



STUDY GUIDE



Ver.1 June 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND COMMANDER

Welcome to the Knight Exemplar Program

Sir Knights,

It is my distinct honor and privilege to welcome you to the Knight Exemplar Program of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of California.

By choosing to participate, you have already demonstrated a quality that sets leaders apart—the willingness to step forward, challenge yourself, and strive for excellence. Regardless of the outcome of this competition, your decision to participate reflects the very spirit of Templary that we seek to encourage and develop.



The Knight Exemplar Program was created to identify, recognize, and cultivate those Sir Knights who exemplify the highest ideals of our Order. Through this program, you will have the opportunity to strengthen your knowledge, improve your skills, refine your leadership abilities, and demonstrate your commitment to the Christian and Chivalric principles upon which our fraternity is founded.

As you prepare for your board, remember that this is more than a competition. It is a journey of personal growth. It is an opportunity to learn from experienced Sir Knights, to build confidence, and to challenge yourself to become a stronger leader within your Commandery and within the Order.

I encourage you to approach this experience with enthusiasm, professionalism, and humility. Study diligently, prepare thoroughly, and present yourself with pride. The lessons learned through this process will remain with you long after the competition has concluded. To those who will ultimately be selected as their Commandery, Department, or Grand Commandery representative, understand that you will carry not only your own achievements, but also the honor of the Sir Knights who supported and encouraged you along the way.

Most importantly, remember that every participant contributes to the success of this program. By stepping forward, you help strengthen your Commandery, inspire your fellow Sir Knights, and ensure the continued growth of Templary in California.

On behalf of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of California, I congratulate you for accepting this challenge and thank you for your willingness to lead by example. May this experience inspire you to continue your journey of service, leadership, and dedication to our noble Order.

I look forward to seeing the future leaders of California Templary emerge through this program.

Fraternally,
Right Eminent Grand Commander
Sir Knight Rick Baca, KCT, KYGCH
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of California



INTRODUCTION

The Knight Exemplar Program (KEP) is designed to recognize, develop, and reward excellence within the ranks of the Knights Templar. Modeled after military Soldier of the Month and Soldier of the Year programs, the Knight Exemplar Program identifies Sir Knights who exemplify the principles of Templary through leadership, participation, ritual proficiency, appearance, knowledge, service, and commitment to their Commandery.

The program serves three primary purposes:

- To recognize outstanding Sir Knights.
- To encourage active participation in Commandery activities.
- To develop future leaders within the Order.

The Knight Exemplar Program is not intended to be a competition between Sir Knights, but rather an opportunity for growth, education, and recognition.

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The Knight Exemplar Program seeks to:

Promote excellence in Templary.

Encourage attendance and participation.

Strengthen ritual proficiency.

Improve uniform standards.

Increase knowledge of Templar history and traditions.

Develop future officers and leaders.

Foster pride within the Commandery.

Every participant should leave the board process better prepared to serve the Order.

SECTION 1 — HISTORY

Q1. In what year was the Knights Templar founded?

A. 1119

Q2. How many knights originally founded the Order?

A. Nine Knights

Q3. What was the original name of the Knights Templar?

A. "Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon"

Q4. What was the original mission of the Knights Templar?

A. To protect Christian pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem

Q5. How many Grand Masters served the Knights Templar?

A. 23 Grand Masters

Q6. Who was the first Grand Master of the Knights Templar?

A. Hughes de Payens (1119-1136)

Q7. Who was the last Grand Master of the Knights Templar?

A. Jacques de Molay (1292-1312)

Q8. Who served as Grand Master from 1136 to 1147?

A. Robert de Craon

Q9. Who served as Grand Master from 1147 to 1151?

A. Everard des Barres

Q10. Who served as Grand Master from 1151 to 1153?

A. Bernard de Tremelay

Q11. Who served as Grand Master from 1153 to 1156?

A. Andre de Montbard

Q12. Who served as Grand Master from 1156 to 1169?

A. Bertrand de Blanchfort

Q13. Who served as Grand Master from 1273 to 1291?

A. Guillaume de Beaujeu

Q14. Who served as Grand Master from 1291 to 1292?

A. Thibaud Gaudin

Q15. Who served as Grand Master from 1181 to 1184?

A. Arnold of Torroja

Q16. Name the four major Templar victories.

A. Battle of Montgisard (1177), Battle of Arsuf (1191), Siege of Tomar (1190), and Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212)

Q17. Name the three devastating Templar defeats.

A. Battle of Hattin (1187), Siege of Acre (1291), and Battle of La Forbie (1244)

Q18. When was the Battle of Montgisard, and was it a victory or defeat?

A. 1177 — a major Templar victory

Q19. When was the Battle of Hattin, and what was its significance?

A. 1187 — a devastating Templar defeat

Q20. When did the Siege of Acre occur, and what was its result?

A. 1291 — a devastating defeat marking the end of the Crusader presence in the Holy Land

SECTION 2 — REGULATIONS

Q1. What year are the current Grand Encampment Regulations?

A. 2024

Q2. What year are the current Grand Commandery Regulations?

A. 2024

Q3. According to Section 275.2, who may receive the Arch of Steel?

A. Only the M.E. Grand Master, M.E. Past Grand Masters, the Grand Commander, and Past Grand Commanders (whether in uniform or not), and the Grand Master of Masons.

Q4. According to Section 279, what are the five Appointed Grand Commandery Officers?

A. Grand Prelate, Grand Standard Bearer, Grand Sword Bearer, Grand Warder, and Grand Sentinel

Q5. According to Section 284.2, what three reports does the Department Adjutant review?

A. Annual Treasurer's Report, Annual Recorder's Report, and Audit Committee Report

Q6. According to Section 287, when do the Grand Commandery books close each year?

A. The last day of May of each year

Q7. According to Section 291, what is the primary duty of the Grand Sentinel?

A. To see that the avenues of approach to the Grand Commandery Asylum are strictly guarded so that only those entitled to admission may enter, and to perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Grand Commandery or the Grand Commander.

Q8. According to Section 295, what is the purpose of the Committee on Policy and General Purposes?

A. To have referred to it and give opinions on all matters affecting the aims, purposes, policies, and ideals of Grand Commandery or any Constituent Commandery.

Q9. According to Section 296, what is the role of the Committee on Finance?

A. To report on all matters appertaining to finance and to prepare and present the budget for the ensuing Templar year.

Q10. According to Section 297, what is the Committee on Ritual and Tactics?

A. The authority on Ritual and Tactics, subject always to the control of Grand Commandery.

Q11. According to Section 300, what does the Committee on Necrology report on?

A. The names of distinguished Sir Knights who have died during the year, together with an account of their lives, characters, and services to the Order.

Q12. According to Section 302, what is the role of the Committee on Religious Activity?

A. Under the direction of the Grand Commander, to render assistance to Constituent Commanderies in formulating plans for Christmas, Easter, and other anniversary observances.

Q13. What does the Committee on Credentials do?

A. Examines and reports on the credentials and qualifications of all persons claiming the right to seats as members of Grand Commandery, as soon as practicable after the opening of the Conclave.

Q14. According to Section 313, by what date must Inspectors hold Inspections each year?

A. On or before May 1st annually

Q15. What three items do Inspectors evaluate during inspections per Section 313?

A. (1) Full Form or Nine Man Opening Ceremonies; (2) Conducting of a Stated Conclave in compliance with the Manual of Asylum Ceremonies and Tactics; (3) Closing Ceremonies as specified in the Ritual.

Q16. According to Section 317, what is the Dispensation Fee?

A. \$125.00

Q17. According to Section 317, what is the Charter Fee?

A. \$100.00

Q18. According to Section 318, what is the fee for each candidate for the Order of the Temple?

A. \$25.00

Q19. According to Section 327, how many Knights Templar in good standing are required to form a

new Commandery?

A. Nine or more Knights Templar in good standing, residing in the jurisdiction of the new Commandery.

Q20. Which section covers the Committee on Ritual and Tactics, and what is its authority?

A. Section 297 — it is the authority on Ritual and Tactics, subject always to the control of Grand Commandery.

SECTION 3 — SWORD MANUAL

Q1. Demonstrate WIELD-SWORDS?

A. Raise the sword to the second position of Draw Swords. Wield the sword in a circular motion to the left, clockwise, with the arm moving from the shoulder, stopping at the first position of Wield Swords

Q2. Demonstrate PRESENT-SWORDS?

A. Raise and carry the sword to the front, cross hilt as high as the chin and six inches in front of the neck, edge to the left, point six inches farther to the front than the cross hilt, thumb extended on the back of the gripe, wrist straight, all fingers grasping the gripe

Q3. Demonstrate SALUTE-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: At the command SWORDS, execute the Present Swords. Second Motion: Drop the point of the sword, edge to the left, to about fifteen inches in front of and in prolongation of the right foot, arm hanging naturally, the elbow close to the body, the back of the hand down

Q4. Demonstrate CARRY-SWORDS?

A. Bring the back of the sword blade against the shoulder, the blade vertical, back of the gripe to the rear, the arm nearly straight down, the thumb and fore-finger embracing the gripe, the thumb against the thigh, the other fingers extended and joined in the rear of the gripe.

Q5. Demonstrate DRAW-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: At the command Draw, grasp the scabbard with the left hand, near its mouth, incline the hilt a little forward, seize the gripe with the right hand, and draw the blade until the right forearm is horizontal, back of the hand against the breast. Second Motion: At the command SWORDS, draw the sword quickly raising the arm to its full length at an angle of about 45 degrees, the sword blade in a straight line with the arm, edge down, extending in the same direction as the right foot. Third Motion: Bring the back of the sword blade against the shoulder, the blade vertical, back of the gripe to the rear, the arm nearly straight down, the thumb and fore-finger embracing the gripe, the thumb against the thigh, the other fingers extended and joined in the rear of the gripe. In executing the third motion, care must be taken not to throw the point of the blade to the rear of the shoulder.

Q6. Demonstrate RETURN-SWORDS?

A. At the command Return, seize the scabbard near the mouth with the left hand, inclining it a little forward, and keeping the right hand near the body, drop the sword blade forward and to the left, so that the point is about six inches from the floor and pointing to a line which is a prolongation of the left foot. Move the sword hand to the left, then raise the hand, drawing the sword blade between the first two fingers of the left hand. Insert the point of the blade in the mouth of the scabbard, edge to the front, assisted by the thumb and fingers of the left hand, eyes to the front, thrust the blade into the scabbard until the right forearm is horizontal (first motion of draw). At the command SWORDS, return the blade smartly and drop the hands to the sides, being careful not to make any noise when the sword comes in contact with the scabbard.

Q7. Demonstrate ORDER-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: At the command SWORDS, drop the sword point to the ground (touching), blade inclined to the rear, back of the blade to the front. Second Motion: Bring the blade to a vertical position against the right toe, and place the hand on top of the hilt, three fingers in front of the gripe, thumb and little finger in the rear, elbow close to the body

Q8. Demonstrate INVERT-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: At the command SWORDS, drop the point of the sword directly forward about fifteen inches, grasping the blade (about nine inches from the guard) with the left hand palm to the front. Second Motion: Release the grip with the right hand and invert the sword with the left hand to a position about four inches in front of the center of the body, blade vertical, edge to the right, guard at the height of the chin, grasp the blade with the right hand at the height of the belt

Q9. Demonstrate SECURE-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: Seize the scabbard with the left hand, palm to the front, the thumb to the left, the arm extended. Second Motion: Raise the scabbard, bring the left hand in front, nearly as high as the waist and the left hand on the outside of the left leg, the scabbard resting along the left forearm, the back of the hand down, the guard at the hollow of the elbow. (Executed only when swords are in scabbards.)

Q10. Demonstrate DROP-SWORDS?

A. Lower the scabbard to its place and detach the hand.

Q11. Demonstrate On-GUARD?

A. Turn the left foot square to the left, turning on the left heel, and plant the right foot firmly eighteen inches to the front, feet at right angles, the weight resting principally on the right foot, the shoulder oblique to the front, head and eyes square to the front. At the same time raise the

sword hand on a line with the lower part of the waist and about two inches from it, the guard three or four inches to the right of the centerline of the tunic. Drop the sword diagonally to the left, the blade about eighteen inches in front of the left shoulder, edge to the front, thumb on back of gripe. The sword held without constraint.

Q12. Demonstrate UN-COVER?

A. At the command COVER, take the chapeau by the front piece with the left hand. Raise the chapeau from the head and place it on the right shoulder, slightly to the front, holding it in that position with the left hand

Q13. Demonstrate RE-COVER?

A. On the command COVER, replace the chapeau on the head. Drop the hand to the side. NOTE: Uncover is never executed unless the swords are sheathed, at the position of Order Swords, or (with the right hand) when at secure swords

Q14. Demonstrate SWORDS-PORT?

A. Seize the blade in front of the right shoulder with the fingers and thumb of the left hand, the thumb to the rear, the left elbow close to the body. (TWO) With the left hand bring the sword diagonally across and about one inch in front of the body, edge down, the left hand at the height of the left shoulder. The thumb extended along the blade, the fingers closed, back of the hand down, the right hand grasping the hilt and nearly in front of the right hip.

Q15. Demonstrate INSPECTION-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: Execute Present. Second Motion: Turns the wrist in regular cadence (two counts) without any forward movement of the forearm, to show both sides of the blade.

Q16. Demonstrate PARADE-REST?

A. Carry the right foot 6 inches straight to the rear, feet at an angle of 45 degrees, left knee slightly bent; clasp the hands, without constraint, in front of the center of the body, fingers joined, left hand uppermost, left thumb clasped by the thumb and forefinger of the right hand; preserve front, silence, and steadiness of position.

Q17. Demonstrate STAND AT-EASE?

A. Being at order swords, at the command "Ease" carry the left foot twelve inches straight to the left, keeping the legs straight without stiffness, so that the weight of the body rests equally on both feet. At the same time incline the blade to the front by extending the right arm, without moving the point or changing the grasp on the hilt. Place the left hand behind the body, resting in the small of the back, palm to the rear, the attitude erect but not constrained. This secures

dignified uniformity while resting.

Q18. Demonstrate GUIDE-SWORDS?

A. Bring the sword vertically in front of the center of the body, the right hand as high as the neck and six inches in front of it, back of the grip to the right, at the same time clasp the left hand over the right, elbows close to the body.

Q19. Demonstrate INVERT-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: Drop the point of the sword directly forward about fifteen inches, grasping the blade (about nine inches from the guard) with the left hand palm to the front. Second Motion: Release the grip with the right hand and invert the sword with the left hand to a position about four inches in front of the center of the body, blade vertical, edge to the right, guard at the height of the chin, grasp the blade with the right hand at the height of the belt.

Q20. Demonstrate SUPPORT-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: Bring the sword to the position of present. Second Motion: Carry the sword vertically to the left side, lowering the right arm until the forearm is horizontal, edge of the sword to the front, the right hand firmly grasping the grip about three inches below the guard, at the same time grasp the right forearm near the elbow with the left hand, the left forearm along and in front of the right forearm, the thumb of the left hand over and supported by the right forearm near the elbow, fingers of the left hand extended and joined, the guard resting on the left arm near its elbow, the blade vertical, edge to the front.

Q21. Demonstrate WIELD-SWORDS?

A. Raise the sword to the second position of Draw Swords. Wield the sword in a circular motion to the left, clockwise, with the arm moving from the shoulder, stopping at the first position of Wield Swords

Q22. Demonstrate REVERSE-SWORDS?

A. First Motion: Drop the blade forward and down until it is directed towards a point about one pace in front of the right foot, at the same time allows the fingers to grasp the lower part of the grip, and move the hand forward about twelve inches. Second Motion: Carry the sword by a wrist movement so that the blade will swing to the rear, the point downward at an angle of about 45°, the edge up. As the sword swings into position under the right arm pit, bring the hand in front of the right armpit and grasp the grip with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, the other fingers successively curved, resting the blade between the right arm and the right side. The end of the hilt remains about nine inches in front of the right shoulder.

SECTION 4 — CHAIN OF COMMAND

— Grand Encampment —

Q1. Who serves as Grand Master of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK David Joseph Kussman

Q2. Who serves as Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK Jeffrey A. Bolstad

Q3. Who serves as Grand Generalissimo of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK Jack M. Harper

Q4. Who serves as Grand Captain General of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK James C. "Jim" McGee

Q5. Who serves as Grand Treasurer of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK David W. Studley

Q6. Who serves as Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK Lawrence E. Tucker

Q7. Who serves as Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK Paul D. Erickson

Q8. Who serves as Associate Grand Prelates of the Grand Encampment?

A. SK Terry L. Plemons and SK Robert J. Elsner

— Grand Commandery of California —

Q9. Who serves as Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of California?

A. SK Rick L. Baca

Q10. Who serves as Deputy Grand Commander of California?

A. SK D. Mike Edwards

Q11. Who serves as Grand Generalissimo of California?

A. SK John E. Bickerstaff

Q12. Who serves as Grand Captain-General of California?

A. SK Michael J. Sekera

Q13. Who serves as Grand Senior Warden of California?

A. SK Marty M. Cusing

Q14. Who serves as Grand Junior Warden of California?

A. SK Jarrod D. Washington

Q15. Who serves as Grand Prelate of California?

A. SK R. Stephen Doan

Q16. Who serves as Grand Treasurer of California?

A. SK Anthony C. McLean

Q17. Who serves as Grand Recorder of California?

A. SK Howard W. "Bud" Ramsey, Jr.

Q18. Who serves as Grand Standard Bearer of California?

A. SK Danny Foxx

Q19. Who serves as Grand Sword Bearer of California?

A. SK James C. Clay

Q20. Who serves as Grand Warder of California?

A. SK Ohannes “Hovig” Antabian

Q21. Who serves as Grand Inspector General of California?

A. SK Nicholas C. Rasis

Q22. Who serves as Deputy Grand Inspector General – North of California?

A. SK Joshua L. Cusing

Q23. Who serves as Deputy Grand Inspector General – South of California?

A. SK Miguel Vasquez-Moreno

Q24. Who serves as Grand Sentinel of California?

A. SK Mark A. Beck

SECTION 5 — RITUAL DUTIES

Q1. What is the Recorder's duty?

A. "Duty is to Faithfully record the transactions of the Commandery, collect the revenue and pay it over to the Treasurer"

Q2. Where is the Junior Warden stationed?

A. "Station is At the north-west angle of the Triangle; on the right or in front of the Third division when separately formed; and on the left of the Commandery when in line."

Q3. Why is the Standard Bearer stationed in the West?

A. "He is stationed in the West, that the brilliant rays of the rising Sun, shedding lustre upon the Banner of our Order, may animate and encourage all valiant and magnanimous Knights, and dismay and confound their enemies."

Q4. What is the Generalissimo's duty?

A. "Duty is to assist the Commander in the duties of his office, and in his absence to preside."

Q5. Where is the Prelate stationed?

A. "Station is On the Right of the Generalissimo"

Q6. What is the Senior Warden's duty?

A. "Duty is to attend Pilgrim Warriors; comfort and support Pilgrim Penitents, and after due trial introduce them into the Asylum."

Q7. Where is the Sword Bearer stationed?

A. "Station is on the right of the Standard Bearer, and on the right of the Second Division when separately formed"

Q8. What is the Captain-General's duty?

A. "Duty is to see that due preparation is made for the conclaves of the Commandery; that the Asylum is in suitable array for the introduction of candidates and the dispatch of business; to execute the orders of the Commander, and in his absence and that of the Generalissimo to preside."

Q9. Where is the Commander stationed?

A. "Station is In The East or at the head of the Commandery"

Q10. What is the Treasurer's duty?

A. "Duty is to receive in charge all the funds and property of the Commandery, pay all orders drawn on the Treasury, and render a true account when required."

Q11. Where is the Standard Bearer stationed?

A. "Station is in the West, and in the center of the Second Division"

Q12. What is the Junior Warden's duty?

A. "Duty is to attend poor and weary Pilgrims traveling from afar, accompany them on their journey, and in due time recommend them to the Commander."

Q13. Where is the Recorder stationed?

A. "Station is on the left , and in front of the Captain-General"

Q14. What is the Commander's duty?

A. "Duty is to distribute alms to poor and weary pilgrims traveling from afar; feed the hungry; clothe the naked, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted; to inculcate the duties of charity and hospitality, and govern the Commandery with justice and moderation."

Q15. Where is the Senior Warden stationed?

A. "Station is at the south-west angle of the Triangle; on the right or in front of the First Division when separately formed; and on the right of the Commandery when in line."

Q16. What is the Prelate's duty?

A. "Duty is to minister at the Altar, and offer up prayers to Deity."

Q17. Where is the Captain-General stationed?

A. "Station is on the left of the Commander."

Q18. What is the Standard Bearer's duty?

A. "Duty is to display, support, and protect the banner of our order"

Q19. Where is the Generalissimo stationed?

A. "Station is on the right of the generalissimo"

Q20. What is the Treasurer's station?

A. "Station is on the right , and in front of the Generalissimo"

SECTION 6 — KNIGHT TEMPLAR EYE FOUNDATION

Q1. In what year was the Knights Templar Eye Foundation incorporated?

A. 1956

Q2. Who sponsors the Knights Templar Eye Foundation?

A. The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar

Q3. Who governs the Knights Templar Eye Foundation?

A. A Board of Trustees comprised of the six elected officers of the Grand Encampment, all Past Grand Masters of the Grand Encampment, and six trustees-at-large elected from and by the membership.

Q4. How long is the term for trustees-at-large on the Foundation's Board of Trustees?

A. Nine years

Q5. Under what section of the Internal Revenue Code is the Foundation exempt from federal income taxation?

A. Section 501(c)(3)

Q6. What is the Grand Master's Club and what is the required donation amount?

A. A donation of \$1,000 that enrolls you as a concerned individual in the humanitarian work of the Foundation. Available to all individuals but not organizations.

Q7. What is the Grand Commander's Club?

A. Members of the Grand Commander's Club pledge to make annual contributions of \$100 or more for nine years until the total of \$1,000 is reached.

Q8. What is The Golden Chalice and what donation amount is required to receive it?

A. The Chalice is awarded in recognition of a single donation of \$10,000 or more. Available to foundations, corporations, or individuals.

Q9. What is The Grand Master's Sword of Merit and what donation amount qualifies?

A. This coveted award is given in recognition of a single donation of \$25,000 or more. Available to foundations, corporations, or individuals.

Q10. Which giving levels of the Foundation are available to organizations as well as individuals?

A. The Golden Chalice and The Grand Master's Sword of Merit are available to foundations, corporations, or individuals. The Grand Master's Club is available to individuals only, not organizations.

*"Let your light so shine before men,
that they may see your good works,
and glorify your Father which is in
heaven.
- Matthew 5:16*



Knights Templar of California

Knight Exemplar Program KEP Committee
RE SK Rick Baca, KCT, KYGCH
Grand Commander

Chairman SK Danny Foxx, KTCH
SK Jarrod Washington, KTCH, KYCH
SK Miguel Vazquez, KCT, KYCH

NOTES

