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So plan now for next year.

Each year by June 30th we have these tasks to review and complete. And each year on July 1st we begin again, we begin anew. The question we ask is how can we make the New Year better than the old year? The answer most often is multifaceted. Each answer can open yet another avenue to be better.

When faced with what might be too many items to fix at once, we may be tempted to invoke the Serenity Prayer: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference." But this is little consolation if we do not understand that it is the courageous in the prayer who create the change.

Each change, or each action is to be for the advancement of the council, the Order if you will. Often the statuesque is unacceptable. Sitting on our laurels is unacceptable. If that is our strategy soon there won't be any laurels for us to rest ourselves on. True advancement, long-lasting and tangible change is what is expected and deserved.

Making the change is the first step. Should we plan better? Perhaps it's to involve all the officers in the operation of the council? Involve our younger members as officers? Or give strong membership growth the same commitment as strong programming? Once the change is made the convincing begins.

The reason for the change is to make the council more successful. The change itself is the vehicle to get to that success. Convincing people is much easier when you, as the leader, give the change the importance it deserves. Involve your officers, your committee, on the status of the change and how it is making the positive impact that is expected. Celebrate the gains that the change is making and if an adjustment is needed then make it.

Why mention all this in May? Because really July is too late. The planning, the decision making, the gathering of personnel needs to be done by July to be truly effective. Perhaps the first change is to commit to be ready on July 1st. Perhaps giving 12 full months of action is one of the first steps we need to help us be successful. Starting the real work of the council in July instead of September or October adds 1, 2, or 3 extra months on the job each year and can make our goals that much easier to attain. This may be the easiest change to make, but it isn't the last. We know that we can be better.

My Brother Knights, let us begin now to make the changes that will move our council toward success. We must thoughtfully support our officers. Then we must urge them to plan and be ready on July 1st. We must be ready to accept the changes that our leadership asks us to make. As long as the success of the council is the end game, then you and your brother knights will know that the course is correct. Constructive change can be our recovery from annual middle of the road performance, or worse. We have elected the leaders, we have placed our trust in them, and we must let them be courageous. Good luck.

Vivat Jesus!

Submitted by Brother SK Bill Country PGK, FDD, Past State Program Director

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