

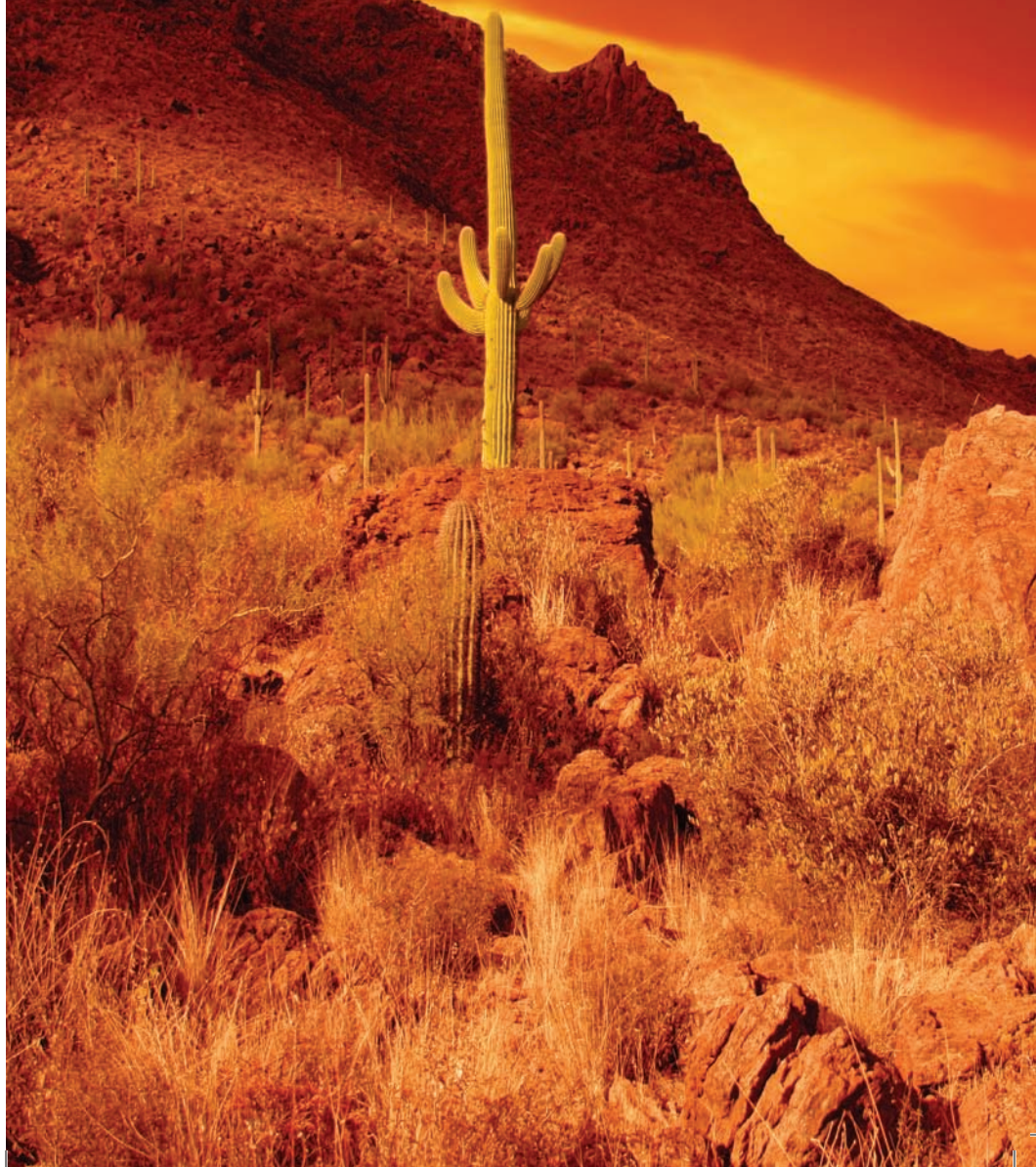


Knight Templar

VOLUME LVIII

JUNE 2012

NUMBER 6



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Knight Templar

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knight templar

Grand Master's Message

"In the Good Old Summer Time"

This song celebrating summer was written 110 years ago with music by George Evans and lyrics by Ren Shields and has been a reoccurring hit ever since. Stars have sung this song in a host of movies, and in 1949, Judy Garland and Van Johnson starred in a hit movie of the same name.



When first written, publishers in New York were reluctant to produce it for fear that it would only be a hit in the summer, but they were wrong. As a boy, I remember my Grandfather singing the song the minute the weather started to change. My own father sang it as well to my daughter, and I sing it, though not well, to my grandsons. Summer seems to be the season everyone likes best, and that may be the reason so many people retire to Florida, Arizona, California, or anywhere the weather is warm and sunny all year long.

The summer season hearkens to happy times with our friends and families when school was out, and the whole day was ours for the taking. The weather was warm, the days were long, and summer seemed to last forever. For many of us, there was a tear of sadness when Labor Day arrived, and it was back to school.

Though we reached adulthood, we never forgot those happy days "In the Good Old Summer Time." Other summer songs by familiar artists, including Nat King Cole with "Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer," Percy Faith's "Theme from a Summer Place," and Peter & Gordon's "The Green Leaves of Summer" just to name a few, have reflected on summer with fondness. More of us vacation during the summer than any other time of year. Summer truly is perhaps the most popular time of the year.

Recall these thoughts as you spend this summer with your family, and know that those young ones in your family are building today similar fond memories as you did long ago. The officers of Grand Encampment hope that the summer of 2012 is a special one, and we would like to share a part of it with you at the 65th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, August 12-15, 2012, in Alexandria, Virginia. We look forward to seeing you!

Fraternally,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William H. Koon, II".

William H. Koon, II, GCT
Grand Master

Reflections on Progress

When I look back and start to think of horses, knights, and things;
When his old world was run by sheiks, and counts, and popes, and kings;

When black was white, and might was right, and falsehood was the truth;
And neighbor dealt with neighbor based on swapping tooth for tooth;

When plunder, rape, and slaughter during Jihad or Crusade;
Was touted by the church and mosque as how that sin was paid;

I look at our new, modern world and how refined we are;
And then I have to wonder if it's true we've come so far;

I still see folks who preach and teach that how to get to Heaven;
Is bombs and rockets, RPGs, and AK-47s;

Instead of daggers, swords, and shields, we now use tanks and drones;
Or cars with bombs and hijacked planes, or mortars on our homes;

The progress that we've seemed to make in science, health, and nation;
Has not been matched by progress in a kinder civ'lization;

I guess that when I think and ponder where we are today;
We still have much to do to show the world a gentler way;

Our duty's to the world as Knights, Companions, Brethren all;
To show them the eternal truth God gave before the fall;

So Brethren, persevere, and hope, and pray for our success;
That by the gentle art we may bring men to happiness.



Eques a Libertas

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Prelate's Chapel

by
Rev. William D. Hartman
Right Eminent Grand Prelate
of the
Grand Encampment

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit ..." The Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4

As Jesus had promised before his departure (ascension), they would receive power from on high. Now the disciples of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit of God. They went forth from their dwelling, praising God and witnessing to His Son, speaking in many different languages, so that all those out in the streets, from different places, could understand their testimony.

As an "end-of-the-depression" boy, I am continually amazed at the rapid expansion of communications in the 21st Century, the many devices and the many ways we can "talk" with others, no matter where we or they are, and the instant access of information literally at our fingertips, but the world is in no better condition now than when those disciples of Jesus burst onto the streets of Jerusalem with the message of love that God had sent in His Son, Jesus. We still need to make known the redemptive power of the cross, the absolute love of God for all His children, and His desire that not one be lost. We need to follow the Great Captain of our Salvation in the war against evil, to seek and save the lost, and to bring them into a loving relationship with God through His Son, Jesus, and with each other.

"Rise up, O Men of God, Have done with lesser things,
Give heart and soul and mind and strength To serve the King of Kings.

Lift high the Cross of Christ, Tread where His feet have trod.
As brothers of the son of man, Rise up, O Men of God." (William P. Merrill)

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890 Sir Knight Alvin E. Just
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891 James Larry Martin
Patton Commandery No. 69
Mt. Vernon, IL 3-Mar-2012
Silver

892 Henry George Scanlan, Jr.
Plains Commandery No. 11
Baton Rouge, LA 12-Apr-2012
2nd Bronze

893 Gary W. Pearce
Wichita Falls Commandery No. 59
Wichita Falls, TX 28-Mar-2012

894-895 George F. Schwartau
Wichita Falls Commandery No. 59
Wichita Falls, TX 28-Mar-2012
Original and 1st Bronze

896 William F. (Rick) Trogon
Abilene Commandery No. 27
Abilene, TX 28-Mar-2012

A Chat With The Managing Editor

The folks at the Eye Foundation asked me to let you know that if you have any outstanding color photos of a Templar castle, church, asylum, or other site, you can send them to me, and I will pass them along. Who knows, they might show up in the magazine or on an Eye Foundation calendar!

The folks with the Holy Land Pilgrimage tell me that they want to sponsor a holy land pilgrimage for the Sir Knights next year in the autumn of 2013. We will forego our magazine Templar pilgrimage in 2013 so you can go to the Holy Land with them. That will enable us to visit Templar sites in 2014 exactly 700 years after Jacques De-Molay was martyred in Paris. We are working on a trip that will include as many as nine Templar museums all over France for the Spring of 2014. Look for information about the 2013 Holy Land trip in the next few issues.

We are getting so many letters to the editor that I am having to expand the space to accommodate them. Because of the backlog, it will take several months for your letter to be published. I have been a little underwhelmed by your response to my question about where you think the fraternity ought to go over the next few decades. I suppose that just about everybody is satisfied with who we are and what we are doing. It looks like a vote of confidence for our leadership!

The Triennial Communication in Alexandria, Virginia, is almost upon us! I have been attending these sessions for years and always have a great time. Since I am not a Grand Commandery officer or Past Grand Commander, I am able to spend my time as I please. I went to the drill competitions for the first time three years ago and was most impressed. For those of you who are not Grand Commandery officers, I would suggest that you might just have more fun than those who are. I hope to see you there. I'll probably be the one with the camera.

Finally, I hope that all of you enjoy a fantastic summer! As I grow older, I am determined to squeeze as much enjoyment as possible out of every one of them - not so much different than when I was much younger and in grade school.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John".

John L. Palmer
Managing Editor



Letters to the Editor



Brother Palmer,

In reading Brother Woods' letter concerning too much Christianity in the *Knight Templar* magazine, I am reminded of all the oaths one takes to become a Templar. One is that we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. As a Blue Lodge Mason I take an oath not to let sectarian beliefs conflict with my fellowship with other Masons no matter what their religion. I am able to do this although it is hard to do so sometimes.

I would suggest that Bro. Woods, if he is not able to conform to the edicts of the Knights Templar, should withdraw and work his hardest to improve sectarian relations in the Blue Lodge.

I enjoy the magazine and look forward to its arrival each month. Christianity has become so weak that it is time for people to get some backbone and stand up for what they believe in. I am proud to be a Templar and more especially a Christian.

Thomas Rice, W.M.



To Sir Knight and Brother John L. Palmer,

Greetings, I always enjoy reading the *Knight Templar* magazine, especially the articles on such topics as the Shroud of Turin and the Templars. I received my December issue today, and it contained The Grand Master's Message, The Prelate's Chapel, and other items which were of interest. However, it would have been better and more appropriate if knight templar

these had been in the November issue, since I received the December issue today, December 28th, well after the subject of their comments.

Yours in Templary, Robert J. Smith, Jr.

Dear Sir Knight Robert,

All our magazines are sent in one mailing each month on the 20th or 21st of the preceeding month. I received my December issue on November 28th. I suppose that during the high volume of Christmas mail, strange delays sometimes take place. I would like to think that our magazine is so interesting that your mail man short stopped it for a week or two to read it, but I think that would be wishful thinking on my part.

If you are receiving your copy consistently after the first of the month, you may want to chat with the folks at your local post office. Our objective is to have the magazine in your hands prior to the first of the month.

The Ed.



I was re-inspired By Sir Knight Robert Bettencourt's article "Does Your Commandery Have Templar Treasures?" (*Knight Templar*, January 2012, pages 10-13), and it was driven home by Sir Knight Darryl Chaman's article "Hindrance to Light a Freemason Obstacle" (same issue, pages 29-31). We have rich histories (another vehicle of knowledge

Letters to the Editor continued on Page 20

Do Right!

By

Sir Knight Matthew Quesenberry

Some years ago while working in a customer service department, I was in the process of assisting an elderly lady. She suddenly smiled sweetly, pointed to my past master's ring, and said, "I know what that ring means, and I know you're a good man." Now that remark was so off subject and so unexpected that all I could manage by way of a response was a weak smile and a self-conscious thank you. I wish I had asked what experience had afforded her such a positive opinion of our craft, but she was gone before I could organize my thoughts. I can assure you however, that I redoubled my efforts to assist her with her problem.

As I reflected on her comment throughout the afternoon, I came to the sad conclusion that I was not, in fact, a particularly "good" man. I was far too prone to having outbursts of temper or frustration, to entertaining unkind thoughts of others, and to speaking without first weighing my words, only to be astonished by how mean or foolish I could sound.

So was the lady wrong about our craft? What is it about Freemasonry that could have inspired her belief about it? Why do we expend so much of our time and energy for it? For fancy medals and grandiose titles? We would indeed be pathetic wretches if we had

to boost our self-esteem with such vanities! To attend endless, dry business meetings only to hear the minutes of the previous dry business meeting and maybe partake of some coffee and stale cookies afterward? Only if you want to watch your membership evaporate! To support our various charities? While Masonic charity is legendary, we are all bombarded through the daily mail by pleas from scores of other commendable charities. Are we, as some have charged, a subversive order plotting global domination? Anyone who has witnessed our efforts to pay our utilities and per capita and sometimes even to organize a degree or committee would laugh that idea to scorn!

What then is Freemasonry? What is its essence? Numerous answers have been given to that question. Perhaps the most inane is the one that claims Freemasonry is different things to different people. What rubbish! Either a thing means something or it does not. Either it stands for something or it stands for nothing. Oceans of ink and forests of paper have been wasted in defining Freemasonry. I say wasted because anyone who was paying attention during their first visit into a lodge was told what the craft is by the master. "Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morals, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols." It is

a system of morals and principles taught by allegory or story. This concise definition applies to all the degrees of all the bodies of Masonry perfectly.

So far, so good. We represent a system of morals. But what morals? Whose morals? For the answer to that question, let us turn once again to the ritual, for nowhere is it answered better than in the Past Master degree of the chapter. "Freemasonry takes men by the hand and, leading them to its altar, points to the open *Bible*, and urges each to faithfully direct his steps through life by the light he shall find therein. If from our sacred altar the atheist or irreligious man should ever wrest this book and thus remove, or even obscure, the great light in Freemasonry, that light which has been for centuries the rule and guide of Freemasons, then could we no longer claim the proud title and rank of Master Mason; but so long as that sacred light shines upon our altar, so long as it illumines and brightens the pathway of the Craftsman by the golden rays of truth, so long will Freemasonry live and shed its beneficent influence among men. Guard then, my brother, this sacred book as you guard your life. Defend it as you would defend the flag of your country, live according to its sublime precepts, govern yourself that you may be able to govern others, learn first that you may be able to teach, and remember that moderation and decorum mark the acts of the upright man." There you have it, Companions and Sir Knights! The morals and principles we as Masons are to live by are those of the "Great Light," the *Holy Bible*, the "rule and guide of our faith and practice."

Without demeaning any other religious system, history and logic will both knight templar

show that Freemasonry could not have originated or developed in any other environment but a Christian one. No other belief system would have been conducive to the concept of a universal brotherhood. To the Muslim, all infidels are to be converted, subjugated, or eliminated. The Hindus have a strict caste system in which certain groups are to be scrupulously avoided. Even the Jews have a long history of isolationism or outright xenophobia (admittedly, not without reason). Only a Christian influence could have fostered the idea of a "brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God." Now before those who are infected with an overdeveloped sense of political correctness begin baying for my blood as an intolerant bigot, let me ask you the same question I asked my Jewish coworker, "What Christian virtue as described in scripture (and not as may have been practiced by flawed individuals) would an orthodox Jew or, indeed, any other responsible person find offensive? To speak the truth? To honor one's word? To give charity to the needy? To care for the widow, the orphan, and the weak? To champion justice? To contend with the wicked? To be humble? To be faithful and loving husbands and fathers? To do right even when it is inconvenient, expensive, or unpopular? To give the worship of Jehovah (Yahweh) primacy of place in our lives?" My Companions and Sir Knights, we do not EVER need to apologize to ANYONE for our advocacy of Christian virtues and principles!

Now comes the hard part. Having determined that the morals and precepts of Freemasonry are those of the *Holy Bible*, we are obliged to incorporate those ethics into our daily lives. In the

words of Albert Camus, “A man without ethics is a wild beast loosed upon the world.” My Companions and Sir Knights, there are far too many wild beasts out there today! Sadly, some are members in churches and some are members in lodges. Any experienced educator will tell you that if you mix good students with bad students, the good students will never pull up the bad students; rather, the bad students will always pull down the good students. My brethren, until we take the necessary steps to put our own houses in order, we can never hope to change for the better the culture in which we live.

In our postmodern world of materialism, self-interest, and moral relativism, it is no easy thing to live according to Biblical precepts. Sometimes, it even seems impossible, but that shouldn’t deter us from making every effort to do so! It needs to be our daily discipline as we build our moral and Masonic edifices. Did you fail today at some point? Then resolve to try harder tomorrow. Tomorrow you may fail at some other point. Each time you fail, get up and head in the direction of Biblical truth. Like any ability, it will become stronger and easier with practice and discipline. Bear in mind that nothing of any real value is accomplished without effort.

At times we feel weary, discouraged, and even defeated by the circumstances of life and the false values of the world, but be of good cheer. We can turn for support to our Brothers, Companions, and Sir Knights in the various Masonic bodies! This should be the primary purpose of our fraternal assemblies – not to get bogged down in dry business meetings, but to encourage and inspire and assist our members to assimilate the

principles of the *Bible* into daily life. This can be done through the ritual, through Masonic education, through instruction by more experienced members, through individual mentoring, and through private admonishment.

The tenets of our profession are “brotherly love, relief, and truth.” Only someone who loves you like a brother will take you aside to tell you that your breath is bad, your fly is open, or your behavior is unscriptural or un-Masonic. That is true brotherly love, relief, and truth in action. A mere acquaintance wouldn’t do that for you, because they don’t care for you like that. This is not just something we ought to do; this is something we must do! We have all sworn on the *Holy Bible* numerous times to be true to our fellows and to help them. What assistance could we possibly render that would be more important than to help each other grow as men and as Masons than to encourage and aid each other in the building of our moral and spiritual temples? Our Lodges, Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies should each be doing their part to achieve that end. It should be their primary purpose! If the Masonic bodies you attend are fulfilling that role, then do everything in your power to support them. If they are not, then demand it of them, and if you are an officer, take the responsibility yourself to see that the teaching of Biblical virtues are implemented. Our honor and our oaths demand it!

The adoption of Biblical virtues into the daily practice of our lives will require more courage than ever before. Never in living memory has our culture been so hostile to Christian morality. The materialist and the secular humanist will ridi-

cule such values by telling you that God does not exist, that He is merely a construct to satisfy the psychological needs of some. Stand fast, my brethren, for the great light in Freemasonry tells us, "The Fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God!'" (Psalm 14:1). The New Ager will tell you about the "earth mother" or the "god within you," the oldest of all lies. Never make the mistake of worshipping the creature or the creation rather than the Creator! The moral relativist will tell you that Christian virtues may be valid for you but not for him and that, in any event, they are outdated. The great light however, states, "For I am the Lord, I change not." (Malachi 3:6).

Jehovah is not subject to trends and fashions. He stands outside of time and is indifferent to it; therefore, His law is valid for all people in all times. What scripture says is right, is always right; what it says is wrong, is always wrong. There is nothing relative about it! It doesn't matter what society condones. It doesn't matter what everyone else is doing . . . DO RIGHT! Though it costs you time or money – do right. Though it earns you enmity or ridicule – do right. Though it causes those you formerly named as friends to desert you – do right. When there is no chance of recognition, commendation, or reward – do right. When no one but you and God will ever know – do right.

My friends, this is the purpose of Masonic teaching from the Blue Lodge through the capitular, cryptic, and chivalric degrees. Do right using the *Holy Bible*, that great Light in Masonry as our rule and guide. Brethren, the degree to which we have assimilated these precepts is the degree to which we have matured as Masons and as men.

knight templar

Mark Twain wrote, "Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest." It will astonish them, but it will also intrigue them. Up to this point, I have dealt with the difficulties of living by Christian virtues. We have looked at the discipline and persistence that is required and the discouragements and outright hostility of an unbelieving world along with the courage and determination needed to overcome it. Now we will examine the benefits of a Biblically correct lifestyle.

While it is true that some will revile us, others will indeed be astonished and fascinated by a pattern of behavior that defies societal norms. Though they would not readily admit it, many people today are desperately seeking something real to hold onto, because they recognize the bankruptcy of our post-modern culture. Young people are especially eager for something genuine with which to connect. This affords us a tremendous opportunity. You have heard it said that people would rather see a sermon than hear one. By living according to Christian precepts, we not only strengthen our society, but we may inspire others to emulate us and even flock to the Craft. But beware. There is a tremendous double standard at play in this situation. Those who do not profess virtue are not faulted when they fail to exhibit it, but those who claim to live by Biblical standards must never allow themselves to slip. Remember your talk talks and your walk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks.

Our actions, both good and ill, are like the ripples caused by a stone cast into a pond, radiating outward and touching others in ways we could never imag-

ine. Who among us has not bemoaned the moral and cultural decline of our country? What if just one man decided to faithfully live out his life in obedience to Christian morality? What if a hundred men in the same community made that decision? Do you think they would be noticed? What if it was known that they all belonged to the same organization? Do you think that others might want to join? Companions and Sir Knights, here is the only way in which we can retake our society. It will never happen from the top down. It can only occur from the grass-roots up; it must begin with us. The beneficial effect on our communities, neighborhoods, and society as a whole would be profound.

Here too, is the answer to the eternal concern over membership. For too long, we have sought to increase our roles by making it easier, cheaper, and more convenient for new initiates to join. Instead, we should raise the bar, so that we can stand in sharp contrast to the culture around us. Let us set such high standards that they can only be approached by constant effort, study, and the reinforcement and assistance of dedicated brethren. That will attract men of the quality we seek and need. It will not only bring in new members, but, more importantly, will increase our influence and recognition in society at large.

A final benefit of the adoption of Biblical morality is an individual one. Numerous passages of scripture allude to the blessings we will receive and the happiness we will enjoy if we study and pursue the principles contained in the great light of Masonry. For example, Joshua 1:8 states, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night,

that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Would anyone here like to be prosperous? It's not as easy as it once was, but here is your answer. Does anyone remember what Joshua accomplished? He led a bunch of homeless nomads to a land where they became a great nation. Do you think he knew something about how to be successful? James, the brother of Jesus, says about the same thing in the *New Testament*. Are you worried about how you are going to make ends meet? In the "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus addressed that very subject declaring, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Not a bad deal. The study of Biblical truth, as recommended to the Freemason, will instill in us a sense of peace and confidence that will enable us to weather any storm and conduct ourselves in a manner befitting a member of the Craft.

Returning to the elderly lady in my story, I can only conclude that she was right in her assessment. This ring should identify a good man! If I fail to measure up, it is only because I have not always used the great light as my rule and guide. That lady knew that a Mason is a good man. How many women her daughter's age know much about us? How many her granddaughter's age have ever heard of us? Brethren, that is our fault, but we can correct that situation if we direct our steps by the great light, the *Holy Bible*. We can become the men that the Craft charges us to be if we govern ourselves according to Christian morality. The prophet Micah writes, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but

to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8) When we do that - when we obey the lesson of every degree we have ever received by making Biblical morality our own, then we will be known as men, "to whom the burdened heart may pour out its sorrow, to whom distress may prefer its suit, whose hand is guided by justice, and whose heart is expanded by benevolence." In short, Companions and Sir Knights – DO RIGHT.

Sir Knight Matthew Quesenberry, Past Commander of Palestine Commandry No. 17, presented this article at the South Central York Rite Conference in Kansas City, Missouri this past year. The Companions and Knights there though you might enjoy it also. Sir Knight Quesenberry resides at 9513 East 68th Street, Raytown, MO 64133 and can be contacted by e-mail at jsteiner4@kc.rr.com.

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2013 Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage

Travel dates: February 11 – 21 &
February 25 – March 7

Nomination forms and other information were sent to each State Chairperson of the Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage and each Grand Recorder in May. Forms and other information are also available via the Grand Encampment web site (see Purpose/Activities page).

IN MEMORIAM



William Skrepnek

Michigan

Grand Commander 2004

Born: June 10, 1937

Died: March 21, 2012

Knights Templar Eye Foundation Research Grants



n July 15, 2011, four Sir Knights had the pleasure of presenting two research grants to two scientists working in the University of California Department of Ophthalmology and Physiology. Dr. Sriparna Majumdar is studying the retina, the specialized neurons that make it up, and how the retinal neurons make physicochemical connections to each other.

Dr. Edik Ullian's study is to investigate the hereditary deafness and blindness associated with Usher syndrome.



Pictured above are left to right: Sir Knight Bruce Pruitt, Past Grand Commander and Eye Foundation Trustee; Sir Knight David Hanisch, Past Commander and recipient of the KTEF Sword of Merit; Sir Knight Elmer Curtis, Past Grand Commander and California Voluntary Eye Foundation Campaign Chairman; Dr Majumdar; and Sir Knight Casey Norris, Grand Commander of California.

Solution to Cryptic Puzzle on Page 20 of May Issue

1	O	2	W	3	A	T	4	E	R	5	B	U	6	G	7	D	8	R	U	9	B
B	10	O	M	11	H	C	12	M	O	I	R	E	U	13	D	U					
14	F	L	O	O	R	S	N	15	B	O	G	L	E	S							
U	D	U	R	16	U	N	G	S	T	A	E	V	I								
17	S	H	R	O	18	U	D	O	F	T	U	R	I	N							
20	C	A	21	U	S	T	I	22	C	23	J	O	S	24	T	L	E				
A	R	P	C	O	25	C	A	R	26	D	S	A	L	S							
27	T	R	O	O	P	S	B	28	N	I	E	C	E	S							
E	Y	L	P	29	I	L	L	S	E	D	I	D	E								
30	S	L	U	E	31	A	N	E	C	D	O	T	E	S							

ACROSS

2. WATER BUG = A WET GRUB
anagram
7. D + RUB
12. MOIRE homophone of "mwa ray"
14. FLOORS double definition
15. BOG + LES(ter)
16. RUNG + S(upper)
- 17+19. SHROUD OF TURIN homo
phone of (shu)"sh row dove
tour in"
20. CAUSTIC homophone of "cause tick"
23. JOSTLE = ST. JOEL anagram
25. CARDS letters 1,3,4,6,8 of
ChARaDeS
27. TROOPS = SPOOR + T(ree) reversed
28. NIECES = NI(I)E + SEC. reversed - L
29. P + ILLS
30. SLUE = SL(ate-bl)UE
31. ANECDOTE = T.I. replaced by E.C. in
ANTIDOTE

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.

knight templar

DOWN

1. OBFUSCATES = O.B. + FUSS
around CAT + (bab)E
3. AMOUR = A(r)MOUR - R (arr!)
4. (th)E CRU(x)
5. BONGO = BON + GO(od)
6. GROTTTO = GO TO around RT.
7. DEGAUSSED = DEGAS USED
with middle letters switched
8. RULER double definition
9. BUS + IN + ESSES
10. OLD HARRY double definition
11. HOROSCOPE homophone of
"hora" + SCOPE
13. DEVIL + LED
18. UTOPIA = (ta)U TOPIA(ry)
21. UPOLU = POL(ice) inside W
(double-U)
22. CAB + LE
24. TACIT = CAT reversed + IT
26. DIED = alternate version of
DICED

The author is a Knight Templar who follows Cryptic Crossword tradition by setting puzzles under a crucinym, choosing Loki, the Norse god of mischief. If you would like detailed instructions on how to solve Cryptic clues, go to <http://cerrillos.org/cryptic.htm>.

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. Some past issues are archived on our web site:
<http://www.knightstemplar.org>.

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.



Interior photo of cathedral in Milano, Italy by the editor.

Exterior photo of cathedral in Fatima, Portugal during a festival by the editor.





Letters to the Editor



Letters to the Editor continued from Page 9

and light) hidden away in our archives that need to be preserved, and that historic knowledge needs to be presented to the public and scholars in a professional environment. As Sir Knight Robert points out, our Fraternity will generally benefit by "shining our light" on the history of our communities.

In November, 2011, several Masons in the Wichita, Kansas area came together to create the Midwest Historic Masonic Lodge Association, Inc. (www.historicmasonry.org). Generally, our goals are to preserve, research, and present the information held in the archives of our Lodges, Rites, and other bodies. As Sir Knight Robert has indicated, this effort takes long hours and dedication as well as resources such as archive rooms and bookcases or shelves. In many cases professional assistance is required to ensure the treasures and archives are stored properly to prevent deterioration. Local historians are often available to assist, and there are other resources available to professionally conserve these valuable assets. The Wichita Scottish Rite has graciously provided a secure location for us to start our archive efforts, and Wichita Lodge No. 99 has loaned us their old records (starting in 1870) as the first pilot effort. We are attempting to bring these resources and interests together before more of our "light" is lost forever.

I have found several incidents where well-meaning leaders have "cleaned house," and much valuable history was sent to the trash dump. In other cases time has deteriorated the materials beyond recovery.

We are teaming with local museums, historical societies, and universities to find and safeguard our historical treasures. We expect to present what we learn in living-history events, presentations, and museum exhibits.

Because we are just starting this effort, we are focusing on the Masonic experience and history in Kansas. We hope to eventually expand our efforts, but that is for a later article. We are working with the Grand Lodge of Kansas A.F. & A.M., the Grand Lodge of Kansas P.H., the Scottish Rite of Kansas (the SGIG is our first member of the association), the Grand York Rite Bodies of Kansas, and our local lodges and bodies. We hope to expand to support any Masonic associated or affiliated organization in Kansas.

Sir Knight Daniel G. Anderson EC
Mt. Olivet Commandery no. 12, Wichita, KS
Executive Director, Midwest Historic
Masonic Lodge Association Inc.
www.historicmasonry.org
(316)249-5283
dirmhmla@cox.net



Dear Sir Knight Palmer,

The sad truth is that some members of our craft use their status for personal gain. Even sadder, some seem to forget the promises they made on both naked knees. You handled the vilifying letter from Timothy Rickheim in a most gracious manner considering the circumstances.

Thank you,
Jim Gibson

Guard the Sepulcher

An account of the history of the Tomb of Christ from an archaeological perspective.

By
V.Em.Kt.V.Rev. Frederick A. Shade

Editor's Note: The dictionary defines Edicule or Aedicule as a small construction or a shrine, designed in the form of a building.

The present structure - the building that houses the Tomb - is not old; it was constructed in 1809-10. The building is called the edicule, which means a little house. It is the size of a very small chapel and stands to the west within a larger building that encompasses it, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The book from which I am taking this information is titled *The Tomb of Christ* and was written by an expert in that field, one Martin Biddle, in 1999. It is a detailed examination of the tomb and edicule and their history based on archaeological findings. This history should not be confused with the history and archaeology of the larger building in which it is contained, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Comprehensive information on the history and archaeology of the tomb itself is not easy to obtain, and so I make no apologies for using this one reference as the primary source of information for this presentation. I will be frequently quoting and summarizing the author's work as it is very clear and succinct.

The Tomb and Edicule

And now to the tomb and edicule. The following quote sets the scene:

"Jesus was executed outside Jerusalem in 30 or perhaps 33 AD. Ten years later, the places of his crucifixion and burial were incorporated within the walls by the expansion of the city. Decades later, these places were buried beneath immense dumps of rubble brought in by the Romans to level the area. Even so, Golgotha, the place of crucifixion, was still pointed out inside the city three centuries later. It served as a landmark for excavations which discovered several rock-cut tombs under the rubble. For reasons never stated, one of these tombs was immediately hailed as the tomb of Christ. The emperor Constantine ordered that Golgotha and the tomb should be preserved and embellished and that a great church should be erected beside them. This basilica, known as the Martyrion, The Testimony, or The Witness was dedicated on September 17, 335, inside the walls of the Roman veteran colony of Aelia Capoline, soon again to be known by the ancient name of Jerusalem."

There are two streams of thought and reflection in the writings that are consulted for eyewitness accounts of the tomb and its environs. They are the structural and the devotional. This is not at all surprising. We have similar streams running through the Gospel narratives, such as the historical and the spiritual. I am focusing on the structural

history of the tomb and edicule that covers it. Of course, the history and archaeology of the larger building encompassing it, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, is most important as it gives us various markers in history of the site and structures such as the damage and destruction of both of them during the centuries.

Edicule of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Photo copyrighted by VojtechVlk.



From the Beginnings to its Destruction in 1009

The structural sequence of the tomb is conventionally divided into six distinct periods:

1. The construction and “use” of the original rock-cut tomb until buried under the fill of Hadrian’s works in 135.
2. The tomb buried under Hadrian’s works from 135 until uncovered ca. 325.
3. The edicule created by Constantine around the tomb until its virtual destruction by the Caliph, al-Hakim, in 1009.
4. The edicule as rebuilt in the early eleventh century, embellished by the Crusaders, and later stripped and in decay with only minimal repair until its rebuilding in 1555.
5. The edicule as rebuilt “from the first foundations” by Boniface of Ragusa in 1555 until it was damaged by fire in 1808.
6. The edicule as rebuilt by the Greek architect Komnenos in 1809-10 which survives today.

Visual Sources - 4th Century to 1009

What visual evidence do we have of the tomb of Christ? Well, during the Constantine period and later, the tomb appears in a wide range of media, painting on wood and vellum, ivory carving, stone sculpture, mosaic, metal, pottery, and glass.

As archaeological evidence is not possible to obtain in the present structure, we have to rely on visual evidence in drawings, paintings, and carvings for some idea as to what the tomb and edicule looked like in those early years. These depictions of the tomb and edicule

can be placed in the following four categories:

1. A rock-cut tomb in a rock face
2. An empty sarcophagus with the risen Christ above
3. An elaborately architectural tomb structure, usually of two stories
4. A single-storied structure with a conical roof and lattice grilles

The first two are non-representational and are really devotional etc. Even the last two are debated, and many believe that they do not reflect the written descriptions of the Constantine edicule. So, it would appear that it is not possible to establish exactly what the original tomb looked like!

There are also life-size copies of the edicule in several countries e.g. Bavaria of the 12th century. What adds to the confusion and complexity of this investigation is that the edicule saw several changes during the medieval period. It was totally destroyed in 1009, and there were major rebuildings in 1555 and 1809-10 (which is basically what we see today). In the 11th century, a cupola was added to the edicule, and we see today the edicule with a rebuilt cupola.

One of the representations of the edicule and chamber in the Middle Ages is crusader coins. These present a stylized representation of the edicule, or precisely, the tomb chamber. They were probably struck during the siege of Jerusalem in 1187 from metal taken from the cladding of the edicule.

The Edicule Between the 4th & 11th Century

Eusebius’ account of the discovery of

the tomb in the course of excavations undertaken following the Council of Nicaea in 325 and his description of Constantine's church, the Martyrion, with its associated structures have been the subject of many detailed discussions over the last century and a half. In recent years, discussion has focused on the curious fact of Eusebius' apparent failure to mention Golgotha or the finding of the true cross and upon the contrasts between his writings and those of Cyril. These studies have gone far to clarify the silences, hidden meanings, and changes in focus of Eusebius' words as he distilled his thought in the *Theophany* shortly after 324 and addressed in turn the congregation at the dedication of the Holy Sepulcher on September 17, 335, the emperor on his thirtieth jubilee in Constantinople on July 25, 336, and posterity.

325 AD

Makarios, bishop of Jerusalem, received permission from the Emperor to destroy the temple of Venus in order to locate the tomb of Christ. The fill covering the site was removed, and indeed the tomb was found. But what was found?

Apparently there was originally a hollowed-out rock, a covering in front of the entrance to the sepulcher, but this had been cut away. This hollowed-out place in front of the tomb was presumably an open and unroofed or partly unroofed forecourt or antechamber cut in the rock face. This was a feature of Jewish tombs of the period and an excellent example of this is the so-called "Garden Tomb" situated outside the city walls of today.

This whole area was developed by Constantine into the edicule we now recognize.

Cyril claimed that the stone that had closed the tomb was still there! Euse-

bios hailed the discovery as "the august and all-holy monument ('testimony' or 'proof') of our Savior's Resurrection."

I will pass over the debates that have raged down the centuries as to whether or not the tomb so discovered is that belonging to Joseph of Arimathea and in which our Lord was laid.

The Edicule from 1009-10 to the Present Day

The rebuilt edicule of 1566 vanished in the rebuilding of 1809-10. With the advent of the printing press, there are many woodcuts of the edifice as well as the usual carvings that show us what it looked like during this period. Also, full scale models were built and set up in Europe as places of devotion.

Some of the interesting objects made in the form of the edicule are silver artophoria – containers for the Holy Bread.

The edicule survives today, and the 19th century visual sources (drawings and early photos of the 1830s) provide us with useful information. In particular they show the number of ornaments (lamps, candles, and candlesticks, frescoes etc.) that adorned both the outside and inside of the edicule.

As some of the painted decorations are now completely covered in smoke stains, these 19th century representations are very informative.

The rain also got through the Church of the Holy Sepulcher roof onto the edicule in the early 19th century. Thus the edicule has been ravaged by time, the elements, and the destructiveness of man.

The Tomb of Christ in the Gospels and Later

Having surveyed very briefly the his-

june 2012



The Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Photo copyrighted by VojtechVlk.

tory of the tomb and edicule, I would like to go back again to the beginning of this story and reflect on the information contained in the Gospel accounts.

In regard to the original tomb in which Joseph of Arimathea laid the body of Jesus on the evening of the day of crucifixion in 30 (or less likely 33), we have the direct evidence only of the Gospels. It is probable that none of the writers witnessed the events of that day and no surprise therefore that the accounts they provide are not entirely consistent. The texts of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) describe the crucifixion and burial in broadly similar terms, but John is more detailed, not least about the tomb itself.

The accounts are quite short: Matthew 43 verses (27:32 to 28:8), Mark 36 verses (15:20 to 16:8), Luke 41 verses (23:26 to 24:10, and 24:22-4), and John 44 verses (19:17 to 20:18). The evidence they provide

for the location and nature of the tomb may be summarized as follows.

Jesus was taken out [i.e. of the gate of the city, cf. Hebrews 13:12,13] to a place called Golgotha, which means the place of a skull, where they crucified him. Multitudes stood by watching or passed by and derided him, and many read the title over his head, "for the place ... was near the city." A rich member of the council, Joseph of Arimathea, took away his body. In the place where he was crucified there was a garden and in the garden a tomb, a new tomb where no one had ever been laid. In this, Joseph's own new tomb which he had hewn out of rock, they laid Jesus, and Joseph rolled a stone to or against the door of the tomb.

[The next morning] the women, the two Marys and Salome, went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away. It was very large. An angel [had] rolled back the stone and sat upon it. Peter

and another disciple came out (i.e. of the city) and went toward the tomb. Reaching the tomb first, the other disciple stooped to look in. Peter and the disciple went into the tomb and then went back to their homes (i.e. into the city).

Mary stood outside and stooped to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the foot. The (three) women entered the tomb and saw a young man sitting on the right side, or two men stood by them. The women went out and departed and returning from the tomb told this to the apostles.



Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem. Photo copyrighted by Pavel Bernshtam .

The essential “facts” seem to be these.

(i) The tomb was outside the city in a cultivated area or garden and was in the place, i.e. presumably not far from the place, of crucifixion.

(ii) It was the tomb of a rich man, previously unused, new-cut in the rock, and closed by a large stone which could be rolled to or against or across the door.

(iii) To look into the tomb, it was necessary to stoop.

These few “facts” are about as much as can be extracted from the Gospel accounts. They can only be interpreted in the light of existing knowledge of contemporary Jewish burial practice in the Jerusalem area, and for logical reasons, must not be explained in terms of the possible form of the tomb inside the present edicule. What is clear is that the kind of tomb suggested by the Gospel accounts is consistent with what is now

known of contemporary practice in the Jerusalem area: i.e. a rock-cut tomb, a low entrance closed by a moveable stone, and a raised burial couch within. The difficulty is perhaps that such a tomb is too simple: burial couches on more than one side, long narrow rectangular niches or loculi (kokhim) in which a body might be inserted at right-angles to the walls of the tomb, and multiple chambers are commonplace. The absence of such features may be due to the sparseness of the Gospel accounts. They may not be mentioned because they were thought to be irrelevant, but that does not mean they were not there. In a new tomb, however, they are not perhaps to be expected. It was only with time that additions were needed, and the more complex Jerusalem tombs are clearly the product of successive generations.

The traditional interpretation of the tomb as having a single arcosolium on the right-hand side and a rolling stone smoothly dressed and of almost mechanical perfection is heavily influenced by the supposed form of the tomb discovered in 325/6 and now located beneath the rotunda. If we limit ourselves strictly to what can be derived from the Gospel accounts, a wider range of possibilities emerges with a correspondingly wider range of parallels readily available in the contemporary rock-cut tombs of the Jerusalem area.

Although there has been no lack of surmise, nothing whatever is known of the later history of the tomb of the Gospels in the period down to 135. Adjacent tombs were presumably emptied when the occupied area of the city was extended northwards ca. 4 AD. Whether or how this expansion or the wars and sieges of 66-70 and 132-135 affected the

tomb is quite unknown.

The foundation of Colonic Aelia Capitolina by Hadrian ca. 130 on the ruins of the city destroyed in 70 brought major changes to the area. But here we have a logical difficulty. The evidence for Hadrian's works relates to the tomb discovered ca. 325, the tomb which lies today beneath the rotunda of the Holy Sepulcher. The view that this tomb is the same as that described in the Gospels depends upon Eusebius' assumption that they were one and the same. Everything learned about the site by modern investigation shows that this could be the case, but there is no proof. In describing here the effect of Hadrian's works upon the site, it has to be clear that we are talking of their effect on the site of the tomb now located beneath the rotunda and not necessarily therefore upon the tomb described in the Gospels.

According to Eusebius' *Life of Constantine*, the whole site had been covered with a great quantity of earth and paved with stone, and on this a temple to Aphrodite had been erected over the "sacred cave," i.e. the tomb. Jerome adds the information that this situation had lasted about 180 years, from the time of Hadrian to the reign of Constantine (actually about 190 years) but asserts that it was a statue of Jupiter which had stood over the place of resurrection (i.e. the tomb) and a statue of Venus on the rock of the cross. By the time Jerome wrote this letter ca. 395, knowledge of the previous situation seems already to have become confused. This confusion may be due to Eusebius who wrote his *Life of Constantine*, in which the temple is attributed to Aphrodite ca. 337, more than a decade after its demolition.

Continued on Page 32

Another Templar Fob

Sir Knight Bill Billingsley of Longview, Texas sends us these beautiful photos of his unique tri-fold fob featuring both the York and Scottish Rites and presented to Sir Knight T. H. Fletcher around 1908.







65th TRIENNIAL CONCLAVE ANNOUNCEMENT

The 65th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar is coming soon. The Ohio & Virginia Triennial Conclave Committee is working hard to make this a memorable and enjoyable event.

The 65th Triennial Conclave will begin with the drill competition on Saturday, August 11, 2012, followed by a "Pass in Review." Sunday, August 12, brings the Divine service at 4:00 PM followed by the Grand Master's reception at 6:00 PM. The business sessions will begin on Monday, morning, August 13, with the reception of distinguished guests and the Grand Commanders. The business session will continue on Tuesday, August 14, and the Grand Master's banquet on Tuesday evening. Installation will occur on Wednesday morning.

The Alexandria Hilton Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA, 22311 (rate \$119) is the headquarters for the Triennial, and all events will be held there.

Hotel arrangements are being handled by the 65th Triennial Committee, and you will receive confirmation from the hotel.

65th TRIENNIAL HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM

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65th TRIENNIAL CONCLAVE ADVANCED REGISTRATION FORM

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Arrival date _____ Departure date _____

Phone no. _____

E-mail address _____

VOTING DELEGATE REGISTRATION

(PGC, GC, DGC, GG, GCG of Gr. Commanderies, or their proxies where proxies are approved)
(EC, GEN, CG of Subordinate Commanderies outside of the USA or their proxies)

Registration Fee \$250.00 _____

\$270.00 after June 1, 2012

Voting delegate registration includes: 2 tickets to Grand Master's reception, 2 tickets to Grand Master's banquet, badge, ladies pin, program book & gift.

NON – VOTING MEMBER REGISTRATION FEE

Registration fee \$120.00 _____

\$140.00 after June 1, 2012

Non-voting member registration includes 2 tickets to Grand Master's reception, badge, ladies pin, program book & gift.

LADIES LUNCHEON & ADDITIONAL TICKETS

_____ Ladies luncheon, Monday \$40.00 per person _____

_____ Grand Master's reception \$40.00 per person _____

_____ Grand Master's banquet \$60.00 per person _____

Please complete both registration forms and mail without delay to Dennis L. Wilhelm, 458 E. Cleveland, Delphos, OH 45833.

Make checks for registration & meals payable to: **GEKT Triennial Conclave.**
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Continued from Page 27.

The Gospels imply that the crucifixion and burial of Jesus took place outside the city walls. When Bishop Makarios of Jerusalem sought the burial place ca. 325, he excavated a site within the walled city and located a tomb that he and others accepted as the burial place of Christ, and which has ever since been the focal point of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in its successive forms. We now know that there is no real conflict in the two accounts. Although no part of the second wall has yet been identified with certainty, all scholars seem agreed that Kenyon's Site C and Lux's excavations under the Redeemer Church provide good evidence that the area of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was outside the city until the construction of the third wall by Herod

Agrippa in AD 41-4. The traditional sites of the crucifixion and burial have remained within the city ever since.

What should also be given some attention is the Coptic Chapel that is attached to the wall on the west side. A small amount of the stone of the Tomb can be seen below the little altar. I have been in this chapel several times. I found it to be very peaceful and spiritual.

Sir Knight Fred Shade is a member of the order in Victoria, Australia. He has been Chaplain of his Preceptory (Metropolitan No. 2) for many years and holds the rank of Past Great 2nd Constable. He was the founding Secretary of the Victorian Knight Templar Study Circle and its second president. He can be contacted on email: fredshade@westnet.com.au.



Beauceant News

(Mrs. Paul E.) Mary Frances Mihal, Past Supreme Worthy President 1984-1985, went to be with the Lord on April 7, 2010. Born in Campbellsburg, Indiana, on February 17, 1926, she was 86 years old. She was raised in California by Clarence and Irma Hammet, married Kenneth Platz who died as a result of injuries received in the Korean conflict, married Paul E. Mihal in 1957, and had been married 39 years at the time of his death in 1996. She retired from Los Angeles County as supervisor of communications systems and had a catering business from 1970 to 2004. The catering business started when she volunteered to cover for a caterer that died the night before an event.



Mary Frances Mihal was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Glendale, California. She attended East Los Angeles City College. She was initiated into Glendale Assembly No. 45, Glendale, California, on June 15, 1959, by her mother, Mrs. Clarence Hammet, the Worthy President, at the Official Visit of (Mrs. Karl) Hazel Gutwein, Supreme Worthy First Vice President, acting for (Mrs. Martin E.) Milly Mae Collis, Supreme Worthy President, who was ill. She served as Worthy President of Glendale Assembly No. 45 in 1968, 1972, 1978, and 1981; Monrovia Assembly No. 169 in 1992; and Pasadena Assembly No. 44 in 1995, 1997, and 1998. She served Supreme Assembly as Supreme Worthy President in 1984-1985, presiding in Portland, Oregon. Her Theme was "A Faith That Smiles" and her scripture James 1:17 "Every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father." Each of the members were called "snowflakes" likened to people as a lovely jewel, yet no two alike. Each were encouraged to put their individual talents together to make life sweeter and better for others. She used the saying "Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things but look what they can do when they all stick together."

She served nine years as Bethel Guardian for Job's Daughters' Bethel No. 19 in Glendale and served on the Council for sixteen years. She served as President of the Glendale DeMolay Mothers Club, as a PTA member for thirty-one years, and as Parliamentarian for the PTA Council of Glendale, receiving the Honorary Service Award and Continuing Service Award. She was a Cub Scout Den Mother, a Girl Scout Lifeguard for six years, and a Little League Team Mother.

She played tennis on the Jr. Wightmen Tennis Cup Teas, a National Tennis Team, and was an avid swimmer and a Ping Pong Champion of Long Beach.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husbands, Kenneth Platz and Paul E. Mihal; and son, Robert Andrew Mihal.

She is survived by a daughter, Louise Milah Lorbati; sons, James Irwin Mihal, Martin Paul Mihal, and Daniel Marc Mihal; grandchildren, Kelly, Erin, and Scott Lorbati; Robbie, Marianna, Layla, and Lianna Mihal; and great-grandson, Colton Mihal.

knight templar



Knights

at the Bookshelf

By
Sir Knight Douglas M. Rowe

The C. Doherty's *Templar Magician* is a lushly described, complexly plotted novel artfully weaving strands of fictional characters and events into the historical tapestry of the mid-12th century. The writer adds texture and context to the historical record by chronicling the exploits of Knight Edmund De Payens, a fictional Templar and nephew of order founder, Hugh; Phillip Mayele, an English Templar; and Thierry Parmenio, a shadowy Genoese.

The story opens with the assassination of Count Raymond, a Frankish Lord of Tripoli, while under the Templar sword protection of De Payens and Mayele then rapidly evolves into a tale of international intrigue spanning from the Holy Land to England; from the siege of Ascalon to the 12th century English Civil War. Doherty peoples the tale with a mixture of historical and created characters including both good-guy and bad-guy Templars; a nefarious dragon lady; King Stephen of England; and his Civil War foe, Henry Fitzempress, a fanatic Malleus Maleficorum, all pursuing the evil Walkyn who morphs between being flesh and blood and a disembodied spirit.

The work is written in a style that is at once engrossing and annoying. Readers will be hard pressed to find a noun without one, and usually several, qualifying adjectives. (One example: choleric red face, luxurious chamber, opulent furnishings, lambswool rugs, and beeswax candles appear in a single sentence.) Such embellishment creates enjoyable backdrop scenery to the bleak landscape but detracts from an already ponderous story line. Numerous times I found myself silently asking the writer to just get on with the intrigue.

The writer, I assume, deliberately uses archaic words that sent me searching in Webster or on Google. As with the abundance of adjectives, obscure wording both adds to, and detracts from the overall work. (Examples: gonfalon (pennant), mangonel (type of siege catapult), comitatus (group of armed men), tumbril (cart for dead bodies), and pannikin (British drinking cup).

Beginning to end, crossbow bolts fly like gangland Chicago machine gun bullets, and dead bodies stack like cordwood. Without revealing specifics, let it be known that our intrepid Templar, Edmund De Payens, solves the crime, triumphs over evil, and vanquishes the villains.

In summary, I recommend this novel to readers with an interest in Templar lore, and a commitment to slogging through a byzantinely plotted who-dun-it.



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with than the
annoyance of a
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Mark Twain



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