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Greetings, Sir Knights!

As you know by now, two major goals of this year, a statewide conferral of The Order of the Temple and sending two ministers on the Holy Land Pilgrimage, have been successfully completed. I cannot thank those Sir Knights and Commanderies who gave the extra effort to make this happen enough.

Sir Knights, this is a crucial time of year because between now and December 15 Sir Knights will be sponsored and file to be elected to the Grand Commandery line. In March, you will vote for them. Becoming a new member to the elected line is a huge responsibility and becoming a future Grand Commander is an even greater responsibility. When elected to a grand office, one should expect to make some huge personal sacrifices and be ready to navigate difficult situations. A great leader has a natural desire to leave an organization better than he found it and should possess the leadership ability to make that happen. Please consider our challenges in Templary when nominating candidates for the Grand Commandery line.

Now I want to extend my focus on The Knight Templar Eye Foundation and what you can do to make this campaign another success of this year. I have asked The Eye Foundation chairman and Past Grand Commander, Fred Whitty to give some remarks.

Faith, Hope and CHARITY

Since its inception in 1956, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Incorporated (KTEF) has expended \$148 million on research, patient care, and education. We are in our 50th campaign which runs from July 1, 2017 to May 15, 2018 so the Grand Commander has asked me to provide some information and to once again implore your generosity. I say again to most of you but there are a few that I urge to make that first donation of \$30 which will make you a Life Sponsor.

A newer incentive for Sir Knights is the addition of The Crusader's Cross Jewel. One of the primary contribution programs is the Grand Master's Club. These are contributions of \$1,000 which can be accumulated over time. These accumulations are known as the Grand Commander's Club (\$100 each until \$1,000 is reached). Currently Grand Master's Club donors receive a plaque and lapel pin. The KTEF has introduced a new award, the Crusader's Cross, to thank donors. The jewel comes in five levels, \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000 and \$5,000 or above. The award can be worn on a uniform, sport coat, or displayed in your home. The \$1,000 level has the single, larger cross in the center. Each additional \$1,000 is identified with an additional small cross in a quadrant until at \$5,000 or above all four quadrants are occupied to complete the emblem known as the Crusader's Cross, also known as the Cross of Jerusalem. Only the Grand Master's club donations will count toward this award.



The five levels of the Crusader's Cross

Of the 2,732 Sir Knights in North Carolina, 39 Sir Knights (1.4%) from 14 of the 25 Commanderies have made donations to the Grand Master's Club, either directly or through the Grand Commander's Club (you can pledge to make annual contributions of \$100 or more until the total of \$1,000 is reached). All have received their Crusader's Cross Jewel. Only one Sir Knight received the Jewel with five Crosses, Sir Knight Paul H. Broyhill from Lenoir Commandery No. 33, to whom I extend a special "thank you." More information about the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Incorporated can be found online at www.knightstemplar.org.

Courteously,

Fred Whitty

Past Grand Commander, 2006