Sir Knights!

I feel very fortunate to have attended our Constituent Commanderies’ Christmas Observances across New Mexico this year. I really appreciate the hospitality offered me, and the time taken to ensure a meaningful program was presented. I also appreciated the attendance of several of our Grand Commandery officers for taking the time to travel and participate with me. Thank you all for holding to your Knightly vows and obligations in gathering with other Sir Knights to observe the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Most of these visits also included installations. I was honored and privileged to be able to participate in our York Rite installations, alongside many of our current and past Grand Commandery officers. As always, this was a great time to share fellowship with one another. The variations of these ceremonies at each of our local bodies is notable and significant, and provides a unique experience each time.

Feast Day of St. John the Baptist

After the conversion of Europe to Christianity, the feast day of St. John the Baptist was set as June 24th. It may, in fact, be the oldest feast, introduced into both the Greek and Latin public worshiping, to honor a saint. It is interesting to note that the feast is held on his alleged date of birth, when other Christian saints’ days are observed on the anniversary of their death. The Catholic Encyclopedia explains that St. John was “filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother’s womb, should be signalized as a day of triumph”. His feast day is offset a few days after the summer solstice, just as Christmas is fixed a few days after the winter solstice. Just as John was the forerunner to Jesus; midsummer forecasts the eventual arrival of the winter solstice - December 21st.

Chapter and Council Festival!

The Albuquerque York Rite Festival will be held on Saturday, February 23rd at Temple Lodge 6 for the conferral of the Chapter and Council degrees. Candidates for these degrees can complete their Commandery Orders during the Land of Enchantment Festival (LEF), which will be held on August 2nd and 3rd in Santa Fe.

Valentine’s Day

This is a special day set aside to recognize the great loving support we receive from our wives, significant others and of course our families. It is reserved for plans that are made to share one another's company, like going out to eat, going to the movies, walking around a beautiful place and of course a simple gift of love to one another. A simple card expressing our appreciation and love is often just as welcome as an elegant dinner.

Officer’s Guidance:

Only medals that have been awarded can be worn. We do not wear sashes or lapel pins on the uniform. The Malta Cross is to be worn, and its proper place is closest to your left arm, aligned with and underneath the welt. I have mentioned throughout different articles of examples of medals and awards that can be worn.

The Arch of Steel

The Honor Guard always starts this maneuver from the “Carry Swords” position. An Escort must be positioned facing inward, about three paces apart at “Carry Swords”.

• When in position, use the Preparatory Command: “Form Arch of Steel.”
• Form the Arch of Steel:
  • On the command “Cross,” Sir Knights execute “Present Swords.”
  • On the command “Swords”, Sir Knights assume the footing of the “Guard” position, simultaneously raising and extending the sword arm while rotating the wrist and forearm 270 degrees to the left, bringing the back of the hand towards the left, wrist as high as the head, with the edge of the sword up. The blade should be in prolongation with the forearm, engaging the sword of the Sir Knight opposing.
  • Return to “Carry.”
  • On the command “Carry,” Sir Knights return to “Present Swords.”
  • On the command “Swords,” the Sir Knights execute “Carry Swords.”

Have you seen or visited the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar website? We have a link through our website address: https://nmyorkrite.org

Courteously,

Christopher A. Larsen, II
Grand Commander