



# **The Temple Rule of 1129 AD:**

## **Charter of the Order of the Temple of Solomon**

**A Source Translation of the Temple Rule  
as the Founding Charter of the Knights Templar**

**Translation and Commentary by:**

**Prince Judge Matthew of Thebes**

**Grand Master, Order of the Temple of Solomon**

*This is the Public Short Version, focusing on the Translation, with minimal commentary only as necessary to support the Translation. The Full Study Version, with almost three times more content, is available only to Members of the restored Templar Order.*

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## **Reference & Legal Information**

### **About the Author:**

Prince Matthew is an accredited International Judge registered with a national Ministry of Justice, a Professor of Law holding a Juris Doctor (J.D.), Doctor of Science in Jurisprudence (J.S.D.) and Juris Canonici Doctor (J.C.D.) in Canon Law, an accredited Diplomat holding a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in International Affairs, a Professor of Ancient and Medieval History holding a Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) in Archaeology, and a linguist with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Foreign Languages, supported by a Master of Science (M.S.) in Electrical Engineering applied to canonical sacred sciences. He is a historian, restoration curator, and sovereign protocols expert for various Royal Houses and United Nations level IGO institutions.

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# **Introduction to the Temple Rule**

## **Modern Relevance of the Temple Rule**

The Temple Rule of 1129 AD is essentially the founding Charter of the original Order of the Temple of Solomon, as the historical institution of the Knights Templar from 1118 AD. Thus, it is perhaps the best evidence in the historical record of the authentic beliefs, philosophy and doctrines of the Templar Order.

The modern Constitution of the Order as a sovereign subject of international law preserves the Temple Rule as its underlying constitutional Charter, which continues to govern the monastic and chivalric life of its Knights and Dames as founding principles.

In the modern era, there persists a movement of “cultural Templarism” worldwide. However, modern Templarism needs to be reconnected with the original and authentic doctrinal principles of the medieval Templar Order.

Meticulous translation of the Temple Rule is necessary to look beyond popularized misconceptions of the Knights Templar, and to correct mistranslations which inevitably result from contemporary cultural biases:

Although many of the rules superficially appear to be outdated, key details and nuances of their medieval Old French and original Latin texts reveal that they hold more relevance in modern life than we might expect. Indeed, when brought back into the context of their more fundamental principles, these rules actually embody core concepts which are wholly compatible with modern practice. Accordingly, much of what we might be tempted to think we want to “modernize” in the Temple Rule is already found within its authentic medieval rules.

For this purpose, the present translation of the 12<sup>th</sup> century document is provided, for all those interested in cultural Templarism to benefit from its wisdom, and to rediscover the original Templar principles.

Therefore, this restoration of the Temple Rule of 1129 AD is provided to serve as a central resource and convenient reference for its practical application, for meaningfully living the true Templar way of life in the modern era.

## Origins of the Medieval Temple Rule

This is the authenticated text of the historical Temple Rule of 1129 AD of the founding Knights Templar. It is considered to be based upon the Benedictine Rule, modified by the Cistercian Rule, as used by Saint Bernard for his own Cistercian Order.

**Original Existence of the Rule** – After the initial formation of the Templar Order in 1118 AD, the Latin legacy version of the Temple Rule was developed by Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, together with the first Grand Master Hughes de Payens, from ca. 1120 AD. Historians attribute the year it was “written” to 1128 AD, confirming the fact that it existed and was already used as the founding Charter of the Order before it was endorsed and ratified by the Vatican at the Council of Troyes in 1129 AD.

**Amendments of Later Rules** – Under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grand Master Robert de Crayon, the Temple Rule of 1129 AD was translated into Old French ca. 1138 AD. It was later expanded with additional “Hierarchical Rules” which increased it to 609 rules by ca. 1150 AD, up to 656 rules by ca. 1250 AD, and finally up to 685 rules by ca. 1290 AD. Nevertheless, the original 72 Rules always remained the essential core principles which all Templars lived by.

## Authoritative Translation of the Temple Rule

This edition contains the authoritative English translation of the Temple Rule by Prince Matthew of Thebes. It was translated directly from the scholarly translation from Latin into Old French by Henry de Curzon in 1886 AD. This translation was also made with reference to the original Latin manuscripts as preserved by La Société de L’Histoire de France in the Librairie Renouard in Paris.

**On Popularized Mistranslations** – It should be noted that the present translation addresses and clarifies several common mistranslations which have become somewhat popularized. In fairness to some excellent historians who have made valiant efforts, it must be said that such mistranslations are innocent, arising only from some practical realities:

Mistranslations typically occur because of the great difficulty in working with Old French, most of which cannot be referenced in any dictionaries of modern French, and can only be reconstructed by reverse etymology. Likewise, they arise from the difficulty in working with Vatican Latin, which requires extensive knowledge of its ecclesiastical and canonical context. These challenges are greatly exacerbated when faced with original calligraphic handwriting on faded parchments.

Academic or professional translators typically must be concerned with quickly revealing the general meaning of the document, often among large volumes of other documents. A translator thus cannot reasonably be expected to anticipate the profound importance of the most subtle nuances, and how they might have indirect and far-reaching implications for diverse highly specialized areas of historical, legal and ecclesiastical scholarship.

**Gender Neutral Translations** – The Temple Rule of 1129 AD specifically confirms that women are full and equal members as Sisters in the Templar Order. Accordingly, the generically used term “Brother” is properly translated as “Templar”, and the phrase “Brothers of the Temple” is correctly translated as “Templars of the Order”, except in certain cases where a rule is specific to male or female members in particular.

**Balanced Sentence Structures** – The present translation of the Temple Rule generally follows the sentence structures of the original manuscripts. Accordingly, some degree of wordiness is tolerated, in favor of preserving many linguistic nuances which substantially contribute to authenticity of the original meaning of the rules. Thus, some convenience of readability is sacrificed for the greater benefit of detailed accuracy.

This painstaking precision allows for the most reliable analysis, by quoting a translation which has best preserved the true intent of the medieval authors. It also brings out greater clarity of the philosophy and meaning of the historical words which were the foundations of the Knights Templar. Overall, this generally increases readability, as the clarity of meaning avoids distraction or confusion, allowing the text to flow in the reader’s mind.

**Notations of Source Materials** – Many key parts of this translation include the original words [in brackets] from the source languages, indicating Old French (“**Fr.**”) or Latin (“**Lat.**”). This is used wherever the authenticated translation reveals a surprising or unexpected meaning, or where it significantly differs from other popularized translations. This provides full transparency for immediate verification of the authenticity of this translation.

The original text of the Temple Rule is presented in **Red Font**. Editorial emphasis (underline) is added for reference of significant parts. Annotations in **Black Font** are added for new topic headers as convenient visual reference, and for relevant explanations and academic commentary, especially for explaining how the rules are interpreted and applied in the modern era. Quotes from the Temple Rule within commentaries are indicated by **Brown Font**. Quotes from Canon law or canonical sources are indicated by **Purple Font**.

# Authenticated Translation of the Temple Rule

## Here begins the Prologue to the Rule of the Temple

**Rule 1. Studios Purification & Obedience** – We speak firstly to all those who despising the isolation [Fr. *segre*, Lat. *summo*] of their own wills and desiring with a pure heart to serve in chivalry with the sovereign King, and by studious purification [Fr. *cure*] desiring to fill in [Fr. *aemplir*] and fulfilling [Fr. *aemplissent*] permanently the very noble armour of obedience. And therefore we admonish you, you who have led lives of secular knighthood until now, in which Jesus Christ was not the cause, but only for human favor you had embraced it, that you follow those whom God has chosen from the mass of perdition and has ordained [Fr. *a ordenés*] by his gracious compassion for the defense of the Holy Church, and that you hasten to join unto them perpetually.

**Obedience as Collective Free Will** – Although this famous first Rule has been mistranslated or misinterpreted as the supposed abdication of individual will with blind obedience, such concept was never a part of authentic Templarism. The historical Knights Templar were always an Order of *leaders*, *not followers*, as defenders of Free Will, exercising great will power as individuals.

The phrase “despising the isolation of their own wills” is most revealing of the personal motivation of the medieval Templars: They were frustrated with the social isolation of being rare individuals of strong will, and therefore desired to unite in the companionship and strength of their collective wills, channeling their individual wills into a common cause.

The phrase “follow those whom God has chosen... join unto them” does not mean to follow only the commands of certain leaders. Rather, this actually means to follow the higher principles and way of life of the collective, precisely by joining it, thus contributing one’s own leadership to the collective shared leadership of all Knights and Dames of the Order.

**Obedience as Armour of Purification** – The phrase “by studious purification desiring to fill in and fulfilling... the noble armor of obedience” means living up to noble ideals, through discipline and scholarship for spiritual purification, as a metaphorical armour. This describes “obedience” not merely to arbitrary commands, but rather to the core principles of shared Templar values.



**Service With Sovereign Kingdoms** – The tradition “to serve in chivalry with the sovereign King” (not “under” a King) clearly describes mutual defense in service together “with” a Kingdom, reflecting reciprocal sovereign diplomatic relations in a military alliance. This specifies an arrangement of chivalric service in a mutual alliance with each Kingdom.

**Rule 2. Guardians of Justice of Our Lady** – Before all things, whosoever would be a Knight of Christ, choosing such Holy Communion, strained by your profession, must apply pure diligence and firm perseverance, which is so dignified and so Holy, and so noble and known to be, that if it is guarded purely and durably, you will deserve to hold company among the martyrs who gave their souls for Jesus Christ. (Rule 2: Part 1)

This rule mandates that the Order, described as a Holy institution of Priesthood, must be “guarded purely and durably”. This evidences that the Templars were dedicated to being Guardians of the Ancient Priesthood of the Temple of Solomon, to preserve its doctrinal purity, and ensure its longevity as a permanent historical institution for the benefit of humanity.

In this Religion [Fr. religion] has flourished and is revitalised this Order of Knighthood. Which other knighthood [Crusades] despised the love of Justice which constitutes its duties and did not do what it should, that is to defend the poor, widows, orphans and churches, but strove to plunder, despoil and kill. The good works of Our Lady of God [Fr. Damedieu] are with us, and our saviour Jesus Christ; He has sent his friends from the Holy City of Jerusalem, on the path to France and to Burgundy, those who for our salvation and for spreading belief in the true faith do not cease to offer their souls to God, a pleasing sacrifice. (Rule 2: Part 2)

**Rejecting the Crusades** – In the context of upholding Justice, here the founding Templars criticize the prior institution of “knighthood” which preceded them, thereby specifically referring to the Crusades. They criticize that the Crusades “did not do what it should... to defend” the weak and uphold Justice. They blame that the Crusaders only “strove to plunder, despoil and kill”. This proves that the Templars were actually not “Crusaders” and did not agree with the Crusades, but instead were wholly dedicated to the cause of Justice, and serving as Defenders of Faith.

**Our Lady is Strong in the Order** – The phrase “The good works of Our Lady of God are with us” uses a rare Old French word “*Damedieu*”, which is unique and distinctive, and literally means “Our Lady of God”. This indicates that the Order is dedicated to honouring the feminine face of God, and is also a reference to special veneration of Saint Mary Magdalene as a Gnostic Apostle, who Saint Augustine recognized as “Apostle to the Apostles”.

**Holy Spirit is Strong in the Order** – That same key phrase “The good works of Our Lady of God are *with us...* and our savior Jesus Christ”, means that God works very strongly through the Order. This combination of the Sacred Feminine (Our Lady) and Masculine (Christ) aspects of God, which is the ancient spiritual alchemy of the Holy Grail, is the essence of the Holy Spirit. This is a very subtle but clear reference to the traditional saying of the medieval Knights Templar: “*The Holy Spirit works strongly in the Templar Order.*”

This is not a claim, nor a mere belief – it is a phenomenon. All Templars unavoidably learn, sometimes through hard experience, that the Holy Spirit rules and governs this historical institution. Anything which is not in true service to God is decisively corrected by the Holy Spirit.

**Dedicated to Justice** – The Templar Order is dedicated to “the love of Justice”, charged to “defend” the disadvantaged, and never to engage in domination nor aggression. This rule declares that the Templar Order “revitalized” the tradition of “Knighthood” as an institution, by restoring “the love of Justice” as its primary “duties”. This confirms that it is an original Templar mission to restore historical institutions, and that its primary purpose for such missions is to uphold the principles of Justice.

**Rule 3. Foundation of the Order** – Therefore we, in all joy and all brotherhood, by the prayers of the Grand Master Hugues de Payens, by whom the Templar Order was founded by the grace of the Holy Spirit, assembled at Troyes from diverse provinces beyond the mountains on the feast of Monseigneur Saint Ylaire, in the year of the incarnation of Jesus Christ 1128, in the ninth year after the founding of the aforesaid Knighthood. And the manner and establishment of the Order of Knighthood we heard in common Council from the mouth of the aforesaid Grand Master Brother Hugues de Payens; and according to the knowledge of the limitations of our understanding, what seemed to us good and beneficial we praised, and what seemed to us unreasonable we eschewed.

**Rule 4. The Council of Troyes** – And all that was presented to the Council [of Troyes] cannot be said nor recounted; nor could be considered lightly by us, but with wise contemplation, which we left to the discretion of both our honourable father Lord Honorius and of the noble Patriarch of Jerusalem, Stephani, who knew the affairs of the East and of the Poor Knights of Christ, by the advice of the common Council we unanimously praised it. Although too great a number of religious fathers who assembled in that Council praised the authority of our words, nevertheless we should not pass over in silence the true words which they spoke and judged.



**Rule 5. Patronage of Saint Bernard** – Wherefore I, Jean Michel, by the grace of God worthy to be the humble scribe of the present parchment by the commandment of the Council [of Troyes] and of the venerable father Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, was entrusted and committed by them to this divine office.

### **The Names of the Fathers who Were at the Council**

**Rule 6. Lovers of Truth by Studious Hearts** – First was Matthew, Bishop of Albano, by the grace of God Legate of the Holy Church of Rome; Renaut, Archbishop of Reims; Henri, Archbishop of Sens; and then their subordinates: Gocelin, Bishop of Soissons; the Bishop of Paris; the Bishop of Troyes; the Bishop of Orlèans; the Bishop of Auxerre; the Bishop of Meaux; the Bishops of Chalons; the Bishops of Laon; the Bishops of Beauvais; the Abbots of Vèzelay, who later were made Archbishops of Lyon and [one] a Legate of the Church of Rome; the Abbot of Cîteaux; the Abbot of Pontigny; the Abbot of Trois-Fontaines; the Abbot of Saint Denis de Reims; the Abbot of Saint Etienne de Dijon; the Abbot of Molesmes; the above named Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux: The words of whom those aforesaid, by their outspoken voices, praised. Also were present [Templar] Master Aubri de Reims; Master Fulcher and many others, of whom it would be laborious to recount. (Rule 6: Part 1)

Among introductory rules which refer to the founding Grand Master Hughes de Payens, this passage for the first time mentions “**many others**” holding the title “**Master**”. Note that the term “Master”, in most of the Rules, does not mean only the Grand Master, but generally refers to a leader of any Branch of the Order, such as a Commander of a Commandery, or Prior of a Priory. The present translation was corrected to use the title “Grand Master” only in those few instances where it refers to the sovereign Prince of the Templar Principality, and all other references to “Master” apply to the many various heads of all Branches and subdivisions.

And of the others who have not been recorded, it seems profitable that we bring witnesses in such matter that those [present] are lovers of Truth: These [witnesses] are known as the counts of Theobald; the counts of Nevers; André de Baudemant. All those were in such manner at the Council [of Troyes], that by refined and studious hearts, that which was good they sought out, and that which did not seem reasonable they disapproved. (Rule 6: Part 2)

This highlights one of the core principles of the Order, that all Templars are required to be “**lovers of Truth**”, always diligently pursuing and upholding the Truth with “**studious hearts**”, meaning through scholarship.

**Rule 7. Full Disclosure of Solomonic Priesthood** – And presenting were Brother Hugues de Payens, Grand Master of the Knighthood, with some of his Brothers whom he had brought with him. Those were made known as Brother Roland, Brother Godefroi, and Brother Geoffroi Bisot, Brother Payen de Montdidier, Brother Archambaut de Saint Amand. Grand Master Hugues presented, with his Disciples [*Fr. disciple, Lat. discipulis*], the customs and observances of their humble beginnings and of He who said: *Ego principium qui et loquor vobis*, that is to say: 'I who speak to you am the beginning,' according to the knowledge of his memory, to make all known to the above named fathers.

The Templars under the Grand Master are specifically described as being his “**Disciples**”, in the full religious and Biblical sense of the word. This evidences that the Templar Order was founded with its own independent ecclesiastical authority, from the Ancient Priesthood of Solomon, which the founding Knights Templar recovered and restored from the historical Temple of Solomon. The Order thus has Pontifical authority from its own lineage of succession, comprising the denomination of Ancient Christianity.

The description that the Templars “**presented... their humble beginnings... to make all known**” evidences that the Vatican received full and transparent disclosure of the Ancient Priesthood of Solomon, as the source and foundations of the Order, and thus knowingly approved and endorsed it by ratifying the present Temple Rule as its charter.

**Rule 8. Preservation of Solomonic Priesthood** – It pleased the common Council [of Troyes] that their advices which were sought, considered and examined through diligence and study of the Holy Scriptures, with the wisdom of my lord Honorius, Pope of the Holy Church of Rome, and of the Pontificate of the Temple of Solomon [*Lat. Patriarchae Ierosolimitarum*], and by the assent of the Council, and by the approval [*Fr. l'otroi, Lat. assensu*] of the Poor Knights of Christ of the Temple which is in Jerusalem, which must be put in writing, and which must not be forgotten, and which must be guarded firmly, and through which by right hearts one can come to his creator; the sweetness of which exceeds that of honey insomuch as comparable to God; the bitterness of which resembles absinth [*Lat. absintum*], and the compassion of which compels us to come to Him whom we desire to serve. *Per infinita seculorum secula. Amen.*

**Endorsement by the Vatican** – This evidences that everything about the Templar Order was fully “**considered and examined**” by the Vatican at the Council of Troyes, and was knowingly endorsed by “**assent of the Council**”.

**Templar Pontifical Authority** – One key phrase, which is commonly mistranslated, is revealed by the original Latin manuscripts to be: “**Pontificate of the Temple of Solomon**”.

The word for “Jerusalem” in Latin would normally be “*Ierosolym*”, and elsewhere throughout the Temple Rule, and even within this same rule referring to the Temple as “which is in Jerusalem” (Rule 8), the Old Latin word “*Ierusalem*” is consistently used.

However, this unique word “*Ierosolimitarum*” uses the end root “*imitarum*”, meaning “imitation” or “representation”, indicating that “*Ierosol-imitarum*” has a dual meaning as “Little Jerusalem”, thus referring to the Temple of Solomon; The more determinative leading root “*Iero*” (from the Greek “*Hieros*” meaning “sacred”) was often used to mean a “Priesthood” or “Temple” (from the Greek “*Hieron*” meaning “temple”); The central root “*Solimin*” means the Biblical “Solomon”, such that “*Solimitarum*” would mean literally “representing Solomon”. Therefore “*Ierosolimitarum*” means the “Temple Representing Solomon”.

This linguistic analysis, from the original Latin, compellingly reveals that by three established grammatical rules of Latin (any one of which would be sufficient alone), the phrase “*Patriarchae Ierosolimitarum*” in fact means “**Pontificate of the Temple of Solomon**”.

**Guardians of Ancient Priesthood** – This rule declares that the foundations of the Templar Order in the Holy Scriptures “**must not be forgotten, and... must be guarded firmly**”. This again highlights the concept that the Templars are dedicated to being guardians of the ancient doctrines of religion, through preserving historical institutions.

### **Here Begins the Rule of the Poor Knighthood of the Temple:**

**Rule 9. Universal Studies for Holy Truth** – You renouncing your own wills, and being servants of the sovereign King with horses and with arms, for the salvation of your souls, during periods of time, study universally, with purity of desire to hear matins and the entirety of the service according to Canonical law and the customs of the regular Masters of the Holy City of Jerusalem. O you venerable Templars, for this purpose God is with you, that you forego the deceiving world and despise it, for the perpetual love of God, and despising the torments of your body: Satiated by the meat from God, and watered and instructed by the commandments of our Lord, for the purpose of divine service, never fearing to go into battle, but being dressed with the crown [**Fr. la corone, Lat. coronam**].

It is especially noteworthy that this rule features a mandate that the practices of the Templar Order must be “**according to Canonical law**”.

The commandment to “**study universally**” emphasizes academic or scholarly studies in many different areas of life, to be “universal” in one’s knowledge. In this regard, the Templar Order itself was somewhat like a “University”, as a center for teaching and learning of diverse areas of wisdom and knowledge.

The admonition “**that you forego the deceiving world and despise it**” indicates that the purpose of such studies is also to pursue the Truth, and to value the principle of Truth.

Most conclusively, the Papal Bull *Omne Datum Optimum* of 1139 AD specifically recognized the Templar Order as a “**university institution**” (Latin: ‘*universitetem exortamur*’).

**Rule 10. Prayers While on Assignment** – If any of the Templars are sent for the needs of the Order and for the Christianity of the East – which we believe will occur often – and thus could not hear the services of God, they should say for morning prayers thirteen paternosters; for the daytime hours seven and for vespers [evening prayers] nine. And all together we oblige them to say those [prayers]. But those who for such needs will be sent and could not come at the hours established for hearing the services of God, if it is possible, those established hours should not be wasted to render unto God his due.

### **The Manner in which We Should Receive Templars**

**Rule 11. Skills Training & Postulant Studies** – If any secular Knight, or any other person, wishes to depart from the mass of perdition, and renounce that secular life, and choose your communal life, do not consent immediately to receive them. For thus said our lord Saint Paul: *Probate spiritus si ex Deo sunt*. That is to say: Test the soul whether it comes from God. But, before one may be granted the company of the Templars, the Rule shall be read to them, and if one wishes to studiously obey the commandments of the Rule, and if it pleases the Master and the Templars to receive them, assemble the Templars in Council and before everyone one shall reveal one’s wish and one’s desires, and make one’s request with a pure heart.

The phrase “**the Rule shall be read to them**” is somewhat metaphorical, meaning more than reading only the Temple Rule. This evidences the importance of a lengthy process of in-depth studies, as Templar skills training, to have a full understanding of the principles and values of the Order.

## On Excommunicated Knights

**Rule 12. Recruiting Where Knights are Gathered** – There where you know to be gathered Knights who are not excommunicated [**Lat.** *non excommunicatos*], there we command you to go; and if there is anyone who wishes to serve and join the Order of Knighthood from regions overseas, you should not expect worldly gain so much as the eternal salvation of their souls. We order them [if excommunicated] to be received on the condition that they come before the Bishop of that province and make known one's proposal [to serve Christ]. And when the Bishop has heard and absolved them, then send them to the Master and Templars of the Order, and if one's life is honest and worthy of their company, if one seems good to the Master and brothers, let one be received mercifully; and if one should die in the meantime, through the anguish and torment one would have suffered, they shall be given all the benefits of the Order as one of the Poor Knights of the Temple.

**Rule 13. No Company with Excommunicated** – In no other manner [than absolution] should the Templars of the Order have company with an obviously excommunicated person, nor shall they take any things; and this we prohibit strongly, because such doubtful thing could make them excommunicated like that one. But if the person is only forbidden to hear the services of God, it would be well permitted to receive one's things for charity, with the consent of your Commander.

## On Not Receiving Children

**Rule 14. Youth Tested for Strength & Wisdom** – Although the rule of the Holy Fathers allows to receive children into religion, we do not advise you to do this. For one who wishes to give to one's child perpetually the Religion of Knighthood [**Fr.** *religion de chevalerie*, **Lat.** *militari religione*], such child must nourish until such time as one can carry arms vigorously, and remove [**Fr.** *arachier*, **Lat.** *delere*] from the land the Enemies of Jesus Christ. Then the mother and father may lead them to the Order and make known to the Templars what one desires; and it is much better if one does not make the Vow [of Chivalry] when one is a child but when one is of age, and it is better if one does not regret than if one were to regret this. And henceforth first one shall be put to the test according to the wisdom of the Master and Templars and according to the honesty of the life of one who requests to be in the Order.



## On Templars who Stand Too Much in Chapel

**Rule 15. Behaving with Simple Moderation** – It has been made known to our ears, and we have heard from truthful witnesses, that without restraint and without moderation you hear the services of God while standing. We do not condone that you behave in such a manner, rather we disapprove of it. But we command as much to the strong as to the weak, to avoid scandal, singing the psalm called *Venite*, throughout the invitatory and the hymn, as much the strong as the weak sitting down; and saying their prayers in silence, and simply and without loudness, so that the one praying does not disturb the prayers of the other Templars.

The phrase “as much to the strong as to the weak” emphasizes that above all, one’s strength should never be used nor presented in any manner of “loudness”, which implies expressions of “pride”. Thus, one should never use one’s strength to be disruptive nor to demand attention. Rather, one must be humble and meek, never abusing one’s strength to interfere with nor seek advantage over the weak.

**Rule 16. During the Hours of Our Lady** – But at the end of the psalms, when the *Gloria patri* is sung, for prayerful reverence of the Holy Trinity, you rise and bow towards the altar, and the weak and the unwell incline their heads. And in this manner we command you; and when the recitation of the Gospels is read, and the *Te deum laudamus* is sung, and also as all the praises are sung, and the matins are finished, then to be on your feet. In such a manner we likewise command you to be on your feet at matins and at all the other hours of Our Lady [Saint Mary] [Fr. Nostre Dame, Lat. Sancte Marie].

The phrase “Our Lady” in the original Latin is “*Sancte Marie*”, literally meaning “Saint Mary”, which is very different from the usual references to the “Virgin” or “Mother” Mary. This clearly identifies her as Saint Mary Magdalene, the Gnostic Apostle revered by the Templars, evidencing that the Knights Templar traditionally used “Our Lady” as a coded reference to Mary Magdalene.

## On the Robes of the Templars

**Rule 17. Standard Brown Clothes** – We command that all the robes [clothes] of the Templars should always be of one colour, that is white or black or *Burelle* [Light-Brown] [Fr. *buriaus*, Lat. *burella*]. And to all the Templar Nobles in winter and in summer, if possible, we grant to have White Cloaks; and to none other is granted to have White Cloaks, if not among the aforesaid Knights of Christ; that those who have abandoned the life of darkness, for the simplicity [Fr. *essamples*, Lat. *conditori*] of white robes are recognized as being reconciled with their creator: Which signifies cleanliness [Fr. *blanchor*] and complete purity [Lat. *castitas*]. Purity is certainty of courage and healthiness of the body. For if any of the Templars do not preserve purity, they cannot come to eternal rest nor see God, by the assurance of the Apostle who said: *Pacem sectamini cum omnibus et castimoniam sine qua nemo Deum videbit*. That is to say: “Bring peace to everyone, maintain purity, without which none can see God.”

This early rule authorizing “White Cloaks” only for “Templar Nobles”, practiced only during the first few years, strongly suggested that “all the robes of the Templars... should always be... *Burelle* [Light Brown]” (Rule 17). Another contemporary rule initially intended for Sergeants and Squires, commands that all Templars “shall strictly be given... *Burelle*” cloaks, which was quickly applied to all Knights Dames and Nobles (Rule 68).

**Rule 18. Uniform Clothes Without Pride** – But these robes [clothes] should be without any arrogance and without any show of pride. And so we establish that no Templar shall have any piece of fur on one’s robes, nor any other thing which pertains to the usage of the body, not even a blanket, unless it is of lamb or sheep. In such manner we command everyone to have the same, so that each can easily dress and undress, be booted and un-booted. And the Drapier or one who is in such position must studiously consider and think to have the reward of God in all these things aforesaid, so that the eyes of the envious and the evil-tongued could not notice anything in the robes worn, that they be too long nor too short; but to the measure of those who must use them, and according to the size of each one we should distribute them.

**Rule 19. On the Issuing of New Clothes** – And if any Templar by a feeling of pride or for arrogance wishes to have as entitlement a nicer and better robe, the worst shall be given to them. And those who receive new robes [clothes], must immediately return the old ones, to give to Squires and to Sergeants and often to the poor, according to what seems good to one who holds such office.

## On Irregular Shirts

**Rule 20. Uniform Exceptions for Hot Climates** – Among the other things we establish mercifully that, for the great hardship of the heat which is in the countries of the East, from Easter to All Saints [day], through compassion and in no way as entitlement, a linen shirt shall be given to each one of the Templars who wishes to wear it.

This rule established that for the extreme heat climate of the Middle East, the general requirements of Templar regalia tend to be relaxed, with various parts of the uniform optional or substituted.

## On Bed Sheets

**Rule 21. Appearance Without Excess of Vice** – We establish by the common Council that each shall have robes and bed sheets according to the discretion of the Master. We expect it to be sufficient for each, after the mattress, one sheet and one blanket; and for a person who needs one to have a carpet, and always a linen blanket can well be used, that which is soft. And always sleeping dressed in shirts and trousers and in shoes and belts, and there where they sleep shall be lighting until morning. And the Drapier should provide that the Templars be so reasonably groomed that they could be inspected front and back; and this same manner we command to firmly maintain for beards and moustaches, so that no excess of vice could be noted on their selves.

## On Points and Laces of Shoes

**Rule 22. Clothes Without Excess of Length** – We prohibit points and laces on shoes, and forbid for anyone to have them; and for all those who serve the Order for a term we do not permit them, rather we forbid them in any manner to have shoes with points or laces. For it is well known and is manifest that these abominable things belong to pagans. Nor to have excess of hair nor robes of length. For those who serve the sovereign creator must by necessity be born within and without by the promise of God himself who said: *Estote mundi quia ego mundus sum.* That is to say: “Be born, as I am born.”

## How They Should Eat

**Rule 23. Eating in Silence & Humility** – In the palace, and better what would be called the refectory, they should eat together. But if because you have not become accustomed to the signals of the other men of religion, whatever thing you find necessary, softly and privately, you may request to be brought to your place at the table, and with all humility and submission of reverence. For the Apostle said: *Manduca panem tuum cum silentio*. That is to say: “Eat your bread in silence.” And the Psalmist: *Posui ori meo custodiam*. That is to say: “I guarded my mouth.” That is, “I thought my tongue would fail me.” That is, “I held my mouth so that it would speak no wrong.”

## On Reading the Scripture

**Rule 24. Hearing Scripture at Meals** – Always, at the dinner and supper of the monastery, shall be read the Holy Scripture, if possible. If we love God and all of those Holy words and those Holy commandments, we must attentively desire and listen; the reader who reads the lesson will instruct you to hold silence before one begins to read.

## On Bowls and Drinking Vessels

**Rule 25. Sharing Implements & Rationing Portions** – For the shortage of bowls the Templars will eat in pairs, for one to provide for the other more studiously, so that neither austerity nor secret abstinence is introduced into the communal meal. And this seems to us a just thing that each Templar have equal measures of rationing wine in one’s cup.

While many of the rules seem to “micro-manage” details of the daily lives of the Templars, it must be remembered that this was not a concept of mere “membership” in some club or fraternity. The Temple Rule was a “Monastic Rule”, literally a constitutional Charter for governing the monastic life of the Brothers and Sisters in Templar churches, castles and fortresses which were essentially monasteries. Most of the rules were needed only for management of that monastic life of the Order.

## **On the Eating of Meat**

**Rule 26. Minimizing the Serving of Meat** – Three times is sufficient for you to eat meat in each week, except during Christmas, or the feasts of All Saints, or the Assumption, or of the Twelve Apostles. For the custom of eating meat is understood to corrupt the body. But if it was on a Tuesday that the monks refrained from meat, the next day it should be given plentifully to them. And on Sunday to all the Templars of the Order, and the Chaplains, and the clerics shall be given two meals of meat in honour of the Holy resurrection of Jesus Christ. And the others of the household, that is the Squires and Sergeants, shall be content with one meal and for such to give thanks to God.

## **On Meals for Weekdays**

**Rule 27. Meals Predominantly Vegetarian** – On the other days of the week, that is Monday, Wednesday and the same on Saturday, the Templars shall have two or three meals of vegetables or grains, and we establish that this should be sufficient, and thus command for this to be maintained. For one who does not eat of one meal will eat of the other.

Of an average three meals a day totaling 21 meals a week, to “eat meat” was authorized only “three times”, thus being only 15% of the Templar diet. This establishes that the Templars were 85% vegetarian.

## **On Meals for Fridays**

**Rule 28. Holiday Meals** – On Fridays meat shall be given communally to the whole congregation, for reverence of the passion of Jesus Christ, and fasting from All Saints until Easter, except not on Christmas Day, nor the Assumption, nor the feast of the Twelve Apostles. But the weak and sick Templars are not held to this. But from Easter until All Saints they can eat [meat] twice, as long as there is no general fast.



## On Giving Thanks to God

**Rule 29. Silent Prayer of Grace at Meals** – All times after eating and after dinner, all the Templars should give thanks to God in silence, if the church is near to the palace where they eat, and if it is not so close, in that same place, with a humble heart giving thanks to Jesus Christ who is our Lord Provider. The remains of broken bread shall be given to the poor, and the whole loaves shall be kept. Although the reward of the poor, which is the Kingdom of Heaven, without doubt will be given to the poor, just as the Christian faith recognizes you among them without doubt, we command that a tenth of the bread be given to your Almoner.

## On Taking the Light Meal

**Rule 30. Evening Wine in Moderation** – When day fades out and the night comes, hear the signal of the bell or the call, or according to the customs of that country, all of you will prepare to come to the gathering. But we command first to take the general light meal [**Fr. collation, Lat. collatio**]; but we place this light meal in the arbitration and in the discretion of the Master. When he wills water and when he will command by mercy a light wine, it shall be given reasonably. Truly, it should not be taken in excess, but in moderation. For Solomon said: *Quia vinum facit apostatare sapientes*. That is to say, that wine compromises the wise.

## On Keeping Silence

**Rule 31. Silence at Bed Time** – When the Templars emerge from the gathering, they have no permission to speak openly unless it be for an important need. But each shall go silently and quietly to one's bed, and if one has need to speak to one's Squire, softly and quietly to say what one has to say. But if by chance as they emerge from the gathering, for great necessity of the needs of the Order or of the state of the household, that by chance the next day could not suffice to meet this need, we establish that the Master or a group of elder Templars governing the household after the Master, could speak appropriately. And for this we command it to be done in such a manner.

**Rule 32. Prohibiting Idle Words** – For it is written: *In multiloquio non effugies peccatum*. That is to say, that: “To talk too much is not without sin.” And elsewhere: *Mors et vita in manibus lingue*. That is to say: “Life and death are in the power of the tongue.” And in saying that, we prohibit idle words and wicked bursts of laughter in all forms. And if anything is said in such speaking which should not be said, when you go into your beds, in all humility and in pure devotion, we command you to say the prayer of the paternoster.

## On Overworked Templars

**Rule 33. Late Mornings for the Overworked** – Those Templars who are overworked for the great needs of the Order, may allow themselves not to rise in the mornings, by the assent and consent of the Master or of those who are charged with such office. But they must say for morning prayers thirteen paternosters, if one is established as such [overworked], in such a manner that the words be in accordance with the heart. Thus said [King] David: *Psallite sapienter*. That is to say: “Sing wisely.” And elsewhere the same David said: *In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi*. That is to say: “I will sing to you before the angels.” And this thing shall be at all times at the discretion of the Master or of those who are charged with such office.

## On the Communal Life

**Rule 34. None Elevated in Strength Nor Weakness** – One reads in the Holy Scriptures: *Dividebatur singulis prout cuique opus erat*. That is to say, that: “To each was given according to one’s need.” For this we say that no person shall be elevated among you, but must be caring for the sick; and one who is less unwell [stronger] shall give thanks to God and not be troubled; and one who is more unwell shall humble oneself for one’s infirmity and not become proud for seeking mercy. In such manner all the members will be in peace. And we prohibit for anyone to embrace excessive abstinence; but to firmly keep the communal life.

This develops the theme that one’s strength must never be abused, and imposes an obligation to respect the weak. It declares that “**no person shall be elevated**” and the strong must “**give thanks to God**” for it and care for the weak.

This rule introduces a new concept for a deeper understanding of the sins of pride and excess, which are forbidden throughout the Temple Rule: Here is explained that one can also be “**proud for seeking mercy**”, even taking pride in one’s weakness to gain advantage of sympathy. Likewise, one can behave with “**excessive abstinence**”, even taking pride in the exaggerated expression of one’s apparent modesty.

Therefore, the Templars considered even pride in one’s weakness, or excess in one’s expression of modesty, as merely alternate forms of the sin of pride. Essentially these constitute pride in expressions of apparent humility, best encapsulated in the phrase “*pride in false humility*”.

## On the Master

**Rule 35. Redistribution of Equipment** – The Master can give to whomever one wills the horse of a Templar and armaments, and anything that one wills, and the Templar who had possession of that thing which was given must not be troubled nor agitated: for know with certainty that if one becomes angry [at this] one would be acting against God.

## On Giving Advice

**Rule 36. Those of Wisdom Called to Council** – Those Templars to be called to the Council, are those who the Master knows to have wisdom and to give beneficial advice; for thus we command, and not to take everyone. For when it occurs that they want to deal with important matters, such as to grant communal land, or to speak of the affairs of the household, or of receiving a [new] Templar, thus, if it pleases the Master, it is appropriate to assemble all of the congregation and to hear the advice of the whole Council; and that which seems to the Master more or most beneficial, he shall do.

## On Templars Sent Overseas

**Rule 37. Exemplary Good Behaviour** – Templars who will be sent through diverse parts of the world must strive to keep the commandments of the Rule according to their ability, and to live without excess of food and drink [Lat. *cibo et potu*], and to live without reproach; and so that they could have good reports from outsiders, so they would not disgrace by deed nor by word the purposes of religion, and that they set an example of good works and wisdom; above all that those with whom they associate and those in whose hostels they lodge will be bestowed with honour. And if possible, the nights should not be without lighting in the house where they stay or lodge, so that the shadowy Enemies would not lead them astray unto wickedness, which God forbids of them.

This rule essentially requires all Templars to serve as “Good Will Ambassadors” (modern term), favourably representing the Templar Order to the outside world, by setting an example of honourable behaviour, thereby elevating the standards of others.

## On Keeping the Peace

**Rule 38. “Provocateur” Rule** – Every Templar must diligently ensure that one does not provoke another Templar to wrath or anger, for the sovereign mercy of God holds both the strong and the weak equal in the name of charity.

## How the Templars Should Go About

**Rule 39. Obeying Commands Without Delay** – It is appropriate for all the Templars who are professed, to carry out Holy service, and to gain the glory of the heavenly blessings, and to escape the fear of the fires of hell, that they maintain strict obedience to their Master. For nothing is more valued by Jesus Christ than to keep obedience. For as soon as anything will be commanded by the Master or by one whom the Master has given authority, it shall be done without delay just as if God himself had commanded it. For thus said Jesus Christ, and it is the truth, through the mouth of [King] David: *Ob auditu auris obedivit mihi*. That is to say: “He obeyed me as soon as he heard me.”

**Rule 40. Going to Town by Permission** – For this we pray, for the Templar Knights [and Dames] who have abandoned their own wills, and for all the others who serve for a term we pray and firmly command that they not presume to go into town nor into the city without consent of the Master or from one who has been charged with such office; except at night to the Sepulchre and to the places of prayer which are within the walls of the city of Jerusalem.

**Rule 41. Continuing in Last Known Command** – Here [on Templar territories] they can go out in pairs of two Templars together, and in other manner shall not go out neither in the day nor at night; and once they have stopped at a hostel, neither Knight nor any Squire, nor any Sergeant may visit to the lodge of another for the purpose of seeing him or speaking with him without permission, as is said above. We command by common Council that in this Order which is ordained [**Fr.** *ordenée*, **Lat.** *ordinata*] by God, no Templar shall fight nor rest according to one’s own will, but according to the commands of the Master, under whom all must follow, that they can follow this declaration of Jesus Christ who said: *Non veni facere voluntatem meam, sed ejus que misit me, patris*. That is to say: “I did not come to do my own will, but the will of my Father who sent me.”

The command that “**no Templar shall fight nor rest according to one’s own will**”, was not intended to be dictatorial nor micromanaging. Rather, this was a practical rule, in the context of medieval Knights being out in the field, often separated from their house Masters or even field Commanders:

The idea was that if a Templar was ordered to fight (or work), one must continue that mission indefinitely until completion, without doubting that the ordered mission remains in force, and without taking it upon oneself to decide whether the mission should be completed or not.

Likewise, if there was no order to fight, then a Templar should not take it upon oneself to provoke or engage in a conflict which could involve the Order in unnecessary war, without having the approval of the Order to do so. If there was no order to work, then one should not create a project which could require the attention of the Order at the expense of priority humanitarian missions.

In this way, each Templar maintains the *status quo* of continuing in the last known command which one received, without creating any new situations which could demand attention unnecessarily.

### **How They Should Make Exchange**

**Rule 42. Exchange Only by Permission** – Without permission from the Master or from one who holds such office, no Templar shall exchange one thing for another, nor request to, unless it is a small or petty thing.

### **On Locks**

**Rule 43. Locks & Seals Only for Commanders** – Without permission from the Master or from one who holds that office, no Templar shall have a lock, not on a bag nor on a case; but this shall not be held to Commanders of houses nor of the provinces, nor the Masters themselves. Without the consent of the Master or of a Commander, no Templar shall open letters from one's relatives nor from any other person; but, if one has permission, if it pleases the Master or the Commander, the letters shall be read to them.

### **On Secular Gifts**

**Rule 44. Receiving Secular Gifts by Permission** – If by gratitude anything is given to any Templar by a secular person, which is perishable like meat, one must present it to the Master or to the keeper of meats. But if it occurs that any of one's friends or relatives does not wish to give it except only to that person, one shall not take it without the consent of the Master or of one who holds such office. But if to the Templar is sent any other thing from one's relatives, one shall not take it without the consent of the Master or one who holds such office. But these aforesaid commandments we do not want to be held to the Commanders nor housekeepers, who are especially charged to implement this function.



## On Minor Faults

**Rule 45. Confession of Mistakes** – If any Templar in speaking or soldiering or in another manner commits a minor fault, that person oneself must voluntarily make known the fault to the Master, to make amends with a pure heart. And if the fault is not habitual, then one shall have a light penance; but if the fault is too serious, then one shall depart from the company of the Templars, that one does not eat nor drink at any table with the Templars; but all alone by oneself, and to be submitted to the mercy and judgment of the Master and the Templars, so that one can be saved on the Day of Judgment.

## On Serious Offenses

**Rule 46. Self-Promotion & Pride are Punished** – Before all things we must ensure that no Templar, powerful or not powerful, strong or weak, who wishes to promote oneself gradually and become proud and defend one's offense, remain unpunished. But if one does not wish to correct it, one shall be given a harsher punishment. But if by pious counsel prayers are said to God for that person, and one does not wish to make amends, but wishes more and more to pride oneself in it, that one shall be Uprooted from the pious flock [**Expelled** from the Order]; according to the Apostle who says: *Auferte malum ex vobis*. That is to say: “Remove the wicked from among you.” It is necessary that you remove the wicked sheep from the company of the faithful Templars.

It is a grave offense to “promote oneself gradually”, which generally means persistently seeking elevation in status within the Order, typically by pursuing higher titles primarily for self-aggrandizement. The offense is especially committed when a person's efforts are more for self-promotion than for accomplishing missions of the Order as earned merit. Willfully refusing or delaying any mission as leverage to demand elevation is a most egregious violation of this rule.

This rule also establishes the principle that pride makes any wrongdoing even worse, as an aggravated offense. It emphasizes that the only thing worse than committing an offense is to “become proud and defend” it, or “to pride oneself in it”, requiring a “harsher punishment”.

When any offense is defended by persistent pride, thereby making it an extreme and aggravated offense, then “one shall be Uprooted”, triggering *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order.

**Rule 47. Disciplinary Measures by the Master** – But the Master, who must hold in one’s hand the staff and the rod – the staff, which must sustain the weaknesses and strengths of others; the rod, which must beat the vices of those who would sin – for the love of Justice, by counsel of the Patriarch, shall make sure to do such things. But also, as Monseignor Saint Maxime has said: “May the leniency not outweigh the offense; nor excessive harshness [of punishment] cause the sinner to return to wicked deeds.”

This rule requires that all wrongdoing must be punished “for the love of Justice” to protect the innocent.

The Grand Master may exercise certain Emergency Powers as established in customary international law, as necessary for state security, to defend against attacks, coup or sabotage. The key phrases “must beat the vices... [and] shall make sure to do” highlights that these powers are not some mere privilege, but rather are a sacred obligation.

### **On Rumor**

**Rule 48. Defamation Condemned as Evil** – We command by divine counsel that you avoid as plague: envy, rumour, spite, slander [Defamation]. Thus each shall diligently guard against that which the Apostle said: *Ne sis criminator et susurro in populo*. That is to say: “Do not accuse nor malign the people of God.” But when a Templar knows clearly that a fellow Templar has sinned, quietly and with collegial mercy the one shall be chastised between the two privately, and if one does not want to listen, then join with another Templar, and if that one scorns the one and the other, before the whole chapter the one must manifestly recant [one’s Defamation]. Those are filled with great blindness who disparage others, and many are filled with great sorrow who do not guard against carrying envy towards others; by which they will be plunged into the ancient wickedness of the Devil.

Defamation was always regarded by the Templar Order as the most despicable and sinful practice, inherently embodying the “wickedness of the Devil”. This makes Defamation itself one of the evils which all Templars are sworn to fight against, as Defenders of Justice. It also means that those who engage in Defamation are precisely those “Enemies of God” whom the Templars are sworn to fight and defend against.

## **That None Shall Take Pride in One's Faults**

**Rule 49. Pride in Faults or Deeds is Forbidden** – Although all idle words are generally known to be sinful, those who speak them in self pride by their own sinfulness will go before the harsh judgment of Jesus Christ. Which demonstrates to us that which the prophet [King] David said: *Obmutui et silui a bonis*. That is to say that in faith one must refrain even from speaking good, to hold silence. Likewise one must refrain more and cease to speak evil to escape the penalty of sinfulness. We prohibit and firmly forbid for any Templar [to recount] the brave deeds one has done in the world, which would be better called follies of the necessities of Knighthood, and the pleasures of the flesh which he had with immoral women, not to recount to any Templar nor to any other; and if it occurs that one hears such told by another Templar, to immediately make them silent; and if one cannot silence them, to immediately leave that place and not give one's ears or one's heart to the peddler of filth.

## **That None Shall Ask**

**Rule 50. Request Equipment Only from the Master** – This custom we command to properly keep and firmly guard among the others, that no Templar shall request neither the horse of the other nor their armaments. In this manner it shall thus be done, if the infirmity of the Templar or the weakness of one's horses or of one's armour is known to be such that the Templar cannot go out for the needs of the Order without damage, to come to the Master, or to one who is in such position in this office after the Master, and show this need in pure faith and in true comraderie, and to thereafter remain in the disposition of the Master or of one who holds such office.

## **On Horses and Squires**

**Rule 51. Minimal Retinue of Knights** – Each Templar Knight may have three horses and no more, without the permission of the Master, because of the great burden of poverty which presently exists in the Order of God and of the Temple of Solomon. To each Templar Knight we grant to have three horses and one Squire, and if that Squire serves charity of one's good will, the Templar must not beat them for any offense which one does.

Many parts of the Temple Rule, such as Rules 51-53, are specific to medieval equipment such as horses and chivalric arms of the Middle Ages. As a practical matter, in the modern era these rules would simply be interpreted as the equivalent (or analogous) modern equipment, such as motor vehicles and other working tools and equipment.

## **That No Templar Have an Ornate Bridle**

**Rule 52. Decorative Equipment Forbidden** – We completely forbid that any Templar have gold or silver on one's bridle, nor on one's stirrups, nor on one's spurs. This is to be followed if one buys them; but if it occurs that such an old harness be given to one in charity, that the gold or silver is tarnished, that the resplendent beauty will not be seen by others, nor pride: one may well have it. But if a new harness is given to one, the Master shall determine what one will do.

It is generally prohibited to use decorative equipment which displays or implies excess of wealth or pride. Historically, this would invite enemies to target and attack the Knight more aggressively, to seize the attractive equipment. Similarly, this can motivate others to robbery or theft. Strategically, this can create jealousy or envy, and provoke unethical competition or even sabotage. Morally, it tends to promote or endorse materialism, giving the appearance of valuing wealth or pride over spiritual pursuits.

### **On Lance Covers**

**Rule 53. Equipment Accessible for Swift Action** – No Templar shall have a cover, neither over shield nor over lance, as this is no benefit, whereas we expect that this would be greatly damaging.

The principle of this rule is that all working equipment or resources must be accessible and ready for action at all times. In the modern era of “information warfare” and “legal warfare”, this can involve having reference books and computer data well organized and readily accessible for swift action in defense of Truth and Justice.

### **On Horse-Feed Bags**

**Rule 54. Proper Care of Service Animals** – This commandment which is established by us is to everyone a beneficial thing to follow, and for this we command that it be firmly held henceforth, that no Templar shall make a horse-feed bag of linen or wool principally, nor of anything else, except string-mesh.

This rule evidences a humane concern for the comfort and well-being of animals, to prevent their suffering and even avoid discomfort. The underlying principle of this rule is the proper care of service animals, and respect for the benefits of their support as God's creatures.

In the intense heat of the Middle East, open feed bags (which tend to cover the mouth) can inhibit healthy breathing, and can cause food spoiling or grow infection. A closed bag of wide-spaced string-mesh (dispensing straw through the holes) is used to promote “slow feeding”, which stimulates health and also increases riding time.

## **On Hunting**

**Rule 55. Hunting Forbidden for Animal Rights** – We collectively forbid any Templar to hunt a bird with another bird. It is not fitting for the religious to engage in pleasures, but to hear willingly the commandments of God and to be often in prayers and each day to reconcile with God, with tears in one’s prayers, the sins which one has committed. Nor shall any Templar presume to go especially with such one who hunts a bird with another bird. As it is fitting for every religious person to go simply and humbly and without laughing nor speaking many words, but reasonably and not shouting loudly: And for this we command especially to all Templars, that they not to go in the woods with longbow nor crossbow, to hunt animals, nor accompany one who would do so, unless out of love to protect them from faithless pagans. Nor should you go after dogs, nor shout, nor chatter, nor spur on a horse for desire to hunt a wild beast.

A sacred doctrine of kindness to animals, and moral rights of animals as God’s creatures, is established here as a core part of Templar values. Hunting for pleasure is defined as inherently sinful. Using one animal to hunt another is considered immoral and wrongful. Dogs, who are among the most emotional and affectionate of God’s creatures, are especially protected from any interference.

## **On the Lion**

**Rule 56. “Lion” Rule Doctrine of Self-Defense** – It is the truth that to you is given especially, as if by a debt, that you must give your lives for your Brothers [and Sisters], just as did Jesus Christ, and defend the land from pagan miscreants who are Enemies of the Son of the Virgin Mary. That aforesaid prohibition [against hunting] does not apply to the lion, as it comes circling and searching that it can devour, and its hands are against everyone and the hands of all are against it.

This rule is the famous mandate that Templars “**must give your lives**” for one’s fellow Templars, as part of Self-Defense of the Templar Order as an institution.

This “Lion” Rule declares that the mandate for care of and kindness to animals “*does not apply*” to lions or such dangerous predators which threaten “*against everyone*”. This reflects the Common Law doctrine of “Self-Defense”, customarily defined to include defense of oneself and also of others. This proves that all rules mandating peaceful conduct “do not apply” in situations of Self-Defense of oneself or others.

The “Lion” Rule also has a metaphorical meaning which is direct and abundantly clear: It declares that any rules of politeness “do not apply” in rightful response to any form of predatory behaviour.

### **How They May Have Lands and Workers**

**Rule 57. Taking Rights Only Justly by Law** – This type of new Religion [*Lat. genus novum religionis*] we believe by the Holy Scriptures and by divine providence took its beginnings in the Holy Land of the East. Let it be known that this Religion of Knights [*Lat. religionis miliciam*], and thus Religion by armed Knighthood [*Lat. sic religio per militiam armata*], are permitted to strike the enemies without sin [*Lat. hostem sine culpa feriat*]. For this we judge that by right you are called Knights of the Temple, with double merit and special virtue [*Lat. speciale probitatis*], and permitted to have lands and workers, houses and fields to hold and govern Justly, and take your rights to them only as specifically established.

**No Specific Intent to Kill** – The original phrase “*to strike the enemies*” (from the earlier Latin) reveals that the true intent of Templar warfare was only to “strike”, without any specific purpose to “kill”, highlighting an emphasis on defensive and proportional force without destructive intent.

**Right to Own Property** – The authorization to “*have lands and workers*” does not imply any supposed conquering of lands, but rather is simply a declaration of the right to keep and own personal property. That was a necessary clarification, that although Templars should not hold personal property while residing in monastic facilities of the Order, they are permitted to own an estate.

**Lawful Rights Upholding Justice** – To “*take your rights*” to property “*only as specifically established*” requires that it must be lawfully acquired, without violating the rights of others, by exercising one’s rights under law. It also mandates that the Templars must “*govern Justly*” over their holdings, possessions and estates.



## On Tithes

**Rule 58. Permitted to Receive Tithes from the Order** – You who have abandoned the pleasant riches of this world, we believe you to be subjects of good will and poverty; thus we establish for you who live the communal life to receive tithes. If the Bishop of the institution to whom the tithe should be rendered by right wishes to give it to you in charity, with the consent of the Council, they may give from those tithes which the Church possesses. But if any layman still retains those tithes of his patrimony to his detriment against the Church, and wishes to leave them to you, by the grant of the Prelate and of his Council he can do so.

This rule introduced a historic new concept, that “tithes” (donations) can be paid not only by individuals to the Church, but rather the institution itself can also pay “tithes” (a portion of donations) to individuals. This established a new tradition unique to the Knights Templar, that the Templar Order could pay tithes to its Knights and Dames, and the Templar Priesthood could pay tithes to its own Clergy. The original phrase, permitting those “who live the communal life to receive tithes”, refers to the essence of “communal life” as giving one’s full-time service, skills and talents to the Templar Order.

**Opportunities of the Order** – This establishes the Common Law legal doctrine of “Institutional Opportunity”: All donations of “tithes” can only be shared with an individual Templar by permission, if the head of the “institution to whom the tithe should be rendered by right, wishes to give it to you in charity, with the consent of the Council”.

## On Giving Judgments

**Rule 59. Chivalric Judges to Protect the Weak** – We know for having seen that persecutors are without number and people who like conflicts and strive to cruelly torment others and the faithful of the Holy Church. By the clear pronouncement of our Council [of Troyes], we mandate that if anyone is in the regions of the countries of the East or in any other place, and requests anything of you, for the weak and for the love of Truth we command you to Judge the matter, if the other party wishes to allow it. This same commandment shall be held perpetually in all matters which will be bound to you.

This rule confirms the values of Justice as being at the heart of chivalric duties, especially in their interactions with the general public. It commands the Knights and Dames to uphold Justice by serving as Judges over various disputes, requiring “for love of Truth... to Judge the matter”.

## On Elder Templars

**Rule 60. Care for Elder Templars** – We command by compassionate counsel that the Elder and weak Templars shall be diligently honoured and shall be regarded according to their weakness; and, preserved by the authority of the Rule in those things which are necessary to their bodies, shall not be in any manner in distress.

## On Unwell Templars

**Rule 61. Support for Unwell Templars** – Templars who are unwell shall be given diligent help and care, and be served, according to what the Gospel says, and Jesus Christ: *Infirmus fui et visitastis me*. That is to say: “I was sick and you visited me”; and this shall not be forgotten. For those Templars who are unwell must be treated gently and diligently, that by such service without doubt you will gain the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus we command the Infirmier to provide diligently and faithfully those things which are necessary for diverse illnesses, such as meats, other meats, birds, and all other foods which support good health, according to the means and ability of the house.

## On Deceased Templars

**Rule 62. Honouring Deceased Templars** – When any Templar passes from life to death, from which nobody is exempt, we command with a pure heart to sing the mass for their soul, to perform the services of God by the Priests who serve Christ and are with you for a term out of charity, and all the Templars who are present where the body is and are with you for a term out of charity, throughout seven days, to say one hundred paternosters. And all the Templars under the command of that house where that Templar passed must say the hundred paternosters, as is said above, from the time they know of the death of that Templar, by the mercy of God. Additionally we pray and command by pastoral authority [*Fr. par l'autorité pastoral, Lat. pastorali auctoritate*], that a pauper be fed with such meat and such wine throughout forty days for the deceased Templar, just as if that Templar were alive. All the other offerings, which had been made without discretion upon the death of Templars and on the holidays of Easter and on other holidays, to which the Poor Knights of the Temple have become accustomed by their own wills, in all manners we prohibit.

**Order Within a Priesthood** – This rule features an unexpected phrase, “we... command by pastoral authority”, thereby declaring that this command itself (like all other commands) is an exercise of ecclesiastical authority of the Order, based upon the Ancient Priesthood of Solomon.

**Rule 63. Self-Sacrifice for Fellow Templars** – But day and night your prayers shall be with a pure heart, so that they can compare with those of the most wise of all the prophets; who said: *Calicem salutaris accipiam*. That is to say: “I will take the chalice of salvation.” That is: “I will avenge the death of Jesus Christ by my death. For just as Jesus Christ gave his body for me, I also am prepared in such manner to give my life for my Brothers [and Sisters].” This is an appropriate offering; truly a living sacrifice and very pleasing to God.

### **On Priests and Clergy who Serve in Charity**

**Rule 64. Supporting the Church of Our Lady** – All offerings and all forms of alms in whatever manner they be made, to the Chaplains and to the Clergy and to others who remain for a term in charity, by the entirety of the common Council [of Troyes], in all forms we command you to give them. The servants of the Church, according to the authority of Our Lady of God [**Fr. Damedieu**], have only food and clothing, and do not presume to have any other thing, unless the Master by one’s good will wishes to give them [something] out of charity.

**Giving Non-Profit Donations** – Templars are required to actively make charitable donations and contributions, in all ways possible, at all times possible. Accordingly, to be a “Templar” necessarily means to actively volunteer for charitable and non-profit organizations, and to proactively and generously donate to charitable and non-profit causes, as frequently and meaningfully as possible.

**Priestly Authority of Our Lady** – This evidences the authentic doctrinal philosophy of the medieval Templars, that the “**authority**” which the Templar Priesthood “**possesses**” is precisely the authority of “**Our Lady of God**”, as representing the feminine face of God.

**Clergy of Templar Priesthood** – This rule defines “**servants of the Church**” as being those who are under the direct authority and command of the Templar Grand Master, meaning the Templar Clergy of the ancient Priesthood of the Temple of Solomon, as the denomination of Ancient Christianity.

### **On Secular Knights**

**Rule 65. Service in Secular or Monastic Chivalry** – There are Knights [and Dames] in the Order of God and of the Temple of Solomon, who serve for mercy and remain with you for a term; whom we, for mercy, ask and indeed firmly command you, that if during [their term] the power of God takes any one of them to one’s end, for the love of God and for collegial mercy, one pauper shall have seven days of food for that one’s soul, and every Templar being in that house shall say thirty paternosters.

Under the header “**Secular Knights**”, this rule specifies that some Knights and Dames are “**in the Order of God**” in its monastic aspect, “*and*” (indicating separately) others are “**of the Temple**” in its chivalric aspect, serving “**for a term**”.

By definition, the term “**secular**” means that such Knights and Dames can be from any religion, or even no religion at all. Serving “**for a term**” means by a contract of professional commitment, without any requirement for monastic vows nor participation in the ecclesiastical life of the Order. It is sufficient for Secular Knights and Dames to profess the Vow of Chivalry, and to live by the Temple Rule, Code of Chivalry and the Templar Code, as defenders of the principle of Faith including all religions.

### **On Secular Knights who Serve for a Term**

**Rule 66. Leaving the Order in Good Standing – To all the Secular Knights [and Dames] who desire with a pure heart to serve Jesus Christ for a term and [to serve] the Order of the Temple of Solomon, we command to faithfully purchase an appropriate horse and armaments and whatever will be useful to them for such needs. Additionally we command for both parties to put a price on the horse and to put that price in writing, that it not be forgotten; and all things needed by the Knight, his Squire and his horse for their lives, and even the horseshoes, shall be given according to the means of the house by collegial charity. If during the term by chance it occurs that the horse dies in service to the Order, if the house has the means, the Master shall replace it. If at the end of his term the Knight wills to return to his country, half of the price of the horse the Knight shall leave for charity to the house and the other half if he wishes he shall receive from the alms of the Order.**

This rule documents that the Templar Order had a standard arrangement of service “**for a term**”, evidencing that many Knights and Dames were not only allowed, but actually expected, to eventually leave the Order. These facts prove that despite popularized misconceptions, it was not prohibited to leave the Order, and there was certainly no supposed punishment for doing so.

The provision that a departing Knight or Dame should be given half the price of one’s horse reveals a practice of giving a “parting bonus” for a person leaving the Order after meritorious service. This confirms that leaving the Order was not only permitted, but is something that was usually done very much in good standing.

## On the Commitment of Sergeants

**Rule 67. Sergeants & Adjutantes by Commitment** – Whereas the Squires as much as the Sergeants, who wish to serve in charity in the Order of the Temple for the salvation of their souls and for a term, come from diverse regions, to us it seems beneficial that their Commitments be received, that the envious enemy does not put into their hearts for those to renounce, nor to retreat from their good promises.

This rule establishes that Sergeants are admitted by making a “Commitment” of service, and thus not by monastic vows. Accordingly, Sergeants are analogous to Secular Knights, who swear to live by the Temple Rule, the Code of Chivalry and the Templar Code, but are not required to participate in the religious or ecclesiastical aspects of the Order. The key phrase that “Commitments be received” implies they are physical objects to be received in hand, thus evidencing that they are *written* Commitments.

## On White Mantles

**Rule 68. “White Cloaks” Became Light Brown** – By the common counsel of everyone in Council we forbid and command to be Expelled, as a familiar vice, those who without discretion being in the Order of God and the Knights of the Temple, that Sergeants and Squires shall not have White Cloaks, from which has occurred great damage to the Order; for in the regions beyond the mountains have been false Templars and the married and others, who would say they were Templars of the Order; but they were of the world. Those brought us so much shame and damage to the Order of Knighthood, that those same Squires prided themselves in it; for this caused many scandals to arise. Therefore [they] shall assiduously [strictly] be given black robes [clothes]; but if those cannot be found, such which can be found in that province, those shall be given; or whichever shall be the lowest price, known as Burelle [Light Brown].

This evidences that the famous Templar “White Cloaks”, used only during the first few early years, soon fell out of use by the Order. This Rule, originally intended for Sergeants and Squires, became increasingly used to modify and phase out the White Cloaks for all Knights and Dames. Applying the theme of “Burelle” (which comes from the French word “beurre” for “butter”), the Templar robes were actually required to be a buttery cream color, which is basically a sand-colored light brown.



**“White Cloaks” Rule** – This “White Cloaks” Rule condemns “false Templars” who are “of the world” of “pride” by unauthorized self-aggrandizement, under penalty of “*command to be Expelled*”. Accordingly, wearing a White Cloak became a symbolic metaphor of usurping falsely claimed authority. If any Templar falsely claims or portrays oneself as having exaggerated and unauthorized authority, displaying false pride in furtherance of worldly ambitions such as status, that offense requires *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order.

### **On Married Templars**

**Rule 69. Admitting Married Templars** – If those who are married request the comraderie and blessings and devotions of the Order, we grant that you receive them in such manner, that each upon their death grants [to the Order] a portion of one’s estate and all which one will acquire from now on. Meanwhile one must lead an honest life and endeavor to do good towards the Templars. But one must not take to wear white robes, nor the White Cloaks; And if that Lord dies before his Lady, the Templars must take the portion of his estate, and all remainder shall be for sustaining the life of the Lady; because it would not seem right to us that such worldly Brothers should reside in one house with Templars who have pledged their purity to God.

This Rule clearly allows married men to join the Templar Order, and does not actually discriminate against them. However, it does address some traditional concerns that married life inherently carries worldly demands which could interfere with active contributions to the chivalric missions.

The deeper underlying principle and spirit of this Rule is really an obligation of married brothers to be sensitive to the burden of sacrifice made by the unmarried Knights. This requires the humility and modesty to avoid calling any attention to one’s marriage. The practical solution established by this Rule was a requirement for married brothers to be seen making major contributions to the Templar Order.

### **On Sisters**

**Rule 70. Accepting Sisters with Monastic Modesty** – The company of women is a dangerous thing, in that the old Devil through the company of women has misled many from the straight path to heaven. From *now on* ladies should not be received as Sisters in the Order of the Temple; thus, very dear Brothers, *henceforth* it is not appropriate for this practice to become a custom, that the flower of purity will always appear among you.



This rule was authentically limited to the context of monastic life. It specifies that it is the “**company of women**”, in particular “**among you**”, which could undermine the monasticism of the men, and not merely the fact of women being admitted to the Templar Order. This meant that ladies should not to be “**received as Sisters**” only within Templar houses where the celibate monastic brothers were living. Accordingly, women could be admitted as Sisters and Dame Templars otherwise, and could reside in female monasteries (convents) of the Templar Order.

The qualifying phrases “**From now on... henceforth**” reveal that during the foundational 12-year period from 1118 – 1129 AD, some women in fact had been admitted as Sisters and Dame Templars. The statement that it was “**not appropriate for this practice to become a custom**” confirms that such “**practice**” of admitting women did in fact already exist. It also clarifies that the only intent of this rule is for that established practice to not be promoted as a “**custom**”, meaning that women should not be proactively recruited into the Templar Order.

Therefore, the authentic Rule was simply to ensure a reasonable degree of separation of the female Dames from the male Knights, primarily for the purposes of modesty supporting a focus on monastic spirituality.

### **That They Not Have Familiarity with Women**

**Rule 71. Limited Contact & Modesty with Women** – *We believe it to be a dangerous thing in every religion [Fr. a toute religion, Lat. omni religioni] to look too much upon the face of a woman. And for this none of you shall presume to kiss a woman, neither widow, nor young girl, nor mother, nor sister, nor aunt, nor any other woman; and therefore the Knighthood of Jesus Christ must avoid in all manners to kiss any women, by which men have perished many times, that they can converse and remain perpetually with a pure conscience and a sure life before the face of God.*

In this rule, the idea that it is “**dangerous... to look too much upon the face of a woman**” is not the commandment. Rather, as indicated by the words “**for this**” and “**therefore**”, it is only mentioned as a reason for the real policy, which is to “**avoid... to kiss any women**”. Moreover, the specific commandment is actually not to “**presume**” to kiss a woman, which means only not to take initiative.

Accordingly, provided that the man does not “**presume**” to seek a kiss, the woman exercises her own initiative to give a kiss, and the man cannot “**avoid**” the woman’s clear intention to kiss him, then such kiss is not prohibited.

Therefore, even this 12<sup>th</sup> century rule is not incompatible with accepting women into the Order as Sisters and Dame Templars (provided only that the Brothers should not take to actually kissing them by their own initiative).

Such rules which limited interaction with women are most accurately interpreted simply as traditional requirements for modesty, respect and professionalism, to accommodate women into the Templar Order in an appropriate way.

### **Not Being Godparents**

**Rule 72. Brothers & Sisters Avoiding Worldliness** – We command to all of the Templars that none from now on shall dare to hold children over the [baptismal] font, and none shall be ashamed to refuse to be godfathers or godmothers; as this [worldly] shame brings more glory than sin.

The intent of this Rule was essentially to discourage major commitments to worldly life, although it was not a strict requirement. The reference to Templars also being “**godmothers**” is conclusive proof that women were in fact admitted into the Order as Sisters and Dames Templar. Indeed, if there were no women in the Templar Order, there would certainly be no need to write a commandment to prohibit being “godmothers”.

### **On the Commandments**

**Rule 73. Rules Administered by Grand Master** – All of the commandments which are said and written above in this present Rule are within the discretion and in the guardianship of the Grand Master.

This rule provides for Emergency Powers, as established in customary international law, placing enforcement of and exemption from the Temple Rule at “**the discretion... of the Grand Master**”.

## Selected Additional “Hierarchical” Rules

After the Temple Rule was translated into Old French ca. 1138 AD, it was later expanded with additional “Hierarchical Rules” which increased it to 609 rules by ca. 1150 AD, up to 656 rules by ca. 1250 AD, and finally up to 685 rules by ca. 1290 AD. All of those later rules remained within the context and general framework of the original 72 Rules, which continued to serve as the core principles of the way of life in the Templar Order.

Many of the “Hierarchical Rules” simply repeated many of the same rules, such that only a few of them were actually new and separate rules. This part presents a restorative and comprehensive selection of those which are unique and distinct as separate rules, and which are most relevant to the accurate interpretation and authentic practice of the original 72 Rules as the founding Charter of the Templar Order.

### **Here Begin the Provisions of the Temple**

**Rule 77.**      **Entourage of Templar Masters** – The Master must have... one Templar Chaplain... one Templar Sergeant... and one courtly Valet... And he must have... one Saracen Scribe [as interpreter], and one Turcopole [Muslim] who must be kept in the caravan [entourage].

Note that the term “**Master**” here includes the Grand Master, but also refers to any other leader of a Branch or outpost of the Order, such as a Prior, Commander, or Master of a monastic house.

**Saracen Scribe** – The term “**Saracen Scribe**” specifically meant a Knight or higher Nobility from the Sultan Salahadin (also spelled “Saladin” by European historians), as an official delegate received from the Royal Order of Salahadin. This reveals an established practice of some degree of diplomatic relations between the two sovereign Orders of Chivalry, despite otherwise being opponents.

**Arab Turcopole** – A “**Turcopole**” is a native or ethnic Arab, traditionally from Syria, and usually culturally Muslim but independent, typically from mixed Muslim and Christian parents, serving as light cavalry at arms supporting the Templar Knights.

**Muslim Membership** – This rule established that Templar leaders – and even the Grand Master – “**must have**” both a “**Saracen Scribe**” from Salahadin and an armed “**Turcopole**”, as permanent fixtures in one’s personal entourage, including in one’s camp or even in one’s own tent. This demonstrates a strong level of mutual trust, and evidences a prominent tradition of the closest possible cooperation with Arabs and Muslims. It further evidences an authentic role for general participation of Muslims in the Templar Order.

**Rule 92. Autonomy of Templar Subdivisions** – When the Grand Master departs from the Kingdom of Jerusalem, he may leave in his place... another Templar, and one who remains in his place does not hold powers, except to advise on anything which happens in the territory and which the Grand Master cannot come for, and to hold Council, and bear arms: as all are within his command. The Grand Master should not send any Templar in his place to the territory of Tripoli nor Antioch, over those who are its Commanders, except to be present for anything which may arise in the territory, to advise... and in these things they should obey him. If the Grand Master wishes to send one of the worthy Templars of the Order overseas in his place for the needs of the Order, he should do so by Council and send.

This rule establishes the basic principle for the status of Branches of the Templar Order, as being autonomous. In particular, this applies to Grand Pories, Pories and Commanderies, as well as any territories of the Order. It describes how the Grand Mastery practices a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of subdivisions, rather providing strategic support to the divisional leadership.

**Rule 151. Gathering Food Without Hunting** – All gathering of food is forbidden to monastic Templars, both the food of the house and of other people, except for green vegetables of the fields, and fish, and birds, and wild animals, if they know how to take them without hunting; for hunting is forbidden in the Rule.

The prohibition against hunting (Rule 55) is confirmed here as a doctrine of kindness to animals, allowing to “**take them**” for food, but only “**without hunting**”, and thus only by humane and peaceful means. The practice of gathering food for “**other people**” indicates a reason why “**hunting is forbidden**”, that Templars should not be seen openly using weapons of warfare during peacetime. By providing another reason, this appears to be motivated by the underlying Templar doctrine of kindness to animals.

**Rule 256. Punishment for Damage from Hunting** – If a Templar hunts, and damage comes of it, the habit [uniform] is at the discretion of the Templars whether to take it or leave it remain.

This clarifies another reason why hunting is forbidden (Rule 55), emphasizing the likelihood of causing “**damage**” or harm to people or property of others, which could be punished by defrocking. By providing another reason, this appears to be motivated by the underlying Templar doctrine of kindness to animals.

**Rule 315. Care of Service Animals** – Each Templar must zealously take care of one’s equipment and horses. No Templar should run one’s horse if it is not rested, nor gallop without permission... One may go out for pleasure at a walking or trotting pace. No Templar should run one’s horse over a complete course without permission. ... No Templar may impulsively race one’s horse against another person over half a course without permission.

This commandment to “**zealously take care of... horses**”, specifically that a horse should be “**rested**”, confirms the Templar doctrine of kindness to animals, especially for the comfort and well-being of service animals.

**Rule 379. Kindness to Animals** – No Templar should place harness or ropes on one’s horses, nor anything else in order to make them ready for riding, without permission. And two Templars should not ride upon one horse.

This proves that the famous Templar “Horsemen” Seal, depicting two Knights riding upon one horse, was intended as only symbolic, and does not mean that such was ever done. This confirms that the Seal symbolizes the shared sacrifice of poverty and hardship endured by the founding Templars, with such sacrifice specifically shared by the Knights together with their service animals.

Note that this rule was added ca. 1150 AD, while the earliest artifact of the Horsemen Seal is dated ca. 1158 AD, such that the rule conclusively proves the symbolic intent of the Seal. It is apparent that this rule was added prior to or in connection with adopting the Horsemen Seal, purposely to prevent animal abuse from any Templars who might take the symbolism literally.

**Rule 285. Enemies of the Templar Order** – When the Templars have left the chapel, if they are not waging war or they have not been given any other command, each should go to one's place and repair one's armour and equipment... or anything else that serves their duties of office. And each Templar should ensure that the Enemy [Satan] does not find one lazy, for the Enemy attacks more boldly and more willingly with Evil desires and vain thoughts and mean words [Defamation], a lazy person than he does one whom he finds busy in good work.

This establishes, and most directly defines, that the primary “**Enemy**” of the Templars is none other than the Biblical Satan, the Devil, who “**attacks... with Evil desires**”. Templar scholarship establishes that the Enemies of the Order are essentially those who are involved with doing Evil works of Satan, and thus are actually evildoers in general, and Secret Societies of Satanists specifically, including even those who may pretend to be Christians.

**Rule 339. Role of Elders of the Order** – And let it be known that the Elders of the Order and those who cannot perform their duty for the benefit of their souls and of the Order should act in this way: For let it be known that harm comes to the Order when a Templar keeps... equipment [and holds titles] without doing one's duty to the Order. The Elders should set a good example to the others, and should zealously ensure that they do not commit any offense, not... in anything, so that especially the young Templars should be mirrored in them, and from the behaviour of the Elders the young should learn what behaviour they should adopt.

### **Here Begin the Provisions of the Turcopoles**

**Rule 169. Turcopoles as Templar Brothers** – A Brother Turcopole... if he is in lodgings or in camp, and alarm is raised... the Marshal should signal to him once what he must do. And that Turcopole must go out to any place, and send reinforcements, to that area where the alarm is, one or two Turcopoles to see what it is; and then he must inform the Marshal... what he can order and direct by his command.

A “**Turcopole**” is a native or ethnic Arab, usually a Muslim, serving both as light cavalry and as an expert advisor on Arabian and Muslim customs. This rule, referring to a “**Brother Turcopole**”, evidences that Arab Turcopoles were regularly admitted to the Templar Order as Brothers, and thus fully in general membership analogous to Sergeants or Secular Knights.

**Rule 170. Turcopoles Command of Knights** – And when the Turcopole goes with the Scouts and is given five or more Knights, up to ten, they are under command of the Turcopole.



**Rule 171. Turcoples Command of Sergeants** – All the Templar Sergeants, when they are at arms, are under command of the Turcopole, and without arms they are not, but the Turcoples are, whether at arms or without arms.

This section thus defines the role of Turcoples serving in full chivalric membership in the Templar Order: A Muslim Turcopole serves under a Christian Marshal, but has temporary command authority over the Knights when acting as a Scout, and over Sergeants when at arms.

## **These are the Things for which a Templar of the Order of the Temple is Expelled from the Order**

### **Offenses Causing Expulsion from the Order**

**Rule 224. On Simony** – The first thing for which a Brother [or Sister] of the Temple is expelled from the Order is Simony; for a Templar who enters the Order by Simony... cannot save one's soul. And Simony is committed by gift or by promise to a Templar of the Order or to another who can help them to enter into the Religion [*Fr. relegion*] of the Temple.

The offense of Simony, established by Scripture (Acts 8:9-24), primarily applies to positions of Clergy as an “ecclesiastical office” (Canon 149, §1, §3). This highlights the ecclesiastical status of the monastic Templar Priesthood of Solomon. It also indicates that this rule might not apply to Secular Knights and Sergeants, but only to the religious Knights and Dames of monastic vows.

**Rule 225. On Disclosure of Council** – The second thing is if a Templar Discloses one's Council [*Fr. chapistre*] to any Templar of the Order who was not there, or to another person.

**Containment of Politics** – Although this rule has been misinterpreted as supposed secrecy of beliefs or practices, its authentic text proves this idea false. The Old English phrase “hold Council” means to convene a meeting for deliberations on the affairs of the Order. Prohibiting “**Disclosure of Council**” thus only applies to political discussions, only as reasonable confidentiality to contain any negativity from politics, to preserve the spiritual focus of the monastic Order.

**No Secret Practices** – Forbidding to disclose political deliberations to any other Templar “**who was not there**” proves that this is not for Templars to keep any activities secret from the public, but rather only to keep all politics strictly confined to those present at the meetings. The mandate of secrecy for containment of internal politics does not permit any “secret practices” of the Order. Indeed, all Templar beliefs and practices were fully written and preserved in the historical record for all of humanity to see and learn, and the activities of the Order were always of a very public nature.

**Rule 227. On Theft** – The [next] thing is Theft, which is understood in various manners.

In customary law, the “**various manners**” of Theft include any unlawful misappropriation of property, whether by removal, concealment, withholding, or other forms of impeding access to property, even by its destruction as sabotage. It could also include any wrongful acquisition of property or benefits by fraud, extortion or duress.

**Rule 229. On Conspiracy** – The [next] thing is to make Conspiracy; for Conspiracy is made by two Templars or by more in combination.

In customary law, “**Conspiracy**” is a crime of combination for any unlawful purpose against the rights of others. In Common Law it is often called “Conspiracy Against Rights”. This offense includes Conspiracy against any fellow Templar, against the Order itself, or even against the rights of outsiders or the general public.

**Rules 321, 46. For Shifting Blame** – The “Provocateur Rule” commands that one “**must take care to not Provoke... to anger or wrath [as] a strict commandment**” for which “**Justice must be done**” (Rule 321). Provoking is usually Jungian Projection of shifting blame, by false accusations, to deflect from and “**defend one’s offense**” and “**pride oneself in it**”, requiring that “**one shall be Uprooted from the pious flock [Expelled from the Order]**”, triggering *mandatory automatic Expulsion* (Rule 46).

**Rule 337. For Usurping Authority** – No Templar, unless one is the heir of Nobility or descended from the heir of Nobles, should wear a White Mantle, nor should the other Templars permit one to do so. But if the parent of any worthy person died before they could be received into Nobility, and was such a person which should and could be a Noble, their heir should not lose one’s Nobility because of it. Rather, such person may be a Knight and Templar of the Order and wear a White Mantle.

**“White Cloaks” Rule** – This command that “**No Templar, unless one is... Nobility... should wear a White Mantle**”, is a restatement and confirmation of the “White Cloaks” Rule, by which wearing a White Cloak became a symbolic *metaphor of usurping* falsely claimed authority.

The “White Cloaks” Rule gives real enforcement power to the commandments that “**No person shall be elevated among you**” (Rule 34), prohibiting any Templar “**to promote himself gradually**” (Rule 46). If any Templar falsely claims or portrays oneself as having exaggerated and unauthorized authority, displaying false pride in furtherance of worldly ambitions such as status, that offense requires *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order (Rule 68).

**Rule 430. For Perjury** – Further you should know that there are some other things for which a Brother [or Sister] of the Temple could be Expelled from the Order. For it is established in our Order that when the Grand Master or another who has the power [of office]... shall make one swear upon the Holy Scriptures that one will tell the Truth about everything which he will ask you... [and] if you have lied and later it is proven that you have lied... you will be severely put to shame, and **Expelled** from the Order for it.

This rule evidences the Templar origins of the Common Law custom and official practice of modern Courts of Law, demanding a “sworn” statement, swearing to “tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth”, with notice that one must answer “under penalty of perjury”.

### **These are the Things for which a Templar of the Order Loses One’s Habit**

#### **Offenses Causing Suspension from the Order**

**Rule 233. Refusing a Command of the Order** – The first thing is, if a Templar refuses a command of the Order and persists in one’s error, and does not wish to follow the command as it was given, one should lose one’s habit... For it is said in our Order that when it is commanded to a Templar that one perform the duties of the Order one must say “On behalf of God”; and if one says “I will not do it”, immediately that Commander shall assemble the Templars and hold Council... for the first promise that we make is obedience.

The essential purpose of an Order of Chivalry, by definition, is to accomplish missions for the benefit of humanity. If members refuse to perform the commands to implement those missions, they must be censured, or else the very concept of the Order as an institution would lose all meaning.

**Rule 313. Not Requesting Release from Command** – When the Master gives a Templar any command, that Templar should say ‘On behalf of God’, and must perform the command if one can and knows how. And if one cannot or does not know how, one must ask someone to ask the Master to release one from that command, because one cannot do it, or does not know how, or because the commands are unreasonable; And the Master is bound to release that Templar, if one sees that the matter is as claimed. And in such manner shall each Commander behave to every Templar who is under one’s command. And so each Templar should say ‘On behalf of God’ to every command that one’s Commander gives, and then do as is said above.

While chivalric commands must be obeyed, they are not absolute. If one truly does not have the capability to perform a command, or it is not reasonably possible for it to be performed, then one must ask to be released from it. However, claiming to be merely “too busy” with “other commitments” does not mean that one “cannot” do it, and is no excuse.

**Rule 246. Receiving Simony** – If a Templar receives something from a secular person by reason of which one should aid them to become a Templar of the Order, one may not keep the habit by this: for one commits Simony.

**Rule 260. Causing Loss to the Order** – If a Templar of the Order causes damage [loss] to the Order knowingly, or by one’s negligence [*Fr. defaute*]... the habit is at the discretion of the Templars whether to take it or leave it remain: because all damages are forbidden to us.

In customary law, causing damage or loss by negligence may include missed opportunities or lost income by non-performance of one’s duties, which would otherwise have been assured if one had diligently pursued an assigned mission.

**Rule 453. For Lying** – If a Templar burdens oneself by lying, one should not keep one’s habit.

**Rule 454. For False Accusation** – For it is known that when a Templar accuses another Templar in one’s Council of something for which the Brother [or Sister] of whom the thing is accused could be expelled from the Order if it were proven, and the accuser cannot achieve [prove] it, one should lose one’s habit if one does not wish to retract... And it is known that such Templar who in such manner has retracted in one’s Council should never be believed against any other... nor should they request one’s advice, because one has proven oneself tainted by wickedness, and no-one, once it is proven that one is wicked, should ever be believed against any person of goodness.

## Discipline on Campaign

### Discipline of Working Groups on Field Missions

**Rule 366.** **Elder as Commander** – When the Templars are in camp [on campaign], they should have one Commander who... should be one of the Elders of the Order, such who fears God and loves his soul.

**Rule 367.** **Not to Take Liberties** – When the Templars are in camp... they should behave in [all things] and in everything else as is said in the Rule they should... Each Templar should ensure that the other Templars, especially one's companions, behave well like worthy persons and as established... [as] the Rule commands, and that they all do not take liberties to go rogue nor elevate themselves and do things which are against the honesty and good customs [laws] of our Order.

**Rule 382.** **On Holding Council** – And the Officer who organizes the campaign should give to each group a Commander of Knights... And that Commander of the mission should hold Council with them, if there happens to be no-one superior among them.

**Rule 383.** **“Provocateur” Rule** – And when the Templars are in small groups [on campaign], they should strive hard to behave to the honour of God and the Order, and the benefit of their souls. And each one must take care within one's power not to anger another Templar.

### On a Brother who has Contact with a Woman

**Rule 236.** **Contact Alone with Woman in Sinful Place** – If a Brother engages in contact [*Fr. estoit ataint*] with a woman, for we consider ‘contact’ [*Fr. tenons a ataint*] if the Brother enters a wicked place, or a house of iniquity, with a sinful woman alone in private [*Fr. soul a sol*], or with bad company; he may not keep the habit...

**Rule 594.** **Contact Laying with Woman in Sinful Place** – If a Brother has contact [*Fr. est atains*] by laying with a woman, and we consider as ‘contact’ the Brother who is found in a wicked place or a house of iniquity with a sinful woman: he may not keep the habit...

The offense of forbidden “Contact” is narrowly defined, as committed only if one (A) “engages” by “laying with a woman”, (B) in a “house of iniquity”, i.e. a brothel, disreputable motel with hourly rooms, drinking saloon or gambling hall, (C) with a “sinful woman”, i.e. a promiscuous female escort, and (D) “alone in private” or in “bad company”.

These criteria do not prohibit, and thus freely allow, the modern concept of merely “social contact”, consisting of respectable women studying, praying and working together with honourable men. This fully accommodates the interaction of Templar Brothers and Sisters, in mixed company, cooperating in furtherance of spirituality and the missions of the Order. It thus effectively allows and supports the full and equal participation of women in general membership in the Templar Order.

### **Monastic Life – Daily Discipline of the Templars**

**Rule 269.**      **Confession by Templar Chaplains** – The Templar Chaplains should hear the Confessions of the Templars; No Templar should make Confession to anyone else but them, because one may see the Templar Chaplain without permission [from the Church]. For they have greater power to absolve them on behalf of the Church than an Archbishop.

**Rule 279.**      **Mass Encouraged Not Required** – Each Templar of the Order should know that one is not committed to anything as much as to serve God, and each must apply all of one’s study and understanding to this, and especially to hearing the Holy service [Mass]; for this none should miss nor avoid [*Fr. faillir ne guenchir*], insofar as one is comfortable with it [*Fr. tant com il en soit aisiés*]. For thus says our Rule: If we love God, we should willingly hear and listen to God’s Holy words.

This confirms the Templar custom that while participation in religious services is strongly encouraged, it is not required. The phrase “insofar as one is comfortable” is consistent with exceptions for Secular Knights.

**Studios Learning of Truth** – This rule features the commandment to “apply all one’s study and understanding”, as part of the essential Templar “commitment” to “serve God”.

**Rule 324.**      **Wearing Hood Forbidden** – No Templar shall wear a hood [*Fr. chaperon*, monastic “*cowl*”] on one’s head.

This rule proves that despite popularized artistic depictions, the short mantles of the original Knights Templar never had hoods. Monastic hoods were originally used for warmth in unheated churches of the European cold climate, but in the intense heat of the Middle East this could provoke heat exhaustion.



**Rule 325. Polite Courtesy & Etiquette** – No Templar should ever blaspheme [**Fr. jurer**, “swear” upon something unholy] neither angry nor calm, nor should ever speak a word of malice nor wickedness [**Fr. laide ne vilaine**], much less do such thing. Each Templar is bound to say and to do all courtesies and all good words.

Note that the Old French word ‘*jurere*’, literally “to swear”, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century meant only blasphemy, such as swearing upon something unholy, or swearing an invocation of unholy forces. The word “swear” did not come to mean “cursing” in the sense of mere profanities until the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

This standing commandment to “**say and do all courtesies**” means to practice the customary Rules of Courtly Etiquette, which originate from the Ancient Priesthood of Solomon, and were actively practiced and promoted by the Knights Templar as the first “courtesy books” of “polite society” in medieval Europe.

**Rule 326. Not to Hold Copies of Commands** – No Templar shall hold instructions [**Fr. tenir retrais**, to hold provisions or commands] nor the [Hierarchical] Rule, without holding them by permission of the Order; for it was forbidden and has been forbidden by the Order for brothers to hold them, because the Squires had found them one time and read them, and our garrisonings [**Fr. établissements**, military positions] were discovered by men of the secular world [**Fr. du siècle**], which thing could cause damages to our Order. And so that such thing could not happen, the Order established that no Templar shall hold them, no Templar if one is not a treasurer [**Fr. bailli**], such who could hold them for the office of the treasury.

Contrary to misinterpretations, this rule – forbidding to hold or carry copies of commands without permission – was never intended to keep any Templar beliefs or practices supposedly “secret” from the world. The authentic text reveals and fully explains the true principle: Only to maintain reasonable confidentiality of strategic plans and proprietary methods, as all public institutions do and should do, only as necessary to prevent sabotage of its humanitarian missions.

The only intent of this rule was to prevent military enemies from learning the battle rules and command structure of the Order. In the modern era, only the underlying principle of rightful confidentiality of proprietary methods or official instructions remains relevant. The end result is no different than existing protections of intellectual property laws which equally apply to all lawful organizations.

**Rule 327.**      **Avoiding to Carry or Hold Money** – None should carry nor hold money without permission. When a Templar requests money from any officer of our treasury [**Fr. bailliz**] to purchase any thing, one should buy as soon as possible that for which one requested it, but another thing one should not buy without permission.

**Rule 330.**      **Travelling with Money by Permission** – But the Master may well give permission to a Templar, when such travels from one territory to another, or when such relocates from one place to another, to carry money for performing one’s duties and to purchase what one requires... but as soon as that Templar will be there where one shall stay, one should return what remains of the money to the treasury [near that place] ...

**Rule 630.**      **Taking a Wife or Another Religion** – If a Templar goes out from the house and takes a woman as a wife, or enters into another religion [**Fr. en autre religion**], it would do no harm if one returns to rejoin the house; but one must not bring anything into it which one should not bring, and will not be held by anything to the woman, nor to that religion nor to us also, for he has returned from the one and from the other.

This rule clearly permits a Templar to “enter into another religion”, even allowing to return to the Templar base in good standing. It establishes that in such case, the Templar “will not be held by anything... to that religion nor to us also”. This conclusively proves the inter-faith nature of chivalric service in the Templar Order.

This rule also openly allows a Knight to go out and “take a woman as a wife”, and then return to the Templar monastery. In that case, it is established that he “will not be held by anything to the woman... nor to us also”. To “not be held... to the woman” is a reference to the traditional requirement that the Knight must make arrangements for her care and safety, thereby allowing his active service unhindered by concerns for her welfare.

**Rule 433.**      **Arrangements for Wife of a Knight** – If a worthy [married Knight]... can also arrange for his wife that she enter and join any religious Order... without the customs of the Order being broken, he can return to the house if it pleases the brothers, without making penance; but he shall make his Vow and his profession just as before at the beginning.

This rule again confirms that Templars could be married. Historically, the Knight was required to “arrange for his wife [to] join any religious Order”, to ensure her safety and caretaking, allowing the Knight to focus on missions in the field. After getting married, the Knight was also required to renew his Vow of Chivalry and profession to knighthood, to remind him of the necessary priority of the chivalric missions over worldly distractions.

**Rule 541.**      **Prayer for Brother & Sister Templars** – Good Templar Nobles you should know, that every time we depart from our Council, we must pray to Our Lord for peace... and for our Order, and for all religious Orders, and for all other religious people, and for our Brothers [**Fr. Confrères**] and for our Sisters [**Fr. Consoeurs**].

This is another clear and direct reference to Templar Brothers and Sisters, confirming that women were in fact fully admitted as “**Sisters**” and Dame Templars in the Order, serving together equally in general membership.

**Rule 679.**      **Accepting the Services of Women** – Nor should you ever take the services of a woman, unless being for illness of your body, or by permission from one [a Templar Master] who grants that you may.

This rule allows Knights to have the services of women for any appropriate reason, requiring only that permission be granted by the Order. Those rules which limited the interaction of men with women are most accurately interpreted as simply traditional requirements for modesty, respect and professionalism. Far from excluding women from participation in the Templar Order, such rules actually served to facilitate and accommodate women in an appropriate way.

## **Reception Into the Templar Order**

The induction ceremony of the Templar Order has been the subject of unending speculation, caused by the insidious fictions of the secular French persecution of 1307 AD. It has also been the subject of much fantasy, arising from the revivalist and reformist inventions of 18<sup>th</sup> century fraternities, which are neither monastic nor chivalric orders. Wholly disproving all of the popularized misconceptions, the authentic text of the Temple Rule always publicly declared the genuine practice of induction into the Templar Order.

## **Formulae of Profession**

**Rule 274.**      **Profession of Canonical Life** – The profession of Templar knighthood or damehood begins with the commitment “**to renounce the secular world... to profess obedience to the Canonical institution [**Lat. *canonicam institutionem***, i.e. of Canon law] and according to the precepts [Rules and Code]... to assume the way of life of our Templars**”. (This is followed by many liturgical prayers.)

This commitment to the “**Canonical institution**” is a constitutional declaration that the Templar Order is an institution of Canon law, emphasizing that the underlying governing body of law for the Order is Canon law as customary international law.

This rule evidences that the Templar induction ceremony, as with all Templar practices, is necessarily canonical, containing none of the blasphemous ideas which have corrupted the popular imagination from false Defamation.

**Obedience to Commands** – This rule mandates that all Templars must show “obedience to the [Templar] institution” and “the precepts” of the Templar “way of life”. This requires living by the Temple Rule, the Code of Chivalry and Templar Code, which are thus established as sets of standing commands which require obedience to their principles.

### **How One Should Make a Templar and Receive in the Order**

**Rule 658. Instructions on the Rule** – For each person seeking to become a Templar: “... They must explain to one the great hardships of the Order, and the charitable commandments thereof...”

As with much of the Templar way of life itself, most of the induction ceremony actually consists of teaching the principles and commands of the Temple Rule. The ceremony is thus not some fraternal nor cultish “rite” as mistakenly supposed, but rather an intensive briefing in the founding chivalric doctrines and canonical rules of the Order. The only purpose of the induction is to ensure that new Templars have the necessary knowledge and understanding of the Templar way of life.

**Rule 659. Questions on Impediments** – The candidate is asked several questions, to verify that there is no legal, canonical nor practical impediment to chivalric service: “... And of all these things which we asked of, one is free and clear [*Fr. quites et delivres*]; Nor are they any impediment that one could and should become a Templar...”

Historically, those customary questions, addressing relevant situations of the medieval era, are asked under penalty of perjury (Rule 430). The essential questions which effectively address relevant issues in the modern era are actually found in traditional Canon law:

**Canonical Impediments** – Under Canon law, an individual is excluded from membership in the Order in the following situations:

(A) *Incompatible Societies*: The person is a member of a “secret society” or one based upon any form of elitism (Canon 278, §3);

(B) *Lifestyle of Worldliness*: The person has a lifestyle predominantly characterized by excessive “worldliness” of secularism, materialism or commercialism (Canon 282, §1);

(C) *Exercising Civil Power*: The person assumes a governmental “public office” involving “the exercise of civil power” over its citizens, except in defense of rights (Canon 285, §3);

(D) *Excessive Political Role*: The person practices a profession primarily characterized by “an active role in political parties” or an unnecessary degree of civil politics, except as “required for the defense of rights” (Canon 287, §2); or

(E) *Incompatible Appearances*: The person projects a behavioral or professional appearance which is “unbecoming” or “foreign” to Templar principles, and thus appears incompatible with the monastic or chivalric principles of the Order (Canon 285, §§1-2).

**“White Cloaks” Impediment – False Titles** – The “White Cloaks” Rule metaphorically defines usurpation, symbolized by wearing a White Cloak for “false” claims by “pride” in things “of the world”, which requires *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order (Rule 68). This specifically applies to false claims of “Nobility”, which is part of Royalty, and includes Diplomatic status from sovereignty (Rule 337). Therefore, any false claims of illegitimate Diplomatic, Nobiliary or Royal status, or any analogous abuse or misuse of Titles or status, constitutes a canonical impediment invalidating membership.

**Rule 678**. **Final Gesture of Induction** – “And then the one who holds Council shall take the mantle [cloak] and shall place it around the one’s neck and tighten the laces. ... And such who makes one a Templar should raise one up and kiss on the mouth.” (This is followed only by more speeches and instructions from the Temple Rule, all while the Council is in session.)

The final gesture, which concludes the induction ceremony, is placing the mantle cloak upon the new Templar, and then welcoming them into the Order with a symbolic Apostolic Kiss of Discipleship. Note that in the modern era, the Kiss of Discipleship is no longer practiced, as that 1<sup>st</sup> century custom is too readily misunderstood in degenerate secular societies.

This rule evidences that the entire induction ceremony is conducted only “in **Council**”, meaning during an official meeting of the governing leaders of the house. Nothing in the rules indicates any further procedure, neither being taken aside, nor anyone coming after for any other purpose, nor anything additional taking place. Once the mantle is placed upon the new Templar, the induction is complete, the Council meeting is dismissed, and nothing further happens. There is nothing secret, nor private, nor unofficial, nor anything beyond what is publicly declared in the Temple Rule as the Charter of the Order.



## The Holding of Ordinary Councils

**Rules 220, 222. Grand Mastery Convocation** – *For Grand Mastery meetings, the convocation prayer has a special formula: In the name of [God,] the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, [and Our Lady of God,] as God and Council have elected us to serve, God help us to be obedient to the Order all the days of our lives, and to keep its good customs and laws, for as long as it shall please God. (220) Almighty God, have mercy upon your servants and lead us on the path of eternal salvation, that we may desire those things pleasing to God and perfect them in all virtue, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (222)*

This medieval Templar convocation is the origin of the modern “Oath of Office” for government service in democratic countries. The statement that “**God and Council have elected us**” is a reminder of democratic governance, serving both God and the Templar State. The pledge “**to be obedient to the Order... and to keep its good customs and laws**” became the modern oath to “support and defend the Constitution”. The invocation “**God help us**” became the modern “so help me God”. (5 US Code 3331.)

**Rule 386. Convocation Prayer of Branches** – *For the “ordinary” Councils of Branches of the Order, meetings are convened in this manner: Each Templar, when one enters the Council, should Cross oneself in the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit... and standing one should say the paternoster before sitting down... And when all the Templars or the majority have arrived, the Chairperson should say to all... ‘Good and noble Templars, stand up and pray to God that He sends the Grace of the Holy Spirit among us today’, and then all the Templars should rise to their feet and [all] say a paternoster.*

**Rule 387. Sermon & Secrecy of Council** – *And the Templar Chaplain, if one is present, should also say a prayer as one sees fit, that is the Sermon, before the Council meeting begins. And then they should sit, and let it be known that they must take care that no-one who is not a Templar of the Order may listen when they hold their Council meeting.*

**Rule 395. Proceedings Only After Prayers** – *Moreover you should know that neither the Master nor any other Templar who holds Council should do anything that he should do with the advice of Council and the judgment of the Templars, before they have said the Prayers and heard any Sermon. For at the beginning of all the assemblies of the Council that we hold, we must ask for the Grace of God.*



## Round Table Principles at Council

**Rule 393. Speaking Turns Around the Table** – When the Templars are in Council... Each one should be quiet and keep silence [as others speak], and none should speak, until one is asked something, or unless someone does or says something unreasonable. (393: Part 1)

In accordance with traditional Templar Round Table principles, Council meetings are conducted simply by taking turns speaking, moving around the table in sequence.

**Rule 412. Begin with Experts then go Around** – When the [Master] asks the Officers for their advice on anything in Council, one should first ask those who should know most about the matter and the customs [laws] of the Order, and afterwards the others communally [moving around the table]. Each Templar, when one's advice is asked in Council, should say what seems best to oneself, for it should not be omitted out of love for one nor hatred of another, nor to appease one or anger another, but one should have God fully before one's eyes, and one should do and say what one says and does for the love of God.

This provides that the Council Chair may begin with experts and advisors who “know about the matter” at hand or under consideration, and then proceed moving around the Round Table in turns thereafter.

**Rule 207. Divisiveness Prohibited** – The “electors” [Officers] of a Council “should love peace and concord within the house, and should not encourage differences [divisiveness]”.

**Rule 393. Rejection of Any Misconduct** – When the Templars are in Council, all should be against any one who does or says anything unreasonable. ... For each should be against any one who does or says anything unreasonable, and each one is obligated to make them make amends. And in no other way may a Templar accuse another Templar during his turn [to speak], except the Master. And the Master may and should accuse during one's turn [to speak] any offender whom he wishes, without formality. (393: Part 2)

This establishes that the principle of promoting “peace and concord” and “not encouraging differences” (Rule 207) is not at all passive, but rather requires active rejection of any divisiveness or misconduct, as “all should be against any one who does or says anything unreasonable”.

**Rule 384. Upholding Rules at Council** – And let it be known that the Templars who are in that Council should be against that Templar who is shown to commit an actual offense; For no Templar should knowingly uphold crime, and especially not in Council; For if one did so the judgment of the Order could be vilely corrupted in such a way that the religious would be lost.

This again confirms that promoting “peace and concord” and “not encouraging differences” (Rule 207) is not passive, but requires actively upholding all rules at Council, as all “should be against [any] who... commit[s] an actual offense.”

### **On Election of the Grand Master of the Temple**

**Rules 198-204. Upon Passing of the Grand Master** – When the Grand Master of the Temple passes and God summons him... (Rule 198) After this, the Marshal as quickly as he can must notify of the passing of the Grand Master to all the Commanders... for them to come to advise the Order... (Rule 200) And from this day after the Grand Commander shall carry the seal of the Grand Master and make all the commandments of the Order in place of the Grand Master until the time when God has provided the Order with a Grand Master as governor. And so he must be as much obeyed as the Grand Master if he were alive. (Rule 204)

This specifies that the Grand Commander of the Grand Mastery automatically serves as the temporary substitute for the deceased Grand Master pending election of the new Grand Master, to ensure stability and continuity of governance of the Order.

**Rules 206-207. Electors of a New Grand Master** – Upon the day of election of the Grand Master... the Grand Commander shall summon the majority of worthy Knights [and Dames] of the Order, and not all the Templars... who are officers and the most prominent [Fr. des plus comunaus]... (Rule 206) And all of the thirteen electors of the Grand Master must be such (Rule 207).

The “most prominent” of the “worthy Knights” of the Order clearly describes the Grand Officers of the Grand Mastery, which traditionally had thirteen members, plus any seats by diplomatic reciprocity in customary law. The electors are thus the Grand Mastery, but if comprised of fewer than thirteen Grand Officers at the time, those may select additional electors for installing a new Grand Master.

**Rules 215-218. Nomination & Election of Grand Master** – And all of the thirteen electors... (Rule 215) will begin to conduct the election and to nominate [*Fr. nomer*, lit. ‘to name’] the persons who seem beneficial to elect as Grand Master. ... And if such is chosen who God wishes to be found beneficial to hold this office, and there is common accord of all thirteen or of the majority, such one shall be elected Grand Master of the Temple. (Rule 216) And if such happens by which they are able to agree upon one person to elect, such one is the Grand Master who by common accord of the majority is nominated and elected. (Rule 218)

This establishes that candidates for the Grand Master position must first be nominated by the Grand Officers and any other appointed electors. One nominated candidate is then elected, striving for a unanimous vote if possible, but otherwise requiring a simple “majority” vote if the deliberations are more complex.

### **Council Rules On Accusations and Defamation**

**Rule 321. “Provocateur” Rule** – When the communal Templars ask the craftsmen Templars [of professions] for something they need, they should ask for it quietly and calmly; And the craftsmen Templars should give it to them quietly and without argument or disturbance, if they have it [if possible]. And if they do not have it [cannot], they should refuse them quietly and calmly. And if they do so in any other way, Justice must be done, for discord could arise between the Templars because of it. And let it be known that each Templar must take care to not provoke another Templar to anger or wrath, and this is a strict commandment of the Rule.

**Rule 384. Charges No Excuse for Defamation** – And if any Templar sees another Templar doing anything they should not, or behaving in any wicked manner, one should chastise the person alone once. And only if the other does not wish to make amends by one’s request or advice, one should call one other Templar and the person should be warned, listening to the other. And if the person does not wish to make amends even with the counsel of two Templars, the good Templar should take the person... to the lowest Council to assemble, in front of all the Officers, and pass him over to the jurisdiction of the Order, for this the Rule commands.

If one finds a reason to charge fault by accusing another, this does *not* justify – and *cannot* excuse – engaging in Defamation to third parties. This rule is crystal clear, even repeating twice, that one can only tell another if the person “does not... make amends”. Thus, the moment a person accepts and corrects one’s fault, it is already strictly prohibited to tell any other person at all.

This rule also clearly limits whom the charge can be communicated to, first to *only* “one other” Templar, and then to *only* “the lowest Council” of the Order, such as one’s local Branch. It is thus absolutely prohibited to repeat the charge to anyone outside one’s local Branch, and especially to anyone who is not a Templar, which would be a grave offense of wrongful Defamation.

**Rule 398.**      **No Hearsay or External Accusation** – A Templar must not accuse another Templar in front of any *outsider* who is not a Templar of the Order. And a Templar may not and must not accuse one’s fellow Templar neither in Council nor outside, nor bring any charge against them, through *hearsay*; but only of anything directly seen or heard oneself may one make accusation and bring a charge against them. And if one does otherwise, one is very wretched and shall be held to be a Conspirator.

In Common Law, “Hearsay” is a type of defective evidence which is inadmissible, defined as testimony reporting not what the person directly witnessed, but merely repeating a statement purportedly witnessed by another. In this rule, the compound offense of “Conspiracy” is established by relying on Hearsay from another to make the accusation, or by relying on an “outsider” as an excuse to spread word of the accusation as Defamation. Establishing Hearsay as an offense of Conspiracy triggers *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order (Rule 229).

**Rule 399.**      **No Accusation for Trivial Things** – When a Templar wishes to accuse another, one must take care to not charge him with trivial things.

This rule means that any accusations must only be of an actual offense or violation of the rules, which must have been actually committed. Accusing another of purely subjective and ethereal faults, like merely thinking something or simply voicing an idea, is not a legitimate charge, but rather constitutes wrongful Defamation.

**Rule 412.**      **Sole Justification for Accusation** – No Templar should accuse another Templar except out of charity and with the genuine intention of saving the person’s soul.

**Rule 400.**      **Proper Manner of Accusation** – When he has permission [at Council]... the accuser should specify to the person calmly and quietly that thing in which he knows that person has failed. For none should falsely accuse one’s fellow Templar. And so one should speak in this way: ‘Good Templar, plead for mercy for such-and-such a thing’, and one must recount factually only that thing or fault as it was said or done. And the one who is accused [if true] should say: ‘Good Templar, I plead for mercy to God and Our Lady, and to the Council, for that thing’.

**Rule 413. Right of Anger at False Accusation** – When any Templar is accused of any thing or fault which one in fact has committed, one should not become angry, but rather one should thank the other who has accused of it.

**“Provocateur” Rule** – This addition to the “Provocateur” Rule is highly revealing, as it commands to “not become angry” only in the case where “one in fact has committed” an offense. By definition, this clearly, directly and necessarily means, that one is *specifically permitted* to become angry, without limitation, at *any accusation* which is provably *false*.

**Rule 401. Full Right of Truthful Defense** – None shall lie in Council. But if the thing of which one is accused is false, one should speak in this way: ‘Good Templars, I plead for mercy to God and Our Lady for such accusation... but you should know that it is false... [and] God forbid that I would ever do such a thing’. ... And one should speak fully on the matter. For, just as it is said above, one must not lie, neither for shame of the flesh nor for fear of the Justice of the Order.

**Rule 402. Witnesses Must Speak Truth** – If there is anyone who knows about the facts [of an accusation], they must rise and come forward at Council, and must stand as guarantor of what one has seen and heard. And they must say only the Truth and nothing more, which they must not hide nor change, neither out of love nor malice, neither on behalf of the accuser nor one defending, for it would be a very grave sin, which shall be considered a Conspiracy.

**Perjury in Council** – The Temple Rule mandates that “None shall lie in Council”, and all “must say only the Truth” (Rules 401-402). This reflects the Common Law doctrine of customary law, that all statements and proceedings at Council are automatically and officially under Oath, and thus are inherently under penalty of Perjury. It specifically declares that “if you have lied and later it is proven that you have lied [under Oath]... you will be severely put to shame, and Expelled from the Order for it”, such that Perjury in Council requires *mandatory automatic Expulsion* (Rule 430).

**Wrongful Silence** – It is commanded that any witness who “knows about the facts” of an accusation “must come forward”, “must say the Truth”, and “must not hide”, and failure to do so constitutes the offense of “Conspiracy” with the accuser (Rule 402). Any person who knows an accusation is false, and fails to speak out to expose it as false in defense of the accused, is thereby guilty of Wrongful Silence, which constitutes both Conspiracy, and also Perjury in Council, both requiring *mandatory automatic Expulsion* (Rule 229, Rule 430).



**Rule 404.**      **Right to Accuse in Self-Defense** – If an accused Templar wishes to charge one’s accuser, because one knows that the accuser has failed or offended in anything, one may accuse them without asking any permission.

**“Provocateur” Rule** – This addition to the “Provocateur” Rule recognizes that Provocateurs very typically defend their own false accusations, by blaming the target of their accusations for “making accusations” in response to their own wrongful accusations. Precisely as rightful Self-Defense against such wrongful blame-shifting, this rule specifically confirms the absolute right to counter false accusations with true accusations, granting full immunity from any artificial blame by the real wrongdoers.

**Rule 408.**      **False Accusation in Council** – If two or more Templars make an accusation in Council... and the accused can prove... that it is false, then the Templar who was wrongly accused must be acquitted, and the false accusers must be found guilty of Lying against another, and shall also be charged with Conspiracy.

This establishes “**Lying**” as “**False Accusers**” against another “**in Council**” by two or more persons as the compound offense of Conspiracy (Rule 408), which thus triggers *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order (Rule 229).

**Rule 409.**      **False Accusation out of Malice** – If it occurs that two or more Templars falsely accuse another... [and] brought the accusation out of malice... the Templar who was accused is acquitted and cleared of that matter... and much Evil may be charged and grave wickedness counted against the other two, and even Conspiracy.

This establishes that false accusation by two or more persons is the compound offense of Conspiracy, which thus triggers *mandatory automatic Expulsion* from the Order (Rule 229). Beyond that, this condemnation of “**much Evil**” and “**grave wickedness**” also gives grounds for full *Excommunication*.