

Kappa Alpha Psi Initiation Ritual

1968

Due to copyrights this is not a verbatim, but a paraphrased display containing the key elements of this initiation ritual.

Procedure of formal meetings

1 The Polemarch is stationed in the middle, the Keeper of the Exchequer on his left and the Keeper of the Records is stationed on his right side. The Strategus and Lieutenant Strategus are stationed at the door.

2. The Sacred Delphine Shrine (the Altar of Kappa Alpha Psi) is placed in the center of the room. It is covered with a crimson and cream cover. On it the Holy Bible is opened to Proverbs, ch. 3.

3. Each officer wears the insignia of his office.

Opening Ceremony

The Polemarch opens the chapter meeting with three raps and orders the Strategus to see if the room is duly prepared and the members take their proper places.

All members say: We seek inspiration and guidance from the Great God of all the earth and the Holy Bible which He has given unto men as a lamp unto their pathway.

The Vice-Polemarch reads the first 10 verses of the third chapter of Proverbs.

After two raps of the Polemarch all recite the Lord's Prayer, the Great Purpose of Kappa Alpha Psi (achievement through Fraternity, Knowledge and Fidelity) and the creed: The fundamental purpose of Kappa Alpha Psi is ACHIEVEMENT. We desire to awaken within each member high ideals and an unquenchable desire to achieve both in college and in subsequent life in a place of usefulness and honor in the world. We believe that the virtues of Fraternity, Knowledge and Fidelity are potent means of realizing these ends. Believing this, we, the members of Kappa Alpha Psi, do hereby solemnly dedicate ourselves to the task of honorable Achievement in every field or human endeavor — in science, in art, in the industries, in religion, in all else that serves to promote the welfare of humanity – and pledge ourselves to encourage among us a Spirit of Fraternity, a broad and comprehensive knowledge of the phenomena and forces of the universe, and an unswerving Fidelity to each other, to the cause of Achievement and to the interest of mankind.

*Finally they sing the Kappa Alpha Psi Hymn.
The Polemarch declares the chapter meeting opened.*

Pre-initiatory preparations and General instructions for Initiatory Ceremony

The candidates for initiation are assembled at a place at some distance from the chapter room where they are met by the Pledge Master and one member for each initiate. These members accompany the initiates throughout the entire ceremony. The pledge is blindfolded and his hands are bound together in front of his body.

“Because of the effectiveness of the initiatory ceremony depends upon the psychological pressure that can be built up in the initiate, it is absolutely essential that once the blindfold has been applied no one speaks to or touches the pledge except the guide who speaks only to give directions.”

The pledges are brought to the outside of the chapter room and seated down in absolute silence.

Initiatory Ceremony Beginning of the Initiatory Ceremony

The members of the chapter take their stations. From within the chapter room sounds of thunder and lightning are heard. The Lieutenant Strategus raps twice on the door. This is followed by a number of raps made in rapid succession giving the effect of a rumble. The Lieutenant Strategus gives again two sharp raps.

The door is opened by the Strategus so everyone can hear what is being said within the assembly.

The Strategus announces the candidates as barbarians who desire to become members of the noble clan of Kappa Alpha Psi, because they realize that only as member of Kappa Alpha Psi they can fully imbibe the principles that are essential to success and true happiness.

The candidates, Lieutenant Strategus and guides are brought in and placed in front of the Polemarch.

The Polemarch then makes the candidates kneel in front of the altar and give the oath: I ...
in the presence of Almighty God and the members of Kappa Alpha Psi, here assembled, and at the Sacred Delphic Shrine, do solemnly swear that I will keep secret forever all things that may transpire or be revealed to me during my initiation.

The candidates are then seated, after which another alarm is sounded at the gate.

Three members, acting as ambassadors who were sent to treat the freedom of a brother which was abducted by Thracians.

The Thracians are planning to sacrifice this brother to their god Ares and are only willing to grant this brother his liberty if another is sent as replacement for this sacrifice.

After all members volunteered to be sent as a replacement the Lieutenant Strategus prompts the candidate to say that he will die for this brother.

The Polemarchus asks whether the candidate is sure to take his place and warns him that anyone who does so must endure atrocious tortures and death.

The candidate, so prompted, repeats his offer and is chosen to replace the brother. He is led outside the chapter room to a secondary room to wait.

The chapter room is prepared as an abode for the Thracians. The entrance of this room should have a number of torture instruments, such as clubs, paddles, switches, a burning fire with a branding iron, a rope made into a noose and other instruments of torture. The members, acting as Thracians, should be loud, wrangling and boisterous, in contrast to the quiet dignity of the Grecian assembly.

The Lieutenant Strategus leads the candidate and the guide to the door and raps sharply on the door. The blindfold is removed so that the candidate sees the instruments of torture.

The candidate is presented to the Thracians as a replacement for the brother in captivity, but this is refused as the Thracian Leader sees that the candidate is not a Greek, but may be a slave. The candidate is sent off unless he is willing to withstand the tortures given previously to the Greek.

Prompted by the Lieutenant Strategus the candidate insists on taking the place of the Greek brother.

This brother is set free and the candidate blindfolded and taken away to a quiet, unfamiliar room, where his shoes and socks are removed and he is being stripped to the waist.

In this condition, the pledge is led to the door of the torture chamber where he can hear what is going on within.

Tortures

The Lash: After a time of silence a member strikes the floor, a table of cushion a heavy blow with a strap. At the same time another members cries out as if in pain. The candidate is led in the room and made to bend over.

A member holds a ribbon, wet in ice water, but makes certain it doesn't drip, over the bowed back of the candidate. Simultaneously with the striking, the ribbon is let to fall on the candidate's back.

The candidate is then led to another part of the room to take the second test.

The Brand: In this test a member heats a branding iron to glowing over a fire. In the presence of the candidate this iron is used on a piece of raw meat so that the candidate smells the burning flesh. Another member has a test tube with some hot water in it.

As the signal is given the candidate is grasped and held firmly with his back to the fire and at the time the iron is placed on a piece of meat, the test tube with hot water is held a very short time on the candidate's back between the shoulder blades.

In another room members have completed the preparation for the third test.

Burning Sands: A small quantity of sand is divided into two parts and placed in a shallow pan or box or spread on a paper. The first portion is moistened slightly and kept at room temperature. The second portion is heated but is insufficiently hot to cause injury to the feet.

A pan of ice water, preferably containing cracked ice, is prepared. These three items are placed on the floor one stride apart. The pledge is instructed to take three fatal steps. He first steps onto sand at room temperature, the second stride is on the hot sand, and the third is on the pan of water.

The candidate is redressed and brought back to the temple of the Thracian priest. Only one candle is lit. The candidate is made to lie down on the floor, head towards the altar. The blindfold is removed. Over the candidate stands an executioner with a sword.

The priest enters and inquires whether all is in readiness for the sacrifice. He lights a small, red light and calls upon the god Ares to show his approval by another red light. However, a blue light is switched on.

All members react horrified and the Lieutenant Strategus cries out that the gods show disapproval with the sacrifice.

The candidate is set free and sent home. Blindfolded he is taken back to the Grecian assembly, where an alarm is sounded at the gate. He is admitted and after a welcome by the Polemarch seated to determine whether he is fit to share the glory and privileges of a member of Kappa Alpha Psi.

The Keeper of Records retrieves from the archives the sacred scroll wherein the high and holy purposes which find lodgement in the breast of every loyal member. The scroll is handed to the candidate to read and familiarize himself with the Grecian ideals. He is asked to manifest his fluency in interpreting Grecian scrolls. Unblindfolded he is unable to read the Greek due to the peculiar arrangement of the text, and, prompted by the Lieutenant Strategus says so to the Polemarch.

The Polemarch sends the candidate to the Hreat Oracle of Delphi to obtain the knowledge which he lacks. He is given a copy of the scroll, blindfolded and sent on his way.

The Strategus keeps the pledge walking until the members have arranged the assembly room to represent the Temple of Delphi . The room is arranged with an altar on which are a

crucible of fire and a single candle. No one is in sight. The Oracle should be concealed in a nearby room or behind a curtain. The Strategus removes the blindfold at the door of the room and they approach the altar. As soon as they reach the altar, the Oracle asks the candidate what knowledge he is seeking.

The Strategus explains what is being sought.

The Oracle rhymes: Let him turn to the Sacred Altar, fire enflame,
And barley white cake offer in my name;
And then remaining at the Altar pray
That Knowledge and high virtue may have sway
Over him and all his fellows evermore.
Till all are wafted to the Golden Shore .

Strategus asks candidate whether he hears what is being said and upon a positive reply he is made to show his obedience. Strategus shows the glowing flame to candidate, gives him a dry cracker and directs him to crush and sprinkle this over coals.

The candidate is prompted to say the following: Great Oracle, confer I hectacomb

In this fair fane, the mighty Delphic Shrine,
White barley cake, not filthy goats and kine,
At thy great Altar on this Grecian stone.
That I may strive and successfully achieve
Some human good that greatly should be wrought;
That I may attain the manliness I ought
And merit here the noble Laurel Wreath,
Vouchsafe to me the knowledge that is meet
To fathom mysteries in this precious scroll,
These living truths and principles unfold
As thou has ever done to valiant Greeks.

The candidate is made to slowly move the scroll above the fire. The English version of the motto will appear over the Greek version.

The candidate, prompted by the Strategus confirms that he applies for fellowship with Kappa Alpha Psi and starts to move away with the Strategus.

The Oracle stops them and warns the candidate for the perils and enemies on his journey towards membership.

The candidate is blindfolded, walked around the room until he is attacked by outlaws.

The outlaws start harassing the Greeks until the candidate is identified as a stranger. He is promised safe passage if he hands the Grecian Scroll he is holding. He refuses, stating he will give his life to preserve the secrets of the Greeks.

He is taken by some force and a noose of rope is placed around his neck and a fight starts.

During the fight a heavy weight strikes the floor. Three Outlaws fall to the ground as if

wounded. The other Outlaws stop and wonder. Chief Outlaw cries out that they are intervened by the God Apollo which wields in defense of those who worship at his shrine and the Outlaws flee.

The Strategus and candidate continue their journey and when they have walked around the room they knock on the door.

The candidate is admitted and introduced again. Strategus recounts the events, says the candidate has stood all the tests and proven himself worthy to be received as a member of Kappa Alpha Psi.

Polemarch asks the candidate whether he still wishes to enter the fraternity. Upon a positive answer he is seated, his blindfold is removed and is asked to explain the Great Scroll of Kappa Alpha Psi. With the aid of the English translation the candidate reads aloud the inscription on the great scroll: "Phi. Nu. Pi. Achievement through Fraternity, Knowledge and Fidelity. This is the great purpose of Kappa Alpha Psi."

The Vice Polemarch moves that the candidate is allowed to take the oath of allegiance and is duly received as a member. This motion is unanimously accepted. The candidate is led to the altar, made to kneel and place his hand on the Bible and made to repeat the oath of allegiance: I, ..., in the presence of Almighty God and the members of Kappa Alpha Psi here assembled, and at the Sacred Delphic Shrine, do hereby solemnly declare my unswerving allegiance to the Grand Fraternity of Kappa Alpha Psi, and do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will ever respect, obey, and defend its Constitution and all of the regulations, emblems, and ritualistic work thereunto appertaining.

After conclusion the Polemarch declares the candidate a new member and congratulates him. All other members come forward and join in the congratulations.

The new member is conducted to the outer room to dress in the appropriate garment and brought back in.

The Polemarch welcomes the new member and makes him familiar with the emblems, signs and ritualistic work of the Fraternity. The new member is told that the initiation ceremony was primarily designed to fix the motto, achievement through fraternity, knowledge and fidelity in the mind of new members. First the candidate had to offer himself as a ransom for a captured member, second the lack of knowledge was shown when the candidate could not decipher the Greek scroll, after which he acquired this knowledge at the Delphian Oracle and finally he showed his fidelity by not forsaking his oath never to give up the secrets he is entrusted with when the outlaws attacked him.

The new member is presented with the coat-of-arms of Kappa Alpha Psi, which meaning is explained by the Strategus.

After that the new members is made familiar with the signs of Kappa Alpha Psi. The recognition sign is made by placing the right hand to the face and removing it downwards as if stroking one's beard. This sign is answered by the same movement, but made by the left

hand.

The distress sign is identical, except that it is made twice in succession.

The grip is made by grasping the right hand in the usual manner of greeting, and by giving three distinct increases of pressure insufficient. These increases in pressure are to be made by both participants simultaneously.

Upon completion of the initiation, the new member is placed among the other members and the ceremony is closed.

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