to accept. The number of awards in any year is limited to one. Whilst the Grand Master's Award is not a Grand Rank, the holder of that award takes salutations with and enjoys the privileges of a Grand Officer.

**1.7.7 Recommendations for Grand Rank:**

Grand Preceptors are invited to recommend appointments to Grand Rank, before the 1st September each year for consideration by the Grand Master according to the following table: -

Number of Chapels		Permitted number of past ranks
From	To	
1	6	1
7	10	2
11	14	3
15	20	4
21		5 (plus 1 for each additional Chapel)

**1.8 Executive Committee:**

There shall be an Executive Committee comprising:

- Grand Master
- Grand Prior
- Grand Marshal
- Grand Treasurer
- Grand Registrar
- Grand Secretary
- Deputy Grand Marshal
- Deputy Grand Secretary

5 Right Worthy Grand Preceptors, three of whom are nominated annually by the Grand Master and two of whom are elected annually by the Barry of Ilford Chapel No. 92.

Such person as the Grand Master, at his sole discretion may nominate, if necessary.

The Grand Master, or in his absence the Grand Prior, will act as Chairman.

Five members shall form a Quorum.

- 1.8.1** The Executive Committee shall meet at the Grand Master's discretion at least once per year and a such other times as may be beneficial to the well running of the Order.
- 1.8.2** The Grand Master and the Executive Committee shall have power:
  - 1.8.2.1** To deal with all matters for the daily management and administration of the order.
  - 1.8.2.2** To carry out and deal with all other matters as the Grand Master shall determine and direct.

**1.9 Forum of Grand Preceptors:**

- 1.9.1** There shall be a Forum of Grand Preceptors, known as: Sir Barry of Ilford Chapel, No. 92. comprising all Grand Preceptors, Provincial Grand Priors in charge along with members of the Executive Committee. The Chapel which meets in committee format, shall meet not less than once in each calendar year and at such a time and place as shall be determined by the Grand Secretary.
- 1.9.2** The Grand Master, being the Worthy Master of the Chapel, shall act as Chairman of the meeting. If the Grand Master is absent the Grand Prior shall act as Chairman and in absence of both Grand Master and Grand Prior, the senior Grand Preceptor in attendance shall act as Chairman. In the event of a tie in any voting which requires a simple majority the Chairman shall have the casting vote.
- 1.9.3** The Grand Secretary, may call such additional meetings as may be required upon the receipt of the written requests of no less than three Right Worthy Grand Preceptors, who should state their reasons for requiring the meeting.
- 1.9.4** The Purpose of Barry of Ilford Chapel No. 92, is to ascertain the considered opinions of the assembled Grand Preceptors and
  - 1.9.4.1** to provide guidance and support to those Grand Preceptors who serve from time to time upon the Executive Committee, and
  - 1.9.4.2** upon the request of the Grand Secretary, issued on behalf of the Executive Committee, to nominate possible successors to the office of Grand Master. For the purpose of this exercise, in which the members of the Executive Committee will take no part, the senior Grand Preceptor present may form a sub-committee, which he will chair and at which, he will have the casting vote. The names of three candidates, along with the reason for their recommendations should be submitted, in writing to the Grand Secretary for consideration and final decision by the Executive Committee.

**1.10 Discipline, Court of Appeal and Expulsion:**

The membership of the Order has the right to expect that all members and officers conduct themselves in a proper manner and do not bring the Order into disrepute. Where a knight is subject of a complaint about his conduct,

abuse of his authority or position, the Order is entitled, on the complaint being upheld to issue some form of redress. This could be in the form of issuing advice, removal of/or reduction in Grand or Provincial Rank, suspension from attendance at meetings for a specified time, or Expulsion from the Order.

**1.10.1 Receipt of Complaint and Investigation:**

On receipt of such a complaint, which must be submitted to and received by the Grand Secretary in writing, the Executive Committee will direct the Grand Registrar to appoint a senior knight, from an area where the knight subject of the complaint has no connections, to investigate the validity of the complaint. The Grand Secretary will write to the knight who is subject of the complaint, informing him that a complaint has been received and is being investigated.

**1.10.1.1** A knight who is the subject of a serious complaint, may be instructed to refrain from attending meetings until the matter is resolved. Such a knight remains a member of the Order and is liable for paying subscriptions and dues.

**1.10.1.2** Any Active Grand or Provincial Grand Officer subject to complaint and discipline, may be suspended from the active office, until the matter is decided, if deemed appropriate.

**1.10.2 Following Investigation:**

**1.10.2.1 No Complaint to Answer:**

If the complaint is found to be unfounded, the Grand Registrar will inform the Grand Secretary, who will write to the complainant and the knight subject of the complaint informing them of the outcome.

**1.10.2.2 Complaint Justified:**

Should the complaint be found to be justified the Grand Registrar will form a Board of Enquiry to hear and if necessary adjudicate on the matter.

**1.10.3 Board of Enquiry:**

The Board of Enquiry will consist of the Grand Registrar along with two senior members, from an area other than the 'local area' of the knight who is subject of the complaint. They will receive evidence from the investigator, the complainant and any others who may be able to give account of the incident being examined. The knight subject of the complaint may offer evidence in his defence. The Board will, on reaching a conclusion by simple majority, either dismiss or uphold the complaint. In the event of the complaint being upheld, they will determine what, if any, admonishment is suitable in the circumstances. The knight will be informed of the outcome at the hearing. The Grand Secretary will confirm the outcome in writing to the knight upon receipt of the Grand Registrar's report of the hearing.



#### **1.10.4 Appeal:**

The Knight, subject of the Complaint, has the right of appeal, against the verdict and/or the admonishment, but must submit the appeal, in writing, stating the grounds for the appeal, to be received by the Grand Secretary within 28 days of the board hearing. The appeal will be held by the Grand Master assisted by two others appointed to assist him who have previously taken no part in the events.

**1.10.5** The Grand Master's decision is final.

**1.10.6** Should a member be expelled from: The United Grand Lodge of England, Supreme Grand Chapter of England or the United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta of England and Wales and its Provinces Overseas, or their equivalent orders, with whom the aforementioned Orders are in amity, he will automatically be expelled from the Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon without right of appeal.

**1.10.7** If a member of the Order is suspended from Masonic Rights by: The United Grand Lodge of England, Supreme Grand Chapter of England or the United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta of England and Wales and its Provinces Overseas, or their equivalent orders, with whom the aforementioned Orders are in amity; then he will be suspended from Masonic Rights in the Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon for a like period without right of appeal.

## **2. Grand Preceptor's Council:**

Each Province of the Order shall be governed by a body styled:

"The Grand Preceptor's Council for the Province of (*title of jurisdiction*)".

### **2.1 Grand Preceptor**

**2.1.1** The Grand Preceptor for each Province shall be appointed annually at the discretion of the Grand Master and subject to the Grand Master's wish shall serve for a period of 5 years provided always that the Grand Master may extend that period annually for a further year to a maximum of 8 years.

Should the Grand Preceptor die, resign or by reason of infirmity, physical or other incapacity be unable to discharge his duties, the Provincial Prior shall exercise all the powers of the Grand Preceptor for the Province until the Grand Master appoints a new Grand Preceptor and installs him.

**2.1.2** The Grand Preceptor shall be proclaimed at each annual meeting of the Grand Preceptor's Council.

**2.1.3** Each Grand Preceptor shall each year following the Provincial meeting, place the names of not more than 3 nor less than 2 persons in writing in a signed and sealed envelope, bearing the date and the name of the Province, of those knights whom he would recommend to the Grand Master to succeed him. The sealed envelope is to be forwarded within 14 days of the said meeting to the Grand Secretary who will retain it sealed,

until circumstances and the Grand Master deem it appropriate that the contents be viewed. The Grand Master shall not be obliged to so appoint any of those nominated or indeed any new Preceptor.

## 2.2 Provincial Ranks:

Every Grand Preceptor's Council shall be composed of the Grand Preceptor, the Present and Past Provincial Grand Officers, and the Master and Priors (present and past) of every Chapel in the Province, with all the Installed Masters who are subscribing members of a Chapel within such Province.

Past Provincial rank can only be bestowed on knights after the Province has been in existence for a year.

Provincial appointments are not to be conferred on knights who are not in possession of the mantle and tunic of the Order.

*Note:* Grand Preceptor and Past Grand Preceptor are Grand Ranks.

## 2.3 Provincial Appointments:

Every Grand Preceptor shall, at least once in every year, hold a Meeting of the Grand Preceptor's Council at such a place within his Province as he may think fit, and appoint annually from amongst the subscribing members of Chapels within his Province, the following Provincial Grand Officers,

(who shall bear the indicated post-nominals):

Provincial Grand Prior	Prov.G.P. *
Provincial Grand Marshal	Prov.G.Mar. *
Provincial Grand Treasurer (Elected)	Prov.G.Treas. *
Provincial Grand Registrar	Prov.G.Reg. *
Provincial Grand Secretary	Prov.G.Sec. *
Provincial Deputy Grand Marshal	Prov.Dep.G.Mar. *
Provincial Grand Almoner	Prov.G.Alm.
Provincial Grand Warden of Regalia	Prov.G.W.Reg.
Provincial Grand Sword Bearer	Prov.G.Swd.B.
Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary	Prov.Dep.G.Sec. +
Provincial Grand Banner Bearer	Prov.G.B.B.
Provincial Assistant Grand Marshal (2)	Prov.Asst.G.Mar. +
Provincial Assistant Grand Treasurer	Prov.Asst.G.Treas. +
Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary	Prov.Asst.G.Sec. +
Provincial Grand Herald	Prov.G.Her.
Provincial Grand Organist	Prov.G.Org. +
Provincial Deputy Grand Organist	Prov.Dep.G.Org. +
Provincial Grand Doorkeeper	Prov.G.Dk.
Provincial Grand Cellarers	Prov.G.Cel.
Provincial Grand Sentry	Prov.G.Sent.

Only Installed Masters, other than by Grand Master's dispensation, may be appointed to those offices marked (\*).

Offices marked (+) are not mandatory appointments.

Not more than six Provincial Grand Cellarers may be appointed.

Past Provincial Grand Officers shall rank immediately after the corresponding Active Officer for the year, they will bear the title of their previous active rank preceded by the word "Past" and in the corresponding Post nominals will replace "Prov." With "P.Pr."

#### **2.4 Provincial Past Rank, First Appointment:**

Every Grand Preceptor may additionally from time to time appoint Knights of ability, who are members of Chapels within his Province and have rendered service to the Order to such Past Provincial Grand Ranks below the rank of Past Provincial Prior as he may deem advisable, according to the following scale.

Number of Chapels		Permitted number
From	To	of past ranks
1	6	1
7	10	2
11	14	3
15	20	4
21		5 (plus 1 for each additional Chapel)

#### **2.5 Additional Provincial Past Ranks:**

Every Grand Preceptor may also from time to time promote such Knights who have served as Provincial Grand Officers or hold Past Provincial Grand Rank and have rendered further service to the Order to such Past Provincial Grand Ranks below the rank of Provincial Grand Prior as to him may seem appropriate.

#### **2.6 Provincial Returns:**

The Provincial Secretary, shall submit to the Grand Secretary, within 14 days of the Grand Preceptor's Council meeting a list of officers appointed and/or invested at that meeting along with the ranks, Present and Past, bestowed.

#### **2.7 Provincial Executive Committee:**

There shall be a Provincial Executive Committee comprising:

- Grand Preceptor
- Provincial Grand Prior
- Provincial Grand Marshal
- Provincial Grand Treasurer
- Provincial Grand Registrar
- Provincial Grand Secretary
- Provincial Deputy Grand Marshal \*
- Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary \*

(\* ) optional at the discretion of the G. Preceptor.

to meet at the Grand Preceptor's discretion at least once per year.

### **3. Private Chapels:**

#### **3.1 Petition:**

A petition for a warrant of Constitution for a Chapel shall be signed by at least seven Knights of the Order who are subscribing members of Chapels on the register of the Order, and shall be submitted to the Grand Preceptor for his countersignature, and shall then be transmitted to the Grand Secretary for presentation to the Grand Master.

#### **3.2 Officers:**

The Officers of a Chapel, who are appointed on the day of Installation specified in the by-laws, shall be:

Master  
Prior  
Marshal  
Treasurer (*Elected*)  
Secretary  
Deputy Marshal  
Almoner  
Four Working Knights  
Asst. Secretary  
Herald  
Organist  
Doorkeeper  
Cellarer(s)  
Sentry

**Note:** Cellarer, Organist and Assistant Secretary are permissive appointments, and no more than 6 Cellarers may be appointed.

**3.3 Chapel Installation Returns:**

The Chapel Secretary, shall submit to the Grand Secretary, via the Provincial Secretary within 28 days of the Installation meeting a list of officers appointed and/or invested at that meeting along with the office bestowed.

**3.4 Progression:**

Traditionally the progression to Master is in the sequence of joining the Chapel. A Knight shall not be Master of more than one Chapel at the same time, other than by Grand Master's dispensation.

**3.5 Elections:**

The Sentry, Auditors and members of a Chapel Committee shall be elected at the meeting previous to the Installation Meeting. The Master and Treasurer shall be elected and invested strictly in accordance with the rituals of the Order. Every Master shall forthwith on his Installation appoint and invest the Prior and other Officers and invest the Treasurer.

**3.6 Quorum:**

The minimum number of members required to hold a meeting of a Chapel is 5. The offices of Master, Prior, Marshal, Secretary and Doorkeeper must be filled by attendees. By dispensation from the Grand Secretary for the purpose of installing a new Worthy Master the minimum number of members may be reduced to 3 which are the Master, Prior and Master Elect.

**3.7 Chapel Effects:**

The jewels and furniture of the chapel are the property of the Master and Eminent Prior for the time being, in trust for the members. The Warrant of Constitution is the property of the Grand Master, and the Master shall be responsible for its safe custody, and shall produce it at every meeting of the Chapel. In the event of the erasure or dissolution of the Chapel, the Warrant, Jewels, Furniture and any other effects shall be surrendered to the Grand Master's Council.

**4. Candidates and Members:**

Admission as a Knight of the Order is by invitation.

**4.1 Qualification for Admission:**

All Candidates for admission as a Knight of the Order shall be a subscribing: - Master Mason in a Craft Lodge, Royal Arch Mason and Knight Templar, or their equivalent in other countries which are recognised and in amity with the United Grand Lodge of England, Supreme Grand Chapter of England and with the United Religious Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta in England Wales and its Provinces Overseas.

**4.2 Qualification for Joining or Re-Joining:**

A knight joining or re-joining a Chapel, must be in good standing in all his previous Chapels.

**4.3 Petition for Membership:**

Each candidate must complete and submit a petition for admission into the Order on the approved application form and be duly proposed and seconded by two members of the Chapel to which he applies.

**4.4 Candidate from Outside Area:**

If a candidate for Installation or joining seeks admission to a Chapel in a locality in which he neither resides nor is his normal place of employment, he shall state in writing his reasons for doing so, and not seeking admission to a Chapel in the locality of his residence or normal place of business. Permission must be obtained from the Provincial Secretary of the Province in which he resides or principal place of business is situated, or if neither be situated within a Province, from the Grand Secretary before his election in accordance with the traditions of the Order, and his subsequent admission into the Chapel can take place.

**4.5 Court of Honour:**

As the Order is invitational, to inform the knights of a prospective candidate, where possible, a Court of Honour may be used, be it informally when the Chapel members are gathered together at dinner, or on a notice from the Secretary, submitted either electronically or in writing. This can be beneficial and avoid embarrassment in Chapel should a candidate be deemed undesirable by some. In the event of unfavourable reports, the proposer and seconder may be invited to reconsider their actions.

**4.6 Objections to Membership:**

In circumstances where there is an objection and the knight concerned does not wish to be identified it is permissible for him to make his objection known by informing BOTH the Master and Secretary in private before the election meeting (which he must attend if the objection is to be reported) and they will then indicate the number of objections that have been received, from the Knights present, when the election takes place.

**4.7 Election of Members:**

For avoidance of doubt the election for Installation, joining, re-joining and honorary membership is not secret and does not employ ballot balls, knights who are in agreement remain silent.

#### **4.8 Number of Knights to be Admitted:**

A Chapel may install up to 2 knights at a meeting. A dispensation to install 3 knights may be granted by the Grand Preceptor; more than 3 knights requires a dispensation from the Grand Secretary on behalf of the Grand Master.

#### **4.9 Certificate of Membership and Registration:**

On admission to the Order, a Knight is entitled to receive a Certificate of Membership. In order that the Grand Secretary can issue that Certificate, the approved membership form, accompanied by the appropriate fee, must be sent by traceable means, via the Provincial Secretary, to the Grand Secretary within 28 days of the meeting where the Knight was admitted. Where fees are paid by BACS into the Grand Master's Council accounts, proof of that payment should accompany the membership form, which can then be submitted in electronic format.

#### **4.10 Ranks & Offices on Re-Joining:**

A former member re-joining the Order, irrespective of whether he left by resignation, expulsion or cessation, shall on re-joining, forfeit all ranks and honours previously held. He will remain, if previously installed as a Worthy Master, a Past Worthy Master and as such wear the appropriate Canterbury Cross. He will not be entitled on re-joining the Order to assume any Office or Rank, Active or Past, previously held, be it an Award of Merit, Grand Rank or a Provincial Rank, except: where the knight himself makes a written application to restore his ranks, which he submits to the Grand Secretary for the consideration by the Grand Master. Should the Grand Master so approve the resumption of rank, the knight can, upon receipt of the written approval signed by the Grand Master, assume the Past Rank indicated in that approval. Awards of Merit, which are never issued as a Past Rank will not therefore be reinstated in this way. The Grand Master may, if he so wishes, re-invest such awards. The Grand Master's decision on these matters shall be final and absolute.

##### **4.10.1 Office in Private Chapels on Re-Joining:**

A knight re-joining a Private Chapel may not assume a right to be appointed to the position he occupied when he left the Chapel, but will be appointed by the Worthy Master to office as the Master thinks appropriate when appointing his officers.

#### **4.11 Honorary Members:**

A brother Knight who has rendered distinguished service to the Order in general, or to a Particular Chapel, may be elected as an Honorary Member of a Private Chapel.

##### **4.11.1 Attendance and Rights at Meetings:**

A non-subscribing knight who holds Honorary Membership in a Private Chapel shall be entitled to attend the Grand Master's Council, Grand Preceptor's Council and any Private Chapel for which he has received a summons from the Secretary. He shall not be allowed a voice at any meeting and is not allowed a vote. He is only allowed to visit each chapel once.

##### **4.11.2 Grand or Provincial Rank:**

A non-subscribing knight, whilst retaining his existing Grand or Provincial Rank will not be eligible for promotion in or appointment to

Grand or Provincial Rank.

#### **4.12 Resignation:**

In addition to the provisions for Resignation of a member in the Constitutions of United Grand Lodge of England, a resignation also becomes effective on the acknowledgement by recorded/special delivery from the Chapel secretary.

### **5. Fees Payable**

#### **5.1 Payable to Grand Masters Council:**

The Annual fee payable by every Chapel to the Grand Master's Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> August, in each year in respect of every Knight who has been a subscribing member during the whole or any part of the preceding 12 months shall be such sum as is determined by the Executive Board and proposed at the Grand Master's Council in the preceding year, and published by the Grand Secretary.

The Fees payable to the Grand Master's Council, including the Fees of Honour payable on the first appointment or promotion as a Grand Officer or Past Grand Officer shall be such sum as the Executive Committee shall determine from time to time and published each year by the Grand Secretary.

On promotion in Rank, the fee of Honour shall be the difference between the fee for the former rank and that due for the higher rank.

(Cheques to be made payable to: "The Commemorative Order of St Thomas of Acon")

#### **5.2 Fees Payable to Grand Preceptor's Council:**

The Annual fee payable by every Chapel to the Grand Preceptor's Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> August, in each year in respect of every Knight who has been a subscribing member during the whole or any part of the preceding 12 months shall be such sum as shall be determined by the Provincial Executive Committee proposed and approved at the Grand Preceptor's Council in the preceding year.

The Fees payable to the Grand Preceptor's Council including Fees of Honour payable on the first appointment or election as a Provincial Grand Officer or Past Provincial Grand Officer shall be such sum as is determined from time to time by the Provincial Executive Committee and published each year by the Provincial Grand Secretary.

On promotion in Provincial Rank: the Fee of Honour payable shall be the difference between the fee for the former rank and that for the higher rank.

##### **5.2.1 Fees not to exceed GMC Fees:**

No fees payable to Grand Preceptor's Council should exceed those levied by Grand Master's Council. (Cheques to be made payable to the Province)

### **6. Regalia:**

The Clothing, Insignia and Jewels, and Arms which shall be borne by members of the Order of St. Thomas of Acon are:

#### **6.1 Knight:**

**6.1.1 Tunic** of stone white material; long enough to cover the knees; to be fastened at the back; on the front a Latin Cross, four inches wide, the

full length of the tunic, colour Medici Crimson, on which is superimposed a white Latin Cross one third of the width. The centre of the intersection of the Cross charged with a Bronze Scallop Shell.

(**Note:** in this Order the Badge is worn [on every garment] *à coquille* with the hinge of the Scallop Shell at the bottom and fan opening at the top).

**6.1.2 Mantle** of similar stone white material to the Tunic, long enough to completely cover the Tunic, a white silken cord around the neck with a silken tassel at each end which shall be tied in front of the collar with a bow; on the left breast a Greek Cross (straight limbs of ten inches length) divided vertically and horizontally red, white, red in even widths of 0.5 inches each, the white cross terminating 0.5 of an inch short of the ends of the cross; the mid-point of the Cross charged with a Bronze Scallop Shell, which shall be of a size to fit in a circle of no greater than 1.5 inches; the top of the cross six to eight inches below the left shoulder; the Mantle is to be shaped or pleated at the neck and shoulder so that the two edges hang vertically in front.

**6.1.3 Cap** of crimson velvet, three inches deep; on the front of the cap a Bronze Scallop Shell.

**6.1.4 Sword** (Templar pattern) and Scabbard - regardless of office, active or past; an Ordained Clergyman may carry a bible rather than a sword at his discretion. The Organist need not wear a Sword.

**6.1.5 Belt** of brown leather two inches wide, the buckle and tongue brass; a leather Sword Frog on the left side.

(**Note:** Priors and Almoners wear neither Belt nor Sword)

**6.1.6 Gloves**, white in colour are worn by all knights with the exception of the Prior. The Organist need not wear either Gloves or Sword.

**6.1.7 Pilgrimage Chough:**

A Knight who has attended the Canterbury Pilgrimage may wear the 'Chough' badge on his Mantle, shown in Plate 6, on his right shoulder approximately 9" from the point where the Mantle joins the Hood and 9" from the opening edge.

**6.2 Master:**

As for a Knight (above) but in addition carries a Baton with a large bronze Scallop Shell on top, within his own Chapel only.

**6.3 Past Master:**

As for a Knight (above) but in addition wears a bronze coloured chain round the neck from which is suspended a bronze coloured Canterbury Cross of the Order.

**6.3.1 Canterbury Cross of the Order:**

A Cross depicted in Plate 1 of 50mm in diameter, which is the traditional Canterbury Cross but additionally bears a Scallop Shell, hinge at the bottom in the centre square.

**6.4 Provincial Grand Officers: (present and past)**

As for a Past Master, but the Canterbury Cross of the Order and chain, along with the Scallop Shell on the tunic, mantle and hat are of silver colour.



- 6.4.1** The Provincial Grand Prior, if in Holy Orders, is to wear the clerical vestments suitable to his Office and Church. If the Provincial Grand Prior is not in Holy Orders, he will continue to wear the habit of the Order, but will be distinguished by a small silver mitre sewn on his mantle one inch above the upper vertical arm of the cross. On the cessation of office, he will cease to wear clerical vestments, if in holy orders; a small silver mitre sewn on his mantle will be worn unless the knight is promoted.
- 6.4.2** Neither the Provincial Grand Prior nor the Provincial Grand Almoner wears either belt or sword.
- 6.4.3** **Gloves** are not worn by the Provincial Grand Prior.
- 6.4.4** An Acting Provincial Grand Officer, where not otherwise a Grand Officer fulfilling a Provincial Office, will, with the exception of the Provincial Grand Prior, wear an additional brooch type smaller silver shell on his mantle, located one inch above the upper arm of the cross. He may wear this additional silver shell for so long as he holds active Provincial Grand Office.
- 6.4.5** **Grand Preceptor:**  
As for a Provincial Grand Officer, but in addition carries a Baton with a large silver Scallop Shell, affixed to the upper end of the Baton. Unless he is filling an office, which requires a Sword, he may dispense with carrying a sword.  
He will be distinguished by a silver Patriarchal Crown sewn on his mantle one inch above the upper vertical arm of the cross. On the cessation of office, the Patriarchal Crown will continue to be worn unless the knight is promoted.
- 6.4.6** **Grand Officers (present and past):**  
As for a Past Master, but the Canterbury Cross of the Order and chain, along with the Scallop Shell on the tunic, mantle and hat are of gold colour.
- 6.4.7** The Grand Prior, if in Holy Orders, is to wear the clerical vestments suitable to his Office and Church. If the Grand Prior is not in Holy Orders, he will continue to wear the habit of the Order, but will be distinguished by a small gold mitre sewn on his mantle one inch above the upper vertical arm of the cross. On the cessation of office, he will cease to wear clerical vestments, if in holy orders; a small gold mitre sewn on his mantle will be worn unless the knight is promoted.
- 6.4.8** Neither the Grand Prior nor the Grand Almoner wears either belt or sword.
- 6.4.9** Gloves are not worn by the Grand Prior.
- 6.4.10** An Active Grand Officer will wear an additional brooch type smaller gold shell on his mantle, located one inch above the upper arm of the cross, and will continue to wear the same for so long as he holds an active Grand Office.
- 6.4.11** Grand Officers who are non-active in Grand Master's Council, but who undertake an active Office as a Provincial Grand Officer will wear the Regalia of a Grand Officer, but are permitted to wear an extra silver shell of an active Provincial Grand Officer.

#### 6.4.12 Knights Caritas and Humilitas:

##### 6.4.12.1 Knight Caritas:

A Knight who has been awarded the title Knight Caritas shall be entitled to wear a crimson collaret with the letters "KC" in gold on either side from which they will suspend their gold coloured Canterbury Cross of the Order. Shown in Plate 4 and is worn on top of the Mantle, put the tapes pass under the hood.

##### 6.4.12.2 Knight Humilitas:

A Knight who has been awarded the title Knight Humilitas shall be entitled to wear a black collaret with the letters "KH" in gold on either side from which they will suspend their gold coloured Canterbury Cross of the Order. Shown in Plate 4 and is worn under the Mantle on top of the Tunic.

#### 6.4.13 Grand Master:

As for a Grand Officer, but in addition:

**6.4.13.1** Wears a princely crown above the Cross on the Mantle.

**6.4.13.2** Bears on his right hand a gold ring with the Cross of the Order; the words "**IN HOC SIGNO VINCES**" inscribed thereon.

**6.4.13.3** Carries a Sceptre with a large gold Scallop Shell on the top.

**6.4.13.4** Wears a black collaret with gold piping and the letters "GM" in gold on either side from which he will suspend his gold coloured Canterbury Cross of the Order. A gold Scallop Shell (the same as that on a Grand Officer's mantle) is attached to the collarette above the Grand Officer's jewel. Shown in Plate 4 and is worn under the Mantle on top of the Tunic.

**6.4.13.5** A Past Grand Master wears the same collarette and gold coloured Canterbury Cross of the Order, without the additional Scallop Shell.

#### 6.4 Badges:

The badges worn on the mantle, tunic and hat band must either be metal plated in the appropriate colours, or genuine sea shell, painted in the appropriate colours. The badges may be pinned or sewn on the garments.

#### 6.5 Banners:

The Banner depicts the Arms of the Order and shall be argent/stone white (34" square) a cross rouge (4.5" in width) reaching to the edges of the banner on which is superimposed a white cross (1.5" in width terminating 1.5" from the edges of the banner). The Banner shall be charged with a Scallop Shell of Gold (fimbriated rouge) edged in the first quarter. As this is a Military Order the Banner should be borne on a carrying pole, affixed to the pole at the hoist side and upper horizontal bar. (It should not be suspended from a cross bar).

**6.6.1** Banner quarters are arranged as follows: -

Hoist Side	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Fly Side
	Fesse Point		
	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	

- 6.6.2 Provinces use the Banner of the Order (as above) charged with an additional device representing the Jurisdiction Territory placed in the second quarter. Where appropriate this device must be fimbriated.
- 6.6.3 Private Chapels use the Provincial Banner of their Province (as above) charged with an additional device representing the Chapel, centrally on the intersection of the arms of the Cross.
- 6.6.4 Any armigerous Knight may carry his personal Banner and place it behind his stall at all meetings of the Order.
- 6.6.5 All designs for banners must first be submitted for approval to the Grand Secretary, and also where appropriate to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

**6.7 Altar Frontal:**

Chapels may use either a plain white Altar cloth, or an Altar frontal bearing the Arms of the Order. In the latter case, the Red Greek Cross on the front of the white Altar Cloth should have arms of equal length, the lesser of 34" or one third the width of the Altar. The arms of the red cross should be 4.5" in width, the white cross superimposed thereon should be 1.5" in width ending 1.5" before the ends of the red cross. The cross should be charged with a gold Scallop Shell at Fesse point.

Constitutions promulgated and approved by the Special Grand Master's Council on the Monday the thirteenth day of November in the year of our Lord two thousand and seventeen, amended at Grand Master's Council on the twenty-ninth day of December in the same year. Amended at Grand Master's Council on the twenty-eighth day of December 2019.

These Amended Constitutions supersede thus replacing all former editions.

*Melwyn of Wood Plumpton KH.*

*Most Worthy Grand Master*



*R.W. Grand Secretary*

Confirmed by Grand Council on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
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## 6.8 Plates Jewels, Badges and Collarettes



Plate 1  
Bronze Past Master  
Silver Provincial Officer  
Gold Grand Officer



Plate 2  
Crimson Cloth Background  
Silver Thread RW Grand Preceptor  
Gold Thread Grand Master  
Both Present and Past

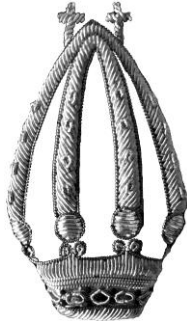


Plate 3  
Crimson Background  
Silver Thread RE Prov. Grand Prior

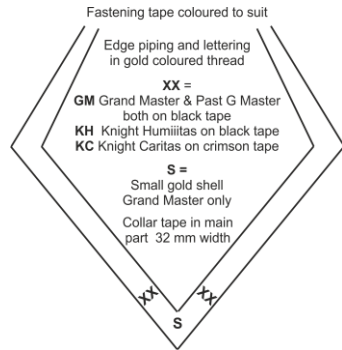


Plate 4



Plate 5  
Shell of the Order  
Hinge down  
Bronze, Knight & Past Master  
Silver, holder of Provincial Rank  
Gold, holder of Grand Rank



Plate 6  
Pilgrimage Chough