


**CALIFORNIA
SUPPLEMENT**
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GRAND COMMANDER'S MESSAGE FOR APRIL 2009

“Service to God, Service to man and Service as Templars”

Greetings Sir Knights:

As we enter the final month of this Grand Templar year, we celebrate the death and resurrection of our beloved savior Jesus Christ. Since my early childhood (which was just a few years ago), I can remember attending sunrise services and my eye-opening years as a DeMolay when my Chapter held many Easter Sunday breakfasts. Those breakfasts were always well attended and well manned by our advisory board and Lodge Members.

I searched for a record of the first Easter sunrise service, and found that the first recorded service took place in 1732, among the single brethren in the Moravian Congregation at Herrnhut, Saxony, in what is now Germany. Following an all-night vigil they would go before dawn to the town graveyard, God's Acre, located on a hill above town, to celebrate the Resurrection among the graves of the departed. This service was repeated the following year by the whole congregation and subsequently spread with the Moravian Missionaries around the world. The most famous "Moravian Sunrise Service" is in the Moravian settlement Old Salem in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The beautiful setting of the graveyard, "God's Acre", the music of a brass ensemble numbering 500 pieces, and the simplicity of the service attract thousands of visitors each year and has earned for Winston-Salem the soubriquet "the Easter City."

The first recorded Easter service took place in the second century. Some of you newer Sir Knights might not be aware that it is mandatory for all Commanderies to hold an Easter Observance which all Knights Templar are required to attend. Be sure that you check your Commandery bulletin for the time and place of the observance. The approved Easter Observance that is found in our Manual of Ceremonies was developed by our own Grand Prelate, Fr. Charles Maier.

The year has now dwindled down to the last few weeks of this Grand Templar year, and on the 28th of this month we will be turning over the reins to Sir Knight William D. Robertson as, Sir Knight Richard Cooper, R.E.P.G.C., and the other past grand officers the new Grand Commander. It has been an extreme honor to be your Grand Commander this year, an honor that I will always cherish. My lady Kathy and I want to thank all who have helped us in our journey. It would not have been possible without the help of my Grand Family for their support and help with the receptions and official visits.

There is one Sir Knight in particular who always gives us "Hope" and that is Kenneth G. Hope, our Grand Recorder. He has been extremely helpful and supportive in all we have been doing and he is truly an asset to all the Grand York Rite Bodies, along with his most able assistant, S.K. Al Lewis. The only drawback to this year was in not having Sir Knight Marshall F. Parker, R.E.P.G.C., my Templar father, attend our functions. We wish him well and hope he continues his recovery and is able to join with us in the near future.

To my counterparts, Sir Knight Sean Foran, M. E. Grand High Priest and Sir Knight Fred "Tiny" Potter, M. I. Grand Master, it has been a joy and a pleasure being with you and your ladies this year. I feel that we have worked well together during the Grand York Rite Receptions, picnics, and events. I hope that it continues in the years to come.

A last administrative reminder: after the Installation of Grand Officers on April 28, we can no longer wear the 150th Anniversary Medallion on the right breast area of our uniform. The right breast area is reserved for Grand Encampment medals and for our name tags.

Finally, my Lady Kathy and I wish the 2009 Grand Officers a most wonderful and successful year. We extend a very warm wish for the Easter Season, and the best for 2009 and beyond to all our members and their families.

Fraternally,
Gary D. Miller
Grand Commander

GRAND COMMANDER'S ITINERARY --- 2009

Apr 3	East San Diego Lodge No. 561	Stated Meeting
Apr 5	Rainbow for Girls Annual Assembly	Fresno
Apr 10-12	K.T. Easter Observance	Washington, D.C.
Apr 25-29	Grand Sessions	Bakersfield
May 1	Redding Commandery No. 50	Grand York Rite Reception
May 2	Marysville Commandery No. 7	Grand York Rite Reception
May 9	Utah Grand Sessions	Salt Lake City, UT