

Grand Commandery of Massachusetts and Rhode Island

February 2023 News



SK Eugene B. Nichols
Grand Commander
www.mayorkrite.org/grand-commandery

February Greetings Sir Knights,

The month of February is mostly recognized for Valentine's Day, flowers, and, depending on where you are, being incredibly cold! I would like to focus on another important aspect related to the Valentine's Day theme, Love. We read in 1 John 4: 7-8: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

The coming of Jesus Christ provides a compelling example of God's love for us. This theme, which is the origin of divine love, weaves its way throughout this section of Scripture. For John, a call to obedience does not come with a threat. Instead, obedience is encouraged through inspiration. God's inspiring love, his generous affection, compels us to obey. If He has done this much for us, how can we do less? Genuine love cannot be exhibited in any community unless it reflects God's love, unless it is empowered by an experience of being loved.

Christians who live out such love are exhibiting much more. They are also giving evidence that they have been born from God and know Him. John goes on to point out that the reverse is also the case. Whoever does not love cannot possibly know God. John describes here a person who has never experienced God's love at any time. No doubt our emphasis should be on the positive character of this principle: Since God is love, those who encounter him have the power to become loving persons. To genuinely contemplate the true identity of God is to become like Him.

We, as Christian Knights, have the power to become more like God as we practice the Christian virtues in our daily lives. Templary is based upon the Holy Bible and extols the doctrine of human brotherhood and benevolence toward all mankind. It commends the reign of peace and glorifies the search for Divine Truth. It stands unswervingly for good morals and right living by each Knight Templar as an example of good citizenship in every community. Each Knight Templar has voluntarily professed the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and love of country and he has sworn to uphold the virtues of Charity and Hospitality. If the love of God is

within you and if you respond to daily life activities and circumstances in the way that Christ would, this will be evident to all those with whom you come in contact. Your conduct within and without the Asylum will afford the best proof of the Love that is within each of you. A true knight leaves a legacy and passes on his virtues to others. A true understanding of the love of God should lead us to change how we live and behave.

As we enter the Inspection season, I have no doubt that the work of the Orders will be performed according to the high standards that are expected in our Massachusetts and Rhode Island Commanderies. Many of our Commanderies have chosen to work candidates and I am so thankful and grateful that you are promoting Templary and sharing your love of it with our Companions and Brethren in Freemasonry. I am looking forward to being with you and witnessing the power of your presentation of our Orders.

May God grant you the will to understand, the courage to do that which is right and the strength to think, speak and act according to the sublime principles of this magnanimous Order.

In His Devoted Service,

Eugene B. Nichols
Grand Commander

From the Apartment of the Grand Prelate

Don't Forget Your Compass!

As a man who enjoys the outdoors, it has been encouraging to see all the new people out hiking, biking and spending time in the fresh air as a result of the pandemic. I have been doing it my whole life, but the new enthusiasts are always welcome, and I encourage them with every opportunity. Unfortunately, that means that a lot of amateurs are on the learning curve at the same time, and we have all seen the various tragedies in the news. Overestimating your abilities or not being properly equipped can lead to disaster for someone who is inexperienced.

We have also noticed an increase among those people who are searching for spiritual answers in the shadows of the life altering pandemic that has swept the globe. Maybe life is not as secure and certain as people once thought, and they are rightfully questioning their own mortality and eternal destiny. But again, that means that a lot of amateur theologians are on the learning curve as they try to navigate the complex map of religion. And just like the person who decides to put on a pair of sneakers and climb Mount Washington in November, they are headed for disaster, or at least a very bad experience.

So as Christians who have already discovered the truth about faith in Jesus Christ, it now becomes our duty to look out for those seekers and young believers who desperately need our guidance and help finding their way to Christ. Just remember back to the early days of your faith and all the questions and quandaries that you faced. You will undoubtedly recall that God was faithful to put people in your life to help guide you and to show you the way. Perhaps it was a parent or family member, a Sunday School teacher or that guy who holds up the John 3:16 sign in the endzone, but God was faithful to send you a compass to give you direction.

Now it is our turn to be a compass for God. It may be a friend or another family member that has been quietly questioning their existence in the light of the pandemic, or just questioning their happiness in a chaotic world. They are looking for answers and searching for the truth, so it is the perfect opportunity for us to show them the way. But it is critically important to remember that seekers and new believers do not have your experience or expertise, so you will need to be patient and lovingly kind. In the same way that you would not start a new backpacker on a hundred-mile journey through the White Mountains, you need to accept people as they are and help them to see the alternative that Christ has to offer. Discipleship can be a very slow process, but it is a process that Jesus illustrated with his own loving kindness and patience.

When I come across a new hiker who is filled with zeal and ambition and wants to conquer the highest mountain or traverse the longest trail, I congratulate them and encourage them the best that I can. But I also look for an opportunity to caution them and to point them in the right direction. I fondly remember the experienced people in my life who took the time to check my bearings and to point me in the right direction and I want to do the same for others. Do you know someone who is lost, or headed in the wrong direction? Is there someone in your life that is searching for truth or asking spiritual questions in a roundabout way? Then be God's compass and help those seekers through the twists and turns of the spiritual learning curve! You did it, and so can they! Happy trails, Pilgrim!



St. Bernard Commandery No. 12 Inspection
SK Peter Randall, Division Commander; MW and SK
George Forest Hamilton and the Grand Commander



MW and SK Albert T. Ames receiving the
Order of Merit from the Grand Commander