

# Invocation of the Pelican's Vigil

I have come to address you concerning certain aspects of the peerage you are about to enter. Many say it is an honor to be made a Master or Mistress of the Pelican, and it is surely that. But it is more than that: it is a heavy responsibility that you take upon yourself not in gladness, but with sobriety and sincerity.

The Order of the Pelican is unique among the three orders of peerage. Every Peer of the Realm, be he Knight, Laurel or Pelican, is expected to serve the kingdom and society. But the service expected of a Pelican is far greater than that expected of the other peers and greater still than that expected of the populace at large. To accept elevation to the Order of the Pelican is thus not to accept an honor, but to accept the burdens implied in your new status.

As a Peer of the Realm, you must endeavor to live, as you have until now, by the rules of courtesy, of gentle behavior. This courtly ideal is your guide in your conduct with others: to deal with them justly and fairly, to be gracious and courteous to all, to be an example of worth to whom others can look.

Each Pelican has the responsibility of service, performing to the best of his ability and then -- and then -- to that point of performance where sacrifice is required. A Pelican must want to do good works, must be willing to do them, and will do them more frequently and more extensively than his friends who are not Pelicans.

To accept elevation to the Order of the Pelican is to accept these responsibilities. I pray you keep these words in your heart as you prepare for your new status.

Alternative Vigil Text (written by Bruce Draconarius)

Hear thou now as was writ by the Evangelist Mark:

"Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever would be great among you shall minister unto you, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all. For even the son of man came not to be served, but to serve."

As it was then, so it is today. Our Society's structure is builded upon that cornerstone of service. And thou, being chosen to be one of the honorable company of this Most Noble Order of the Pelican, are by that election admitted to the select by ministering to the many.

For none may aspire to the high ranks of Peerdome save they serve the many. If a warrior showeth martial skill enow to slay thousands, but serveth not his Kingdom, he is but an engine of war, and no true Peer of the Realm. And if an artist createth wondrous works to delight all who behold them, but serveth not her Kingdom, she is but a rushlight that shineth betimes ere its spark fail, and no true Peer of the Realm.

Chivalry of conduct, creativity of thought – these virtues demark your brother Orders of Peerage, and these virtues thou as a Peer shouldst also strive to display. Yet as a Companion of the Pelican, thou wilt be judged most highly by the service thou renderest, the same being agreeable and not repugnant to those so served. Thy conduct, as much as thy service, is a mirror not only of thine own worth, but the worthiness of all who do share this mantle with thee.

Thus, in thine acceptation of this new title, thou wouldst tread a road most rough, bearing upon thy shoulders the heavy burden of responsibility. Many have walked this road ere thee; and others will one day surely follow. For now, this is thy road. Gird thyself, therefore, with high noblesse and with due humility, and compose thine whole being so to befit thy new estate.

I pray thee ponder these thoughts until the hour of thine elevation draweth nigh. Amen.