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VOLUME LX

JANUARY 2014

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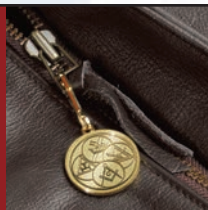
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**Cover Photo of the Leaning Tower of
Pisa taken by the editor.**

Grand Master's Message

Welcome to 2014 and to almost the half way point of the 66th triennium.

We are pleased to announce the New Year's resolutions for your Grand Encampment for this coming year. These are our hopes and dreams. Will you make them yours also?

1. We will live by our theme, Chivalry, Christianity, Templary.....A way of life!

We will live according to our principles in our daily lives, treating our fellow Sir Knights as Brothers, practicing our faith, being charitable, and supporting Freemasonry, thereby ensuring the success of our order.

2. We will be of greater assistance to our Grand Commanderies.

Through our Department Conferences and Emerging Leaders Program, we will increase our member and officer training as well as our level of service to our Grand Commanderies.

3. We will continue to improve and expand The York Rite Information System.

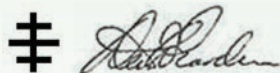
We will modify and improve our system to better meet the needs of our Commanderies and Grand Commanderies. We will offer the system to Grand Chapters of Royal Arch Masons, Grand Councils of Cryptic Masons, and other National Masonic Bodies that may request it.

4. We will strive to continue the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. as a significant resource in the ophthalmic community.

These are our resolutions for 2014! We ask your help in bringing each of them to fruition.

The officers and ladies of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar join with my Lady Marci and me in wishing you good health, happiness, and prosperity throughout the New Year!

Courteously,



David Dixon Goodwin, GCT
Grand Master



The future is ours! We must seize the moment!
Every Christian Mason should be a Knight Templar.

Prelate's Chapel

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

January - the beginning month of a new year - named after the Roman god Janus. Janus was a two-faced god; that is, he had a face that looked backward and a face that looked forward. He looked back on the year just gone by and looked forward to the new year ahead. He was the god of new beginnings transitioning from the old.

As we look back on the year just past, we can see much that has happened, many things we didn't expect and that may have brought us great joy but also many things that may have brought us sadness and perhaps even despair. We have seen the ravages of nature as well as political unrest world-wide. Sometime we may wonder how much "darker" our world can become.

St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans that no matter what the world might throw at us, no matter how great the ravages of time and nature, "there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord." We must let the light of Christ shine through us to illuminate the world around us. We must let the love of Christ motivate us to build a better world. St. John reminds us that Jesus was the light of the world and that the darkness of this world cannot overcome that light.

During the darkest hour in England, with Nazi Germany threatening to conquer that nation, King George VI in his 1939 Christmas address to the nation quoted from a poem by an English schoolteacher that gave hope in the midst of darkness and despair: "I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I might tread safely into the unknown.' He said unto me, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way.'" (Mary Louise Haskins)

In this new year of 2014, let the light of Christ so shine through our lives that we may help to enlighten a darkened world.



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A Chat With The Managing Editor

I recently received a letter stating that the sending Brother thought that Freemasonry did not allow the discussion of politics or religion. While it is true that our traditions and sometimes our rules do not allow the discussion of these subjects during a Lodge meeting, I am beginning to realize that some of our Brethren are having difficulty seeing the difference between the Commandery and the Blue Lodge. They are two different organizations, and different rules apply.

The Commandery is a Christian order, and our business is religion - specifically the Christian religion. Knights Templar owe no-one an apology for publicly announcing and sharing our Christian faith. That is what we are.

When it comes to politics, I have come to realize that folks seem to be less able to discuss them civilly than they used to. Is Freemasonry bound to refrain entirely from politics? Perhaps the bodies, but surely not the Freemasons. What about Washington and Franklin?

The problem that seems to be cropping up is that since Freemasonry is a system of morality, it would seem that we should be involved in moral issues. So what happens when political parties decide to also become involved in moral issues? As Freemasons, are we to abandon our involvement in morality, find something else to do, and turn moral matters over to the politicians, or are we to stand up for the moral principles our order teaches? Some would say that morality is a matter of opinion. If this is so, what happened to the *Holy Bible* being the rule and guide of our faith and practice? I'm confused.

We live in tough times when tough decisions will have to be made. When I think back to growing up during the 1950's, a quote from The Wizard of Oz comes to mind. "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore." I wish I knew the wise answers that we will need to carry us through these troubled times, but I don't. It reminds me of some of the things written by our Brethren in the months leading up to the Civil War (Sometimes known around here as The War of Northern Aggression); interesting reading. As you can read in old Grand Lodge proceedings, several of our Grand Lodges tried valiantly in vain to keep that war from happening.

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.



John L. Palmer
Managing Editor

With the Eloquence of Men and of Angels

By

Sir Knight Tom Lewis, Jr.

“If I speak with the eloquence of men and of angels but have no love, I become no more than blaring brass or a crashing cymbal. If I have the gift of foretelling the future and hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but the very secrets of God and if I also have that absolute faith which can move mountains but have no love, I amount to nothing at all. If I dispose of all that I possess, yes, even if I give my own body to be burned but have no love, I achieve precisely nothing.” – I Corinthians 13:1-3

In 1823, Dr. Dalcho became involved in an unpleasant controversy with some of his Masonic associates as a consequence of difficulties and dissensions which at that time existed in the Ancient Rite. His feelings were so wounded by the un-Masonic spirit which seemed to actuate his antagonists and former friends that Dr. Dalcho resigned the office of Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge and Grand Commander of the Supreme Council and retired for the remainder of his life from all participation in the active duties of Masonry. At the end of the year, Dr. Dalcho withdrew his membership from the Grand Lodge, which marked the end of his Masonic career. In Dr. Dalcho's resignation letter to the Grand Lodge, he states in part the following:

“Every friend of the Masonic institution as well as every member of our order must have felt not only deeply interested but greatly grieved at the unhappy difference which, for a few weeks, has existed in the Grand Lodge. As an old Mason and particularly as a religious man, I confess that it produced in my mind the most painful sensations. Believing, as I conscientiously do, that genuine Freemasonry is a powerful auxiliary to the religion I profess, I cannot but be solicitous to see it practiced in its native purity and truth. That charity which covers a multitude of sins and that Brotherly-love which makes the friend of his species are fundamental principles of both. Where these principles are permitted to govern our feelings and our conduct; whether in the domestic and social circle, in the Lodges of the Fraternity, or the community in which we live; there peace and happiness, the types of celestial enjoyment, must necessarily reign.” - Illustrious Brother Frederick Dalcho; Illustrious Brother McDonald Lawrence Burbidge, 33°; and Worshipful Brother Eric Andrew Meace, 32° K.C.C.H.

At a 2011 meeting of the Masters and Wardens Club of the 1st and 2nd Masonic Districts, I heard the newly-elected and installed Most Worshipful Grand Master say that he doesn't travel all over the state to hear first, second, and third degrees, he's heard them before, and they're always pretty much the same. He said that he goes to share a meal and fellowship with his brothers.

At a somewhat informal meeting of the Past Masters of my Lodge last November, while discussing the leadership the Lodge would be electing later that month, the question was raised as to why we don't have the turnout at Lodge meetings we enjoyed prior to the last few years. The opinion was voiced that the meals these days aren't as good as we had then. Another opinion was that we needed to practice more, because when our ritual recitation was more nearly perfect, we had more visitors. I don't know why, but these two things are always the things brothers grab onto when things aren't going as well as we'd like. Maybe that's because we don't want to address deeper issues.

Why do men choose Masonry from all the other fraternal orders? Certainly its antiquity is a drawing factor, aided by Dan Brown's books and other mentions in popular culture. Some read in exposés and on the internet and see on popular TV shows about arcane rituals which supposedly allow Masons access to sources of ancient power, but once they experience Masonry, why do they come back? Or conversely, why do they NOT come back? A man doesn't voluntarily withdraw from an organization he's put time, effort, and money into joining if he truly feels connected to it. Maya Angelou once said "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

I believe in my heart that if they come back it's because they feel a sense of belonging, that we truly are a sacred band of friends and brothers, and that we have made them feel like one of us. They came back because they believed that the men they saw in the room when the blindfolds came off were just as committed to them as they themselves had just become to Masonry and that every other man there for the degree was there simply to help provide the proper initiatory experience for the initiate. Dr. Dalcho didn't withdraw from Masonry because the ritual recitation suddenly deteriorated or the quality of the meals went down. Brethren, he withdrew because the feeling of brotherhood was no longer present for him. It seems that even Masonic legends are not immune to being hurt by brothers they love and trust.

A brother who does not engage with others during dinner doesn't support a feeling of brotherhood. Reciting ritual as fast as possible so that no one is really sure what was said, least of all the candidates we are supposedly reciting the ritual for, doesn't support that feeling. A brother showing gross disrespect during meetings doesn't support that brotherly feeling. One brother berating another for having gotten a few words wrong or out of order in his recitation doesn't support that brotherly feeling. The Master of a lodge physically assaulting one of his officers in the lodge room after calling the lodge from labor to refreshment doesn't give the impression to the new brothers that we need them to have. Brothers who, after being elevated to a position of power, misuse that power in an autocratic, dictatorial manner do nothing to promote brotherly love, relief, and truth. I could go on, but hopefully I have made my point.

When I first began visiting Lodges in Charleston, South Carolina, I had no real intention of joining one of them. I was a life member of my mother Lodge in Tennessee and as such was privileged to visit any Masonic Lodge in the world, and I no longer had to pay dues to maintain my membership. When I visited one particular Lodge in Charleston, there was a feeling of brotherhood there that I felt the need to be a part of. The very name “fraternity” means a brotherhood. Men come to a fraternity for fellowship, a sense of belonging, a feeling that the “brothers” they associate with are closer than mere friends, a fellowship that will stand with them when other lesser friends are nowhere to be found. If they were coming to Masonry to find people that will cheat them, betray them, and fight with them, they could save their money and go pick a fight in a bar. There are plenty of bars with plenty of untrustworthy people in them, and I have yet to find one that charges annual dues.

Brethren, if all that was needed to swell our ranks was a good meal beforehand, Lodges would still be meeting in the banquet rooms of restaurants and pubs like they did in the 1700s, and people who think Masonry begins and ends with correct ritual recitation miss the entire point of the ritual they claim to revere. The United States has not survived for nearly two hundred fifty years simply because the *Constitution* is beautifully worded but because of the principles the *Constitution* promotes. The more people try to circumvent the letter of the law while violating the spirit of the law, the worse our society becomes. Likewise, Masonry has not survived for centuries simply because it has beautiful ritual but because once upon a time when men put their hands on a *Bible* and swore to act in a particular way, they actually did it, not because of the several penalties of the obligations but because their given word was sacred to them. Masons learned the ritual to be sure they lived in accordance with it, and while it is true that as you go visiting in different places, the ritual will be worded differently and will even be in other languages, how those different words tell Masons to act is always, always the same. Masonry stands for the same morality and the same principles all over the world that it stood for when Masonic brothers were molding this country.

The world will judge a tree by its fruit, and Masonry is not bearing the fruit it once did. The problem is not Masonry. The problem is the members, members who pay lip service to Masonry but don't follow through with their actions. I have heard it said that to have friends, you must be a friend. Masonry may take good men and make them better but not without effort on their part, and it needs good men to start with. Men who are there just for a free meal or to network to get ahead in business are not what Masonry needs. Masonry needs men to whom personal honor is part of their character and not a quaint, anachronistic concept. Masonry needs men who don't have to suppress a chuckle or a grin when someone speaks of the love of God, family, and country. In short, Masonry needs men who care. Masonry is not just a lot of archaic words and outdated principles; it's a foundation on which to build a worthy character, but just paying lip service doesn't build character. No matter how many membership cards a man may carry, as long as Masonry is just words in his head and not alive in his heart, he is not really a Mason, he is just a Masonic member.

Have we properly used our working tools? None but those who do are worthy

to be called Master Masons. Titles do not matter. Words do not matter. Riches do not matter. Pins on lapels and rings on hands do not matter. Chains of silver or gold around the neck do not matter. Actions matter. They are all that matters.

Sir Knight Tom Lewis, Jr. is a member of Jackson Commandery No. 13 in Jackson, Tennessee. He resides at 2104 St. Peters Lane, Charleston, SC 29414 and can be contacted at thl@gel.com.

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>.

Grand Encampment

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Lock Haven, PA 10-Sep-2013
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974 Christopher Schroeder
Sublette Commandery No. 18
Jackson , WY 13-Sep-2013

975 David E. Rush
Los Angeles Commandery No 9
Van Nuys, CA 18-Sep-2013

976 Sven Golling
Heidelberg Commandery No. 2
Heidelberg, Germany 5-Oct-2013

977 Russell L. Compton
Mt. Hope Commandery No. 22
Mt Hope, WV 22-Oct-2013
1st Bronze Cluster



978 Ronald C. Hart, Sr.
Trinity Commandery No. 44
Norwood, OH 28-Oct-2013
1st Bronze Cluster

No. 979 Charles "Mick" Olson
Ivanhoe Commandery No. 24
Milwaukee, WI 11/07/2013
1st Bronze

Nicodemus' Secret

John 3:1-17

By

Reverend Sir Knight Dr. Christopher D. Rodkey

This passage of scripture has two of the most famous lines from the *Bible*. First, “you must be born again” and second, “for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, and whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” These two phrases are so well-known that they are part of regular conversation between Christians, as in, someone asking if they are “born again” or describing themselves as a “born again Christian” or people holding up John 3:16 signs at football games.

We all know that often these two statements are meant to be exclusionary rather than inclusive statements of love. When Jesus says that you must be born again, we often make an assumption that Jesus is probably speaking to Nicodemus about a small group of people being saved. When Jesus says that whoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life, very often it is not the everlasting life that is emphasized or celebrated, but instead the focus is upon the exclusion of much of the world in this great statement. While I want to resist the exclusive nature of these statements, it's hard to ignore them.

It would be helpful for us to talk about the various sub-groups of Jews

that were important during the time of Jesus, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. If you know your *Bible* and *Bible* history, these terms are probably familiar to you. The Pharisees were very legalistic and political, and the *Bible* often characterizes them as a conservative group that sought to follow their religion to the letter of the law. The Sadducees were an opposing group to the Pharisees and were more entrenched in the political machine of Jewish culture; the Sadducees were often the tax collectors and the political administrators on behalf of the Jewish priests.

There is another group called the Essenes. The Essenes were a mysterious group, and some of the speculation is that many of the Dead Sea Scrolls found in a cave in a place called Qumran were writings collected by the Essene community. The Essenes, some today believe, practiced a ritual of being initiated into their group by ritually burying a person while he was still alive and then resurrecting the person in ritual. The symbolism is that the initiate dies to their previous life and is born again. Those who were full members of the group were considered the “living” and those outside of the group were considered to be the “dead.”

Some have speculated that John the

Baptist was a member of this Essene group, who were mostly secretive. The theory is that John the Baptist began preaching and practicing a kind of “second birth” ritual through water baptism outside of the Essene Community, making public a ritual that was before only known to the Essenes in secret.

There is further suggestion that Jesus was either a part of this Essene community or may have been initiated into the group and then left, and leaving, he began preaching some of the secret teachings and ideas of the Essenes to everyone instead of just a select few. Some of the stories of Jesus are opened up in new ways if one considers this to be true. For example, the raising of Lazarus would have been symbolic of Jesus restoring life to someone who was considered spiritually dead. (Or when Jesus says his famous line, “let the dead bury their own dead” [Matthew 8:21-22], this statement reflects an Essene belief; those outside of the sect are dead anyway, and death is an essential part of the outsiders’ culture of death.) Some of these lines of thinking are esoteric or highly speculative, but is not all Biblical hermeneutics speculative in some way?

So keeping this in mind, in this passage of scripture, we encounter Nicodemus who was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin or a judge. The Pharisees were a group who did not like the Essenes, and the Essenes did not like the Pharisees, but in the *Gospel of John*, Nicodemus encounters Jesus and asks him questions, trying to trick him. The story ends not revealing whether Nicodemus immediately accepted or rejected Jesus, but Jesus took Nicodemus seriously and gave him two of the most important of all of his teachings, given to a member

of a religious and political sect that Jesus, whether he was an Essene or not, would not have typically entertained, because the Pharisees would have been seen as the enemy.

We do not find Nicodemus until later in the story, on two occasions. In John 7:45ff., Nicodemus was accused by the insiders of the Pharisees of being under Jesus’ influence when he demanded that Jesus be treated fairly. The Pharisees passed off Nicodemus as being too friendly to Jesus, because they were both from the same area, saying, “Surely there is no prophet in Galilee” (John 7:52-53). We encounter Nicodemus again in the *Gospel of John*, 19:39ff. when Nicodemus came to the dead body of Jesus, bringing burial spices including myrrh, one of the spices brought by the three wise men, and Nicodemus then ritually prepared Jesus’ corpse for burial and laid it in the tomb.

It would seem that Jesus made a convert out of Nicodemus as perhaps a distant admirer of Jesus but as someone who came after Jesus in an accusatory way. As a Pharisee, Nicodemus made a sharp turn in his thinking after hearing Jesus say the words “you must be born again.” Nicodemus perhaps knew that Jesus had initiated him into the secret teachings of the Essene community and understood what Jesus was saying more than the disciples who were following Jesus around. In other words, Nicodemus was a Jew whom the disciples, as working class fishermen, would not have ever accepted, partially because the Pharisees (the sect with which Nicodemus was affiliated) despised the mainstream Jewish working class.

Regardless, in the scriptures we find that Nicodemus understood Jesus’

words and later came to prepare Jesus' body with one hundred pounds of embalming material, an inordinate amount of expensive spices, because he knew that Jesus was truly the only begotten son that is spoken of in John 3:16. In fact, Nicodemus was the first to hear and then the first to believe the famous words of John 3:16. Nicodemus tended to the deceased body of Christ while the other disciples were in hiding and afraid. Nicodemus somehow got the hint that Jesus did not mean that eternal life was just a metaphor or a figure of speech but that He was about to enact a raising of the dead that universally follows from the resurrection of Jesus himself from the grave.

These teachings of Jesus—that you must be born again and that God loves the world so much that he gave His son—were like a secret message given in a secret code by Jesus to Nicodemus, and they are handed down now to us through scripture. Somehow Nicodemus made the connections that no one else really did. The question posed to us now is, “What we are going to do with this information?”

Christians are often in the habit of, as I said before, focusing upon the exclusionary words and tone of these teachings, believing that one must be “born again” in the exact same way that they are, baptized in a certain way, and voting in a certain way if one is to truly be a Christian. Further, citing the famous John 3:16, many Christians believe that if you do not believe in Jesus in the exact same way as they do, one cannot be a legitimate Christian. Churches that nationally protest funerals, local Christians who protest high school musicals, and Christians and preachers everywhere who shun mem-

bers of their own families and communities are all examples to which we can all relate as practices of exclusion.

We need to read the line after John 3:16 which follows like this. Verse 16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” Now verse 17, “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.” Those who choose not to believe are condemned already, because they have not experienced the resurrection of being born again in the first place, but Jesus' resurrection invites new believers into the resurrection, a resurrection only understood by a few before and now accessible to all.

The bottom line for this teaching is that Nicodemus understood the resurrection as a resurrection not just for some but for many, and among those for whom Jesus came to die was Nicodemus himself who humbled himself and publicly spoke for and was ridiculed for his support of Jesus. When everyone else bailed on Jesus at the end, this outsider came to prepare the body of Christ for a resurrection that would invite new people into the secret for thousands of years to come.

So the question left for us is: Are we ready to let the secret out?

The Reverend Sir Knight Dr. Christopher D. Rodkey is Pastor of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Dallastown, Pennsylvania, a member of Hermit Commandery No. 24 in Lebanon, Pennsylvania and resides at 237 W. Main St., Dallastown, PA 17313. He can be contacted at cdrodkey@yahoo.com.



84th ANNUAL EAST COAST EASTER OBSERVANCE – 2014

The 84th Annual Easter Sunrise Service, sponsored by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, will again be held on the steps of the George Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia on Sunday, April 20, 2014.

HEADQUARTERS HOTEL

The headquarters hotel will be the Hilton Crystal City at Washington Reagan National Airport, 2399 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia. Our special Knight Templar rate will be \$99.00 per room, based on double occupancy. Please make your reservations directly with the hotel by calling 703-418-6800 (mention Knights Templar). A hotel reservation link is available on our website at www.knightstemplar.org.

MEALS

A meal package is available for \$65.00 per person and includes Saturday evening dinner and Sunday morning breakfast buffet. Order your meal tickets from the Grand Encampment office. Registration forms are available online at www.knightstemplar.org for credit card processing or mail your check, payable to the Grand Encampment, to 5909 West Loop South, Suite 495, Bellaire, TX 77401-2497. Additional tickets may be ordered separately: Saturday dinner, \$50.00; Sunday breakfast buffet, \$20.00. Reserved seating at the Saturday night dinner will be assigned on a first come first served basis. If you would like to be seated together, please send in your payment as a group.

Note: The hotel and meal ticket cutoff date is March 28, 2014. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Grand Commanders and their ladies are invited to attend the Saturday evening dinner, courtesy of the Grand Encampment. **Prior reservations are required with the Grand Encampment office.**

EASTER MORNING SCHEDULE

Breakfast buffet - 6:00 a.m.

Buses begin to leave hotel - 6:30 a.m.

Parade will step off at 7:40 a.m.

Easter Memorial Service – 8:00 a.m.

Buses return to the hotel after the service at approximately 9:30 a.m.

OTHER DETAILS

Grand Commanders are requested to appoint a delegation chairman and notify Sir Knight Lawrence E. Tucker, R:E: Grand Recorder, 5909 West Loop South, Suite 495, Bellaire, TX 77401-2497; Phone: 713-349-8700; Fax: 713-349-8710; E-MAIL: john@gektusa.org.



Letters to the Editor



Dear Sir Knight Palmer,

Don't you get it? It's so plebian to love and cherish one's country. It's just plane creepy in this day and age of moral relevance. Shall we paraphrase Sir Knight Malone?

"A true and loving husband is one who acknowledges his wife's serious problems and seeks to solve them, not one who brags about his wife and her virtues and grossly exaggerates them."

Let's see how far that gets him. Your response to him was, as always, excellent. Your work on behalf of our fraternity is greatly appreciated.

Cordially and with fraternal best wishes,

Thomas Sather, P. C.
Beauseant Commandery No. 86
Murphysboro, Illinois



Sir Knight Palmer,

Sir Knight Lewis is right in his assertion that "Masonry espouses virtues and values that have become nearly obsolete." Yet, when I see what is going on around me in the world, I realize that we are indeed beacons of hope against a raging storm. Who would have thought that mere civility would have become a lost commodity? No, we should NOT relax our membership requirements nor discard our aprons or uniforms, as these are what we are. These are what set us apart, and as long as we maintain our honor, we will have nothing to regret.

knight templar

Sir Knight Peter Harding
Commandery No.1, Portland OR



[This letter was written to one of our writers, Tom Jackson]

Dear Brother Jackson,

Sir Knight Ken Rose recently shared your piece in the March 2013 *Knight Templar* with me. We are longtime friends, and he is the main reason I became a Mason. I am now a 32nd degree and historian of Cape Island Lodge No. 30 in Cape May, New Jersey. I am also a noble of the Crescent Shrine.

Ken and I have often lamented the evolution of Masonry from the elite organization in which stimulating intellectual investigation and discussion is shared toward making good men better which it has historically been into just another egalitarian social and charitable organization of good men doing good work in their community. As worthy as this new function may be, it falls far short of the fraternity's historic role in the United States. As an allegedly retired historian and educator, I often yearn for stimulating intellectual discussion among worthy fellows. I was attracted to Masonry, in part, because it seemed to offer the promise of that. Sadly, it has not delivered. Masonry, as I have experienced it so far, has largely been reflective of our modern society, an egalitarian meritocracy. Here in Cape May, what was once a gathering of the area's political, economic, and intellectual leaders has evolved (devolved) into just an

Continued on page 20.

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.





These photos of Schloss Neuschwanstein were taken by Sir Knight Richard Muth.



Letters to the Editor



Continued from page 17

other social club of good and well meaning men.

Please continue your crusade to bring Masonry back to its former status and esteem. Sadly I fear you may be Don Quixote on an impossible quest in our modern American society. Know that you have some Sancho Panzas like me supporting you.

So Mote It Be!

Brother Dr. Robert E. Heinly



Sir Knight Editor,

Robert Goldberg Chapter, order of DeMolay in Warrensburg, MO is in need of swords so that we can do the arch of steel ceremony. If anyone would like to donate any swords that are not being used, it would be most appreciated.

Curtis Shipman
24050 Hwy 765, Box 9
Sedalia, MO 65301
(660) 596-4830
dadshipman@yahoo.com



Sir Knight Editor:

Another fine issue with the August 2013 release of the *Knight Templar Magazine*. I especially appreciated the pictures and short item on pp 22-23 regarding the Knights Templar Eye Founda-

tion Inc. The item certainly added meaning to "a picture is worth a thousand words." I was quite upset when the Eye Foundation discontinued individual care situations, particularly by the manner in which the decision was made and communicated at the time. The item on pp 22-23 facilitated my better understanding of the current state of affairs and operations regarding the Eye Foundation. I know my change of attitude is shared by others as the pp 22-23 item was a topic of discussion among several Knight Templars at a recent Masonic meeting.

Thanks for your efforts with the magazine and with some exciting travel opportunities (hope I can take advantage of them at some future time), and I look forward to your continued guidance of the magazine and communications.

Fraternally,
David P. Miller
PC, Bethel No. 36, Illinois
PC, St. Andrew No. 17, Arizona



Sir Knight Editor:

Regarding Sir Knight Hoskins' statement that Masons must believe in the Trinity, this would exclude not only Muslims, but Jews, Unitarians, certain Pentecostals, Baha'i, and those outside the Abrahamic family entirely, such as Hindus, Buddhists, and Sikhs.

Does the Grand Lodge of Texas, then, not have Masonic relations with the Grand Lodges of Morocco, Tunisia, Israel, Turkey, Iran, India, China, and Japan?

Bruce Alan Wilson

january 2014

Freemasonry and the Art of Moral Navigation

By
P. D. Newman

In the ritual work and literature of Freemasonry, we encounter a lot of talk about traveling. Whether we are symbolically journeying from the West to the East in search of Light, from the East to the West in search of that which was lost, or to the center in search of the genuine secrets of a Master, as Masons we do a great deal of traveling. It is no surprise then that the ritual work and literature of Freemasonry are replete with references and allusions to the art of navigation. Intimately connected to the sciences of geography (the charting of the earth) and astronomy, navigational symbolism is so important in the Craft that it is mentioned directly in some versions of the so-called “Staircase Lecture” from the Fellowcraft degree.

“Contemplating the globes atop the brazen pillars, we are inspired with a due reverence for the Deity and His works and are induced to encourage the studies of astronomy, geography, *navigation*, and the arts dependent on them by which society has been so much benefited.” [italics mine]

In fact, the very position of the pillars in relation to the Candidate’s body in the degree of Fellowcraft is suggestive of the art of navigation. In most Jurisdictions, in the pertinent portion of the Fellowcraft degree, the celestial globe is found on the right-hand side of the candidate while the terrestrial globe is on his left. In nautical parlance, a ship’s right side is known as its starboard side, indicative of the heavens, while the left is called the port side, indicative of where ocean and land meet.¹ Even the pillars themselves allude to navigation, as Josephus in his book, *Antiquities of the Jews*, reported, insofar as the pillars within the portico of King Solomon’s Temple were intended to remind one of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of smoke or fire which guided the Israelites per the *Book of Exodus*.

Another allusion to the art of navigation within Freemasonry can be found on the jewel of a Past Master. As Carl W. Davis explains,

“In several jurisdictions, especially in the United States, the Past Master’s Symbol consists of the Compass [sic], Sun and Quadrant. ...[the latter] symbol is unique as it can also be understood to be a sextant.

A sextant is a tool of navigation used to measure latitude and to enable one to determine his location and thus plot a course to travel. This is a very appropriate symbol for a Past

Master, as he has had to navigate the course of his Lodge during his Eastern tenure. It also shows that he is capable of assisting in the navigation of the Lodge if his successors may request his assistance.”²

Indeed, navigation and navigational language play no small role in the literature and ritual work of Freemasonry. In the words of W. Kirk MacNulty,

“The concept of traveling is found in all three degrees... Man is pictured as a traveler; indeed, in some parts of the world, the term ‘traveling man’ is a guarded synonym for a Mason. ...The Masonic Lodge...is a model of the human psyche, [and t]he psyche is the Watery World.”³

In further illustration of this point, we recount an excerpt from a humorous and little-known ritual which was composed for the amusement of the brethren of the Royal Naval College Lodge of Mark Master Masons in London. In the Initiation ritual of the Noble but Slightly Dishonourable Degree of the Corks, we find the following exchange:

“[Q].: Matey, what is your duty?

[A].: To assist you in *boxing the compass* ...and to steer a straight course when homeward bound.” [italics mine]

What, exactly, is this act of “boxing the compass” to which the above ritual refers, and what has it to do with Freemasonry? For starters, boxing the compass is a navigational term which refers to the act of learning and naming all of the degrees or points of the compass, clockwise and in order, beginning with North. What has it to do with Freemasonry? Well, the number of points on a compass just so happens to be no more and no less than thirty-two, the same number of degrees which comprise the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite!⁴ Interestingly, in addition to the “squaring of the circle” implication contained in the phrase, which is directly applicable to the Masonic symbol of the combined square and compasses insofar as the function of the latter in geometry is to construct right angles or squares, i.e., boxes, on the one hand and arcs and circles on the other, the word compass stems, according to the *Online Etymological Dictionary*, from the Old French word “*compas*,” meaning “circle, radius, pair of compasses.” Is the Masonic significance of the concept becoming clear? By boxing the compass, the traveler is effectively making his way around the circle, “in going round which, it is said the Master and Brethren cannot materially err.”

While one in shape, it can also be said that a circle consists of two arcs, both equal and opposite, one curving to the heavens and the other bending toward the earth. In the opinion of the author, the lesson here is that in boxing the compass; that is, in making one’s way fully around the circle of one’s life and all of the ups and downs that living entails, after facing and assimilating all of the degrees or points

which surround it, he must always arrive back at the source, back at the North, but travel he must.

The excerpt from the above ritual states that the “Matey” is also charged with the duty of steering the ship in “a straight course when homeward bound.” This too is notable. For an untold millennia, prior to the invention of the compass, sailors employed astronavigation as their primary means of finding the way home after long journeys out to sea. Of particular relevance here is the North Star or Pole Star, which sits “always fixed and immovable” above the North Pole. Almost two thousand years have passed since sailors and travelers began using the North Star as their central means of navigation, and it continues to the present day to hold a central position in the almost mystical art of astronavigation.

In the degree of Master Architect in the Southern Jurisdiction of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, the candidate is taught that “[t]he North Star...represents the point in the center of the circle, or the Deity in the center of the universe. It is the special symbol of the Deity and of faith.” The North Star then, both literally and symbolically, is that guiding light by which a traveling man may find his way back home, that is, back to the center. Referring once more to W. Kirk MacNulty, “Faith in the Deity is a reference (analogous to the mariner’s compass) which will provide direction when other sources fail.”⁵ A similar and familiar lesson appears in the nineteenth century exposé, *The Master-Key through All the Degrees of a Free-mason’s Lodge*: “In all regular, well-formed Free-masons’ Lodges there is a point within a circle in going round which, it is said the Master and Brethren cannot materially err.” The implication here is, of course, that of orientation. In fact, the very word orientation is suggestive not only of the act of determining one’s bearings but also of the Orient or East, the source of light and wisdom in Freemasonry. Returning to the *Online Etymological Dictionary*, we read that the word *orientation* originally meant an “arrangement of a *building*, etc., to face east or any other specified direction.” [italics mine] Again, the Masonic import here is readily discernible.

No matter how *disoriented* or *un-centered* we may become, no matter how far off the path we may veer, the Great Architect of the Universe in his power, wisdom, and beneficence has seen fit to equip each and every one of us with our own internal compass which will never falter and never fail us. I speak here of course of our own consciences. If we can but muster the courage and the fortitude to allow that internal gauge to dictate and light our way, if we can but find the faith to simply trust and follow our own intrinsic guide, then there will be no reason for us to have fear of any danger. Just as is alluded to in Masonic ritual, our internal compass is ever present, “fixed and immovable,” always at the ready to assist us in steering “a straight course when homeward bound.”

While we may be builders, it is also true that we are travelers, journeying through life toward the great unknown, toward a realization of our pure potential. It is no wonder then that navigational language has found its way into the symbols of our gentle Craft. All men lose their way. We all, from time to time, lose ourselves amidst the circumambulations and trials of daily life, but as Freemasons, we have been provided a precious golden thread whereby we may discover the direction home, back

to the North; that is, the direction back to the *center*.

The moral implications of navigational symbolism were perhaps best articulated by William Waterway in his poem, *Navigation*.

*Floating to hither from Nether
comes a message free of tether
It guides along the water way
to navigate by eye far far away
Should the message be set aside
a life full of dull thee shall abide
But to the lines thee sails true
howling seas nothing but little ado
For upon knowing which flows unseen
one senses the now come to being
Mind to mind thought to thought
things to find beyond that taught
A moment to grasp flung far past
a second within all things last
Herewith written reflection of light
witnessed by birth blessed with sight
For those who ask how this can be
look in the glass and ponder what see
Deep deep within the center of eye
keep keep the answer till thee die
Then shall crossing to Nether sway
open waters as your sails make way*

Notes

¹ Thank you to Brother Michael Jonathan Asa of Fulton Lodge No. 444 in Fulton, Mississippi for that remarkably insightful bit of information.

² *The Meaning and History of the Jewels and Symbols of a Past Master*

³ *The Way of the Craftsman*, pp. 20, 57, & 90-1

⁴ The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry is a progressive system of initiation consisting of thirty-two degrees or levels of attainment, with an additional honorary degree which is only conferred in recognition of distinguished Masonic or public service. Why there are thirty-two degrees with an additional thirty-third is a mystery even unto the Fraternity itself. Manly P. Hall offered a rather romantic explanation, writing that “King David ruled for thirty-three years in Jerusalem;...there are thirty-three segments in the human spinal column; and Jesus was crucified in the thirty-third year of His life,” [*The Secret Teachings of All Ages*] while Arturo de Hoyos has provided a more practical explanation, suggesting that the decision to settle on thirty-two plus one degrees may have resulted from the fact that Shepherd’s Tavern, the birthplace of Scottish Rite Freemasonry, was situated at 32.776883° North Latitude [private communication]. It has also been postulated that the thirty-two degree system may in fact owe its origin to the Thirty-two Paths of Wisdom of the Hebrew *Kabbalah*, with the additional thirty-third degree alluding to Ein Soph. The navigational concept of boxing the compass provides yet another possible source for the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite’s settlement upon a thirty-two degree structure

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The Holy Bible
Waterway, William *Navigation*

Sir Knight P. D. Newman is a member of New Albany Commandery, No. 29 of New Albany, MS. He can be contacted at: pdnewman@tupelomason.org



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Knights Templar Eye Foundation

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 Commandery credit is given for participation. Information is available from: Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1033 Long Prairie Road, Suite 5, Flower Mound, TX 75022-4230, Phone (214) 888-0220 Fax (214) 888-0230.

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.
1033 Long Prairie Road, Suite 5
Flower Mound, TX 75022-4230
Phone (214) 888-0220
Fax (214) 888-0230.



Greetings Sir Knights,

Happy New Year! Our Voluntary Campaign is well underway with amazing results. We are seeing an increase in Life Sponsorships. You have heard the call, and I want to say thank you. When we close the books on this campaign, we will say that it was a success because of the contributions of individual Sir Knights.

I wanted to share with you a few comments on the Senior EyeCare Program. Following is a letter we received from Dr. David J. Palmer, M. D., chair of the Seniors EyeCare Program.

"We are pleased to report another productive year. Through EyeCare America's On-line Referral Center, the program referred 10,724 people to a volunteer ophthalmologist, exceeding the previous year's total by 1,492 referrals, a sixteen percent increase.

EyeCare America's national television, radio, and newspaper promotions resulted in a total of 300,145,249 communications impressions. Once again, we enjoyed the benefits of being named in AARP Magazine's '99 Great Ways to Save,' one of the most well-known and well-respected reference lists for seniors in the United States. This is the third year in a row we have been included.

For the first time, EyeCare America promoted its service to the Chinese community, generating coverage in leading Chinese publications such as *Sing Tao Daily* and the *World Journal*. Program promotions can now be distributed in three languages; English, Spanish, and Chinese; representing eighty percent of the languages spoken within the United States.

As the aging population expands, a greater number of medically underserved older Americans will be in need of eye care. Currently, thirty-eight percent of people say that they heard about EyeCare America through the Internet. This percentage is expected to steadily increase as more people naturally turn to the Internet to find local resources and services.

EyeCare America continues to reach out to its partners, social service agencies, and senior centers on an ongoing basis. More than two thousand partners and individuals (a forty-three percent increase from 2012) utilized our Online Referral Center on behalf of someone in need. Of these, an impressive fifty-two percent were referred.

On behalf of the Academy Foundation, EyeCare America, the Senior EyeCare Program committee, and all those we have served, I am grateful to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. for your unwavering commitment and dedication. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership."

God Bless you Sir Knights, thank you for all you do. You make me PROUD.

Terry Plemons, KGC
templar

Your invitation to join us on a Knight Templar Pilgrimage to France May 6-17, 2014

12 DAY PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- 10 night-accommodations at the following hotels or similar
1 night Hotel Belloy Saint Germain Paris
1 night Hotel Mercure Brive-La-Gaillarde
2 nights Hotel Mercure Millau
2 nights Hotel Le Donjon Carcassonne
1 night Hotel Holiday Inn Dijon
3 nights Hotel Belloy Saint Germain Paris
- 10 Breakfasts, 1 Lunch, 3 Dinners
- Sightseeing per detailed itinerary in modern air-conditioned motor coach (7 days)
- Services of English-speaking escort/guide per itinerary (7 days)
- Local guides as required
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Optional add on air fare may be added at an additional cost from other gateways to join your group in JFK for your international flight. Call for details.

May 07, 2014 Upon arrival at CDG airport, the group will be transferred by private coach to Paris. For your first day in Paris, enjoy a panoramic tour of Paris with guide - you will see : Champs-Élysées to the Arc de Triomphe, Eiffel Tower (photo stop), Jardins du Trocadéro, Montmartre, Notre Dame Cathedral, and more! Check in in the afternoon at your hotel located in the heart of Saint Germain des Prés, in the Latin Quarter of Paris.

Overnight: Hotel Belloy Saint Germain

Meals: No meal included

May 08, 2014 Meet your guide and driver and start your 2-hour ride by private bus to the discovery of the Knight Templar First stop - COMMANDERIE D'ARVILLE. A 2-hour guided tour will be dedicated to explore the site, founded by the Templars in the early 12th century. The Commanderie remains, regarding the importance of the present buildings, a unique monument and one of the best preserved in France. After the visit, you will be driven to Brives la Gaillarde (4 ½ hour to 5 hours ride)

Overnight: Hotel Mercure Brive-La-Gaillarde

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner (3-course meal without drinks)

May 09, 2014 Morning tour of the medieval town of Sarlat. This town is well known for its medieval heritage, in the heart of a beautiful region and a landscape full of superb feudal castles. The old town has a Templar cemetery around the cathedral, where you can see a number of tombs marked with the distinctive cross. There is also a curious tower in the form of an arch known as the "Lantern of the dead". In the afternoon, you will be driven to Millau. (3 ½ hour drive) Visit the House of Causse - glove manufacturer of Millau, founded in 1892 and supplier of Chanel, Vuitton, Hermès. - Optional - if times allow

Overnight: Hotel Mercure Millau

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

May 10, 2014 Visit of the Larzac plateau, where the Knights Templar took possession in the 12th century thanks to the gifting of land to the order and from which the revenue served to maintain the Knights in the Holy Land. 10.00am - arrive at Sainte-Eulalie de Cernon, and visit the commanderie of Sainte Eulalie (1h30)

2.00pm - visit La Cavalerie (1 hour)

4.00pm - visit La Couvertoirade (1 hour)

Free time in la Couvertoirade to visit the traditional shops

Overnight: Hotel Mercure Millau

Meals: Breakfast

May 11, 2014 2nd day of your discovery of the Larzac:

On the way, you will have the occasion to view the world record tallest bridge, Viaduc de Millau, culminating at 343 metres (higher than the Eiffel tower) and 2460 metres long.

(15 min stop)

10.45am - Saint Jean d'Alcas

12.30pm - lunch inside the Fort

2.00pm - Le Viala du Pas de Jaux

After the visit, you will be driven to the fortified town of Carcassonne

Overnight: Hotel Best Western Le Donjon Carcassonne

Meals: Breakfast, lunch

May 12, 2014 Today visit the cathar sites of Montségur and Foix in the Ariège Pyrenees. Chateau de Montségur: Situated at an altitude of 1,207 meters, Montségur castle is built on a natural site. The guided visit will allow you to hear all about the dramatic history of Montségur, conjuring up the lives of the Cathars on this mountain, the episodes of the siege until their horrendous end, burnt at the stake in 1244. The Foix Castle houses the collections of the Ariège Département Museum, where you can discover a range of themes as varied as the County's history, war in the Middle Ages and prisons in the 19th century. Before returning to your hotel, visit the church and village of Rennes-le-Chateau - known internationally for being at the center of various conspiracy theories, and for being the location of an alleged buried treasure discovered by its 19th-century priest Bérenger Saunière.

Overnight: Hotel Best Western Le Donjon Carcassonne

Meals: Breakfast

May 13, 2014 Drive to the Burgundy wine-growing region where you will visit the Commanderie of Bure-Les-Templiers. You can still see the "square courtyard", and the church "treasure" with a tombstone. Explore the village of Voulaines-les-Templiers which keeps alive the memory of another important commandery.

Overnight: Hotel Holiday Inn Dijon

Meals: Breakfast

May 14, 2014 On the way to Paris, you will first make a stop in Troyes to visit its cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The site was originally occupied by an oratory in the 4th century, then a cathedral was built in the 9th century, and immediately destroyed by the Normans (or Vikings). A Romanesque style building was constructed in around 940, and was the seat of the Council of Troyes. This Council confirmed the important role played by the Order of the Knights Templar in about 1129 and its application of the Saint Benedict rule. The building was destroyed yet again 160 years later. A gothic cathedral was finally built in around 1200, but building continued up to the 17th century and was never fully completed! In the afternoon, stopping before returning to Paris we visit the Hugh de Paynes Museum in Paynes and Commandry of Avalleur, in Bar-sur-Seine

Overnight: Hotel Belloy Saint Germain

Meals: Breakfast

May 15, 2014 Full day at leisure

Overnight: Hotel Belloy Saint Germain

Meals: Breakfast

May 16, 2014 Full day at leisure. Farewell dinner in Paris and lot of memories to share!

Overnight: Hotel Belloy Saint Germain

Meals: Breakfast, dinner (3-course meal without drinks)

May 17, 2014 Transfer to CDG Airport

AF 012 17MAY CDGJFK HK26 1035A-1235P

Meals: Breakfast

Cancellation: Once a partial or full payment has been made, cancellations will only be accepted in writing. Cancellation terms

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Fuel surcharges and taxes are subject to change until paid in full and ticketed

CONTACT INFORMATION:

John L. Palmer KTCH, KGC, 33°

Managing Editor,

Knight Templar magazine

ktmagazine@comcast.net

Office 615-283-8477

Payment Schedule/Terms and conditions

Air and land deposit: \$600 per person
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or before Jan 24, 2014

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received on or before Nov 29,
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Final payment is due by Feb 18, 2014

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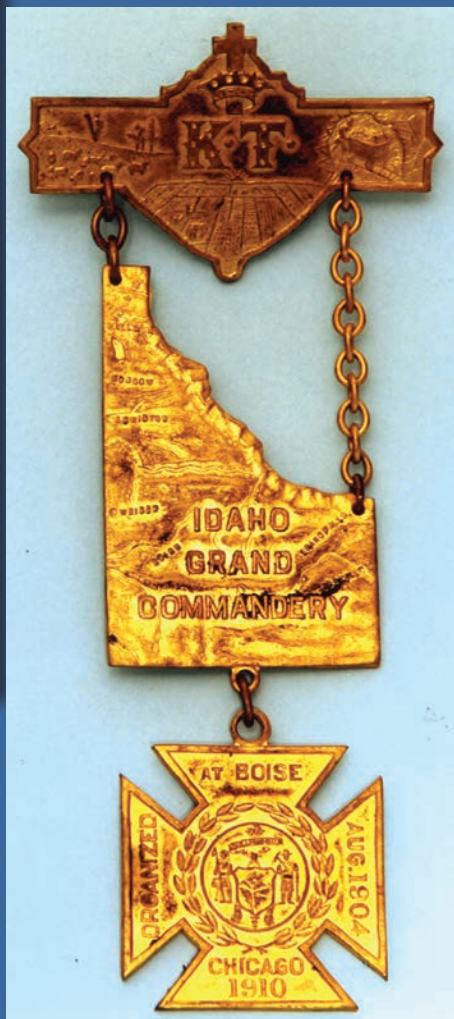
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More Old Fobs and Masonic Jewelry



Sir Knight Robert Keene of Commandery No. 9 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, sends us these three photos of part of his collection, below and to the right and left. The photos were taken by Essex Photography and are published with permission. I will publish some more photos of his collection in future issues as space permits.





Sir Knight George Wyatt, in addition to collecting Masonic items, also collects Kansas State University memorabilia. In the early 1900's a "metals" program

at the University cast brass items – drawer pulls, watch fobs, etc. Below are two photos of a "crossover" piece – Masonic and KSU. On the front: Manhattan, Kan. – May, 1913. Center: "Grand Commandery Welcome." He assumes that this is from Grand Commandery held in Manhattan, Kansas in May of 1913. On the back it says "MADE BY STUDENTS K.S.A.C." (Kansas State Agricultural College later to become Kansas State University).



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Beauceant News



Cleveland Assembly No. 15 welcomed (Mrs. T. Michael) Debhra Fegan, Supreme Worthy President, on the occasion of her Official Visit. Worthy President, (Mrs. Kenyon) Jean Killinger, seated next to the Supreme Worthy President, was also pleased to welcome Sisters from other Assemblies in the region.



In late October, Columbus Assembly No. 79 initiated (Mrs. Gary) Ann Imabnett as a new Sister during Supreme Worthy President Mrs. Fegan's Official Visit. Worthy President, (Mrs. John) Mary Mashburn, was pleased to increase their membership on this special occasion.

COMMANDERY GROWTH

By

Sir Knight R. William Perkins

Remember the disharmony of the workers at the end of the Mark Masters Degree? In the following degree, the Chaplain suggests to the candidate that a solution will be found within the *Sacred Volume*. When a Mason is installed as Chaplain in a Blue Lodge, he is told that from the Great Light we "...learn our duty to God, to our neighbors, and to ourselves." Within these pages can also be found guidance for the growth of our order.

I. A Study For Growth

A. 1 Chronicles 12:32 the "Issachar Factor"

We see here that we should seek counsel and guidance from those who know the times, the people, and area. This can be found in talking with your members and learning about them or their "group," meaning age, interests, and the effects that current events have on your members and potential members.

B. Numbers 26:53-55 the "Choice Factor"

God works with the choices we make. If we sit back and wait for candidates to "beat our door down," we will watch that door get locked for good. We will reap what we have gone out and sown for growth, which of course also speaks of our charitable and community work.

C. Acts 2:41 & 47; 4:4; 5:14 and 6:7 the "Number Factor"

As with each soul that is added to Christ's Church, so each of us adds another soul (member) to our order.

D. Amos 9:7 the "Israel Factor"

Although they were God's people, the Israelites sinned and found themselves back in captivity. The rules of growth apply to everyone and every organization. "We're special" are words of death. To rest on one's laurels is to await the closing of the coffin's lid.

II. Study Of Growth

1 Corinthians 9:22

This tells us that we should study and practice different methods for growth, accepting that what did work may no longer work, while at the same time not changing our message. In 1 Cor. 15:58, the apostle Paul goes on to say that we must "...stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourself fully..." which is true of the Lord's work and for Commandery growth.

III. Five Choices For Growth

A. Culture Choice

So often we are quick to pass judgment on another. Are we not reminded in Luke 6:37 not to judge others? If God had made everyone alike, it would be a very boring life. He gave us adventure and variety, and it is in this that we find growth.

B. Leadership

If you want growth, you have to be proactive. It can't just be the one in charge, or the "old guy" that's been there for what seems forever. It is the responsibility of every member to set an example that others will want to follow. The officers must be open and involved; they have to always be approachable. They must listen to the ideas and suggestions of all the members of their Commandery. Prov. 24:6.

C. Involvement Choice

This is getting people involved or "worked-up" about projects. Make sure that you do your best to let every member know that they are welcome and needed at all functions, no matter how long it has been since their last activity. It means doing God's work and the rewards that await us. John 14:21.

D. Outreach Choice

This means visiting our sick and homebound fellow Knight. This must include being there to assist with a sick spouse, a child, or a grandchild with special needs or making sure they know you are there. The families will see this, and many may want to join. Did not Jesus go to the sick and afflicted? Included here would be tactics practice. How often do we cram for an inspection, trying to memorize lines and floor work, only to embarrass ourselves and our Commandery? Yes, we all have lives outside of Lodge, but we also have "down-time," time to learn and brush-up on our tactics and the ritual of our other Masonic bodies. Pick a part and KNOW IT, not just learn it. My drive to work is twenty minutes. It's amazing how much you can learn in that time, and by the end of one week, how well you have it memorized. No, I've never had someone pass me and look at me strange for talking to myself. When possible, get with another and practice. Make it a point to have practices. Remember that you are setting an example for a new Knight while at the same time reassuring the "old-timer" that his years of work were not in vain. What sort of an example are you setting? Develop relationships. I spoke in a previous article about commonalities; use them! Get together for other activities and include your families.

E. Identity Choice

Are we outward focused and warm or inward focused and cold? Do we project a feeling of hospitality or of snobbery? A part of the identity is the dynamics. There is the group, and helping one another thus, internally, builds strength and establishes order. Gal. 6:2 and Rom. 12:15. Show and say who we are, thus clearing away suspicions and doubts. Gal. 3:27 & 28. This is, of course, our mission as Christians. Heb. 12:28; 13:15 and 1 Pet. 2:5.

The Great Light in Freemasonry is the rule and guide of our faith and so of our lives. Refer to it, follow the example mentioned at the beginning of this article, and by so doing, let it shine before man that others will want to join us and that we might grow and our world once again become good.

Sir Knight William Perkins is Past Eminent Commander of Belvedere Commandery No. 2 in Alton, Illinois and can be contacted at gunnyperk@gmail.com.

Knight Templar

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“For thus hath
the Lord said,
the whole land
shall be desolate;
yet I will not
make a full end.”
Jeremiah 4:27

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