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VOLUME LXI

DECEMBER 2015

NUMBER 12



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knight templar

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Duane L. Vaught
Grand Master

Jeffrey N. Nelson
Deputy Grand Master and Publisher
3112 Tyler Parkway
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JOHN L. PALMER
Managing Editor
Post Office Box 566
Nolensville, TN 37135-0566
Phone: (615) 283-8477
Fax: (615) 283-8476
E-mail: ktmagazine@comcast.net

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Lawrence E. Tucker
Grand Recorder

Grand Encampment Office
5909 West Loop South, Suite 495
Bellaire, TX 77401-2402
Phone: (713) 349-8700
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E-mail: larry@gektusa.org

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Templar fortified city of La Couver-
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Grand Master's Message

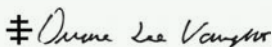
Christmas is upon us again. Unless you are under the age of twelve, I suspect that you, like me, have found that the year slipped away more quickly than expected. There is always so much to do. The demands of work, the needs of family, the desire to help the community press upon us. Even vacations and relaxing with friends are matters to be rushed and squeezed into a schedule lest they happen not at all. Nor are the festivities of the season free of pressure.

Yet, this is the time of year above all others when we should reflect for a moment on the single greatest blessing ever bestowed. Knights Templar is a Christian part of our fraternity. About two thousand years ago, Jesus brought a message of peace and hope, a plea to love others, and a promise of recognition for faith and virtue.

Let us find some time this season to give thanks for the things that are really important. Let us find some time to help others. Let us find some time to show those around us how much we appreciate them. Let us find some time to consider how we can be more like the person we would like to be.

From all the officers and members of the Grand Encampment, I wish you a joyous Christmas, full of all the love the season promises to those who believe.

Courteously,



Duane Lee Vaught



Grand Encampment

Membership Awards



1035-1038 Nestor V. Tampol
Cavite Commandery 7
Naic Cavit, PHL
3rd-5th Bronze; 1st Silver

1039 Wilfredo G. Baula
Cavite Commandery 7
Naic Cavit, PHL

1040 Ruel L. Ditan
Cavite Commandery 7
Naic Cavit, PHL

1041 Dexter L. Ng
Rajah Commandery 20
Davao City, PHL

1042 Carmelo C. Panlaque
Rajah Commandery 20
Davao City, PHL

1043 Adonis Agreda
Rajah Commandery 20
Davao City, PHL

1045 Don Radloff
Baldwin Commandery 11
Waterloo, IA
3rd Bronze



Cathedral at Troyes, France, where the Rule of the ancient Order of the Temple was granted. Photo by the editor.

Prelate's Chapel

by

Reverend William D. Hartman,
right eminent grand prelate of the
Grand Encampment

Autumn ends in December, and winter begins. The shortest day reminds us of the darkness that shrouds the northern hemisphere, but on December 25th, we celebrate the birth of Him who is the light of the world. As light returns to us a day at a time, so we are reminded that God's gift of His Son is the light of the world for all the days of our lives.

God's gift of light and life is given to all who will receive Him into their lives. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) The greatest gift we could receive, the gift of redemption and salvation, was hailed by angels and humans alike as a babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Shepherds brought sheep and the magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh and worshipped Him. What can we give Him as a tribute of love and adoration. I am reminded of a hymn that Christina Rossetti wrote over 150 years ago,

"What can I give him, poor as I am,
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb:
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part:
What I can I give Him, Give Him my heart."

With all the gift-giving at Christmas, let us be reminded there is nothing our Lord wants more than the gift of our heart, so that we might love and serve Him in all that we do and say. He who is the Light of the world will guide us in all the ways we go and lead us to "His Father's House" to be with Him forever.



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A Chat With The Managing Editor

I still remember when I petitioned the lodge for membership, even though it was more than forty-five years ago. More importantly, I remember why I petitioned. I certainly didn't know what went on in the lodge or any of the ritual, because you see there was no internet in those days. I suppose I could have read about it in books, but I didn't. For those of you who don't know, I will quote a line from a movie I saw recently, "Books are like TV for smart people." The reason I petitioned the lodge is because I looked up to the people who were members. You see, they were pillars of the community, upstanding citizens, honest men, brave men, men of character. You could do business with them on a handshake, their word was their bond, and although they didn't all agree on which church to go to, they all went to church somewhere. I wanted to be like those men, and I figured it would help me if I could become one of them. They were better than the average fellow both in character and in morals. Strangely, they didn't have everything in common. Some were politicians, some were bankers, some were lawyers, some were businessmen like my future father-in-law, and some were what we now call "blue collar workers" like my father, but they were all widely recognized as "good men." My only fear was that they wouldn't find me worthy to be among their number.

During my years as a Freemason, I guess you could say that I immersed myself in the fraternity. I donated my time and my money, I memorized and delivered volumes of ritual, I studied the history and the symbolism, and I even had a small part in the administration of the fraternity. Although I didn't learn a lot about morals and character that I hadn't already been taught, I guess you could say that the fraternity sort of solidified it for me. I believed what the ritual said about principles, precepts, and morals. I thought that if you promised to do or not to do something, you ought to do exactly as you said. Then, I guess I went to sleep.

When I woke up not too long ago, a lot had changed. For one thing, when I look around the room at a Lodge meeting, I am no longer the youngest guy in the room but am more often the oldest. That doesn't bother me, but some of the other changes do. I find that our lodges now have two different kinds of members, genuine Master Masons and those who are just members. The Master Masons hold the same beliefs as those fellows I looked up to fifty years ago, but the ones who are just members have a different and novel way of looking at things.

These members believe that morality is relative and defined by us humans rather than by God. I guess that when they obligate themselves, they believe it is all play-acting and not real life. As the morality and civility of our society has deteriorated, rather than the fraternity maintaining a standard, it seems to have deteriorated at an even greater pace until it is almost the same as the society we live in. So much for a positive influence on society. When I woke up, I was shocked. I guess I wasn't paying attention during this change. It's not so much the members who are behaving badly that bothers me but rather those who think that sort of behavior is acceptable.

I have recently had several discussions with some of these fellows, and the course of the discussion is becoming predictable. First, they point out that morality is rela-

tive and that I am violating some sort of ancient landmark by insisting that my God's morality is the only right one, even though they seem to profess, in most cases, a belief in the same God that I do. Then they accuse me of violating some sort of landmark by discussing politics. Since when did morality become a political subject? Morality used to be the domain of Masonry, but it seems to have been hijacked by the politicians. I guess they think we should abandon our interest in morality since the politicians have decided it is their domain. They then point out that the book we refer to as the "rule and guide of our faith and practice" is outdated and was never the "inestimable gift of God to man." Finally, they imply that I'm some sort of backwoods, ignorant, *Bible* thumping hick who has no business in an intelligent discussion. They don't really say that, they just imply it.

Rather than trying to compare educational degrees with them, this is where I usually just give up. I remember that my "blue collar" but wise dad once told me never to wrestle with a pig, because you both get muddy, and the pig enjoys it. What is fascinating to me is the many ways these fellows can rationalize their beliefs and especially their bad behavior. Some of their rationalization is even comical.

At any rate, I am now becoming depressed at the state we are in. It reminds me of a quote taken from one of my favorite movies. The enemy had over-run the camp, and the colonel (John Wayne) had called in an airstrike. The pilots asked him where to drop the ordinance, and he replied, "Put it on the camp; those people have it." I feel like "those people" have stolen my fraternity, and Masons or not, they have votes. I can't figure out why, if they didn't agree with what the fraternity teaches, they didn't just start their own fraternity with their own values. I guess they feel it is just easier to hijack the original one and change it into something different than what it was.

Probably some of you who are just members will take great offense at what I have said. There is at least one advantage of being a grumpy old man. I no longer define my self-esteem by other's opinions, and I would remind you that a person is offended because he chooses to be offended, not because of what someone else says.

Finally and on another subject, for those of you who are Christians; Glenda, Precious the cat, and I wish for you a most joyous and satisfying Christmas religious experience this month. Remember that we are not mortal beings having a spiritual experience but rather spiritual beings having a mortal experience.



Handwritten signature of John L. Palmer.

John L. Palmer
Managing Editor

Knights Templar Cross of Honor Templary's Highest Award

The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America presents the recipients of the Knights Templar Cross of Honor for the year 2015. These distinguished Sir Knights have demonstrated meritorious service and have been rewarded for it. The *Constitution and Statutes* of the Grand Encampment state that the Knights Templar Cross of Honor "shall be awarded only for exceptional and meritorious service rendered to the order far beyond the call of duty and beyond the service usually expected of an officer or member."

ALABAMA

Richard Carl Beck
Anniston 23

ARIZONA

Daniel George Repony
Ivanhoe 16

ARKANSAS

Michael Pat Lockhart
Chivalry 38

CALIFORNIA

Steven Robert Goad
Bakersfield 39

David Martinez Ferreria
Santa Monica 61

COLORADO

Roy Ashworth Snyder
Georgetown 4

CONNECTICUT

Michael Seamon
Washington 1

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Charles Arthur Phillips
Columbia 2

DELEWARE

John A. Eberly
St. Andrew's 2

FLORIDA

Bruce Loren Davis
Springtime 40

GEORGIA

William F. Shepard
St. Elmo 21

HAWAII

Lee K. Kaneakua
Honolulu 1

IDAHO

Barry Edwin Newell
Idaho 1

ILLINOIS

Rob R. Beldon
Urbana 16

INDIANA

Carson Clay Smith
Fort Wayne 4

Brian Charles Lewis
Prather 62

KANSAS

Waldo Lee Cain
St. Bernard 10

KENTUCKY

William F. Alderdice
Mayfield 49

LOUISIANA

Edward Albert Reine
Indivisible Friends 1

MAINE

Walter Loring Hayes
Portland/St. Alban 2

MASSACHUSETTS/RHODE ISLAND

George Anthony Sarafinas
Gethsemane-DeMolay 7

MICHIGAN

Terry Gaylord Baker
Romeo 6

MINNESOTA

Terrence John Becker
Duluth 18

MISSISSIPPI

David Brian Fricke
Gulfport 38

NEBRASKA

David A. Portwood
Joppa 17

NEVADA

Alan B. Power
Edward C. Peterson 8

NEW HAMPSHIRE

David Scott Collins
North Star-St. Gerard 4

NEW JERSEY

William Michael Krzewick, III
St. John's 9

NEW MEXICO

Fred Eldon Walker
Shiprock 15

NEW YORK

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Central City 25

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Raleigh 4

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Adam E. Fedler
Tancred 1

OHIO

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Wilmington 37

Robert A. Esarey
Holy Grail 70

George Smith Develen
Middletown 71

OKLAHOMA

Larry Douglas White
Trinity 20

OREGON

Richard Frank Harris
Columbia 26

PANAMA

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PENNSYLVANIA

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PORTUGAL

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drigues Jesuita
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ROMANIA

Gheorghe Niculescu
Dimitrie Cantemir 5

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Larry Joe Granger
S. Maner Martin 17

SOUTH DAKOTA

DaNiel D. Wood
Cyrene 2

TENNESSEE

Clarence Raymond Wilson, Jr.
Paris 16

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Llano 54

James Roy Elliott
Tancred 82

Delaney Wayne Howard
Melrose 109

UTAH

Jeffrey Elmer Hamilton
Ivanhoe 5

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Penn-Neck 33

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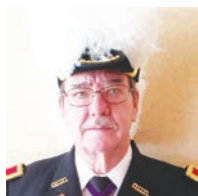
Congratulations are extended from Most Eminent Grand Master Duane L. Vaught and the grand officers of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, U.S.A. to the newly elected grand commanders of the grand commanderies within their jurisdiction. As a part of this salute to their dedication and tireless service to Templary, *Knight Templar* magazine is printing the available photographs of the Sir Knights who will serve as grand commanders for the current Templar year.



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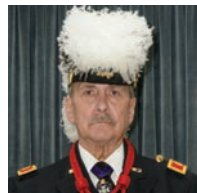
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Jeffrey Bolstad

Department Commander Northwestern Department

Jeff Bolstad is a native of Homestead, Montana, born on Christmas day of 1956. He began his career in radio, doing the morning show and broadcasting hundreds of sporting events. In 1980 and 1981 he was honored by UPI as "Sportscaster of the Year." In 1986, Jeff moved to Helena, began his present career as a State Farm agent, and continued officiating high school and college basketball.

Over the years, he has been heavily involved in community service and served as the Pastor of Valier Lutheran Church from 2001-2010. He is currently the pastor at both the Lutheran and Presbyterian Churches in Jordan.

He began his Masonic journey in 1990 when he was initiated into Helena Lodge 3 where he served as Worshipful Master. He joined the York Rite Sovereign College and was awarded the purple cross in 2002, serving as governor in 2008. He was grand commander in 2013-2014 and is currently grand king in the Royal Arch, and grand sentinel in the Council. He is a member of the Red Cross of Constantine, in which he is currently senior general, as well as Knight of the York Cross of Honour and the usual honorary bodies. One of his goals is to establish a college of Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis in Montana, having joined the Wyoming college earlier this year.

He has served as the presiding officer in all four Scottish Rite Bodies and in 2003 was appointed as the personal representative of the sovereign grand inspector general in Montana. In 2005 he was coroneted with the 33rd degree in Washington, D.C.

For seven years he was a member of the Board of Governors at Shriners Hospital in Spokane and spent six years on the Montana Masonic Home Board.

He is a past grand patron in the Order of the Eastern Star. An ardent student of the art of leadership, motivation, and personal development, Jeff has put together several workshops and seminars, and for the 2006-2009 triennial, he served as the international director of the leadership program for the General Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star.

He and his beautiful wife, Jill, like to spend as much time as they can at their ranch near Lewistown, where he enjoys refereeing high school basketball and writing and performing cowboy poetry.



The Christmas Gift Giving Tradition

To the Sir Knights of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar:
Greetings, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Several months after Jesus Christ was born, wise men came and presented gifts to Him. "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.' On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." (Matthew 2:1-2, 11)

Just as the wise men gave costly gifts to the Holy Child without the hope of anything in return, parents can lead sons and daughters to purchase gifts for elderly loved ones and neighbors who may be less fortunate.

These gifts need not be costly, but they should be given with thought, care, and love. Children who receive a lot of gifts might be encouraged to give a few of them to children in homeless shelters or children's hospitals. This is the true spirit of Christmas gift giving.

The custom of giving to the needy was one of the legendary traditions of Boxing Day which is celebrated the first weekday after Christmas in many countries. On Boxing Day, employers gave their servants boxes of food and other necessities. Public workers, such as mailmen, were remembered by the people they served. Some traditions hold that money was taken from church collection boxes and distributed to the disadvantaged.

How can we as Knights Templar join in this practice of gift giving in a truly meaningful way? How about the gift of a life sponsorship to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation? By purchasing a membership for \$30.00 in the name of a fellow Sir Knight, you are blessing not only him but contributing to the legacy of this most worthwhile charity. "So that others may see!" For information on how to accomplish this, contact the Knights Templar Eye Foundation office at (214) 888-0220 or visit the website at <http://www.knightstemplar.org/ktef/wtd.html>.

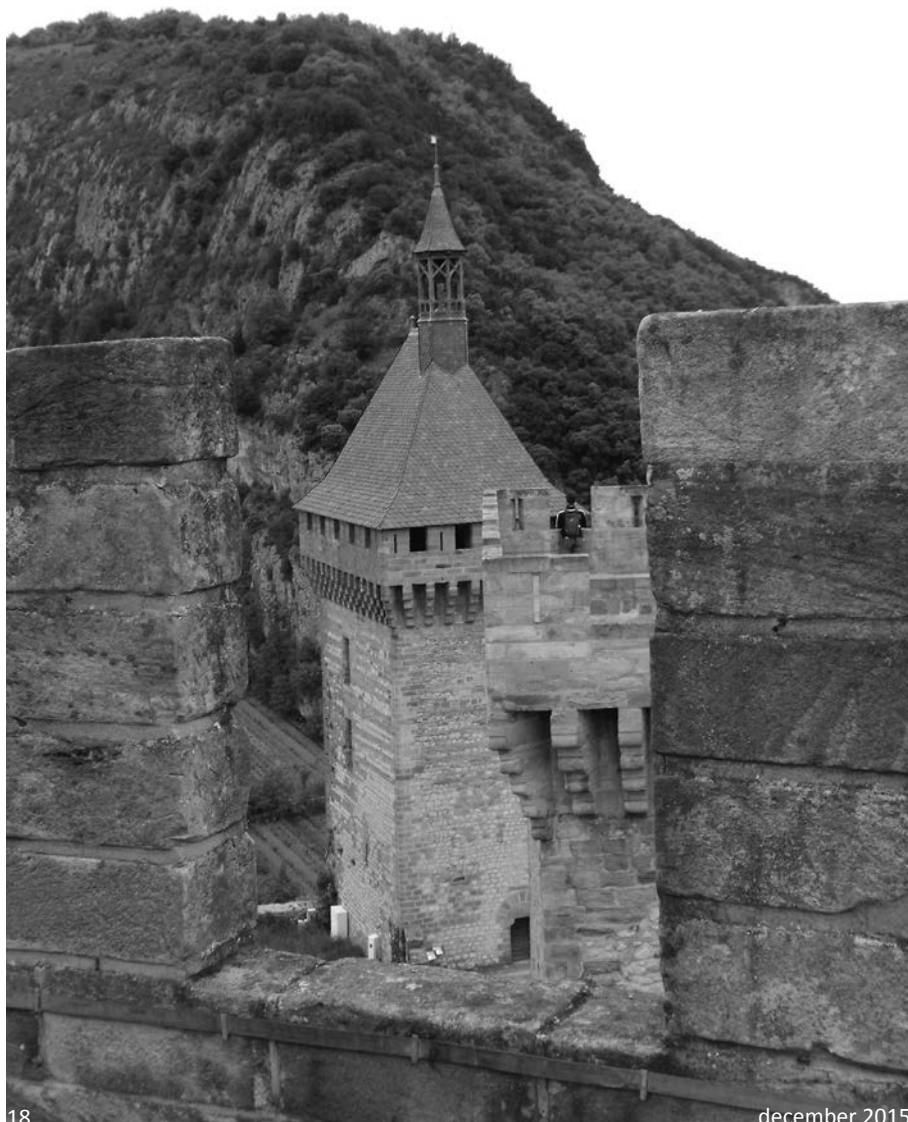
The giving of gifts is a wonderful expression of the love and good will that surrounds the Christmas season. Ultimately, gift giving at Christmas should be done in remembrance of the greatest gift of all — Jesus Christ the Son, the gift of the Father. As we know from John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, filled with God's peace and joy.

David J. Kussman, GCT
Chairman
48th Annual Voluntary Campaign
Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

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.



Photos of Foix Castle in France taken by the editor.



NEW CONTRIBUTORS TO THE KTEF CLUBS

Grand Master's Club

Billy R. Morris	AR	Larry C. Taylor	CA
Keith D. Lapuyade.....	CO	Wayne Smisek.....	CO
Kevin J. Nickelson	FL	Kenneth A. Rautiola	MI
Vance A. Pascal.....	NC	Ross R. Black, II	OH
Scott M. Orris	PA	Thomas C. Snedecor	TX

Grand Commander's Club

Kevin J. Nickelson	FL	Bruce Widger	NY
Bruce A. Crisman	SD	E. Lawrence Douglass, Jr.....	VT
Jonathan P. Park.....	VT		

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.

As of 2/1/2015 once 25 Grand Master's Clubs are reached, a Sword of Merit will be awarded.

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

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.

Lies of Larmenius?

Why the Larmenius Charter, which purports a succession of secret Grand Masters since Jaques Demolay, is probably fake.

By

Sir Knight Benjamin Williams

The sun was like a wound above the road to Versailles, spilling blood into the clouds. The men were feverish. Furor demands a quickening it seems, even as gravity sweeps the blade. They burst into the jails all at once and hacked the noblemen to bits.

It was September 9, 1792.

Justice is too slow, it seems:

Something had to be done.

No. Something had to be *undone*.

Among the prisoners that day was Louis-Hercule Timoléon, Duc de Cossé Brissac, a regular at the King's court, master of the King's pantry, and governor of Paris. He had broken bread with kings. Now he was just another dismembered corpse, reduced to anonymity in death and the equality of bones.

Several days later – maybe weeks – the crowd became impatient as the lots were cried. A man stepped forward and raised his hand. It was Brother Jaques Philippe Ledru; physician to house of Brissac, the son of Nicolas-Philippe Ledru; the famous prestidigitator, illusionist, and man-about-town; known by his cognomen, *Comus*, for the Greek god of revelry; who'd once performed for the King. Brother Jaques was less famous than his father. No one had recognized him. He bid again. He must win that desk! So begins the legend of Larmenius.

Freemasonry is filled with stories of knight templar

lost knowledge found in some hollow place. The antediluvian wisdom of Atlantis had survived the flood in a hollow pillar, a replica Ark of the Covenant beneath the Holy of Holies, so why not the Temple in the leg of an *escritoire*?

Did Jaques Ledru, physician to Cossé Brissac, know that a parchment was concealed in the leg of the desk he won that day at auction or was he just trying to salvage his patron's estate? We may never know, but it wasn't until twelve years later that any discovery was announced, this time by another physician, Brother Bernard Raymond Fabré-Palaprat, at the court of Napoleon.

Fabré-Palaprat and Ledru were brothers and friends. Ledru had apparently shown the parchment to Fabré-Palaprat and a few others. It was written in a simple substitution cipher, but once deciphered, it appeared to list in Latin an unbroken chain of Grand Masters of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon; irrefutable proof of the succession, you see; from the death of Jaques DeMolay in 1314 right up to 1792, with the bloody execution of the last Grand Master in secret, Cossé Brissac himself, heaped up in that Versailles prison. It was just too good to be true.

By authority of the charter in their possession, Fabré-Palaprat and Ledru sought to resurrect a new Templar lineage, but Ledru refused the Grand Mastership. Perhaps he thought it unseem-

ly? It was deemed by all that some noble should take the title. Fabré-Palaprat graciously deigned to fill the office, at least temporarily, until a suitable replacement of noble blood could be found, but he had no desire to relinquish the position. He retained the grand mastership for the rest of his life.

He kept many titles, each betraying some sort of desire for aggrandizement, such as “Most Eminent Highness” and “Very Great, Powerful, and Excellent Prince” even “Most Serene Lord.” Apparently the humility of the Temple, which typically dubbed its leaders “Vicars of Christ,” had escaped Mr. Fabré-Palaprat.

Such large personalities as these, though, would result in splits to his new-found order and rend the establishment of a gnostic church based on yet another discovery he claimed to have made of a long lost Gospel of John known as the *Levitikon*. This apocryphal text essentially rewrote the Gospel according to John, placing John in supereminency over Christ, but the Johannite Gnostic Church as it became known, would likewise splinter (as so many do) among the avaricious in-dealings of zealous disciples and overcompensating egos.

Today a number of neo-Templar organizations feign legitimacy to the Temple through this document and this man. They pooh-pooh the Masonic Knights Templar as some sort of imposition on their rightful ascendancy. They seem to need proof of a direct lineage to the last Grand Master of the Temple and neglect what makes a man a Knight in the first place – not a parchment but his heart.

Most scholars believe the parchment (the “*Larmenius Charter*,” as it has come to be known) to be a forgery, either by Philippe, Duke of Orleans,

with the assistance of a Jesuit monk known only as Bonani in the early 18th Century (around 1705), or by Ledru and Palaprat themselves in the early 19th Century (around 1804). Zealots of neo-Templar organizations, on the other hand, are steadfast. The document is real they claim, and any attempts to denounce it as a forgery are proof enough of a conspiracy of the Mother Church to discredit their rightful place.

Unfortunately, there is motivation on both sides of this issue. For those who wish to legitimize their orders (or cults, as case may be) and those who wish to delegitimize them, there is a certain madness unfortunately, that seems to attach to the Knights Templar and twist their legend to substantiate some sort of personal delusion. This makes men artful, even deceitful, and motivates each side as claimants of veracity.

Some men grow delusions like rose gardens. If you expose them for what they are (weeds choking out the truth), they attack you as if defending their life’s work. Sadly, in many cases, it actually is. This unhappy fact is pertinent to the exchanges we find throughout history regarding the *Larmenius Charter*, alas, from both sides. So bear that in mind.

The *Larmenius Charter* then, has been written about extensively, not least by the eminent Masonic scholar Albert Mackey, in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. Mackey takes an unfavorable view of the document, drawing off the research preformed in the late 19th century by a number of writers who claimed to have examined it in person:

“He [Duke of Orleans] caused new statutes to be constructed, and an Italian Jesuit, by

name Father Bonani, who was a learned antiquary and an excellent designer, fabricated the document now known as the *Charter of Larmenius* and thus pretended to attach the new society to the ancient order of the Templars."

According to Mackey, Philippe, Duke of Orleans, had established a rakish society at the French court, known as "La Petite Resurrection des Templiers." It dealt in lechery, overeating, and general largesse. Its mark was a man's foot on a woman's face. Whatever the exploits of this society of the French royal court, once discovered, King Louis XIV found it necessary to disband it. We read in Mackey:

"In the year 1682 and in the reign of Louis XIV, a licentious society was established by several young noblemen which took the name of "La Petite Resurrection des Templiers," or "The Little Resurrection of the Templars." The members wore concealed upon their shirts a decoration in the form of a cross on which was embossed the figure of a man trampling on a woman who lay prostrate at his feet. The emblematic signification of this symbol was, it is apparent, as unworthy of the character of man as it was derogatory to the condition and claims of woman, and the king, having been informed of the infamous proceedings which took place at the meetings, dissolved the society (which it was said was on the eve of initiating the dauphin); caused

its leader, a prince of the blood, to be ignominiously punished; and banished the members from the court, the heaviest penalty that in those days of servile submission to the throne could be inflicted on a courtier."

Then Mackey suggests that Ledru, who may have garnered the charter from the hollow leg of Cossé de Brissac's writing desk (or assisted in the fabrication of it outright) and Fabré-Palaprat used the document to establish their own Templar authority, this time with political aspirations. Even Napoleon, it is said, drew some interest in the group.

According to Mackey, one Francisco Alvaro da Sylva Frevre de Porto infiltrated the order shortly after its founding. Da Sylva was, it is alleged, an agent of King John V of Portugal whose Knights of Christ legitimately claimed decendency from the Temple. Da Sylva became Fabré-Palaprat's secretary in the order, and at Fabré-Palaprat's direction, sent a copy of the charter to King John V of Portugal seeking authentication and legitimacy for the order, but the King denounced it as fake.

Nonetheless, this document of much controversy remains important for a number of reasons. If real, it demonstrates that DeMolay had conferred the Order of the Temple to a successor to be perpetuated in secret, "only to be made known after due profession and knightly consecrations" had occurred. If a forgery, then the attempt to impose it on the world is a bold and unworthy deception, and as any equilibrium must depend on its initial conditions, so those orders claiming their legitimacy from it are likewise

deceived and thus, ultimately deceitful.

Most scholars contend that the charter's Latin, once substituted for the simple cipher in which the document was originally written, is too good – the scholastic, ecclesiastical Latin more typical of the 18th Century than the 14th Century. Worshipful Brother Christopher Hodapp takes this view, writing in *The Templar Code for Dummies* that:

"The charter which is actually in the hands of the Freemasons and is available for inspection at Mark Masons Hall in London is indeed written in a cipher code and when translated, is in Latin as one would expect a document from a 14th century Catholic order of monks to be, but it is not in the ecclesiastical form of Latin typically found in religious documents of the period. Instead, it is polished, formal, and quite scholarly – a little too scholarly, in fact."

However, this argument is not by itself convincing. Latin is an old language, and certainly the Church has cultivated perfection in Latin during the centuries it has employed the language since even the dark ages. This view was confirmed to me personally by the chair of the Department of Languages and Literature at Denver University, Dr. Victor Castellani. However, Dr. Castellani did point out some specific discrepancies in the usage more typical of a later time. Particularly, the use of the word *rerum*, ordinarily translated as "thing," and used in the charter ecclesiastically to mean "the world." In his own words:

"Maybe it's too classical according to people who know this style, but that doesn't bother me at all. It's a nice usage, but it could be anachronistic. It could be something that was not done at the time when this was supposed to be written and something that was picked up during the humanist period. If the forger is a Jesuit, he has the benefit of Catholic humanism. The Latin of someone like Erasmus, for example, is much better than the Latin of Dante."

He also pointed out the single lettering in words like *quattor* and *comissa*, ordinarily using a double consonant. Not definitive proof of a forgery, mind you, but a suggestion that the author was possibly Spanish, as the suspected forger, Bonani, was known to be.

Another question raised is the specific phraseology employed in the second paragraph, *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, meaning "To the greater glory of God," the motto of the Jesuit order itself, established in 1540, more than 200 years after the year when Johan Marcus Larmenius was meant to be penning the document. Granted, it could be a coincidence, but it is a significant one. Supporters of the document may contend, however, that this was because the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius de Loyola, was influenced by these secret Templars. The society of Jesus was, after all, founded in Paris, but it does seem more likely that a forger, if a Jesuit as alleged, could not resist putting in a nod to his own order.

Further clues are found in the method and style of illumination of the man-

uscript. At the turn of the 20th Century, the document fell to the scrutiny of the premier research lodge in England, *Quator Coronati*. We read from a paper regarding this inquiry:

"The charter has been carefully examined for me by Sir George Warner, keeper of the manuscripts at the British Museum, who is one of the greatest experts on the subject. He says, that whilst the Latin is that of the fourteenth century, the illumination cannot be, but it may be any time from the latter part of the fifteenth century, so we seem no nearer to the true history of this remarkable document than before."

For me, the clincher is toward the end in the charter proper where Larmenius himself calls down a curse upon the Scottish Templars, denouncing them as beyond the pale of the Temple:

"Finally, on consequence of a decree of a supreme convention of the brethren and by the supreme authority to me committed, I will, declare, and command that the Scottish Templars, as deserters of the order, are to be accursed and that they and the Brethren of Saint John of Jerusalem, upon whom may God have mercy, as plunderers of the domains of our soldiery, are now and hereafter to be considered as beyond the pale of the Temple. I have therefore established signs, unknown to our false Brethren and not to be known by them, to be orally communi-

cated to our fellow-soldiers, and in which way I have already been pleased to communicate them in the supreme convention."

This seems to be a dig at the Scotch Templars of Masonic origin. It is certainly odd that a grand master of the Templars would curse any knights that escaped the flames of the perfidious pope and the corrupt king of France. You would think he would be happy for them! And Scotland was not the only place "deserting" knights fled, either. Portugal was a particularly safe haven. There the Templars simply changed their names to the "Knights of Christ." There were substantially more fleeing Templars in Portugal than Scotland, especially around the time period when this charter is supposed to have been written. Some Knights surely made it to Switzerland, too. Thus this curse by a supposed grand master is out of place, out of time, partial, and peculiar, unless we accept that the real author of the charter was deliberately attempting to bolster his Templar organization above a competing organization such as the Masonic Knights Templar, well established at the time of writing, say in the late 18th Century when the Scottish connection to the Knights Templar was gaining reputation following Ramsay's famous oration in 1741. Anyway, how would Larmenius have known the Templars had deserted to Scotland if it was not, indeed, part of some plan to escape Philip the Fair's mass arrest? In order for him to denounce them, he must have been aware of their flight there. The inherent logic just doesn't hold up. It seems much more likely that this curse was motivated to bolster a competitor

Ego frater **Johannes Marcus Larmenius**, hyerosolimitanus, Dei gratia et secretissimo venerandi sanctissimique martyris, supremi templi militie magistri (cui honos et gloria) decreto, communi fratrum consilio confirmato, super universum templi ordinem, summo et supremo magisterio insignitus, singulis has decretales litteras visuris, salutem, salutem, salutem.

Notum sit omnibus tam presentibus quam futuris, quod, deficientibus, propter extremam etatem, viribus, rerum angustia et gubernaculi gravitate perpensis, ad **majorem Dei gloriam**, ordinis, fratrum et statutorum tutelam et salutem, ego supra dictus, humilis magister militie Templi, inter validiores manus supremum statuerim deponere magisterium:

Idcirco, Deo juvante, unoque supremi conventus equitum consensu, apud eminentem commendatorem et carissimum, **Franciscum Thomam Theobaldum Alexandrinum**, supremum ordinis templi magisterium, auctoritatem et privilegia contuli, et hoc presenti decreto, pro vita, confero cum potestate, secundum temporis et rerum leges, fratri alteri, institutionis et ingenii nobilitate morumque honestate praeclatissimo, summum et supremum ordinis templi magisterium, sine commilitonum templi conventus, et, rebus ita sese habentibus, successor ad nutum eligatur.

Ne autem languescant supremi officii munera, sint nunc et perenniter **quatuor** supremi magistri vicarii; supremam potestatem, eminentiam et auctoritatem; super universum ordinem, salvo jure supremi magistri habentes; qui vicarii magistri apud seniores secundum professionis seriem eligantur. Quod statutum è commendato mihi et fratribus voto sacrosancti supra dicto venerandi beatissimique magistri nostri, martyris (cui honos et gloria) amen.

Ego denique, fratrum supremi conventus decreto, è suprema mihi **comissa** auctoritate, **Scotos Templarios** ordinis dsrectores, **anathematice percnssas**, illosque et fratres sancti Johannis hyerosolimae, dominiorum militie spoliatores (quibus apud Deum misericordia) extra gremium templi, nunc et in futurum, volo, dico et jubeo.

Signa, ideo, pseudo-fratribus, ignota et ignoscenda constitui, ore commilitonibus tradenda, et quo, in supremo conventu, jam tradere modo placuit.

Quae vtro signa tantummodo pateant post debitam professionem et equestrem consecrationem, secundum templi commilitonum statuta, ritus et usus, supra dicto eminenti commendatoris à me transmissas, sicut à venerando et sanctissimo martyre magistro Jacobo de Molaya (cui honos et gloria) in meas manus habui tradita. Fiat sicut dixi fiat. **Amen.**

The Jesuit motto

The Society of Jesus (the "Jesuits") was founded in 1540 – 226 years *after* the death of Jacques DeMolay.

Use of Single Consonants

Classical Latin would write *quattor* and *commissa*, so if the cipher was letter for letter substitution (as it is meant to be) this sigle usage may allude to a Spanish author.

Curse of "Scottish Templars"

It does seem a bit odd that the GM of the Templars would curse the men who escaped to Scotland – especially since most of them actually escaped to Portugal. Unless the wirtre of the Latin was seeking to delegitimize competitors using Scottish descendency in their rites and rituals, that is.

above a rival and diminish an established history of the Temple which, in fact, was not established until the latter 18th Century – nearly 500 years after the time the charter was allegedly written!

Additional points raised by people who have examined the charter include an illiterate man's signature as grand master, showing some good penmanship for an illiterate, and incorrect titling of various nobles throughout the list. Vexingly, these are still explainable in

other ways aside from forging the document. However, with each addition of another curiosity or peculiarity, the odds begin to build until it becomes statistically unlikely that the document is genuine. Why would all the grand masters of the Temple be nobles at the French royal court? While this is possible, it does seem a little imprudent for a secret order committed to acts of charity in secret and perhaps contrary to any belief in humility and sacred anonymity.

Moreover, anyone who requires such a document to prove they are the direct descendants of the Temple is suspect, and their motives are surely questionable. Legitimacy doesn't come from truthful claims of some transmission. It comes from receipt of teachings and their adoption in the heart. The true inheritor wears the mantle of simple truth, never grandiose claims desirous of legitimacy.

Perhaps the only way to be sure is to carbon date the document. On this note, I emailed the Mark Masons Grand Lodge on St. James Street in London earlier this year, offering to pay for such a test. After

a few weeks, I received a rather short reply: "We do not wish to carbon date the *Larmenius Charter*."

Like so many things in our Craft, perhaps the mystery is better than fact.

Sir Knight Ben Williams is Past Commander of Mintrose-Ouray Commandery 16 in Colorado and is currently serving as the eminent grand generalissimo of the Grand Commandery of Colorado. He publishes the *Rocky Mountain Mason*, magazine and serves on the editorial review board of the *Knight Templar* magazine. He can be contacted at orionsg8@mac.com.

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IN MEMORIAM



William B. Berk
Nevada
Grand Commander 1977
Born: May 3, 1923
Died: September 17, 2015

Richard Elwyn Cooper
Michigan
Grand Commander 1996
Born: July 25, 1935
Died: October 8, 2015





Knights



at the Bookshelf

By
Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC, KCT

Napier, Gordon, *The Pocket A-Z of the Knights Templar: A Guide to Their History and Legacy*, The History Press, The Mill, Brimscombe Port Stroud, Gloucestershire, Great Britain, 2014, ISBN 978-0-7524-9867-6

What was the baculus? Who was Godfroi de St. Omer? Who was Imbert Blanke? Where is Mansourah? The answer to these questions and many others can be found in this little gem of a book. Don't let the title fool you—this book is not just about the Knights Templar but is a nice reference book about things, persons, and places pertinent to the Crusades, the Middle Ages, and chivalry. It is a great place to acquire some elementary knowledge and then expand on this knowledge by consulting more comprehensive texts. The book does not skimp on information; some of its entries cover as many as two pages.

Additionally, the book has the nice feature that words in the text of a given entry that are in bold print are names and topics of entries that appear elsewhere in the book. Another nice thing is the range of topics that are treated—not only the well-known things but also things that are rarely found in general history books. Copious notes and references are included at the end of the book for the interested reader.

The book is a revised, condensed edition of *A-Z of the Knights Templar* by the same author. Both books are readily available at online bookstores.

If you are at all interested in the medieval Knights Templar, their history, and the history of their times, this book belongs in your home library. I find myself referring to it often in my studies and research and suspect that you will also. It makes a useful companion when reading books or online articles about the Templars and the Crusades.



The Honeybee as a Symbol of Virtuous Masonic Industry and Ethics

By

Sir Knight James A. Marples

Freemasonry, in its capacity as a fraternity of “Ancient Free and Accepted Masons,” has various symbols that are designed to remind the Mason, inside and outside of the lodge, of his duties to himself and to mankind. Engaging in noble and industrious endeavors is but one example. Most of the symbols are architectural working tools such as the level, plumb, square, gavel, and other miscellaneous tools used by ancient stonemasons as literal tools as described in the *Holy Bible* and other holy writs but now also employed as metaphors or inserted as honorable symbolic signs and symbols used by modern speculative Freemasons to illustrate “more noble and glorious purposes” befitting a moral code of conduct in our modern world.

Oddly enough, the beehive doesn’t fit the category of an architectural working tool, yet it has a prominent place in Masonic allegory and symbolism. Various Masonic scholars try to connect the beehive with the pope rounding-up ancient knights to form the Crusades. Hugh de Payens was the first grand master of the Templars. However, he needed support in protecting the road from Joppa to Jerusalem. He needed men and resources. This is where the abbott, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, gave de Payens his complete support, offering men, and resources, and within two years, de Payens received full papal sanction for his knight templar

monastic group known as the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of the Temple of Solomon,” more commonly known later as the “Order of the Temple” or the “Knights Templar” to protect pilgrims in route to the Holy Land. Unfortunately today, many dubious and even clandestine and criminal thugs have corrupted the honorable name of the “Knights Templar.” While the ancient Knights Templar displayed heroism and piety, I don’t believe that the beehive was exclusively a Templar symbol transferred to modern Freemasonry. I believe it had a connection with the Rosecrucians who also bridged that gap in history.

To draw that conclusion, I read a commentary, “The Bee, A Symbol of the Church,” by Catherine Croisette. She writes: “The bee is also a symbol of wisdom, for it collects nectar from many flowers and turns it into nourishing and pleasing honey, which is the ‘gold’ of bees. We should do the same, take whatever we can and transform it through our labor into a superior element useful for us and our neighbor.”

She adds, “the bees work without rest and give their lives without hesitation for the good of the hive. They are instantly and vigorously militant against enemies of the hive. Not only the hive but the honey upon which their lives depend is also vigorously protected. When endangered by heat, they cling to the outside of the hive and beat their wings



relentlessly to cool the hive and keep the honey from melting. Many bees die when this happens.”

She also notes a text of St. John Chrysostom in which he in some way confirmed that explanation when he wrote: “The bee is more honored than other animals, not because it labors but because it labors for others (12th Homily).”

These virtues of laboring and industrious behavior could legitimately be attributed to ancient Knights Templar as well as the modern Knights Templar in the York Rite of Freemasonry. However, to support my conjecture, I believe the bridge of symbolism was actually amplified further by the Rosecrucians. Like Hugh de Payens, Father Christian Rosenkreutz strove to form a monastic order which evolved into the Society of the Rose and Cross (or Rosicrucians). Rosicrucians tended to use elements of nature such as the rose, the cross, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, and the elements.

Therefore, a beehive is just as natural as a blooming rose. It embodies life as well as growth. That is why Rosecrucians played an unsung role in helping our Fraternity as a whole to advance its use of

eloquent graphics in symbols describing virtuous principles and the highest standard of ethics.

The noted Masonic scholar, Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33rd and a Knight Templar, notes that the beehive was, among the ancient Egyptians, the symbol of an obedient people. Of all the insects, the bees around a beehive was a sign of “regulated behavior when congregated in their hive.” He also notes that Freemasonry adopted the beehive as a symbol of industry. He notes that new Masons are taught that Master Masons work so that they “may receive their wages, the better to support [themselves] and family and contribute to the relief of worthy distressed Brother Master Masons and [their] widows and orphans.”

Brother Brigham Young, who was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in Nauvoo Masonic Lodge at Nauvoo, Illinois, described “The Beehive is a symbol of harmony, cooperation, and work.” One of his notable residences was “The Beehive House” in downtown Salt Lake City, Utah, which I have personally visited. It is even adorned with this emblem atop the structure. This building served as the “Executive

Mansion” of the Territory of Utah from the years 1852-1855.

Today, honeybees and other pollinators such as butterflies and birds contribute substantially to the economy of the United States and are vital to the preservation of flowers and shrubs as well as keeping nuts and vegetables in our diets. Bees and beehives are essential in the pollination which sustains large portions of our food supply. In recent years, the number of bee colonies has dropped due to varying factors. Some people have theorized that this is because of disease, parasites, other pathogens, loss

of foliage and forage lands, and exposure to pesticides.

Using an analogy, groups of hard-working men who are Masons could be likened to bees. While a Masonic Lodge is essentially the group of men themselves, in bygone times, large Masonic halls were built to accommodate the conferral of degrees and other activities and thus became a hub of activity, similar to a beehive.

Various flowers including sunflowers are pollinated by honeybees. The state of Kansas is known as “the sunflower state.” Furthermore, Sunflower



Masonic Lodge 86 is located in Wichita, Kansas. In Nebraska, the sandhills have been another prime growing region for sunflowers which are a beautiful crop to see growing in the fields and are cultivated for their seeds and oils. The delicate balance of abundant light and adequate moisture is precisely what sunflowers need to survive. Those plants are similarly dependent upon bees and pollinators.

Regardless of where Masons meet, act, and part, I would hope that we keep the symbolism of the beehive in our hearts and minds. The Three Great Lights of Masonry are described as the

Holy Bible, square, and compasses. It is essential for us to retain and teach our symbolism to future generations since a band of friends and Brothers can accomplish many more good deeds than a single individual can do alone in this world.

This article was presented to the Nebraska College of SRICF on July 1, 2014, and is published with permission. Sir Knight James Marples is a life member of Mt. Olivet Commandery 12 in Wichita, Kansas, and currently resides in Texas. He can be contacted at rosehills@yahoo.com or P. O. Box 1542, Longview TX 75606.

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Macoy's Masonic Manual by Robert Macoy, 33rd and a Knight Templar. Fifteenth Edition. New York, 1861 by Clark, Austin, Maynard & Company located at 3 Park Row & 3 Ann Street, New York, New York. "A Pocket Companion for the Initiated."





Beauceant News



Kingsport Assembly No. 244, Tennessee, members and Mrs. Randall Carrier, worthy president, welcomed Mrs. Thomas R. Derby, supreme worthy president, on the occasion of her first official visit. Also present from the supreme family were Mrs. Joseph L. Bongiovi, supreme worthy first vice president; Mrs. Edwin R. Carpenter, supreme credentials committee; and Mrs. Gary Davis, supreme courtesy committee. A warm welcome and congratulations goes to Mrs. Clifford McMillan who was initiated at the official visit.



Westminster Assembly No. 245, Maryland, hosted Mrs. Thomas R. Derby, supreme worthy president, for their official visit. Miss Kelly Woolman, worthy president, served as presiding officer. Mrs. David E. Alcon, past supreme worthy president; Mrs. Joseph L. Bongiovi, supreme worthy first vice president; Mrs. Joseph C. Chalker, supreme recorder emeritus; Mrs. Edwin R. Carpenter, supreme credentials committee; and Mrs. David W. Rogers, supreme benevolence committee, were all in attendance also!

Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



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

Year of Our Lord 2015

To all valiant and magnanimous knights of the Temple, where-so-ever dispersed throughout Christendom
~ salutations and knightly greetings:

A TOAST TO OUR MOST EMINENT GRAND MASTER

CHRISTMAS 2015

We offer a toast to you, our most eminent grand master, during your first year of leading the Chivalric
Masons of this Grand Encampment.

We celebrate this Christmas season, remembering the gift given to us in a little baby boy, born in
Bethlehem and laid in a manger "because there was no room in the inn," but we open our hearts to receive
God's greatest gift to us in His Son Jesus.

Luke tells us that the first people who heard the great news were shepherds keeping watch over their
flocks by night. Angels sang of his birth, and the shepherds then went to the stable to see this baby boy.
(Luke 2:8-14)

To you, Grand Master, as shepherd to us Sir Knights, we too sing of the joy of Christmas and wish to you
and Lady Georgia all the best that we can offer. We bring you our gifts of love and affection for your
dedication, leadership, and friendship. As you shepherd us through this coming year, may you be led by
the Good Shepherd of us all, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We toast you and Lady Georgia and wish
for you a blessed Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

In His Name,

Sir Knight and Reverend William D. Hartman, grand prelate
The Committee on Religious Activities
Sir Knight and Reverend Kenneth D. Fuller, P.G.C., chairman
Sir Knight and Reverend Terry L. Hensley, P.G.C.
Sir Knight and Reverend James R. Herrington, P.G.C



GRAND MASTER'S RESPONSE

Christmas 2015

To the Right Eminent Grand Prelate, the Committee on Religious Activities, and all Sir Knights wheresoever dispersed:

Knightly Greetings!

A most sincere thanks from Lady Georgia and me to the Right Eminent Grand Prelate and the Committee on Religious Activities for their meaningful and humbling toast this Christmas season.

The toast speaks of the gifts of love and affection as well as dedication and friendship. May we all practice these traits so that all our fraters may receive their benefits in turn. It is far too easy to fail to care enough for our brother knights. If I may be remembered for anything in this office, it would be an honor to be remembered for leading a deeper caring for each other.

Christ told us to love others, and in this season more than any, we should make a greater effort and a deeper commitment to carry the practice into the new year and into our daily lives.

We pray that each of our Templar families and the world at large may find peace, happiness, joy, hope, and love during this Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The officers of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar and their ladies join with my lady Georgia and me in wishing each of you and your families a most blessed and merry Christmas!

Courteously,

Duane Lee Vaught, GCT
Grand Master



The foregoing toast to the most eminent grand master and his response thereto are transmitted to you with the request that you extend an invitation through the proper offices to all Sir Knights within your jurisdiction to join in the sentiments thus conveyed at some convenient hour, on or near the birthday of Christ, commonly called Christmas Day, December twenty-fifth, in the Year of Grace 2015.

Knight Templar

5909 West Loop South, Suite 495
Bellaire, TX 77401-2402

*Glory to God in
the highest, and on
earth peace, good
will toward men.
Luke 2:14*

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