



ILLINOIS SUPPLEMENT

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Sir Knights and Ladies:

As Templar Year 2008-2009 comes to a close so, too, does my term as the Right Eminent Grand Commandery of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Illinois. With August 1, 2009, fast approaching I want to thank all of the Sir Knights and Ladies of the constituent Commanderies who have given me support and shown hospitality to my Lady Kimberly and me all year. We have traveled many miles and met many wonderful people throughout Illinois, the East Central Division and the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America. We have made many new friends within the Masonic Family and renewed old acquaintances.

My goals, upon becoming the Right Eminent Grand Commander, have been simple:

- A Re-invigorate – NOT reinvent – Templary in Illinois. I wanted to take a step back and look to our history, our roots and the very foundation Templary was built upon. I wanted to get back to our traditions and the and the founding principles.
- B Attempt to make Templary more visible to the non-Masonic public.
- C Put Christ back in the forefront of Templary.

Throughout the year, it has been very encouraging to me when other Sir Knights have told me they appreciate hearing the message of Christianity that has been demonstrated this year. They say this has made them excited about the Knights Templar and made them want to become more active.

I have tried to renew excitement and to re-invigorate and encourage the members of our great Fraternity. Let us be proud of our heritage of a Christian background and mentor our new members – not add new programs. Let us make Knight Templary more visible and strive to show that we are proud to be Christian men and Masons.

My year has been busy and includes several “firsts” for a Grand Commander of Illinois. I attended the Grand Conclave of the Philippines and met Sir Knight of different nationalities. I was told that I was the only Grand Officer of the United States or any other country to ever attend their Conclave. I was asked to invite the Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America, Sir Knight William H. Koon, II. To attend their 2009 Conclave. I honored their request and the Most Eminent Grand Master is making plans to attend the Grand Conclave of the Philippines in October.

Throughout the State of Illinois, there have been several full form Orders of the Red Cross and Orders of Malta portrayed. On April 25, 2009, a York Rite Unity Day was held at Addison, Illinois and a class of thirty Sir Knights was knighted by the Grand Commandery Officers who filled their Stations. This is the first time in many years that the Grand Officers have been able to fill their Stations and participate in such an event. I received many compliments on the fantastic job the Grand Officers did. I want to congratulate my Grand Line of Officers for their dedication and hard work.

The first Ascension Day Service was held at Bald Knob Cross, the Cross of Peace, near Alto Pass, Illinois, May 17, 2009. This was history in the making for Templary in Illinois and one of the greatest public displays of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar in recent year. This event was planned as part of my goal to put Christ in the forefront of Templary in Illinois and to make the Fraternity more visible to the public. All Masons, their families and friends and the general public were invited to attend.

Another first was the institution of the Grand Commander’s Prayer Breakfasts held before each Dais Inspection. Our Eminent Grand Prelate, Sir Knight John Davis Jones let these Prayer Breakfasts and provide inspiring messages for those in attendance. The Bible tells us that where two or three are gathered in His name, there He would be also. We need to realize that our Christian values should always be with us and we should not be meek in letting others see that we are Christian men.

In closing, I want to say “thank you” Sir Knights of Illinois for a wonderful and unforgettable year. It has been a privilege to serve as your Grand Commander and I will carry the memory with me forever. My appreciation extends to those Sir Knights who gave of their time to serve on the many committees who make this Grand Commandery run smoothly. This is not a one man job, it takes a team to accomplish our goals. I would ask you to continue to let Christ lead, to put him in the forefront of your activities and work toward the common goal that all Christian Masons should be Knights Templar. My best wishes to Sir Knight Joseph W. Lucas, V.E.D.G.C., as he completes his plans to take charge and lead Illinois Templary in the next year.

May God Bless You One and All

Jesse Lee Johns, Right Eminent Grand Commander 2008-2009