

Vigils and Peerages

The vigil is an optional preparation to elevation to a peerage. As a further option it may include at some appropriate and convenient time an invocation, such as the ones that follow. The Crescent Principal Herald or another senior herald should give the invocation.

On Customization of Peerage Ceremonies

Every peerage elevation is intended to be special for the candidate. More than a wedding, which takes two partners' wishes into account, this is the candidate's ceremony alone. For most candidates, this will be the only time in the SCA that they get to be the center of attention and have things go their way.

The ceremonies contained herein are carefully constructed defaults, scripts formed by decades of tradition, and polished with consideration of history, theatre, and ritual. Nonetheless, they are not magical, nor is any part of the text sacrosanct. Some options are called out within the scripts, which should be discussed with the candidate. Do they want to be escorted in by members of the Order? Do they wish members of each of the Orders to speak on their behalf? What regalia will be used in the ceremony? Will they swear fealty? However, these are far from the limits of customization.

The limitations of this introduction prohibit a full study of customization options. However, the main considerations for a customized ceremony include:

- Culture and time period of the candidate
- Traditions of the candidate's Peer or household
- Candidate's interest in a period-accurate ceremony
- Alternative languages (e.g. Latin) for parts of the script
- History or lineage of regalia
- Dissolution of Peer/associate relationships prior to elevation
- Involvement of significant other or family members
- Music and/or choreography during processions

Make sure that each part of the customized ceremony is meaningful both to the candidate and the audience. If a detail might otherwise be lost on the audience, insert a brief explanation from the herald on the significance of the detail.

Regardless of the degree of customization, the following elements of the ceremony are essential:

- Summons of the candidate into the Royal presence
- Offer of Order membership by the Crown, and acceptance by the candidate
- Proclamation of elevation (typically in scroll format)
- Presentation/investiture of regalia
- Oath of fealty (required for knights only)

In addition, it's highly encouraged that the Order be summoned prior to the candidate's procession to bear witness and support their elevation.

Finally, as herald, you have a responsibility to make sure that all participants with speaking roles are provided with their lines. If they will be writing their own speeches, provide each speaker with their cues. The most common of the latter variety are members of the Peerage Orders speaking on behalf of the candidate prior to the offering of the accolade. If the script calls for more than just "Is there one who will speak?" be sure to let the speakers know their full prompts. An example of non-standard prompts:

- Is there here a knight of Caid who will speak of *N.*'s Honor and Loyalty?
- Is there here a Companion of the Laurel who will speak of *N.*'s Honesty and pursuit of Beauty?
- Is there here a Companion of the Pelican who will speak of *N.*'s Humility and Generosity?
- Is there here a Companion of Defense who will speak of *N.*'s Courage and Camaraderie?
- Is there here a Companion of the Rose who will speak of *N.*'s Nobility and Courtesy?