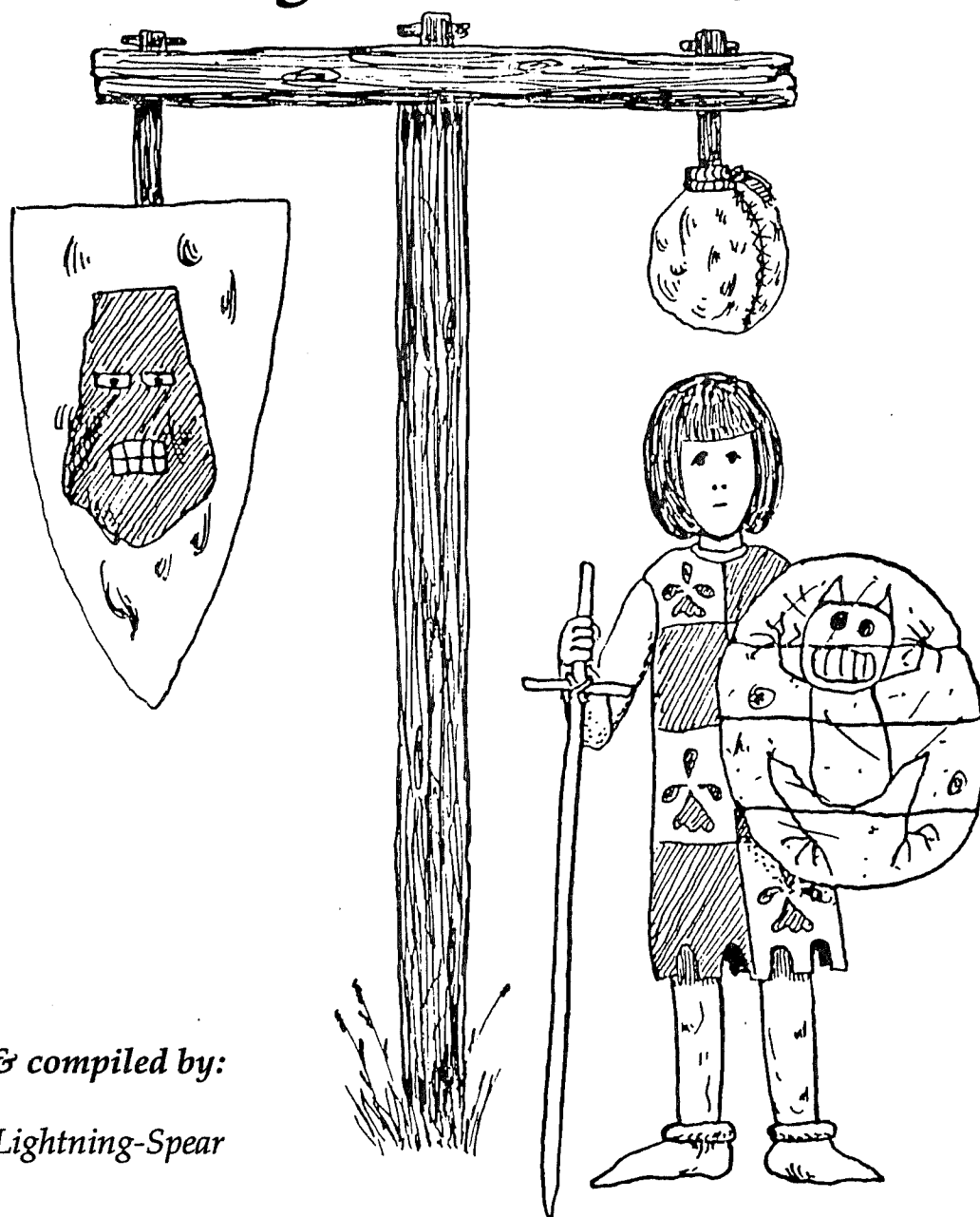


X Ω P

Chi Omega Rho

Pages Handbook



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Royal Rangers

X Ω P

Pages Handbook

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Chi Omega Rho
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Welcome to Chi Omega Rho. By now, you have many questions in your mind about what Chi Omega Rho is, and what will be required of you. Some of those questions will be answered here, some for reasons you will discover later will not be answered quite yet. I will in no way try to guess the reasons that have brought you this far into X Ω P. There are about as many reasons for joining Chi Omega Rho as there are Knights and Ladies. The important thing is that you are here. By completing the application at the back of this handbook you will have passed into the first stage on your way to knighthood. (Many times in this handbook I will use the term Knight. It is not meant to be chauvinistic there is just a greater percentage of Knights than Ladies. The Ladies of Chi Omega Rho are entitled to all the same privileges as the Knights.) Let me again say welcome to the realm of the medieval. You have just become a page, the first step of your journey has been done. It is my sincere hope that this handbook will help you as you prepare for the Quest and your entrance into Knighthood. May you find Chi Omega Rho as rewarding as I have.

Sir Roric Lightningspear
Vice-Regent Shire of the Crusader
Evangel College 1988-89

Chi Omega Who???

As a new member you probably have some questions about the origin of Chi Omega Rho, as well as the purpose. Royal Rangers has always sought quality programs, but there was a gap between high school and adult leadership. Many of the rangers lost interest through their college years. The Collegiate Order of Royal Rangers was formed in 1972 to fill in this gap. The greek letters that make up the name come from first letters in the Collegiate Order of Royal Rangers. Michael Harris Arch-duke of Chi Omega Rho, in researching the period, discovered an ancient Christian monogram using the letters A X Ω P. The Greek letters Chi and Rho are the first two letters in the Greek word for Christ (Χριστός). The Alpha and Omega symbolize Christ as the beginning and the end. The best interpretation for Chi Omega Rho would be "Christ, the end of all things."

Thus, the first major aspect of Chi Omega Rho is Rangers. Since we are primarily a ministry of Royal Rangers, you will be asked to help in a local outpost. In addition to the local outposts, there will also be opportunities to help at district and national functions. Keep in mind that your officers are fellow college students and realize that each situation is unique. Working in the local outpost is one of the most rewarding aspects of Chi Omega Rho.

The second major aspect of Chi Omega Rho is the theme. The

Collegiate order takes as a theme, Medieval Knighthood. This theme not only helps in our outreach to the local churches, but also right here on campus. Many of you may in fact have first become interested in X Ω P because of the theme. This theme gives Chi Omega Rho a unique identity. As a Christian warrior, the medieval Knight never avoided honorable battle. As Christians we must always be "Ready" to do battle with the enemy. In each aspect of the theme there will be many parallels to remind us of our heritage as a Royal Priesthood. Let us never forget Ephesians 6:17; as soon-to-be Knights of Cor, as well as already being warriors in the Army of God, let us strive to put on the whole armor of our God and King.

TRADITIONS OF KNIGHTHOOD

Chi Omega Rho follows in the traditions of Medieval Knighthood. This period covers from 900 to 1450 A.D. Chi Omega Rho members are encouraged to follow in that tradition by learning what the knight wore in everyday life and in battle, as well as becoming familiar with the skills learned by the knight for battle and recreation.

The Page

According to legend, a knight believed that the first piece of food fed to a baby boy should be from the tip of his father's sword. The father hoped that because of the child tasting the steel of the blade, the child would grow up to be a brave knight. At the age of seven the child was taken by invitation from his mother's company and placed in the castle of a knight. At the

castle, he would learn about armor and weapons in the castle's armory. He would run messages for the Lady of the castle, and develop himself in the tiltyard with games. The tiltyard was an open meadow near the castle, where the page would run, wrestle and learn how to use weapons, using wooden duplicates. He learned how to slash and parry with a blunted sword, learning all the defensive and offensive tactics. The page was taught to be an expert horseman. He became so balanced on a horse, he could vault on a horse and stand upright while in a canter. The page learned to blow the hunting horn and was taught to attend the mews. Here he learned falconry with certain restrictions. Other rules that a page was taught were:

1. Do not sit until told to.
2. When spoken to, do not fidget, wiggle, scratch, or lean against a post. (He was told to stand as still as a stone.)
3. Do not speak until spoken to.
4. To kneel on one knee before the lord of the castle.
5. To bow his head when answering.
6. To be courteous and helpful to ladies.
7. To follow and adhere to the principals of the Christian religion.
8. To sing and learn how to play a musical instrument.

The pages played with marbles and toy knives, played ball, seesawed, and walked on stilts. These sports helped develop the page and prepare him to enter squirehood.

The Squire

The page became a squire at the age of 14. Sometimes a simple ceremony was given to mark his advancement. The squire was taught the rules of chivalry and his skills continued to develop. He was taught how to properly clean the knight's armor, a ritual that he would do every day. One of his favorite games was "tilting at the quintain." This involved riding at a full gallop with his lance, striking a target, usually a brightly painted shield which pivoted. If the squire wasn't fast and agile enough, the quintain would quickly spin and knock him from his horse. The squire learned to groom the horses and take care of the falcons and the hunting hounds. Other sports the squire enjoyed were wrestling, fencing, boxing, and swimming. The squire also learned more quiet games such as backgammon and chess. For the most part, the squire was to serve his overlord. The squires attended tournaments with the knight and would help the knight during the tournament. He would wait in the lists ready to aid the knight by handing the knight another lance or weapon, holding a captured knight, or sometimes, during the heat of a tournament, join in the fighting illegally. A squire could strike a blow, if his knight was in mortal danger. In battle, this is one of the ways that a squire could be knighted before his 21st birthday. If a squire saved the life of his lord during a battle, he probably would be knighted right on the battlefield. In one instance, a squire captured an enemy knight

during battle. The knight was shocked to discover that his captor was nothing more than a squire, the knight dubbed him a knight on the battlefield to save face. The personal services that the squire had to perform for the knight were:

1. To stand guard on the castle walls.
2. To help his master into his armor.
3. To keep his master's armor polished and repaired (due to rusting).
4. To wake the knight up in the morning and help the knight dress.
5. To welcome visitors on the master's behalf.
6. To carve meat on the table according to special custom.
7. To help the knight prepare for bed and to sleep at the foot of his master's bed in case the master would need him in the middle of the night.

Sometimes the squire remained a squire the rest of his life, mainly because the squire couldn't raise sufficient funds for his armor and knighting. When the squire reached the age of 21 he was eligible for knighthood.

LEVELS OF CHI OMEGA RHO

Just as in traditional knighthood, there are different levels of Chi Omega Rho for possible members. Each expectant member will have to pass through each level before he/she can be knighted.

The Page Level

As a person interested in Chi Omega Rho, you should be

attending the Chi Omega Rho meetings faithfully prior to the induction. As potential members you must show a willingness to work and attend meetings. You should also have turned in the membership application at the end of this handbook. At this point, let me welcome you to the Realm of Cor. Only one step separates you from knighthood and that is a successful Quest.

The Squire Level

This level starts when as a page you begin your induction ceremony. You will remain a squire until you are knighted.

QUEST

Much of your concern as a page undoubtedly centers around the Quest, or induction ceremony. You may feel apprehensive about the secrecy involved; this is normal, we all had a few butterflies in our stomachs. In my case, it felt as if an all-out mle was taking place inside me. When a knight of old would set out on a quest, he was completely uncertain of what he would find. There were many perils, a few defeats, and surprisingly several victories.

The Quest strengthened the knight in many ways. The true victory of your quest may never come from obtaining some external prize. Instead, your greatest victory will come in the innerprize of accomplishment and self growth that will follow. Instead of fearing the secrecy, let it be a time of faith building.

As part of your Quest, you will be asked to bring the following items. If you have any trouble locating any of them,

let one of the knights or your friar know.

QUEST ITEMS NEEDED

1 wooden sword, 42" long with 8" crosspiece
1 candle
1 box of wooden matches
36" leather thong
36" rope (cotton cord)
1 small pouch (a sock works nice "If its clean")
1 bag parched corn (Corn nuts)
1 beef jerky
Small loaf of Bread (unsliced)
Grape Juice
Blindfold
Bible (preferably pocket-sized)
Bookpack or backpack (to carry all of this stuff)
Gift for the Friar (anything that you want)

AND REMEMBER -- Dress for the weather!!!

The Legend of Chi Omega Rho and the Crystal Sword

The Fall of Kirygrym

One day, the king's son, and his most trusted aid, the Keeper of the Crystal Sword, were discussing the affairs that kings and aids usually discuss when war is not foremost on their minds. You see, the King wanted his son to share the throne with him, to better prepare him for the day that he would be King. He was a bright lad, and showed great promise, and was well loved by all. Anyway, they were discussing these important things on their way to the jousting arena for a little practice in swordplay, both being clad in nearly full armor for the event. Suddenly, a beggar dressed in just a dirty brown tunic, with no sandals on his feet, came running towards them. The beggar fell at the prince's feet and clutched his armor-clad hand, begging for mercy.

Now, the knight, who's name is not recalled, and the reason

for that is not known, was visibly outraged at the beggar's appearance. Some say that the reason for his name being forgotten is because he was always called "the King's aid," while others say it was stricken from all records for reasons you'll soon learn. However, the knight cried out, "You wretch, how dare you speak of mercy and grovel so at the Prince's feet; you deserve no less than death." And with that, he withdrew the Crystal Sword to slay the seemingly helpless beggar. The Prince, thinking that his aid had gone mad to kill a helpless beggar, cried out, "Stop, in the name of the King!" and jumped in front of the beggar to shield him from certain death. But it was too late to stop the mighty swing of the knight's blade, and it continued on its course towards the beggar. However, the Prince, standing in the way, received the full blow of the sword. It cut through his thick, strong armor that had turned aside many blades and weapons of all kinds before, as if it were but mere paper, and cut deeply into his side. As the blade entered the Prince's vulnerable flesh, the sword burst asunder. Some say that this happened because the blade had never killed an innocent man before, and could not bear the thought of killing the prince, as if the sword had a mind of its own. Others believe that the sword was getting old, and had seen its better days. Whatever the real reason was, it probably will never be known. The prince crumbled to the ground, and the beggar jumped away from the angry knight. Soon, the King's guards appeared from all directions and gathered the nameless knight, who was still trying to slay

the beggar, yelling, "Get out of my way! The beggar must die. For it was he who meant to kill the Prince." The beggar was searched, but not a weapon of any kind could be found.

The nameless knight was then lead away to the dungeons to be stripped of his armor, and to await the decision of the Chamber. The whole Castle of Kirygrym (Keer-a-grim) prayed and fasted the whole day that the Prince would recover, but he never opened his eyes again, and died the next night. Those of the council cried for revenge, but the King would not heed them. He said to them, "I have already forever lost one of whom I love; losing another would only deepen my sorrow." The court declared, "He must be killed or banished from your sight until he has paid for his crime." The King knew this to be true, for it was written in the law, that one could not kill except in battle. Since the person charged was a knight, the law required that he be given a fair trial at once. Many were moved as the nameless knight spoke in his defense, but he soon realized that the hearts of the council were cold. So he turned to the people and spoke these words: "Beware; for that which is perceived as good may be full of evil. Keep your hearts pure before God, for He will show you what truth really is." He then was lead back to his dingy cell deep in the heart of the Castle. The council did not take long to decide, and pronounced him guilty, but the King would not suffer him to die, so he banished him from the Castle. The King also charged him with a Quest, that he could not return until he had gathered back all the shards of the Crystal Sword, that had scattered all

about the country.

It is said that when the Prince died, the King had taken all the shards of the Crystal Sword, climbed to the highest tower, and threw them out, then lo and behold, a mighty wind came and scattered them throughout the land. Others hold to the belief that it was those on the council that had hidden them all over the countryside. The King's heart suffered greatly from this, and he wondered what good it was being King, if he was powerless to save those that he loved the most.

After this was all finished, the King took the body of his son, and set out alone, though many would have gone, had the King allowed it to be so, and went out into the countryside to seek the face of God and to bury his son. It is believed that he buried his son in a grove of dogwood trees, for his wife had brought him into this world under trees such as these, and here is where he would forever sleep.

Upon his arrival at the Castle, he found his banners torn and thrown into heaps in the dirt. A lone black flag was now in it's stead. The king walked into the main tower of the Castle Kirygrym, his shoulders straight and head held high, then stalked into the throne room. There he threw open the great iron-shod doors to the hall, a storm of rage and fury upon his face. There upon the throne sat the very beggar that had caused the Prince's death. As soon as Scratch, the beggar, saw the King's rage, he leapt from the stone throne and ran to the nearest group of knights shouting, "Slay him, you fools! For he is to blame!"

All the knights drew their swords, but a single glance from the angry King forced them to hang their heads in shame. He then walked and stood before the throne, the guards fearful to cross his path. He turned to the shamefaced knights. "You base-born curs!" he said in a low rumbling tone of voice, "How dare you defile the Castle Kirygrym! For hundreds of years it has stood for courage, honor, and truth! And here you listen to a base deceiver! You do not merit the name of Knight! And I refuse to rule a pack of back-biting dogs!"

With that, he turned, and with his great battle-axe, he hacked and hewed at the great stone chair fashioned by his fathers. Like unto the sound of thunder and earthquakes it was as it rang throughout the castle. Finally, the King clove through the last remaining piece of the throne; nothing was left but a pile of useless rubble. He again turned, tears streaming down his dusty, sweat-streaked face and into his flowing grey beard. He took up his battered, notched axe and cloak, and walked to the doors, a fierce grimness set deep in his face. At the doors, he turned and spoke, "A beggar caused the downfall of Kirygrym, and as a beggar I will redeem it. You dogs go and redeem your own honor if you can, and leave Kirygrym, for she will shelter you no more." Then he turned and left the hall in a deafening silence until thunder began to rumble in the sky.

The King, realizing his error for banishing the Nameless Knight, knowing that the knight would never return until he had found the shards of the Crystal Sword, wandered abroad, searching

for him, that he may help in his Quest for the Crystal Sword. Along the way, the King would enlist the aid of all who were willing to take up the Quest, but he always continued on alone. To this day, not all of the shards of the Crystal Sword have been found, nor has the King found the Nameless Knight, though many reports and accounts of his passing have been recorded. All who aid the king in his Quest become part of a special order which uphold the principals and truths of Kirygrym. They call themselves Chi Omega Rho.

MEANING

This is not just a strange story designed just for your reading pleasure, but it also has a few spiritual applications that can be applied to it. The first major point that can be made is that the Nameless Knight struck down the beggar in the name of justice. No matter how wrong something is, we should never do something wrong to correct it. This may seem pretty simple or basic, yet I have seen people do wrong time and time again, and then justify why. How many times have you known someone to copy a paper for a class from a friend because the class wasn't an important one, or the teacher wanted something that you didn't think they should. The list goes on and on. We must guard ourselves from doing this same thing, but in different ways.

The beggar, once he got a foothold in the castle, was able to take control and destroy all that others had worked to build over the years. Once we do the wrong thing once, we all know

that it really is easier the second and third time, and before you know it, you're not even thinking that it may be wrong. It happens in such a way that we never notice it, and soon we are in a place where we feel that it is too late.

This story does not say that it is never too late, and that is because you, as a member of Chi Omega Rho, must decide how it will end. Will you allow that which has beaten you to rule your life, or will you fight back with all that you have, and pick up the pieces of your life and start anew? The Bible says that God will never leave us nor forsake us. We may think that He has, but He hasn't, because God stays true to His Word. We must believe Him and trust Him to help us through the difficult times, not only in college, but in life itself.

EPILOGUE

In closing let me thank those without whose help this handbook would never have been possible. The first is Lady Alatheia Stalwart who painstakingly proofread this text and has been a general encouragement and help mate to me. The others not in any particular order are Arch-Duke Sir Stalwart the Oak-Heart Knight, Sir Griswald the Grey, Sir Hurrin the Iron-Hammer. Not only have I taken from the writings of these men almost to the point of plagiarism, but each of these men have been influential in ways that they can never know. Each has brought a sense of sanity to the seeming insanity of college life. For this and much more I will be forever indebted to them.