



Knight Templar

VOLUME LIV

DECEMBER 2008

NUMBER 12

Church of the Nativity
Bethlehem, Israel

See story on page 7

Grand Master's Christmas Message 2008



On Christmas Eve in 1971, I was working in a small town 30 miles from my home and met a family friend for lunch. After finishing lunch, he asked me to do him a favor and drop a few things off to a needy family. I agreed and went to his place of business to pick up the items to be delivered.



He and his employees proceeded to fill my car with food, clothing, and wrapped gifts for this family. Soon there was only room for me, and in those days, cars were much bigger! My friend said the father was unable to provide for his family for a reason long forgotten, and without the intervention of someone, the hopes of a Merry Christmas were indeed bleak. The friend and his employees wanted to do something to help but wished to do it anonymously. I promised to never reveal where these items came from.

I did as instructed, and at about 4:30 PM on Christmas Eve, I arrived at the address provided. The wife and children were home, and following an explanation of my purpose, they all helped me empty the car. The young children were jubilant, and their mother was in tears as she carried the items into the house. To this day, not a Christmas goes by that I don't see that woman's tears of joy at the kindness she'd received. I only regret that I hadn't had a greater part in the kindness extended to that family, save being the delivery boy!

I never forgot the kindness of this man and his employees during the Christmas season. Most of us have had many blessings. During this season, let us remember those who may be in difficult circumstances and extend a hand to them at this special time of year.

On behalf of the officers of the Grand Encampment, I wish for each of you a most enjoyable Holiday Season.

Merry Christmas!

William H. Koon, II.

William H. Koon, II, GCT
Grand Master



Knight Templar



DECEMBER:

The front cover is a photo of the interior of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. See the story on page 7. The back cover is an old orthodox depiction of the nativity. You can just make out the wise men and shepherds at the top corners.

Subscriptions to the *Knight Templar* magazine are available from the Grand Encampment office at a rate of \$15.00 per year. Individual issues in quantities of less than 10 can be obtained for \$1.50 each from the office of the managing editor if available. Inquire via e-mail to the managing editor for quantities in excess of 10.

We publish letters and articles from a variety of sources and points of view. The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Grand Encampment, the *Knight Templar* magazine, or the Editorial Review Board.

Grand Encampment Web Site: <http://www.knightstemplar.org>

DECEMBER 2008

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Materials and correspondence concerning the Grand Commandery state supplements should be sent to the respective supplement editor.

Address changes or corrections and all membership activity including deaths should be reported to the Recorder of the local Commandery.

Grand Master's Report

2008 Goals and Resolutions

Last January in the Grand Master's Message, I listed the goals and resolutions of the Grand Encampment Officers. I am pleased to make the following report:

We Resolve to have a new "State of the Art" On-line Data Processing System fully operational in 2008.

On November 1, our members were able to access the new system and update their personal membership information. By the time you're reading this update, the system should be fully operational.

We Resolve to improve the readability, content, quality, and appearance of the *Knight Templar Magazine* this year.

The January 2009 magazine will be a totally full color issue with slick paper. Paid advertising is covering the cost of this upgrade. Moreover, the content has been improved through the efforts of the recently formed Editorial Review Board. I think you'll agree that our new editor, S.K. John L. Palmer, KCT, is making this publication something of which we can be justly proud.

We Resolve to make our Easter Observance in Alexandria, Virginia, more "user friendly" in the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center. We hope to increase attendance by scheduling events with a concern for those coming in by bus who want to attend the service and see the Washington area during the same trip.

The Easter Observance this year was the best attended we've had in several years. All but one bus utilized the Alexandria Mark Center, and they will be with us in the hotel this coming year. Improvements are continuing, but the comments we have had concerning the facility have been positive. Come to the Easter Observance this coming year, and see what it's all about!

We Resolve to further improve the Department Conferences so as to make them a "Want to Do" event for Templar Leaders.

With 6 of 8 conferences completed thus far, the comments by those attending conferences have been very positive. For the first time, we have made motivational DVD's available, free of charge, to each Grand Commandery and at a nominal fee, far below cost, to those interested Templar leaders attending the conferences. This is an area we will be seeking to improve even further in coming years.

We Resolve to more fully utilize our website as a vehicle for Templar information. We want www.knightstemplar.org to be the place to go for 90% of your questions and needs.

During this year, many new items have been made available on our website. The updated "Constitution" and the "Book of Decisions" are just a couple of the new items

of interest. Take a moment and check out our website; there is more there than you might imagine. S.K. Dan Pushee, KCT, is to be commended for his help and assistance in making these improvements.

We Resolve to substantially increase support of Pediatric Research through our Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

This year, your Board of Trustees of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation has increased its support from \$600,000 to \$1,000,000.

Your Grand Encampment Officers are pleased with the progress made on these projects and the support and encouragement of our members. More is to come! Be sure to read the January "Grand Master's Message" to see what the resolutions for 2009 will be!



Fraternally,

William H. Koon, II, GCT
Grand Master



Some Holiday Spirit

by

Sir Knight Donald Craig Kerr

In the light of our current economic woes, read this and reflect. "It is a gloomy moment in history. Not for many years, not in the lifetime of most, has there been so much grave and deep apprehension... the very haste to be rich, which is the occasion of this widespread calamity, has also tended to destroy the moral forces with which we are to resist and subdue the calamity." Does it sound like something you might hear today? Those words were printed in October, 1857, in the *Harpers Weekly*.

How times change, we say. In a lot of ways they do change, but human nature doesn't seem to be much different from time to time. It may be very good that times do change as our hope is always that the change will bring about improvement.

So the holiday season is upon us. This is a good time. We need the candles, the music, the knight templar

pageantry, and the spirit of good will. What would we do without Jesus and the wise men and the shepherds? They bring that festive wonder to our celebration. So it is with Hanukkah, which is the celebration of deliverance. These ceremonies are signs to help us remember that God is in control and cares for us. It would be a dismal world without God in our hearts.

The Masonic ritual uses many signs to tell us who we are and what we believe. Because of these signs, we learn to look up and to hope, as Robert Browning believed "God is in heaven; all's right with the world."

So may it be and for all joyful holidays. Sir Knight and Reverend Donald C. Kerr, a member of Beauseant Commandery No. 8, Baltimore, MD, is Pastor-emeritus of the Roland Park Presbyterian Church in Baltimore. He resides at 700 John Ringling Boulevard, Apt. E202, Sarasota, FL 34236-1586

From the Grand Recorder's Office...

PRELIMINARY EASTER - 2009

The 79th Annual Easter Sunrise Service, sponsored by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America, will again be held on the steps of the George Washington Masonic Memorial, Alexandria, Virginia, on Sunday, April 12, 2009, and will begin at 8:00 AM. This service will complete a memorable weekend of events in our nation's capital, including delegation dinners, tours, and Masonic fellowship. The Right Eminent Grand Prelate, Sir Knight Robert J. Cave, will conduct the service.

HILTON ALEXANDRIA MARK CENTER

The headquarters hotel will again be the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, Virginia, located approximately four miles from the memorial. Our special Knights Templar rate will be \$100.00 per room, based on double occupancy. Please make your reservations directly with the hotel by calling (703) 845-1010 or 800-HILTONS, (mention Knights Templar).

MEALS

A meal package is available for \$45.00 per person, which includes Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast buffet. Order your meal tickets from the Grand Encampment office. Mail your check, payable to the Grand Encampment, to 5909 West Loop South, Suite 495, Belaire, TX 77401-2402. Additional tickets



Lawrence E. Tucker GCT
Grand Recorder

may be ordered separately: Saturday dinner, \$35.00; Sunday breakfast buffet, \$20.00.

Note: The hotel and meal ticket cutoff date is March 5, 2009. No tickets will be sold at the door.

GRAND COMMANDERS AND THEIR LADIES

Grand Commanders and their ladies are invited to attend the Saturday dinner, courtesy of the Grand Encampment. **Prior reservation is required.**

OUR GRAND MASTER

The Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America, Sir Knight William H. Koon, II, and his officers will greet everyone at the Sunday breakfast.

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWNNS

On Saturday, April 11, 2009, at 10:15 AM, the Grand Commandery of Indiana will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery honoring their members who fell in combat as members of the Armed Forces of the United States of America. Addition-

ally, the Grand Commandery of Georgia will lay a wreath at 11:15 AM. Everyone is invited to attend these events. Buses will leave the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center for Arlington National Cemetery at 8:45 AM. Buses will unload at the visitors' center for the short walk to the Tomb of the Unknowns. Trams will be available for those unable to walk to the Tomb. Buses will leave from the visitors' center, to return to the hotel, following the Georgia ceremony.

EASTER MORNING PROGRAM

A breakfast buffet will be served beginning at 6:00 AM at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center on Easter morning. Buses will be available to leave at 7:00 AM, to take the Sir Knights and their ladies to the George Washington Masonic Memorial for the Sunrise Service. The buses will return to the hotel after the service at about 9:30 AM.

PARADE INFORMATION

The parade will form on the lane leading up the hill. Delegations will form according to their entry into the Grand Encampment, senior to junior, and markers for each will be in place. As in past years, the Maryland delegation in their black plumes will appear before the formal parade with drummers and form a passion cross in the stands. The Grand Commandery of Maryland would also like to invite any Sir Knights who wear the black plume to join them in the formation of the Cross.

The parade will step off at 7:40 AM, proceed up the hill, render "Eyes Right" on passing the Grand Master and his staff, and then proceed into seats as directed. knight templar

Colors will right flank at the podium and column left and column right and post the colors as directed. Parking for cars and buses is available at the top of the hill next to the Memorial. However, no vehicles will be permitted up the roadway after 7:30 AM.

OTHER DETAILS

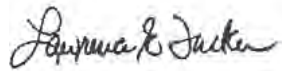
Delegations desiring to make any special group arrangements should call the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center. Delegations staying at other locations must provide their own transportation.

Recognition is made to the Grand Commandery having the most Sir Knights in uniform in the parade and to the Grand Commandery having the highest percentage of its members in uniform in the parade.

Reservations must be made for rooms, meals and any other activities by March 5, 2009.

GRAND COMMANDERS ARE REQUESTED TO APPOINT A DELEGATION CHAIRMAN AND NOTIFY GRAND RECORDER, SIR KNIGHT LAWRENCE E. TUCKER, 5909 WEST LOOP SOUTH, SUITE 495, BELLAIRE, TX 77401-2402; TELEPHONE NO: OFFICE: (713) 349-8700; FAX: (713) 349-8710, E-MAIL: letucker@sbcglobal.net in order to receive information concerning this event and to facilitate adequate planning!

Your Grand Encampment Officers are looking forward to greeting you in Alexandria next April!



God's Christmas List

A Christmas Message from John 3:16

by

Reverend and Sir Knight Paul L. Phillips

At this season of the year, many of us are making out a Christmas list. How could it be otherwise when Christmas is about the greatest gift ever given to the world?

Our text reminds us of this gift. Note it carefully. "God so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten son." Now, when we think of our Christmas list, let us never forget God's Christmas list.

When we do, I think there are two types of gifts. First, there is the gift which is in general—a gift for everyone. What does that list contain? I think for one thing there is the gift of hope. In our world it is so easy to lose hope. So much is present to discourage us. There is war, crime, economic problems, and many more. Yet, in spite of darkness, there is hope.

The year 1809 was not a very pleasant year. Our nation was a small struggling nation. There was doubt it would survive. In Europe there were wars and rumors of war. This was the era of Napoleon,

and Europe was in great conflict.

One day a historian was looking through the history books and came to this realization. In 1809 Abraham Lincoln was born. In 1809 William Gladstone was born. In 1809 Alfred Lord Tennyson was born.

Think of these great people. How much poorer our world would be if these men were not born. Yet, other than their families, how many people were aware of their birth?

In this year of 2008, a lot of babies will be born, and many of these will grow up to be great people. That is the way God works. When a wrong needs righting, a truth needs preaching, or a reformation needs leading, God sends a baby into the world to do the work.

That's why a baby was born long ago in Bethlehem of Judea. Yes, now as then, now as in 1809, babies are born who bring hope to the world.

Then there is the word "savior." We cannot earn a Savior. A Savior

Continued on page 14

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THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY HOLIEST OF HOLIES

by
Sir Knight Robert M. Wolfarth

We drove up a gentle hill in what is now suburban Jerusalem in the occupied West Bank to the literal birthplace of Christianity. This was Bethlehem. The town looked no different from many others in the Middle East with short white houses, mosques, and narrow, winding roads.

My Palestinian friend parked his car, and we got out. As we walked away, he kept glancing back at his car and then at a cop on duty nearby. Finally he said he was going to ask the officer if he parked legally. He pointed down the cobble stone square, enclosed on three sides by ancient walls, to a tiny doorway. "There," he said quietly. "In there is where Jesus was born. I'll catch up with you." Then he turned and disappeared.

I stood in an empty Manger Square, gazing at the ancient wall about seventy yards ahead of me. I became aware of the silence and slowly began walking toward the structure, beginning to tremble with the impact of his simple words: "In there is where Jesus was born." I had traveled across the world, after all these years, for this moment. I walked forward alone with God as my guide.

The Church of the Nativity façade is stone, looming and stark. No markings, no signs, just a monolithic, aged white wall. The entrance to the church is a small opening in very thick stone. One must stoop to enter through the Door of Humility, designed to ensure a reverent bow by pilgrims who knight templar

enter and to keep invading horses out. Once inside, the church is long, cavernous, and dark. No pews, no Bibles, no gift shop at the door.

My footsteps echoed slightly. At the far end, Greek glass ornaments hung over the altar. This holy structure is currently managed by three denominations: Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and the Armenian Church.¹ The détente is awkward, with each denomination jealously guarding its mandate while coveting that of the others. A section of the old wooden floor is hinged back to expose a tiled floor dating from the fourth century. For obvious reasons, this church is all about history.

After St. Justin Martyr announced this spot in the second century as Christ's nativity place, the first church was built around 333 AD by decree of Emperor Constantine the Great. It was one of three magnificent churches on Christian holy locations; the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, and the Ascension, also in Jerusalem.

A church did arise under Constantine, but the times were unstable. Christianity had only been legal in the Roman Empire for 20 years. Unfortunately, the Samaritan Revolt destroyed the building, leaving us nothing to remember her by. Yet the belief that this spot is holy persevered, and the present church was erected where the first one stood by order of Emperor Justinian in 565.²

Amazingly, it has stood on the same location for almost 1,500 years, battle-hardened after waves of invasions, yet honored regularly by awestruck pilgrims. During that time, the structure has been administered and protected by various factions. And yes, maintained and defended by Knights Templar, among others. Crossing the nave, one cannot help but yearn to hear stories these walls could tell, if only they could speak, but the walls remain silent.

I descended steep steps at the right of the altar into a small stone room, the “grotto.” Three or four people were quietly exiting as I entered, leaving me there alone. What sounded like a vent fan was the only noise—a low hum. The room is simple and serene. This is the very spot where the manger lay, where wise kings knelt, where Mary gave birth to my Savior.

I stood silently with naught but God and my thoughts for company, gazing down upon a tiny marker where Jesus was born—a fourteen-pointed star on a raised hearth with candles suspended above it. There was nowhere else in the world I wanted to be. It was an intensely personal experience.

At last, I emerged from the grotto. My devoutly Muslim host stood in the nave, smiling. The site is sacred to both religions, as is Jesus. He clearly understood the emotion I must be feeling, and he was very happy for me. He showed me around the building—and reported that his car was now legally parked. We chat-

ted amiably, not about the Crusades or the building’s contentious history, but about the religious philosophies we have in common. Yet I still wondered how this structure could have lasted through the ages, and what brave men built and defended it.

It is commonly believed that the Order of Poor Knights of the Temple of Solomon, or the Order of the Temple, was founded

around 1119 in Jerusalem. Many have speculated about the role that the knights of this order (the Knights Templar) had in the erection, upkeep, and protection of this church. It has been stated that around 1150, Knights Templar “participated in an extraordinary building boom in the Holy Land; fortresses, palaces and churches, including the new Church of the Holy Sepulcher and a redo of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem”.³ The leaders of the Crusades wanted to establish an enduring presence in the Holy Land. Building fortresses and churches was one way to accomplish this goal.

Although we do not have a clear picture of the degree of their involvement, Crusaders including Knights Templar and operative masons of the order unmistakably had a hand in renovations of the church.⁴ We cannot conclusively credit the walls, altar, or other structures to these knights, but we can thank them for the enduring presence of the building.

Even so, the building has been invaded
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Above the Altar

or conquered over the years by Persians, Byzantines, Muslims, Crusaders, Mamluks, Ottomans, Jordanians, British, and Israelis.⁵ Who, by right, owns it? The debate may rage for another thousand years. Deed of trust aside, it is an astonishing structure to marvel at when one considers that it has stood relatively unchanged by the ravages of time, wars, earthquakes, and fire since Emperor Justinian built it in the sixth century. The land it sits on is today called Palestine by some, the West Bank by others, but occupied and thus contentious by any definition. Tension hangs in the air, however peacefully the grotto may lie. Bethlehem is no sanctuary of tranquility.

Yet, as we sing romanticized Christmas carols in America, the church structure is in peril. Sheep still graze in nearby fields while the holy Church of the Nativity slowly disintegrates.

“The roof of the church is in a decayed condition and its timbers are rotting,” says Dr. G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville.⁶ “Rainwater seeps into the building and damages its structural fabric and the precious 12th century wall mosaics and pillar paintings. An emergency such as a fire caused by the damp wiring in the building could result in heavy casualties as visitors struggle to escape. Moreover, the amianthus asbestos curtains throughout the Grotto of the Nativity pose a health hazard....”

To you and me, Knights Templar of a different age, who are patterned after the operative knights who came before us, this situation should be alarming. Yes, the church was substantially renovated in the sixth century, and 1500 years is a remarkable testament to the good work done by noble Knights and operative masons. Yet knight templar

prayers alone will not support this most sacred of churches. It cannot last indefinitely. It needs urgent attention.

To this end, my Palestinian friend, a Muslim custodian of the holy City of David, and I, a Knight Templar of a new era, have left our historic differences behind. We now break bread together and speak of our partnership in history—and our shared duty to protect and defend this sacred building, for if we fail to join hands in this cause, our sons may not have the same holy church to visit.

¹BBC News, “Church with a Turbulent History”, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1910843.stm, April 4, 2002.

²Ibid.

³Weiss, Lawrence D., “The Templars, Poor Fellow—Soldiers of Christ”, First Presbyterian Church of Skaneateles, Skaneateles, NY, April, 2001

[http://www.gort.net/Sermons and Bible studies/Templars, Presbyterian Men's Breakfast, April 29th, 2001.htm](http://www.gort.net/Sermons%20and%20Bible%20studies/Templars,%20Presbyterian%20Men's%20Breakfast,%20April%2029th,%202001.htm).

⁴Martin, Sean, *The Knights Templar: The History and Myths of the Legendary Military*, Basic Books, November 19, 2004, p. 61.

⁵Finkel, Michael, *Bethlehem*, 2007 A.D., *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 2007.

⁶Freeman-Grenville, G.S.P., “The Church Of The Nativity In Bethlehem,”

<http://www.pef.org.uk/Pages/Bethlehem%20Pages/Present.htm>, Palestine Exploration Fund, December 27, 2004.

Sir Knight Robert M. Wolfarth, 32°, a native Texan, now calls Salt Lake City home. After six years working in defense and foreign policy for the US Congress in Washington, Robert moved into the medical device industry. He is fascinated with systems of ethics as influenced by different societies and religions, and is a writer by passion. He is a Knight Templar and a Noble of the Mystic Shrine. Robert is active in his community, the United Methodist Church, and serves Wasatch Lodge #1 as editor of “*The Trestleboard*,” and Argenta Lodge #3 as Junior Deacon. You can reach him at CornWineOil@gmail.com.

History is Always Fiction

A Continuing Analysis of the Mystery of the Trials of the Ancient Templars

by

Sir Knight John L. Palmer, KCT

Managing Editor

A very wise man once said that we are all ignorant – just about different subjects. It seems to me that there is an awful lot of ignorance about the Knights Templar in general and about the ancient Knights Templar in particular. There also seems to be a good deal of interest about the subject. Part of the reason for the ignorance is the fact that it happened so long ago and that everyone involved who wrote anything down had an axe to grind.

There is a reason for this. It seems to me that any history over fifty years old is probably erroneous. It has been said that the victors write the history. Well, other folks do that too. The history of our country as I learned it in “grade school” has been changed significantly since I learned it. It seems to me that seven hundred-year-old history is probably predominantly fiction.

One of the ways to flush out ignorance is to stir up a healthy debate. The articles we publish during the next few months will very probably do that.

Another problem with this subject is that those who are not ignorant about it tend not to communicate very well and in a common sense manner with those who are.

What better place to have a debate about the truth of Templar history than in the *Knights Templar* magazine. I hope these next few issues will be entertaining for you because I cannot guarantee you that, at the end, you will know the truth.

As I indicated in the October issue, the museum and library of the Ancient and Accepted

Scottish Rite of the Southern Jurisdiction, in a generous and most fraternal gesture, offered us full access to their recently acquired documents from the Vatican. I was able to go back to the House of the Temple in Washington D.C. in October and to spend some time photographing and studying the documents. The feedback on the October issue has been that most of you would like to know a good deal more about the documents; what they say, the history surrounding them, and their relevance to Templary today.

As I see it, this museum piece is not only a copy of an historical document, but the entire package is a history making document. The timing of its publication is interesting. It is of museum quality, and only 800 copies were produced. I know of only two Masonic bodies in the United States which possess one, the Grand Lodge of New York and the Scottish Rite of the Southern Jurisdiction. Most of you will never have the opportunity to visit a museum and actually see one of these, let alone study it. Since many of you are interested in it, I can only offer you a series of articles in which I will attempt to share with you the experience and my thoughts as we explore together the relevance of and the mystery surrounding this curious package of documents. I am neither an historian nor an archeologist so I claim no expertise in the history of Templary. I only know what I read and what I can deduce. I am not a bad observer and I have held the title of “analyst” in a former life, so maybe I can relate to you what I see and the sense I make of it. Much of what I relate will be my perceptions of someone else’s

perceptions, so consider yourself forewarned; you may be reading fiction. As the magazine has space, we welcome input from those more knowledgeable than I and will certainly publish contrary opinions as we receive them. Remember that an analysis of the facts depends on the truth of those facts. There is probably no one who is totally impartial on the subject of the history of the Templars, so everything you read or hear is tainted by some bias.

Having said all that, I propose to give you a step by step physical description of the artifact, my opinions about why it might have been published at this time, my perception of the times and environment at the time it was written, some photographs of it, and the sense I get from the rather extensive commentary that is part of the package. We will approach this by publishing a piece each month until I have told you all I know or until you tell me you are tired of hearing about it. We will begin publishing the photos when the magazine goes to full color next month.

Why do you suppose the Vatican chose to publish this package at this time? For one thing, Friday, October 13, 2007, was the 700th anniversary of the initial raid on the Templars in France. This action was the beginning of the end of the Templar era. That still doesn't explain why they did it on the 700th anniversary and not the 600th or 800th. I believe that it may have had something to do with the recent publicity associated with the publication of several popular novels and the production of movies about the ancient Knights Templar. I can tell you from personal experience that these things have made young men curious about Templary and Freemasonry. Our lodges and Commanderies are receiving petitions from many serious, bright young men who are interested in the ideals and character of the ancient order and who want to become a part of an organization which seeks to perpetuate these ideals. In these recent fictional publications, the Freemasons and the Knights Templar knight templar

have been characterized in a much better light than the Church. They have often portrayed the Templars as the "good guys" and the Church hierarchy as the "bad guys". While this has been a refreshing change for us Templars and Freemasons, I am sure that it has been a concern for Church leadership; particularly the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church.

The publication of existing material that would tend to exonerate the Church of all wrongdoing and to shift the blame to the long extinct monarchy of France might seem like a very good idea. The fact that the document packages sell for around \$8,000 each and that the market is ripe for such a product probably didn't discourage them from producing them either. The package is extremely nice, but I can tell you that the profit margin is not trivial.

A part of the package is a rather extensive documentary about its contents and the environment during this period of Templar and Church history. This was written by Dr. Barbara Frale, the researcher who apparently discovered the "misfiled" parchment in 2001. I studied this material and found it to be very logical and informative. She expresses some perspectives on the background of the times that were new to me and which I thought were very interesting opinions.

I will, in future issues, attempt to share with you, not so much her exact words as the sense I got of what she had to say. Maybe she will write a less expensive book at some time in the future, and you can read it for yourself.

We will attempt to discuss the events, the environment, and the perspectives of the people involved in this drama leading up to the execution of Grand Master Jacques DeMolay. Some of the parallels to our current times seem striking to me. The events leading up to the establishment of the Knights Templar as an organization are all involved with the Crusades. Next month we will attempt to take a look at the environment which led to these Crusades and take a look at some photos of the artifact.


Prelate's Chapel

by

Sir Knight and Reverend William D. Hartman, P.G.C.

Chairman of the Committee on Religious Activities

Grand Encampment, Knights Templar, USA

ome years ago, *McCall's Magazine* featured a portrait painted by the famous artist, Norman Rockwell. Maybe you have seen it. Rockwell portrayed, in very striking terms, a truth about ourselves, a truth about our impersonal society, and about relationships today.

Shown in his painting is a magnificent entrance to a city cathedral. Vaulted high above its magnificently-carved Gothic doors are statues of prophets, apostles and martyrs. On the sidewalk below the cathedral steps move the busy throngs of people amidst the traffic of cars and taxis. Fourteen steps above the sidewalk, perched on a ladder, the custodian has just completed, under the watchful eye of the pastor, changing the church announcement board. On the announcement board, written for the edification of all those passers-by, are the words, "Lift Up Thine Eyes."

The irony of this whole scene, which Rockwell wants us to see, is that the throng passing by underneath this sign is caught up in their own thoughts. No one is looking up! Most of them appear to be harried, gloomy and depressed. They hurry on by without nary a glance at the words on the signboard.

What a tremendous caricature Norman Rockwell has given us of life today. How many people today move through life, trudging in the old, familiar ruts of life they don't know how to, or even care to leave. Their lives are empty of meaning, amazement and excitement, because they do not lift up their eyes from their weary, dreary daily routine to behold the beauty and glory of the day.

Twenty-one centuries ago, shepherds were out in the fields around Bethlehem "keeping watch over their flocks by night," when behold, an angel of the Lord appeared. They lifted up their eyes to behold the glory of God come into their lives, announcing the birth of His Son, the Savior of the world. Then a host of angels appeared above them, singing the praises of God, and with excitement and joy, they hurried to Bethlehem to behold the infant born to Mary.

Wise Men from the East had lifted up their eyes to behold a new star in the heavens, and they journeyed to Bethlehem (by way of Jerusalem) to behold the one who was born to be the new King of Israel.

Thirty-three years later, the disciples of this new-born King, this Emmanuel, would lift up their eyes to hear His promise to be with them forever, even to the end of the world, and then watch as He departed in clouds, with a promise to return someday to take us home with Him.

We are children of a living, loving God, who wants us to enjoy the creation He has given us, the family and friends who hold us dear. Why, then, do so many of us live life with our souls cast down to the concrete? How many people are there today like the parishoner who came into his pastor's study on Christmas Eve in tears. He had worked

and striven all his life to accumulate wealth, but his personal world was a shambles. With tear-streaked cheeks, this millionaire said to his pastor, "I would give it all away to find real meaning and purpose for my life."

I say "Lift Up Thine Eyes" to behold the glory of God in the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord, who came to give us life, and give it in abundance; who Himself is the Bread of Life and the Light of the World. "Lift Up Thine Eyes" and sing with all the sons of men and angels, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will to all peoples."

A Chat With The Managing Editor

I have now had opportunity to visit with several of the Sir Knights at five departmental conferences and have received some excellent suggestions for the magazine. Our state supplement editors are doing a better job every day and are an indispensable part of our team. The next time you see yours, tell him how much you appreciate all the hard work he puts in each month. That's probably all the reward he is going to get for it.

Next month will be our first full color issue ever. Please be patient with me as I learn how to deal with full color. We were able to pull this off financially with the assistance of some businesses who sell Templar uniforms, paraphernalia, and jewelry. They are underwriting the addition of color and the change in paper stock with their advertisements. If you like the changes and need some of their products, you might want to show them your appreciation by giving them your business. This is a substantial risk for some of them. If you know of others who would like to participate, we still have a little room, so have them contact me.

If you or someone you know is interested in Templar uniforms or old Templar jewelry, I would be interested in talking to you about doing a series of research articles on those subjects. Many of the Sir Knights would like to see some articles along that line. Remember that we are always in need of good articles about the history, philosophy, and symbolism of Templary, Christianity, and Freemasonry.

Meanwhile, we will continue our series about Templar buildings, Templar organizations, and the suppression of the Order in 1307. Please continue to let us know about what you like and especially about what you don't like about the changes we are making. We do try to listen. We are beginning to get more requests for subscriptions and extra copies of specific issues. See the table of contents page for information about that and for information about how to correct problems with the delivery of your magazine.

By the way.....



knight templar

Merry Christmas !!!



John

John L. Palmer

Managing Editor

13

is given. A Savior is a gift. God so loved the world that he gave a Savior.

The second type of gift is one which is personal—a gift designed for our personal needs. What are some of these? First, I think the gift of guidance. Some of you may feel alone. You need a guide. How wonderful to know that there is a Savior who says “I am the way.”

This idea is found in an Old Testament passage. Remember these words, “I will bring the blind by a way they know not. I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight.”

If you are facing a momentous decision, remember you have a Savior to guide you.

Third, I think of another gift for you, and that is the gift of one who will comfort us in a time of sorrow. Some of you have lost a loved one this year. If so, remember this truth. The Savior born at Bethlehem is the Savior who won the victory over death. He reminds you that Christ has gone to prepare a place for us, and there is indeed everlasting life.

Now, there is one more question I wish to ask. I Inquire, Is God on your Christmas list? Several years ago I read this interesting illustration. Suppose someone wanted to give a birthday party. They prepare food

and decorations and invite their friends. However, they make one big mistake. They forget to invite the one whose birthday they celebrate. One might say “ridiculous.”

But in effect this is what many people will do at Christmas time. They will decorate their homes, buy gifts for family and friends, and prepare an abundance of food for family gatherings, and then they will forget to remember the one whose birth we celebrate.

At Christmas, let us remember above all the one whose birth we should celebrate at Christmastime. Let us above all remember the

Christ who came to save us all and give to the world the supreme revelation of God. Let us above all invite Him into our hearts and lives.

Another Christmas approaches. We have a Christmas list. God also has a Christmas list, and we are on it. Is God on our list? This can and should happen to us all. How can this be done? It can be done when we remember the greatest gift of all, which is the gift of God's Son and our Savior.

Sir Knight and Reverend Paul L. Phillips is a retired Methodist minister and Past Grand Master of Masons in Tennessee. He resides at 17 Battlefield Cove, Jackson, TN 38305.

december 2008





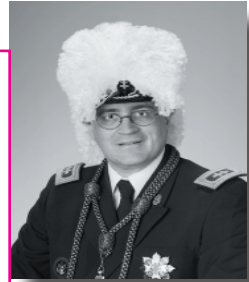
Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

1000 East State Parkway, Suite I
Schaumburg, IL 60173
Phone (847) 490-3838
Fax (847) 490-3777

A message from

Duane Lee Vaught, GCT

General Chairman of the 41st Annual Campaign
R.E. Grand Captain General
Grand Encampment, Knights Templar of the USA



Greetings, Sir Knights,

Last month's article asked the question: "Imagine something even better. Imagine that children don't need surgery. Might that be possible?"

The answer is yes. In recent years, the Eye Foundation has moved more and more into the field of research. Applications are received from researchers and evaluated by a scientific advisory committee of experienced professionals. These doctors donate their time and expertise to help us select the best of the proposed projects. If we don't have sufficiently exciting projects, we save the money for future use. Over the years we have funded approximately ten million dollars of this research work. Last year we approved grants of over \$500,000 for pediatric ophthalmology. Last week I was able to present two checks for \$25,000 each to researchers in Massachusetts. One is working on eye defects resulting from premature births, and the other is working on a parasitic problem. These new issues have trouble getting government funds, but if the projects are successful thanks to us, they will later be able to get the large grants that can bring the work to fruition.

A number of these research projects have met with success. Those successes have largely eliminated the surgery needed by so many children in the past. Surgery is a big deal. Dangers, pain, recovery time, expense, and the success rates are all issues. Thanks in large measure to our efforts, there are now non-surgical treatments such as drug therapies, which much of the time can produce similar results while avoiding most of the negatives of surgery.

Contributors recognized: in most issues of this magazine we recognize contributors to the Grand Commander's and Grand Master's clubs. Contributions of \$100 or of \$1,000 over time receive this recognition because they represent about 20% of all the funds annually raised for our Foundation. It's really not such a large amount of money, and any amount helps, but a great many of our members seeing the good works of our Foundation choose to do more. Maybe you will too.

THAT OTHERS MAY SEE

Duane Lee Vaught, GCT
General Chairman of the Campaign

NEW CONTRIBUTORS TO THE KTEF CLUBS

Grand Master's Club

- No. 5,356 Matt Mcgee (OK)
- No. 5,357 Harold N. Barker (CA)
- No. 5,358 Jay L. Cotner (VA)
- No. 5,359 Edwin M. Lindke (TX)
- No. 5360 Cecil A. Ryder, Jr. (HI)
- No. 5,361 Ronald L. Snider (MI)
- No. 5,362 James Sidney Jones, III (VA)

Grand Commander's Club

- No. 102,792 Stephen Gassett (CA)
- No. 102,793 Edward W. Stenger (PA)
- No. 102,794 Clarence C. Smith (SC)
- No. 102,795 Charles Perez (FL)
- No. 102,796 Jeffery T. Shank (PA)
- No. 102,797 Michael J. Broom (SC)

How to Join the Grand Commander's or the Grand Master's Clubs

Any individual may send a check in the amount of \$100 or more specified for the purpose of beginning a Grand Commander's Club membership and made payable to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. This initial contribution will begin your Grand Commander's Club membership. In addition, members of the Grand Commander's Club pledge to make annual contributions of \$100 or more. Once contributions total \$1,000, the individual is enrolled in the Grand Master's Club. Membership is open to individuals only, and there is Commandery credit given for participation. Information is available from: Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.; 1000 E. State Parkway, Suite I, Schaumburg, Illinois 60173-2460. The phone number is: (847) 490-3838. The fax number is (847) 490-3777.



Ms. Shari Parker of Albuquerque, New Mexico, was recently awarded a scholarship by the New Mexico Knights Templar Educational Foundation to assist her in her graduate studies at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Ms. Parker is the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Clifford Parker. Pictured from left to right is S.K. Robert Keene, P.G.C., the Reverend Parker, Ms. Parker, her mother Ethyl, and S.K. Hendrik deBruin, P.G.C. Both Sir Knights are members of the Educational Foundation Committee.



Knight Voices

Attention Sir Knights and readers!!

Beginning with the January issue of the *Knight Templar* magazine, we will begin accepting a limited amount of commercial advertising to assist us in bringing color to the publication. These businesses are assisting us by underwriting the cost of these improvements. In order to do this, we have had to establish a new policy on the type of items we will publish in "Knight Voices" and on the pages near the back of the magazine that we have been using to promote fund-raisers. We will be combining these two sections. We will continue to accept classified personal items such as lost swords, genealogy requests, and collectors seeking items for their collections at no charge. We will continue to accept advertisements for fund-raisers if 100% of the funds raised are donated to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, the Educational Foundation, or the Holy Land Pilgrimage charities. We will be glad to put the other items on the Grand Encampment web site but will not be able to print them in the magazine. We will publish the web site address in the magazine and encourage our readers to visit the site. Unlike the current ads, the web site will be in color.

If you wish to submit an item for the magazine, it must be sent in electronic form to ktmagazine@comcast.net. Please send any photos in JPG format and indicate how long you would like the item to run. If you wish to submit an item to the web site, please send it to the web master at KYCH52VA@AOL.com.

■ **FOR SALE:** The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Wisconsin is selling key chains to commemorate its 150th anniversary which occurs on Oct. 20, 2009. One side features the Knight Templar cross and crown and the other a Knight on horseback. Proceeds from the sale will be used to help finance the Grand Commandery's 150th anniversary observance. *To order, please send check for \$12.50 to Gary Parker, Grand Recorder, 36275 Sunset Drive, Dousman, Wisconsin 53118. Shipping and handling is included in the price.*

■ **Wanted:** Masonic Chapter pennies by an avid collector. I have been building this collection for 36 years and still need many pieces as I am collecting all varieties. These one day will end up in a Masonic museum. Why not find a home for your mark? I will gladly send you a check for one piece or will buy your collection. If you collect, I will gladly exchange. I will answer all letters. **Especially needed are Iowa, Michigan, Hawaii, and Alaska pennies.** *Maurice Storck, Sr., 775 W. Roger Road, No. 214; Tucson, AZ 85705, (520) 888-7585.*
knight templar

■ **For Sale:** Gold-finish sword lapel pins. Men's lapel pin is 1-1/4" long with red stone in the center of the hilt, \$7.00 each, and ladies pin is 2-1/2" long with clear stone at the top of the hilt, and red stone in the center of the hilt, \$12.00 each. Prices include shipping and handling. *Send check or money order to: Melrose Commandery 159th Grand Conclave, 17120 Theiss Mail Road, Spring, TX 77379. Email inquiries to pewunsche@sbcglobal.net. 10% of all sales will be donated to KTEF. Sword pins are a special project for the 159th Grand Conclave of the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Texas.*

■ **For Sale: Plymouth Chapter No. 41, O.E.S.,** Union Bridge, MD is selling their three ring binder hardback cookbook, *Cookbook of the Stars* as a fund raiser in support of Shriners's Hospitals & Burns Centers for Children. Great for Christmas gifts. The cost is \$15.00 plus \$3.00 shipping. All profits from this project will go to Shriners. *Send checks to Plymouth Chapter No. 41, O.E.S., Geneva B. Delphey, Treasurer, 11919 Green Valley Road, Union Bridge, MD 21791, or for more information, call (410) 775-7432.*

General Supplement

The space on these two pages is provided by the *Knight Templar* magazine to be used by the Grand Commanderies to communicate with the individual Sir Knights in their jurisdictions on a monthly basis. From time to time and for various reasons, we fail to receive any material from the editor of the state supplement for a given month. When this happens, we take the opportunity to offer you the information below. – The Ed.



The model shown to the left is located in Jerusalem. It is presumably a model of the third temple sometimes known as Herod's Temple which occupied the temple mound during the time of Christ. As you can see from the photo, this is an outside model which includes much of the old city of Jerusalem as it was in Biblical times. The Templars were said to have been headquartered on this mound during their early involvement in the crusades. There has been much speculation that they may have excavated this mound and found some sort of treasure or some valuable hidden secrets concerning the Christian religion. This speculation has given rise to the recent publication of a number of novels and movies concerning the secrets and treasure of the Templars and their association with the Freemasons.

Shown at left is the temple mound in Jerusalem as it is today. Prominently in the center of the mound, supposedly in the spot occupied by Solomon's Temple, is a Mosque sometimes known as The Dome of the Rock. This mound plays an important role in the three religions of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity and is perhaps the most disputed piece of real-estate in the world. The famous Wailing Wall is the only part of Herod's Temple remaining intact today. The modern city of Jerusalem can be seen in the background. Several years ago, a tunnel was excavated which ran down the side of the mound. Passageways were discovered leading back under the mound, but these had been filled with rubble and debris. Further excavation has been prevented by the political environment in the region and because of concerns about the structural integrity of the mound itself. We may not live long enough to see the archeological excavation of this mound. There are a few structures on the mound itself which are believed to have been built by the Templars.

The tomb sometimes known as The Tomb of St. James, shown below, is located in the Kidron Valley in Jerusalem. Some believe it to be the tomb of James, the half-brother of Jesus. Recently, some have speculated that the two columns on this tomb are somehow related to Freemasonry and the Knights Templar, that the Disciples of Christ were associated with the Essenes, and that they were the true founders of Freemasonry. There are several books on this subject. Some even theorize that the Templars subsequently discovered secrets or treasures belonging to this group and somehow preserved them in some secret place. Whatever the truth, the two columns do look familiar to some of us.



■ **For Sale:** Fatigue uniform, size 42 regular. Pants W-38 L-27. Good condition. Two pairs of pants. Coat \$75.00 Pants \$25.00 each. Contact Roberta Fowler, 1904 White Oaks Dr., Alexandria, VA 22306.

■ **Collector's Item:** Pint bottle of Waterfill & Frazier Whiskey bottled by U.S. Internal Revenue Department, Distillery No. 17, Louisville, Kentucky, fall 1933, made in spring 1917 for medicinal purposes ONLY. Cork is leaking or it is beginning to evaporate. Make offer. Contact Roberta Fowler, 1904 White Oaks Dr., Alexandria, VA 22306.

■ **Plate:** Nine inch round, Mary Commandery No. 36 Knights Templar, constituted 1869. Date on plate 1910. Rabboni on bottom. Anyone collecting this item? Contact Roberta Fowler, 1904 White Oaks Dr., Alexandria, VA 22306.

■ **Cochran Lodge No. 217, F. & A.M. Cochran, Georgia,** is continuing its long-term charity project: In addition to the Masonic and Shrine jewelry boxes, we are now offering O.E.S. jewelry boxes: all are approx. 5.5"x5.5"x2.5" in size, constructed of exotic woods from Central America, and hand-crafted with an interlocking design. All profits go to Masonic charity with a portion going directly to the Georgia Masonic Children's Home Endowment Fund. The price for each box is \$20 plus \$6 shipping and handling. Postage is pro-rated on bulk orders; *please contact e-mail below or call (478) 934-7236 for pro-rated S&H rates. Check or MO to Cochran Masonic Lodge No. 217 and mail to Harry A. Bruno, Chairman; Cochran Masonic Lodge No. 217, F. & A.M., P.O. Box 732, Cochran, GA 31014, or e-mail harrya217@cstel.net.*

■ **For Sale:** peel-off, vinyl, royal blue square and compass decals designed to fit on your license plate or window, 2" high, 1" wide, 6 vinyl decals for \$5, postpaid. Also, approx. 4" reflective chrome vinyl square and compasses, Past Master, O.E.S., or Shrine decals to fit on your taillights, only \$5 per set of 2, postpaid. Also black vinyl square and compass decals 3/4"x3/4" designed to place on the photo or list of your Past Masters who have gone on to that Celestial Lodge Above. 10 decals for only \$5 postpaid. All profits go to our Masonic Widows' Fund. *Joe Allen, P.M., Sec., Cochran Masonic Lodge No. 217, F. & A.M., P.O. Box 732, Cochran, GA 31014.*

■ **For Sale:** custom design Masonic die cast coins, lapel pins, and other promotional items. To request a custom quote or a full color brochure contact *Frank Looser, P.M. 800-765-1728 or send mail to 809 Cobble Cove, Nashville, TN 37211, e-mail fhjlj@comcast.net or visit me on-line at www.cnfinteractive.com for ideas and to see what other Masons have to say about my work. % goes to KTEF.*

■ **For Sale:** Middle Georgia Chapter #165, R.A.M., the first chapter started in Georgia in 25 years, is selling its newly minted shekels. They are mounted in a 2x2 coin folder and come with a sealed certificate of authenticity. \$7.00 each or two for \$10.00, postpaid. *Orders to: A. Neal Mims, 708 Jeanette Street, Cochran, GA 31014. E-mail: neal217@comsouth.net.*

Please visit the classified section of our website. These and other listings can be found on the Grand Encampment web site at:

<http://knightstemplar.org/knightvoices/>

■ **Lloyd L. Gibson Chapter No. 481, R.A.M.,** has available their newly minted 50-year commemorative mark/penny for a donation of \$10 each postpaid with a certificate of authentication. Penny is made of antique bronze. *10% of donations will go to KTEF. Checks or money orders to Lloyd L. Gibson Chapter No. 481, R.A.M., P. O. Box 972, Channelview, TX 77530.*

■ **For a free listing** of VHS videos, DVD's, and radio program CD's related to Sir Knight Tom Mix and the Tom Mix of radio, please send a postcard or note with your name and complete mailing address to *Paul E. Mix, 13116 Billiem Drive, Austin, TX 78727-3258.*

Sale of Blue Lodge Wall Hanging to Benefit the KTEF



The wall hanging is made of 100% USA cotton, and is manufactured in the USA with 380 picks per square inch to give it outstanding definition. It is made of upholstery material for durability,

and it has a solid cotton backing. The design has the three steps to Freemasonry and contains a Bible verse, Matthew 7:7. This item is color fast, and it is dry cleanable only. The size of the wall hanging is 25 x 33 inches. It comes with a wooden wall hanger and a brass chain and is ready to be hung up when you receive it. It is very colorful. The price is \$44.75, which includes the shipping and insurance. For every wall hanging sold through *Knight Templar*, there will be an \$8.00 donation to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. If interested, please send check or money order to: Sandra D. Knotts, P.O. Box 158, Trexlertown, PA 18087.

Brethren Persecuted

A three-part series on the demise of the Knights Templar

By Sir Knight Stephen Dafoe

Past Grand Historian, Sovereign Great Priory of Canada

Part Three: The Curse of Jacques de Molay

In August of 1308, Pope Clement V had issued a papal bull calling for a general church council to be held at Vienne in October of 1310. The purpose of the council was to try the matter of the heinous charges levelled against the Templars by King Philip IV of France. However, the council was postponed a year - not out of any procrastination, but because the papal commission who had been given the task of collecting evidence was having difficulties. Witnesses and testimonies contradicted one another or, in many cases, even themselves. When all was said and done, the commission determined that the Templars and their Rule of Order were orthodox, but that some peculiar and unworthy aspects had been allowed to creep into the Templar initiation ceremonies. Those who had acknowledged these errors were absolved of their sins and reinstated with the Church, as was the case at Chinon in Tours. It was this conclusion that was to be presented to the Council of Vienne, a matter that, had it been brought to full light, would have changed the face of Templar history.

But such was not to be the case. Although the church fathers who had gathered at the council were, for the most part, knight templar

doubtful of the Order's guilt, King Philip had no intention of letting the matter go in the Order's favor. On 20 March, 1312, Philip, along with a sizeable portion of his army, arrived at Vienne. Within two days, Clement called a special meeting with his commissioners and a number of cardinals, who, in a four-fifths majority, voted to dissolve the Order of the Temple. The result was the papal bull *Vox in Excelso*, penned on 22 March and read publicly on 3 April. With so much evidence in support of the continuation – albeit modified – existence of the Templars, Clement knew that his report would be met with resistance. To this end, a clerk announced that anyone who rose to speak to the matter without permission would be excommunicated. Of course, with Philip sitting in the council chambers and his army sitting outside, there was little that could be done. After all, Clement did not wish to suffer the same fate as his predecessor Boniface VIII, in whose death Philip had played a prominent role.

But even in the bull dissolving the Templars, a document of far greater importance than the "Chinon Parchment," we see that it was not the Order's guilt, but reputation that was the cause.

*“Therefore, with a sad heart, **not by definitive sentence**, but by apostolic provision or ordinance, we suppress, with the approval of the sacred council, the order of Templars, and its rule, habit and name, by an inviolable and perpetual decree, and we entirely forbid that anyone from now on enter the order, or receive or wear its habit, or presume to behave as a Templar.”*

Of course, this was but the first of several papal bulls dealing with the dismantling of an Order that had served Christendom for nearly two centuries. A short time later, Clement issued the bull *Ad Providam*, which transferred Templar properties and assets to the Hospitallers, who were further authorized to pay the former Templars a pension. In the end, Philip had succeeded in destroying the Templars, but failed to acquire any of their assets for himself. But it would not be his last dealing with the now defunct Order or its members; for de Molay, the last Grand Master of the Templars, was still in prison.

The Death of de Molay

The story of Jacques de Molay’s final hours is an important one to Masonic Templars; for we see in his martyrdom a great act of resolve in the hour of danger, and a human parallel to the sufferings of Christ on the Cross. But de Molay’s execution, while a matter of historical record, has been greatly embellished over the years to include the notion that the last Grand Master cursed the king and pope, who died soon after. Although this story has formed the pinnacle of the Templar mythos for many years, early chroniclers mentioned de Molay’s execution in passing. The most reliable of the contemporary accounts comes to us from the continuation of the chronicles of Guillaume de Nangis.

The writer tells us that on the Feast of St. Gregory (March 18) de Molay and other Templar leaders were brought to the steps of Notre Dame de Paris to hear the final decision of three cardinals, who had been charged with determining their fate. According to the chronicle, de Molay and Geoffrey de Charney - upon learning that they were to remain in prison for the rest of their lives - interrupted the cardinals in protest, retracting their previous confessions. When Philip learned of the matter, he moved swiftly and ordered the same fate for the Templar leaders that he had issued to the fifty-four knights he’d burned at the stake in 1310. That evening de Molay and de Charney were taken to a little isle on the Seine and executed.

And this is where the curse myth begins, for the writer of the chronicle tells us that *“They were seen to be so prepared to sustain the fire with easy mind and will that they brought from all those who saw them much admiration and surprise for the constancy of their death and final denial...”* Beautiful and poetic words that should have been sufficient to solidify de Molay’s memory in the heart of all Templars; however, others would add to the story. In the popular tale, told in many Masonic Templar settings over the years, de Molay did not suffer his fate with resolve and calm mind, but pronounced that before the end of the year Philip and Clement would meet him before God to answer for their crimes. While it is certainly true that both men followed de Molay in death; Clement on April 20, as a result of his long suffered illness, and Philip on November 29, after being thrown from a horse while hunting; it was not the curse that was responsible for the timing of their deaths, but the timing of their deaths that was responsible for the curse.

The closest contemporary source to the curse story comes from the words of Geoffrey de Paris, a clerk in Philip's court who wrote in a poem that de Molay said God would avenge the Templars, for he knew who was truly in the wrong. It is not until 1330 that the curse legend begins to truly take form in the works of an Italian chronicler named Feretto de Ferretis, who puts the curse, not in de Molay's mouth, but in the mouth of an anonymous Templar. Not until the sixteenth century do we see the words actually ascribed to de Molay, when the French historian Paul Émile became the first to make the claim in his *De rebus gestis francorum*, published in 1548. Unfortunately, Émile was not the last and the myth of de Molay's dying words has continued long after the order he led had vanished into the pages of history and legend.

Having spent a few months covering the end of the Templars, the next article in this series will jump back to the beginning and

examine the history and mythology surrounding the origins of the Templars in the years that followed the First Crusade.

Sir Knight Stephen Dafoe is a freelance writer, author, and publisher who lives in Alberta, Canada. He is Past Grand Historian of the Sovereign Great Priory of Canada and is currently serving on the editorial review board of the *Knight Templar* magazine. He is author of *Nobly Born: An Illustrated History of the Knights Templar* and *The Compasses and the Cross: A History of the Masonic Knights Templar*. He also coauthored *The Warriors and the Bankers* and *The Knights Templar Revealed*.

Stephen has appeared in several documentaries on the history of the Templars and related subjects including *Sacred Societies - A&E*, *In Search of Satan - MSNBC*, and *The Prince and the Grail - Vision TV Canada* and has served as a consultant in the production of *The Templar Code - History Channel*.

He can be contacted at:
 PO Box 3135
 Morinville, Alberta
 T8R 1S1
 author@stephendafoe.com



Donald Sitton McNulty
 Idaho
 Grand Commander – 1995
 Born: : February 3, 1921
 Died: August 25, 2008

Donald Warren Vose
 Massachusetts and Rhode Island
 Grand Commander – 1982
 Born: December 27, 1911
 Died: October 1, 2008

James O. Jackson
 Arkansas
 Grand Commander – 1984
 Born: March 9, 1919
 Died: October 27, 2008

Knights Templar Cross of Honor



Templary's Highest Award

The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America presents the recipients of the Knights Templar Cross of Honor for the year 2008. These distinguished Sir Knights have demonstrated meritorious service and have been rewarded for it. The Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Encampment state that the Knights Templar Cross of Honor "shall be awarded only for exceptional and meritorious service rendered to the order far beyond the call of duty and beyond the service usually expected of an officer or member."

This year the Grand Commanderies have selected only forty-seven Sir Knights to receive the coveted Cross of Honor.

ALABAMA

William Jerald Burfitt
Huntsville No. 7

GEORGIA

Lloyd J. Leinbaugh
Constantine No. 26

LOUISIANA

John Leslie Belanger
Istrouma No. 28

ALASKA

Lee O. Seagondollar
Mat-Su Valley No. 4

IDAHO

Stanley Eugene Barker
Idaho No. 1

MAINE

Millard A. Tripp, Jr.
St. Amand No. 20

ARIZONA

Paul James Dóre, Sr.
Phoenix No. 3

ILLINOIS

F. Richard Carlson
Elwood No. 6

MARYLAND

Richard H. Westermeyer
Monumental No. 3

ARKANSAS

Silas Melton Wilson
Damascus No. 8

INDIANA

Thomas W. Harper
Trinity No. 62

MASSACHUSETTS/ RHODE ISLAND

Morphis Albert Jamiel
Calvery No. 13

CALIFORNIA

Carlos Hugo Gonzalez
Los Angeles No. 9

IOWA

Tim Scott Anderson
Apollo No. 26

MICHIGAN

James Carrington Needham
Marshall No. 17

COLORADO

John A. McKenry, III
Jefferson-Highlands No. 30

KANSAS

Leo William Magnuson
Mt. Olivet No. 12

MINNESOTA

Kevin V. Jones
Duluth No. 18

FLORIDA

Malcolm B. Ryder
Trinity No. 16

KENTUCKY

Ernest Eugene Atkins
Paducah No. 11

MISSISSIPPI

Jerry Wayne Reeves
Mary Savery No. 14

MISSOURI

Glenn Ervin Means
Palestine No. 17

MONTANA

Lawrence "Larry" A. Hale
Crusade No. 17

NEBRASKA

Ronald O. Clarke
Mt. Calvary No. 1

NEVADA

Larry G. Kesler
Melita No. 9

NEW JERSEY

Frederick E. Schlosser
Corson No. 15

NEW MEXICO

Daniel Lucero
Pilgrim No. 3

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Hugh de Payens No. 30
Tancred No. 80

NORTH CAROLINA

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Cory R. Lien
St. Aldemar No. 3

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Harold Eugene Clawson
Reed No. 6

OKLAHOMA

Timothy Peter Israel
Elk City No. 22

OREGON

Milton Sidney Roberts
Columbia No. 26

PENNSYLVANIA

Thomas J. Reimensnyder
Mt. Hermon No. 85

SOUTH CAROLINA

Jerry O'Neal Glenn
Greenville No. 4

SOUTH DAKOTA

George Bauder
Schrader No. 9

TENNESSEE

Clarence Franklin Alexander
Dickson No. 41

TEXAS

Ronald Dean Park
Alexander C. Garrett No. 103
David Leroy Anderson
Dallas No. 6

UTAH

Michael Fifield Slaughter
Utah No. 1

VERMONT

John T. Colby
Mount Zion No. 9

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Grice No. 16

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Edwin "Skip" Sanford
DeMolay No. 6

WEST VIRGINIA

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Huntington No. 9

WISCONSIN

Parker W. Dow
Robert Macoy No. 3

WYOMING

Gary D. Skillern
Wyoming No. 1





Letters to the Editor



WOW!!! The October issue of the *Knight Templar* has set the Gold Standard for what we've "long sought" in editorial content, make-up and design.

It's a perfect blend of concise articles on the relevant aspects of the fascinating history of Templary written in a readable and understandable manner. It's our ancient history and the landmarks of the Knights of Old that make for stimulating and engaging reading for all us Knights. This is all done without jeopardizing the magazine's goal as a line of communication between the Grand Encampment and its membership. Keep up the good work. You're right on target.

Calvin A. Nixon, P.C.

In reference to your invitation to comment on the new look of our magazine, I congratulate you on the considerable improvement in appearance, readability, arrangement, and some of the content. I eagerly anticipate the continuation of the saga of the "Trial of the Templars Revisited" and reports and analysis of the recently acquired Templar Transcripts. I had also hoped that a new editor would reduce the number of classified ads to only those that serve a useful purpose for the goals of Masonry, or at least levy a charge upon those who just wish to sell or buy merchandise.

Your limited use of sepia is enough color to draw attention where you want it. We really don't need a "comic book" to convey the worthy messages of Chivalric Masonry.

You're doing great; keep up the good work!
David L. Smith, KYCH

Thanks, David. We are beginning to limit the "free" advertising in deference to our new paid advertisers. If the Sir Knights don't patronize our advertisers, I am sure we will be back to black and white within a year or so.

This is an open response to the article "The Importance of Character in Public Office" by Sir Knight James P. Gilmore published in the *Knight Templar* magazine October 2008.

Sir Knight Gilmore,

I want to say that I agree with what you said wholeheartedly. The problem as I see it is that a considerable number of people in our country generally lack character. They were not taught this in the home or school when growing up. This is why we are seeing declines in membership in our fraternity and our churches and why we are currently experiencing the worst financial crisis since 1929.

Over the last 20 years, we have seen this lack of personal character in political candidates infiltrate our governments to a much greater extent. I would attribute this infiltration to an increase of special interest groups promoting candidates that will support their causes not the interests of our country.

When you examine voting statistics, you find that a very small percentage of eligible voters are, in fact, registered, and the number that actually votes, is an even smaller percentage. Thus, the special interest groups have been able to elect candidates of their choosing.

A candidate of good character seeking public office is unlikely to get elected unless he has the support of groups that can stand up to the special interests. All one has to do is look at the millions of dollars that were spent in the recent presidential election of 2008. A substantial part of the funds were provided by special interest

Continued on page 28

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PERSONAL INTEGRITY

Part I of a Three Part Series

by

Sir Knight Clayton J. Borne, III

In the September 2007 *Louisiana Freemason* is an article entitled *Relevancy of Freemasonry in the Twenty-First Century*, originally presented at the 8th World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges in Paris. The paper ended with the conclusion that our fundamental principles and their significance to society are just as relevant today as they were to our ancient brothers.

Accepting this conclusion as the premise for this paper and extrapolating the cause and effect relationship forward in time, civilized society and mankind in general will measure the dynamics of our spiritual brotherhood not by its idealistic objectives, but whether the Masonic philosophy is truly alive and evident in the lives of each of our Brothers. In other words, if instead of integrity they see hypocrisy, instead of truth they see prevarications, instead of honesty they see deception; our footprints on the pages of time will have been tarnished. Where our history evidences a God centered life adorned in a cloak of charity, brazen by badges of truth, honor and courage, the 21st century will continue to see men drawn to our lodges, as the Brotherhood and its destiny is truly a reflection of who we are and all that we do.

As a predicate to this paper, I ask each of my brothers the question, "Why do we, as a brotherhood, believe that belief in a Supreme Being is necessary for a personal transformation in our lives and ultimately necessary for the development of a disciplined yet free society?" As an extension of that thought, "Why is a belief in a Su-

preme Being essential to the landmarks of our fraternity and sacred to the ritual of our regular Masonic Lodges?" The answer is fundamental to understanding the Masonic philosophy or the Masonic way of life.

Exactly how were we able to affirm a belief in a Supreme Being and what effect did that acceptance have on our lives? Have we truly challenged the concept of the "Being behind Reality" and its effect on the men that we are? Did the Masonic initiation ritual enhance your conviction and your commitment to spiritual growth? Philosophers over the ages have challenged this basic concept and pushed mankind to investigate more specific questions: "What is the nature of God, and how is God related to the universe?", "Is God a force responsible for creation?", "What is the true concept of God?", "Is it possible to even come to a knowledge of God?", and for us, as Masons "Why was it essential to the tenets of our brotherhood that we affirm the concept before gaining admission?" and "Why have we severed communications with those Grand Lodges that believe it is no longer essential to the Masonic discipline to embrace a belief in a Supreme Being?"

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

The concept challenged by many early philosophers and historians which is fundamental to each of our most basic beliefs is "How do we as humans come to a knowledge of God, and why is it important?" Further, for the purpose of this paper, what effect does this academic inquiry have on our Masonic Brotherhood,

its spiritual pursuits, and objectives?

After much research, self reflection and thought, it is my sincere belief that for a finite creature, such as man, to come to a knowledge of an infinite creature or being, such as God, is on its surface impossible. The reason: man as a finite creature cannot truly understand or comprehend the limitless concepts such as eternity or infinity. Despite many brilliant philosophers' allegations to the contrary, finite man conceptually defines everything in terms of, or with limits.

God, however, most definitely can be known. God is known to the extent that his nature would demand it be revealed; that is, in the ways God would choose to reveal himself to his creations. An example would be found in our perception and knowledge of nature. As a Christian the revelation would be the embodiment and person of Jesus Christ. There are others. Only in the revelation is a finite knowledge of God possible. By his creation, God or the Creator becomes the principal of the Universe. God is the whole of his creation; God is truly the "Grand Architect of the Universe".

To be continued next month

Sir Knight Clayton J. (Chip) Borne, III is a Past Grand Master of Masons in Louisiana and a practicing attorney-at-law in that state. He is a member of the Dormer Masonic Study Circle (London, England), the Masonic Study Society (London, England), the Louisiana Lodge of Research, and the Scottish Rite Research Society. He has published a book entitled *The Story of Early History in Louisiana including History and Roster of Perfect Union Lodge (1973 to 2001)*. Sir Knight Borne and his wife Nancy reside at 1800 Lakeshore Drive, Mandeville, LA 70448.

Letters to the Editor continued from page 26

and similar groups.

I believe that the majority of the citizens of our country are apathetic when it comes to government. This is why they do not seek office or get involved in the election process. I have campaigned for individuals whom I know are of good character and have found when distributing campaign literature that the persons did not seem to care one way or another.

This leaves us with the dilemma of choosing between the lesser of evils. Not the ideal, but not to vote is to forgo your right to express your opinion under the Constitution. I wish I had an answer, but I don't. I just put my trust in the Great Architect of the Universe as He is in control of everything.

Fraternally,
Terry W. Simonton

Thanks for your comments, Terry. I am glad to see our articles invoking a response from our readers. Isn't the building of character, one man at a time, really what we are about?

Knights Templar,

It is with great pleasure that I write you this letter to let you know that my eye surgery went well and that I am able to see much better than I did. I was praying and hoping that I wouldn't lose my eyesight. I would like to say from the bottom of my heart thank you for all your help in restoring my eyesight. You really are a blessing to so many people. May your good work continue always. Again thank you.

BJF

Beauceant News



Westminster Assembly No. 245, Maryland: "Mrs. Robert Brendle receives her 40-year certificate and roses presented to her from Mrs. J. Michael Robbins, Worthy President of Westminster Assembly No. 245, Maryland, on the occasion of the Assembly's 34th birthday celebration."



The R. E. Grand Commander of Virginia, Jeffrey Glen Burcham, made his Official Visit to the 10th District in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on Saturday, August 23, 2008. Members of Fredericksburg Assembly No. 266, Social Order of the Beauceant, posed with Sir Knight Burcham. Back left row: (Mrs. Walter) Betty Smith; (Mrs. Daniel) Di Thompson, Recorder; (Mrs. James) Helen Fields. Front row: (Mrs. William) Dolores Reinhold; (Mrs. John) Mary Wigglesworth; (Mrs. Edwin) Sharon Carpenter, 1st Vice President; Jeffrey Glen Burcham, Grand Commander; (Mrs. Joseph) Barbara Bongjovi, President; (Mrs. Jarrett) Mary Frame, 2nd Vice President; (Mrs. Joel) Sandra Ratliff. Back right row: (Mrs. Lawrence) Lynne Smith, Standard Bearer; (Mrs. Rudolph) Barbara Griffith, Treasurer.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ABOUT THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

The following story and photo was reported in *The Daily Telegraph* of London on July 26, 2008.

Reprinted with permission

Christopher Howse reviews

The Templars:

***History and Myth* by Michael Haag**

In the open country outside the walls of Segovia a couple of weeks ago, I found myself caught up in a throng of teenagers scrambling into the cave-like undercroft of the mysterious round church of La Vera Cruz. Here their guide told them the bloodcurdling history of the Templars, who built it in 1208.

Except that they didn't build it, and the bloodcurdling history was fantasy. Most Templar churches were not round and this round church, like many others, is not Templar. Vera Cruz belonged to the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre, who did not, like the Templars, ride around putting infidels to the sword.

The Templars were a rum lot, all right, quite apart from Da Vinci Code imaginings. At the time of their suppression in 1312 they were accused of worshipping a head, of spitting on the crucifix, and of sodomy. These habits were presumed to have been picked up in Moorish lands. In 1314, their Grand Master, James of Molay, protesting his innocence, was burnt at the stake by Philip IV of France.

Only in 2005 was it discovered why he protested so much. A scroll misfiled in the Vatican Secret Archives turned out to be

the sworn account of the interrogation of Molay and his colleagues at the castle of Chinon. They admitted that on initiation into the Templars they had been told to spit on the crucifix and to denounce Christ, but they declared they had not meant it in their hearts. As for sodomy, none admitted it, and none had worshipped any head.

The importance of the Chinon parchment is that it proves that Pope Clement V had absolved these Templars from their crimes and cleared them of any taint of heresy. The subsequent dissolution of the order was the work of the French king's persevering campaign.

It was a long way from the idealism with which, on Christmas Day 1119, a handful of knights took their vows as "Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ" devoted to guarding pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, at that period in Christian hands. The new foundation was granted as its headquarters the al-Aqsa former mosque. This domed building on the Temple Mount was thought at the time to be Solomon's Temple, hence Templars.

Michael Haag, in his well-knit narrative, gets through an enormous spread of history, helpfully telling readers what the Bible has to say about the Jewish Temple before running through the Roman, Muslim and Crusader centuries. The after-history of the Templars is dominated by the imaginings of Freemasons and the conspiracy fancies of scarcely distinct alternative historians and novelists. If anything, the author is too tolerant of this froth. Historical truth does matter.

december 2008

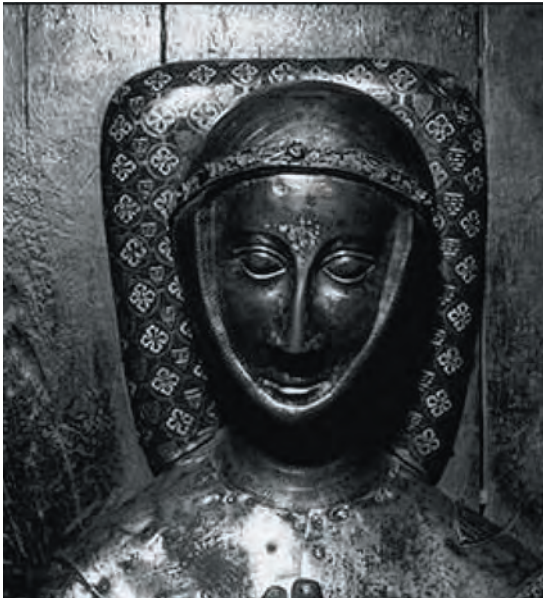
Perhaps the Templars themselves were off-beam from their first dawn, since it seems to have escaped the notice of these poor, chaste and obedient monk-knights that Christ was not a soldier. They joined St. Bernard in promoting the rather disastrous Second Crusade but found little success in freeing Christian territories in the Holy Land from surrounding, warring Islamic factions. They had better luck in Spain, where the frontier of reconquered territory pushed steadily southwards.

The Templars acquired rich grants of land from kings such as Henry I of England, who gave them a plot at the end of Chancery Lane, where the Temple church now stands. Its model is not Solomon's Temple, but the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, built over the site of the tomb of Christ.

An idea in medieval Europe, more widespread than the Templars, was that every church in which the body and blood of Christ were sacrificed again daily was another Holy Sepulchre. In 1009, long before the Templars' foundation, Christ's rock-hewn grave in Jerusalem was attacked with pickaxes after the church around it had been demolished, on the orders of the Fatimid caliph al-Hakim, who made Jews and Christians wear distinctive clothes and generally behaved in a fierce manner.

There was never an unmoving monolith-knight templar

ic Muslim force opposing a monolithic Christian Crusader polity. Shia, Egyptian-based Fatimids, were displaced by Sunni, Persianised-Turkic Seljuks. Saladin, the man who in 1187 recaptured Jerusalem from the Christians, was by origin a Kurd, an Indo-European people like their Frankish enemies. Saladin purified the Templar headquarters, restoring it as a mosque, but decided not to demolish the rebuilt Holy Sepulchre.



The Templars were accused of spitting on the crucifix.

When in 1229 Frederick II crowned himself King of Jerusalem there (no bishop caring to crown this excommunicated troublemaker), he ensured by treaty that the Templars were forbidden to return. It was a straw in the wind. The Templars were to be destroyed by the jealousy of kings.

The Biretta

by

Sir Knight and Reverend Arthur F. Hebbeler III, STS
Grand Prelate, Grand Commandery of Maryland

Recently, I was installed as the Grand Prelate of the Grand Commandery of Maryland. As one who has been called “high church” most of my career, I was familiar with the vestments of the Prelate in Knights Templar. However, I quickly learned that many—even some very seasoned Sir Knights—were not as familiar with the vestments and the headwear especially, of the Prelate. More than once, I was given instructions regarding the wear of my “mitre,” including being informed that “even the Pope wears his all the time.”

In the interest of furthering our collective historical understanding, a brief article seems to be appropriate for the edification of all.

The biretta, a cap with three or four ridges (peaks) and sometimes a tuft or pom, has been in use by academics and clerics since at least the early tenth century A.D. The three-ridged version has traditionally been used by the clergy and the four-ridged version by academics (a predecessor to the mortar board).

In its academic use, the biretta has often been adorned with piping identifying the area of study in which the wearer’s degree has been awarded in a pontifical degree (dark red for theology, for example). In many European academic communities, the cap worn by holders of doctoral degrees is often called a “biretta” even if it doesn’t look like one.

The biretta is to the clergy (mostly Roman Catholic, Anglo-Catholic, and a small number of Lutherans) what a fedora or bowler or top hat is for the layman—headgear for outdoor wear. With a few exceptions, it is worn outdoors by vested clergy (except for the pope, who never wears a biretta), and removed when entering a building, just as one removes one’s hat elsewhere. When it is worn indoors for liturgical

purposes, it is always removed and held about breast-high during prayer, at the name of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the patron saint(s) of the particular church or order.

In the asylum, all are covered as part of the uniform of the order. Taking a cue from our armed forces today, this also makes sense, because Templars are armed with their sword, and it is proper for a military person under arms to remain covered inside as well. Once again, our actions are governed by certain rules and customs which have existed for some time, even when we don’t necessarily make such an association.

In our asylums, and elsewhere, the Knights are ordered to uncover for the benefit of prayer, vows, and other solemn times. Yet, in many asylums, the Prelate remains covered while praying. We are in error in this action, strictly speaking, from a Christian context. While our Jewish and Muslim brothers generally pray with their heads covered, we Christians have historically prayed with bare heads. Why, then, would we ever expect our own Prelates to pray while wearing a biretta while all others are uncovered? It seems to be contrary to logic and good order to do so.

Much of what we do as Freemasons comes handed to us through the centuries as custom, and oftentimes, the reasons and background have been lost, and being lost, custom becomes “regulation” or “because that is the way it is done.” This is right and good, but as a public Christian order using symbols common to our Christian heritage, we should take care to use them wisely, lest we find ourselves offending others because of our “inappropriate” behavior, when we mean no offense at all.

Sale of California Cookbook to Benefit the Knights Templar Eye Foundation

The Grand Commandery of California is selling cookbooks, shown right, to benefit the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Entitled *California Gold*, the book is a compilation of recipes submitted by Sir Knights and ladies of the Commanderies of California. It is bound in a 3-ring loose-leaf format and contains 750 recipes. The books sell for \$20.00 each, and **the entire amount goes to the KTEF**. They are able to do this because the publication cost of the books was covered by private donations. Make out checks to: Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Send to: Dan McDaniel, Attn: Cookbooks, 1250 Peterson Court, Los Altos, CA 94024.



A COLLECTION OF
FAVORITE RECIPES FROM
KNIGHTS TEMPLAR COMMANDERIES
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT KNIGHTS TEMPLAR EYE FOUNDATION

KCT and GCT Award Recipients: A 2-1/2 inch diameter, embroidered emblem has been produced for use on mantles and blazers of KCT recipients. The emblem is to be centered on the Cross that adorns the left side of the mantle or ceremonial robe or on the left side (on pocket) of a dress blazer. The same use is required for the GCT emblem which is bordered with a wreath. The cost of the KCT emblem is \$8.50 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling, and the cost of the GCT emblem is \$10.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Contact: Jon Patrick Sweet, 7474 Benton Street, Westminster, CO 80003-7001, or phone (303) 430-8483.



Grand Commandery of California Sesquicentennial Coins to Benefit the Knights Templar Eye Foundation

The Grand Commandery of California is selling its Sesquicentennial coins for \$15.00, postage paid, and **all profits from the sale will be donated to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation**. Make checks payable to and send to: Charles R. Waterman, Jr., 731 Scottsdale Drive, Vacaville, CA 95687.





**Meet Sam
the Masonic Bear
and Ester
the Eastern Star Bear.**

They measure nine inches tall and are made with the colors of our Fraternity and are crafted by Holy Bear Inc. These bears were created for the purpose of raising funds for the Scottish Rite Centers of South Carolina and the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. The Scottish Rite

Center provides care, free of charge, to pre-school aged children with the inability to properly communicate efficiently and effectively. The Knights Templar Eye Foundation helps fund eye surgery for those in need. The proceeds from the sale of the bears will benefit these organizations. The price of each bear is \$10.00 and shipping in the USA is \$4.95. Both bears may be purchased for \$25.95. Make checks payable to Michael Broom, and please send your orders to Sir Knight Michael J. Broom, P.C., 201 North Ridge Road, Columbia, SC 29223 or MJBSWB@AOL.COM; (803) 360-1772 .

BLUE LODGE - MASTER MASON STEIN

This stein has a ceramic white shell body that measures 7 1/4" tall by 4" at the base and 3" at the lid. The stein has a ceramic insert lid that says Master Mason of the Blue Lodge. It has a Holy Bible on the top in color. The front of the stein bears a Bible verse; Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it should be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." On the right hand side of the stein is a poem called "A True Mason." On the bottom of the stein is wording and a casket, and each stein is numbered. The price of the stein is \$54.95, which includes shipping and insurance. \$10 from every stein will go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. If interested please send check or money order to Stanley C. Buz, P.O. Box 702, Whitehall, 34



Summer Uniform Sale Aids Knights Templar Eye Foundation

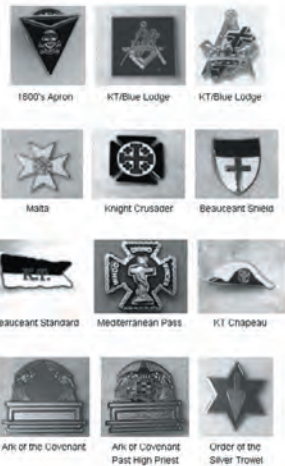
Milford Commandery No. 11, Milford, Massachusetts, is offering a complete summer uniform and accessories (no pants or shoes) for \$165.00. (G.G. and P.G.C. add \$35.00 for gold decoration on cap visor.) The uniform includes white military style cap with insignia, short sleeve shirt, shoulder rank insignia, collar insignia, metal ribbon bar, name plate, plain black tie, tie clasp with cross and crown, and shipping and handling. Send us your cap size, shirt size, rank, Commandery name and number, choice of engraving on the tie clasp (plain/Knight Templar/your state/Commandery name and number) to the address below. For further information or to request an order form for your state (include a stamped, self-addressed envelope), send to Milford as indicated below or e-mail: ccwinterhalter@aol.com. Make checks payable to: Milford Commandery No. 11. Mail to: Milford Commandery No. 11, C/O Robert P. Winterhalter, P.O. Box 321, Ashland, MA 01721-0321. **All profits go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.**

Sale of Milford Commandery Polo Shirts Benefits KTEF

Milford Commandery also offers top quality white polo shirts with pocket. These shirts have your choice of embroidered insignia in full color (nonfading). Select from: Templar Cross, Cross and Crown, Royal Arch Mason, Royal and Select Master Mason, Cryptic Mason, York Rite, KYCH, York Rite College, and Masonic Square and Compass. We also offer a lady's shirt with Social Order of the Beauceant or any of the above emblems. Each shirt is \$30.00, plus \$5.00 S & H. You may add your name or nickname to the right side for \$5.00 additional. Royal Arch Mason shirts are also stocked in red, and Masonic Square and Compass may be had on white or royal blue shirts. There are eleven other colors available on special order. We also offer great 3-season jackets and a light weight flannel-lined jacket. Make checks payable to: Milford Commandery No. 11. Send to: P.O. Box 321, Ashland, MA 01721-0321. For further information, write us at this address or e-mail: Ccwinterhalter@aol.com. **All profits go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.**

Tennessee Commandery Continues Sale of Lapel Pins To Benefit the KTEF

Manchester Commandery No. 40, Manchester, Tennessee, is pleased to announce that it is continuing its fund-raiser for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and has added a new Blue Lodge/Knights Templar pin to their selection of unique lapel pins! In the past five years of pin sales, donations to the Campaign have exceeded the \$29,500 mark! Manchester No. 40 would like to thank those who have purchased these pins and encourage you to check out the new Blue Lodge/Knights Templar pin. The entire collection, along with 3 new York Rite pins, can also be viewed in color at www.yorkriteusa.org. These pins are available for \$6.50 each or any 9 (nine) pins for \$45, with free shipping, and 100% of all profits go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Make check or money order in American funds payable to: Manchester Commandery No. 40. Send to Garry L. Carter, Recorder; 530 Winchester Hwy., Hillsboro, TN 37342. Thanks again for your continued support.



Grand Encampment of Knights Templar OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



THE APARTMENTS OF THE GRAND PRELATE *and* THE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Year of our Lord 2008

To all Valiant and Magnanimous Knights of the Temple, wheresoever dispersed throughout Christendom ~
Salutations and Knightly Greetings:

A TOAST TO OUR MOST EMINENT GRAND MASTER

The Gospel according to St. Luke states that Mary "brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Here is the beginning of our salvation which ends with the events of Good Friday and Easter.

But beyond the theological significance of the birth of Jesus, Christmas is about family. St. Luke states that at the time of Jesus' birth a census was being taken so "Joseph also went up from Galileeto be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child." They went as a family. St. Matthew adds to the birth narrative the flight of the family. An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to flee to Egypt. St. Matthew states "When he (Joseph) arose he took the young child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt." Again, we see the significance of the family.

And so down through the ages the Christmas season has always emphasized the significance of the family. It is a time for families to come together, to worship together, to count their blessings and to give thanks to God for all that he has done for us in Christ Jesus and for our safe passage through the year.

This emphasis on the family is no less true for our Masonic family, especially that branch we know as Knights Templar. So as we come together this Christmas, we offer this toast to our Most Eminent Grand Master and his Lady Elizabeth who lead us in counting our blessings and giving thanks for all God has done. Most Eminent Grand Master and Lady Elizabeth, we offer you this toast and invoke God's blessings upon you. May the road ahead be straight and safe, and may you always reside on the sunny slopes of life.

In Christ's name,

The Committee on Religious Activities
Rev. William Hartman, P.G.C., Chairman

Rev. Robert J. Cave, P.G.C., Grand Prelate

(This toast was prepared by Reverend and Sir Knight Robert J. Cave, R.E. Grand Prelate)



GRAND MASTER'S RESPONSE

To the Grand Prelate, the Committee on Religious Activities and to all Sir Knights, wheresoever dispersed: Greetings!

My thanks to the Right Eminent Grand Prelate and Committee on Religious Activities for a most meaningful toast.

In the Toast just given, our Grand Prelate and the Committee touch on a very appropriate subject during this special season – Family. The importance of family is with us more right now, than at any other time. Each Christmas, we have an occasion to experience the excitement of the greatest story ever told, as we look into the hopeful eyes of our children and grandchildren. It is an opportunity to be grateful that we have them to enjoy. We all have much for which to be thankful, especially family we either have now, or have had in the past. For those of our family who are with us, let us seize the moment to say a prayer for them, and tell them how much they mean to us. And for those of our family who have passed on, it's an opportunity to remember with fondness the times we had with them, and be grateful for those moments.

The officers and membership of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America join me in expressing our best wishes to you and your family this Christmas Season.

As we celebrate this holiday season, let us remember, "Nothing is more important than our Family".

In His Service,

⚔ *William H. Koon II.*

William H. Koon, II, GCT
Grand Master



The foregoing Toast to the Most Eminent Grand Master and his response thereto are transmitted to you with the request that you extend an invitation through the proper offices to all Sir Knights within your jurisdiction to join in the sentiments thus conveyed at some convenient hour, on or near the birthday of Christ, commonly called Christmas Day, December twenty-fifth, in the Year of Grace 2008.



Knight Templar
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Merry



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