

# Knight Templar



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# Knight Templar

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**Duane L. Vaught**  
Grand Master

**David J. Kussman**  
Grand Captain General and Publisher  
1781 N. Pheasant Street  
Anaheim, CA 92806-1007

**Address changes or corrections and all membership activity including deaths should be reported to the Recorder of the local Commandery. Please do not report them to the editor.**

**Lawrence E. Tucker**  
Grand Recorder

**Grand Encampment Office**  
5909 West Loop South, Suite 495  
Bellaire, TX 77401-2402  
Phone: (713) 349-8700  
Fax: (713) 349-8710  
E-mail: [larry@gektusa.org](mailto:larry@gektusa.org)

Magazine materials and correspondence to the editor should be sent in electronic form to the managing editor whose contact information is shown above.

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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](mailto:ktmagazine@comcast.net)

**Cover photo of templar fortifications in Conques, France, taken by the editor.**

# Grand Master's Message

## SAVE THE DATE

**MA**rk your calendars – The Grand Encampment Triennial Conclave will be in Indianapolis in 2018. For most members, our gathering begins with drill competition on Saturday, August 18. On Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> we will have a divine service, traditional Grand Master's Reception, and plenty of time for site seeing. The business sessions will be Monday and Tuesday, August 20-21, which includes the public opening on Monday morning. We conclude with the installation of officers on Wednesday. Detailed information will be coming in early 2018.

The headquarters hotel will be the Marriott Indianapolis Downtown at 350 Maryland Street

Within walking distance of the hotel are several museums, Indianapolis Zoo, White River Garden, Grand Lodge and Scottish Rite Buildings, Circle City mall, and over 200 restaurants. Many of these are attached by sky-bridge. Also in town are the Indianapolis 500 track, the Indiana State Fair, and much more.



### OTHER ACTIVITY

The bicentennial has gone very well but there is much more to do. In coming months expect to hear about changes to the Education Foundation, a new program to support DeMolay, a new recognition program for donors to our charities, and advances in our relationships outside the current Grand Encampment.

I hope your grand and constituent Commanderies have been busy too. If not, why not? We all have a great opportunity to make Templary everything it can be for our benefit as well as our future members.

✠ *Quinn Lee Vaughn*



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# Prelate's Chapel

by

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

I like February. It's the shortest month of the year, which reminds me that spring is getting closer. The daylight is getting longer. Then there is the celebration of St. Valentine's Day on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month. While it is a remembrance of a martyred saint of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, his love and devotion as a Catholic priest ministering to others has been an inspiration for all ages to the power

of love. Nancy and I were married forty-one years ago on St. Valentine's day as a blessing on our love and devotion to each other.

As romantic as Valentine's Day may be to all of us, let it serve to enhance our understanding of what love is. Scripture assures us that God is Love. John 3:16-17 is the hallmark: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (16). That Son, the Word of God become flesh and died for our sins that we might be saved from death and restored to everlasting life with "Our Father, who art in heaven," "For God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (17).

St. Paul, who didn't have the advantage of a Valentine's Day reminder, certainly knew the power of God's love in Jesus Christ. His encounter on the Damascus road with the blinding light of Jesus changed his life forever. He preached the love of God in Jesus throughout the world of his day, eventually also being martyred. The 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Paul's first letter to the Christians in Corinth is better than any Valentine card to learn of and live in love.

Let the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord fill you and guide you every hour of every day.



# The Rise and Fall of the Krak des Chevaliers

Part I of II

By

Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC

*"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" (2 Samuel 1:27)*

**T**he *Krak des Chevaliers* (Castle of the Knights) located near Homs, Syria, is a limestone Crusader castle and is considered to be one of the most important preserved medieval castles in the world. It fell to the Sultan Baibars in 1271 during a siege. In order to obtain a better idea of what occurred in the siege, it will first be necessary to briefly consider the castle and its history.

The site was first inhabited in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by a settlement of Kurdish troops from 1031-1099, who built a fortification there atop a 2,130 foot high hill overlooking the Homs Gap and dominating the road between Homs and Tripoli. This fortification was called *Ḥoṣn al-Akrād*, meaning "fort of the Kurds." The word "*Krak*" was probably derived from the Frankish version of *Akrād*, namely, "*Crat*," the word for Kurds. In January of

1099, on the journey to Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the army of Count Raymond IV of Toulouse came under attack from the garrison of *Ḥoṣn al-Akrād*, the forerunner of the *Krak*, who harried Raymond's foragers and scouts. The next day, Raymond marched on the castle and found it deserted. The crusaders briefly occupied the castle in February of the same year but abandoned it when they continued their march on the way to Jerusalem. Permanent occupation began in 1110 when Tancred, Prince of Galilee, took control of the site. The early castle was markedly different from the surviving remains, and no trace of this first castle survives at the site. When the Knights Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem took control of the castle in 1142, it was styled *Crac de l' hospital*. (The name *Crac (or Krak) des Chevaliers*



knight templar







ing the inner court were built. They followed the earlier walls with a narrow gap between them in the west and south which was turned into a gallery from which defenders could unleash missiles. In this area, the walls were supported by a steeply sloping glacis which provided additional protection against both siege weapons and earthquakes. Four large, round towers project vertically from the glacis; they were used as accommodation for the knights of the garrison. The southwest tower was designed to house the rooms of the grand master of the knights. Though the defenses which once crested the walls of the inner wards no longer survive in most places, it seems that they did not extend for the entire circuit. *Machicolations* (openings between the corbels of a projecting parapet or in the floor of a gallery or roof of a portal for discharging missiles upon assailants) were absent from the southern face. The area between the inner court and the outer walls was narrow and not used for accommodation. In the south, where the defenses were weakest, there was an open cistern filled by an aqueduct. It acted both as a moat and water supply for the castle, supplemented by an interior well. At the north end of the small courtyard is a chapel, and at the southern end is an *esplanade* (walkway). The *esplanade* is raised above the rest of the courtyard; the vaulted area beneath it would have provided storage and could have acted as stabling and shelter from missiles. Beside the west of the courtyard is the hall of the knights.



Though probably first built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the interior dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century remodeling. The current chapel was probably built to replace the one destroyed by the earthquake in 1170. Only the east end

of the original chapel which housed the apse and a small part of the south wall survive from the original chapel. The later chapel had a barrel vault and an uncomplicated apse. It was divided into three roughly equal bays. A cornice runs round the chapel at the point where the vault ends and the wall begins. When the castle was remodeled in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, the entrance was moved to the south wall. The chapel was lit by windows above the cornice, one at the west end, one on either side of the east bay, and one on the south side of the central bay, and the apse at the east end had a large window. A picture of the chapel is shown below:



Arrow slits in the walls and towers were distributed to minimize the amount of dead ground around the castle. *Machicolations* crowned the walls (except in the south), offering defenders a way to hurl projectiles towards en-

emies at the foot of the wall. They were so cramped that archers would have had to crouch inside them. The box *machicolations* were unusual; there were no comparable features among other Crusader castles. However, they bore similarities to Muslim defense works. It is unclear which side imitated the other, as the date they were added to the Krak is unknown, but it does provide evidence for the transmission of military ideas between the Muslim and Christian armies. These defenses were accessed by a wall-walk known as a *chemin de ronde*.

When the outer walls were built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the main entrance was enhanced. A vaulted corridor led uphill from the outer gate in the northeast. The corridor made a hairpin turn halfway along its length, making it an example of a bent entrance. Bent entrances were a Byzantine innovation, but that at the *Krak* was a particularly complex example. It extended for 450 feet, and along its length were "murder-holes" which allowed defenders to shower attackers with missiles. Anyone going straight ahead rather than following the hairpin turn would emerge in the area between the castle's two circuits of walls. To access the inner ward, the passage had to be followed round.

Despite its mostly military character, the castle is one of the few sites where Crusader art (in the form of frescoes) has been preserved. In

1935, 1955, and 1978, medieval frescoes were discovered within the *Krak* after later plaster and whitewash had perished. The frescoes were painted on the interior and exterior of the main chapel and the chapel outside the main entrance which no longer survives. Those in the chapel were painted on the masonry from the 1170–1202 rebuilding operations. The one on the exterior of the chapel depicted the presentation of Jesus at the Temple.

**Part II follows next month.**

Right Eminent Sir Knight Marshall, KYGCH(3), KCT, 33°, is a past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Alabama. He is a member of the Editorial Review Board of the *Knight Templar* magazine and has published several articles in that magazine as well as in the *Royal Arch Mason* magazine. He can be reached at [geomarsh@yahoo.com](mailto:geomarsh@yahoo.com).

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# *Failing to Prepare is Preparing to Fail*

By

Sir Knight John R. Dinkel

**W**hat if I told you that someone was going to give you a gift that you could use and enjoy every day of your life? What if then I said that this gift was very valuable, maybe even priceless? Would you accept it? What if I told you that this gift would make you a better person, well liked, well respected, and that it would forever change your life in every way possible for the better - would you accept it then?

Now, what if I told you that the gift wasn't free, that you would have to earn it? It would do all of the things I just said it would do, but that there would be a cost to be paid - would you still accept it? The great gift that I am suggesting here is the ability to become a good communicator.

We often hear it said in Freemasonry that our true purpose is to take good men and make them better. Well, we can make ourselves better by improving our interactions with those with whom we come into contact every day. We can become more comfortable in our life and learn to think on our feet and make good rational decisions that affect both ourselves and our families. We can become more articulate, better able to express ourselves, and more able to avoid conflict whenever possible in any situation we might encounter.

So, how do we achieve all this? There are many paths to becoming a better communicator; colleges offer credit

courses in public speaking, and an organization called Toastmasters International has a fine program, too. I should know, I am a graduate of that program. Many service organizations gladly offer their members opportunities to develop their speaking skills, but there is no better place to hone and develop the ability to speak in the presence of your best friends and brothers than in your Masonic Lodge.

One of the secrets of the founding fathers of Freemasonry is that our ritual is part and parcel to the Masonic experience and that it takes time to learn and even more time to be able to present in a meaningful way. This learning process, when done properly, not only takes time, effort, and study, it also demands the skill to stand up in front of people, some of whom may be perfect strangers, and to make a presentation calmly, clearly, and in a way that engages the audience as well as the candidates at hand.<sup>1</sup>

Yes, as I suggested, there is a price to be paid, but the rewards are everything I said they would be. We have all seen degree cast members who flash through a piece of ritual by rote with their only concern being to get through it so they won't forget what they are supposed to say. In the end, neither they nor their candidates know what was said. On the other hand, we can all remember ritualistic work that we have witnessed that

was done with care from the heart, and even though we have heard it all dozens of times before, on that special night we were delighted to hear it presented in a way that made us think, remember, and maybe even reflect on why we joined our fraternity in the first place.

The difference between those two examples is that one man prepared to succeed, and the other one did not. Tony Blauer, the author and instructor of the SPEAR self-defense system currently in use by our United States military forces has a saying, and the saying is this: "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail." I want to point that out one more time: "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail."

Although Mr. Blauer uses this statement in his training program with regard to self-defense, the idea actually applies to any area of life, from our work, to our relationships, our hobbies, and nearly every facet of life, including our Masonic life. It certainly applies as we consider the gift I mentioned earlier, our gift of great value.

Our Masonic founders well knew that learning by rote is merely memorization for its own sake but that learning our beautiful ritual in order to instruct and reach out to another person in a way that will be remembered is communicating par excellence, and that is a very great gift indeed, both for the audience and for the speaker himself.

The Mason who learns his ritual because he wants to and not just because he "has to," learns faster, with more ease, and with better comprehension. He is able to think on his feet and is not afraid of getting stopped in mid-sentence. He has confidence because he has prepared well, and so he does well.

This confidence may be seen in virtu-

ally all areas of his life; his work is done well because he is habitually prepared. When he meets people, he is able to remember names and faces, because he has prepared to do so. If asked to fill-in at a meeting, he does it with aplomb, because he has prepared over a period of time and has confidence in his ability to do what is asked of him and to do it well. The more success he has, the more successful he becomes, and small successes usually lead to larger ones. Our successful communicator will be respected for his coolness, and his opinion may be sought in business and in his personal life. He does not fail, simply because he prepares to succeed.

The small arena of the lodge room is where this preparation takes place, there among his brethren who have trod the same path and labored along the same way, who understand the work and concentration needed to learn our ritual, and who appreciate the determination to succeed that all good speakers have in common. This smaller arena is a microcosm of the larger arena of life where the same skills and determination to succeed are played out in myriad ways every day - the smaller arena acts as a training ground and stepping stone into the larger arena, one where we can apply all that we learn in the Lodge to the other areas of our life.

I can remember the fall day in 2004 when I first had the honor to confer a Master Mason's degree on a member of my Blue Lodge. I had prepared for months and had my mentor in the room acting as my prompter, as well as the advantage of knowing the candidate personally; I could tell the story of Hiram Abiff as if it were a story told between friends. I made my friend a Master Ma-



son, and in so doing, made myself a better Mason at the same time.

In spite of my diligent preparation, I made an error in delivery - at least one self-appointed critic who cornered me after the meeting thought as much. I had never before met him, and his name and face elude me now, but his behavior (all too common in Freemasonry) is the bane of ritualists everywhere. After all, who could condone a critic who insists on telling you about the one word you missed, with nary a word about the 7500 words that you got right? Although the critic is ever with us, it is well to remember that although he may sound superior (he is not) and may never attempt to do what you have just done, his usefulness is in pointing out a (possible) mistake that you will thereupon resolve never to make again, and thanks to him, you likely never will. Embrace every opportunity to improve your skills. The critic is present in all areas of life, and the criticism that you face today will make you stronger in the long run for the challenge of tomorrow. Resolve to have the courage to hear honest criticism and the tenacity to prepare even harder to succeed.

No one has a better right to critique your performance than you do yourself, and you probably will. However, success never lies in not making mistakes but rather in learning from our mistakes and in not making the same mistake twice. Many of us are our own worst critics when we should be our own best cheerleaders. So, remember the wise words of former President Theodore Roosevelt in his 1910 speech *The Man in the Arena*,<sup>2</sup> "It is not the critic who counts ... the credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena."

Remain confident in what you can do

and become the communicator that you want to be. Use the smaller arena of the lodge room to prepare for the larger arena of life, and you cannot help but succeed in both. Our Masonic forefathers knew that the road to success is built one stone at a time, and their method of successful personal growth, one step at a time, is as valid today as ever, and getting a little bit better every day is a lot better than the alternative.

Now you know that the great gift is within your reach, as long as you are willing to pay the price of its acquisition. It will take some time and effort, but it will change your life for the better. Remember that we are all in training, every day of our life. We are learning to think like Masons and to live like better men. Prepare to succeed, and you will succeed; decide to win, and you will be a winner. Discount the critics while always being willing to improve through honest criticism, and the gift of great worth will become yours forevermore.

Sir Knight J. R. Dinkel is past commander of Beaver Valley Commandery 84 in Beaver County Pennsylvania. He resides in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania and can be contacted at [jdcommander@comcast.net](mailto:jdcommander@comcast.net).

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.

## Notes

1. Wilkinson College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences reports that in their 2015 survey randomly sampling of 1,540 adults, nearly 29% of all Americans have fear or great fear of public speaking, termed glossophobia. Another study done in 2006 estimated that at least 75% of all people world-wide have this fear of public speaking. Perhaps this points out one reason for the rise of texting and emails over phone calls and face-to-face interaction in societies that have the disposable personal income to purchase data tools that support this method of avoiding personal interactions.
2. Excerpt from the speech "Citizenship In A Republic" delivered at the Sorbonne in Paris, France on 23 April, 1910, by President Theodore Roosevelt.

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**S**ir Knights of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, I bid you a fraternal and respectful salute. Brother George Washington was born 285 years ago this month. He was commander-in-chief of the American Army from 1775- 1783. The surrender at Yorktown was on 10-19-81 and the *Treaty of Paris* ended the war on 4-15-83. Did you ever wonder about the time span between the surrender and the treaty?

The British clearly knew the war was lost, wanted out, and negotiated to end it. General Washington clearly did not believe them and insisted on keeping the army intact until the treaty was executed. He even wanted to attack British garrisons that remained in America. There were some who suspected that Washington was maneuvering to become king. He was at the pinnacle of power, having led the nation to victory over the most dominant empire on earth. Historically, successful military commanders had elected to convert their wartime success into political power.

It was at this time that King George III asked Benjamin West (an American living in London) whether Washington would be head of the army or head of state when the war ended. West replied that Washington's sole ambition was to return to his estate. The king declared, "If he does that, he will be the greatest man in the world."

Of course, the king was correct. The father of our country was the greatest man in the world! He did not conspire and manipulate to serve his own appetite for power and authority. To me, he personified Masonic tenants that many of you have heard before: "He that would be foremost in rank must be foremost in serving his Brothers."

I want you to be foremost in rank. I want you to serve your Brothers and the order. I ask you to be generous in support of the great work of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

There are a number of ways to contribute. You can be a life sponsor for \$30.00. A contribution of \$50.00 makes you an associate patron; \$100.00 makes you a patron. If you would like to enroll in the Grand Commander's Club, you may do so for as little as \$100 as an initial contribution with a pledge of \$100 for the next nine years, at which point you will then be elevated to the Grand Master's Club. Also available for \$10,000 is the Golden Chalice or \$25,000.00 for the Sword of Merit. You can also give to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation through estates and planned giving.

Fraternally & Respectfully,

David M. Dryer, KGC, chairman, 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Campaign



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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.

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#### **Qualified Charitable Distributions Can Yield Big Tax Savings**

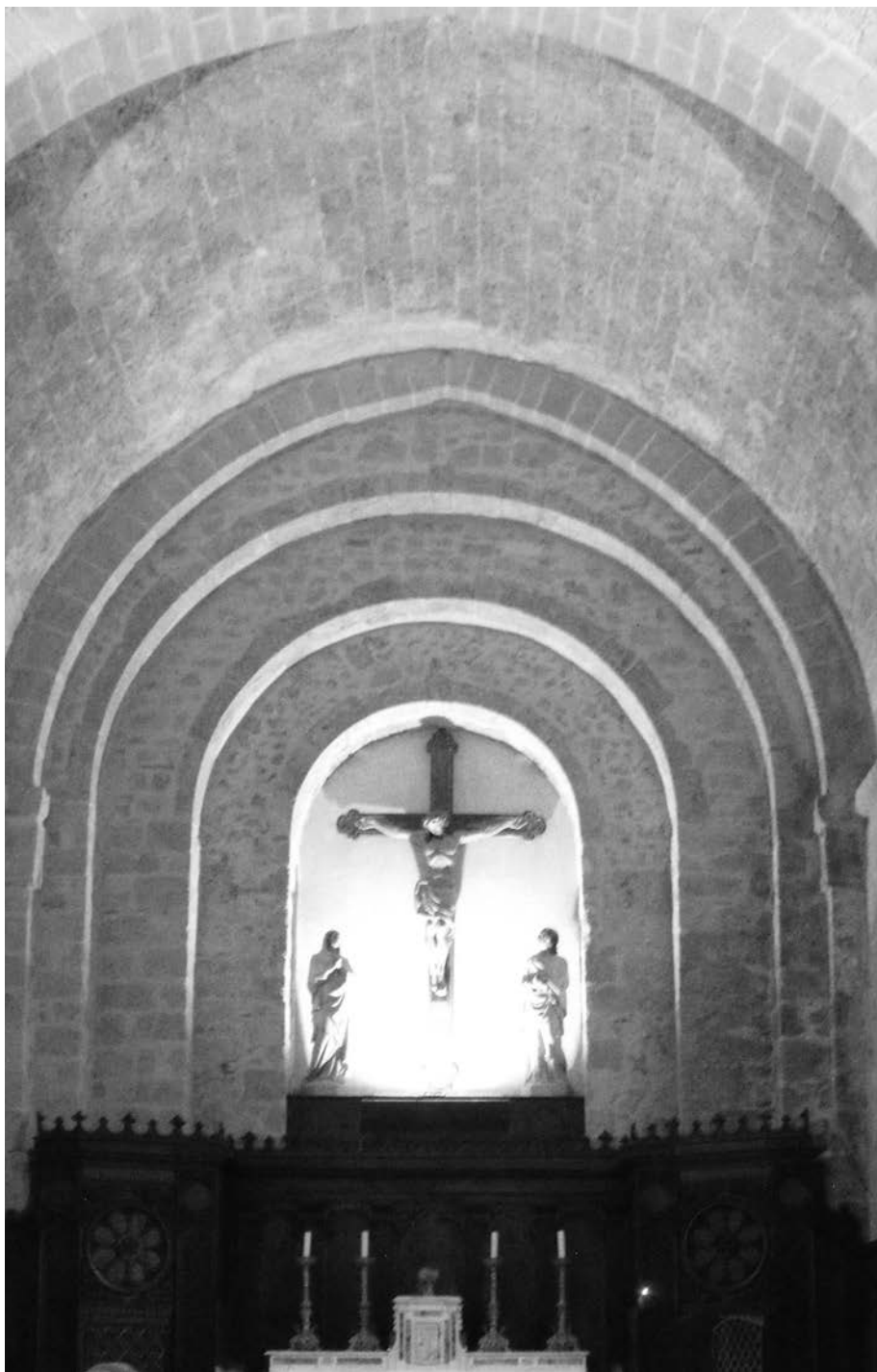
Congress has now made the qualified charitable distribution (QCD) option permanent for those who wish to make direct contributions from their IRA to charity. The tax law allows individuals age 70 ½ or older to transfer up to \$100,000 a year from their IRA to a qualified charity. This distribution counts toward their required minimum distribution but isn’t added to their adjusted gross income the way a normal IRA distribution is. This can provide a tax savings of up to 40% depending upon an individual’s tax situation.

# 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 the Templar Commanderie of Sainte Eulalie, France, were taken by the editor.





## 87<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EAST COAST EASTER OBSERVANCE – 2017

The 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Easter Sunrise Service, sponsored by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, will again be held on the steps of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia, on Sunday, April 16, 2017.

### 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](http://www.knightstemplar.org).

### MEALS

A meal package is available for \$75.00 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](http://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, \$60.00; 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 20, 2017.** 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, Right Eminent 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](mailto:john@gektusa.org).





# An Inquiry into the Accusations of Luciferianism

which, Present Day, Continually Affront the Fraternity of Freemasons

By

Sir Knight Ben Williams

**M**e all know how conspiracy theorists love to pin all sorts of nefarious dealings on us Freemasons. The accusations are manifold, but essentially they devolve into three main camps, more or less extensive.

One, the Masons are a vehicle used by the Illuminati to take over the world, destroying all religions and national sovereignties, to set up the antichrist enthroned in opposition to everything right and holy. Two, by accepting multiple faiths into a Masonic Lodge, Freemasonry is a tool of Satan himself, wielded to contravene Christianity, particularly the literalist interpretation of John 14: 6, where Jesus says, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Three, most Masons are unwitting fools, condemning their souls one pancake at a time. All that money we give to charity? It can never buy back our souls, because we just don't know what is really going on up there, over Heredom, at those dizzy heights of the 33<sup>rd</sup>!

The logical fallacy of these absurdities notwithstanding, if someone really wanted to take over the world, there are much better options than Masonry. Yet, anti-Masonry seems as old as the Fraternity itself.

The first consolidated move against Freemasonry appears when Holland banned membership in the Fraternity as a criminal offense, a mere eighteen years after the formation of the Grand Lodge at London in 1717. We might presume that this was due to suspected Jacobite leanings against the Protestant House

of Orange. This is ironic considering that the main opponent of Freemasonry next to emerge was the Catholic Church.

The Roman See issued a Papal Bull in 1738, condemning all Freemasons and those who aided them in any way to "pain of excommunication... from which no one can obtain the benefit of absolution, other than at the hour of death, except through Ourselves [Pope Clement XII] or the Roman Pontiff of the time."<sup>1</sup>

The main issue, it seems, was not devil worship or aspirations of global domination, but secrecy pledged under oath upon the *Bible*. This left the doors of the society closed, except perhaps to overactive imagination.

This secrecy Clement is wont to interpret in light of John 3: 20, *qui mala agit odit lucem* – he who does evil hates the light. The assumption appears to be that, while the church can't prove there's anything nefarious ongoing, the fact that it's a secret means we Masons must be hiding something.

Pope Clement writes:

"Thus these aforesaid societies or conventicles have caused in the minds of the faithful the greatest suspicion, and all prudent and upright men have passed the same judgment on them as being depraved and perverted. For if they were not doing evil, they would not have so great a hatred of the light."

Clement goes on to authorize his underlings, including the Inquisition, to “pursue and punish them with condign penalties as being most suspect of heresy.”

By his own pen, he bases his contempt on “rumors” and “common gossip” and authorizes use of “condign penalties,” a.k.a. “torture” at the hands of the Inquisition, because we Masons are “most suspect of heresy.”<sup>2</sup>

One might ask then, whether or not Freemasonry weighs the same as a duck?<sup>3</sup> The scales were certainly mercilessly applied. Testimony is extant from John Coustos for example, a Swiss Jeweler who, after founding a Lodge in Lisbon, suffered at the hands of the Inquisition for over a year before being released in 1744 by the intervention of King George II of England. According to his own testimony, he was tortured on at least nine occasions, but he was luckier than some of his Brethren who met the gallows and hanged the year before.<sup>4</sup>

The main complaint of the Inquisition, it seems, was use of Biblical lore in a format unrecognized and unsanctioned by the Church. This was blasphemy, and such Biblical injunctions were commonplace in the early operative Craft. We know, for example, from Etienne Boileau, Provost of the Corporations of Paris, from his *Code of the Usages and Customs of the Masons, the Stone Masons, the Plasterers, and the Mortarers*, collated c. 1260 at Paris by order of King Louis IX, that the operative Craft guilds made use of oaths as early as the high middle ages.

In a time when literacy was a luxury enjoyed by a ruling class, the use of mystery plays for instilling moral teachings was everywhere remarkable. The

Noachite Rite of early Masonry, from which John Coustos’s Masonry no doubt evolved, for example, owes much to the mystery plays of the preceding age. So it should come as no surprise that obligations and ritualistic initiations that acted out Biblical scenes were part and parcel of the early speculative Craft.

Clement XII’s ban on Masonic membership was ratified by Popes Benedict XIV, Pius VII, Leo XII, Pius VIII, Gregory XVI, and Pius IX. Still, the charge remained that Freemasonry concealed its membership from the world and therefore must dwell in the shadows.

However, a century later, Pope Leo XIII wrote that Masons were now working to “overthrow...that whole religious and political order of the world.”<sup>5</sup> Not really finding much proof of this, he goes on to add that the “Masonic federation is to be judged not so much by the things which it has done or brought to completion, as by the sum of its pronounced opinions.”<sup>6</sup>

Again, if she weighs the same as a duck, she must be a witch! So what are these opinions by which Freemasonry is to be judged and by which our overarching disruption to the “whole religious and political order of the world” may be exposed? By Leo’s own admission in his encyclical, *Humanum Genus*, his entire attack on Masonry is based against the humanist idea that, the “church and state ought to be altogether disunited” which, from the modern perspective at least, certainly seems like a good idea.

Thus unequivocally, earliest anti-Masonry, arising in the century after the iconic meeting at the Goose and the Gridiron pub, seems entirely fixed against the secrecy of Masonic members, the oaths and obligations bind-

ing men together, and the meeting of men to discuss subjects other than Church Canon.

In the United States, the formation of the Anti-Masonic Party in 1828, the only major third party to emerge in the United States, bespeaks concerns that in-dealing and Masonic nepotism were polluting the political process here.

Rallied by the disappearance and suspected death of Masonic exposé, William Morgan, in 1826, the Anti-Masonic Party rose to prominence in opposition to the candidacy of Most Worshipful Brother Andrew Jackson, but the furor was oriented at the influence Masons could disproportionately wield in favor of their Brethren. This is a similar concern as for the church, only the party affected in this instance is the state, but the charges leveled are nonetheless almost equivalent. Significantly, devil worship is not one of them.

For almost two-hundred years then, after the formation of the first Grand Lodge in England, accusations of devil worship and luciferianism were not overtly made. Not until the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the work of a self-confessed hoaxter, Leo Taxil, was seized upon by every anti-Masonic enthusiast the world over, does this peculiar strain of anti-Masonry appear on the record.

We have to look at this hoax, because almost all the luciferian madness hinges upon it. Léo Taxil was one of several pseudonyms for Marie Joseph Gabriel Jogand-Pagès. He was a French journalist and staunch anti-Catholic. He pretended to convert to Catholicism in the latter 19<sup>th</sup> century and famously wrote against Freemasonry under various names (about the time of the Pope Leo XIII's *Humanum Genus*, as it happens) al-

knight templar

leging preposterous crimes at the door of the Lodge; among these, accusations of devil worship.

Taxil claimed to have a written confession from one Diana Vaughan, detailing her libidinous involvement with a Satanic cult connected to a Masonic Lodge. In April of 1897, at a convention assembled specifically to introduce Diana Vaughan in person (her phantom had risen to some notoriety by this time), Taxil surprised everyone by confessing that Vaughan and in fact the whole of his anti-Masonic propaganda was just a hoax, deliberately devised to expose both the contumacy of the Church and the ridiculousness of the Fraternity.

It was too effective a campaign, though. Despite his own public confession, this myth remains alive today, ardent with the simpleminded, awash in false opinions, absurdity, and longing.

A fine example of the evolution of this luciferian lie among anti-Masons is evinced in transmission from one of Taxil's pamphlets.<sup>7</sup> Taxil claims to expose a nefarious letter written by none other than Albert Pike to an Italian politician, Giuseppe Mazzini. The letter, the pamphlet says, stressed designs for dismantling the Catholic Church and proves a Masonic conspiracy to secularize the world.

Then, in 1925, Taxil's pamphlet is cited as fact by Cardinal Rodríguez of Chile in his book, *The Mystery of Freemasonry Unveiled*. Rodríguez elaborates the lie, bringing the secular designs in the pamphlet to bear on the Bolshevik uprising in Russia at that time. Now Pike's plan suddenly includes Communism. Cardinal Rodríguez embellishes further, the letter he claims, is in the property of the British Museum in London (it isn't). The letter is never specifically cited, only

contextually referenced in support of the divisive narrative Rodriguez allows.

Then in 1956, Rodriguez is cited in the book, *Pawns in The Game*, by Guy Carr. Carr also outlines what the letter says without actually citing it. With Carr driving the lie, the letter now morphs into a massive plot aimed at global domination to enthrone the antichrist over his "New World Order." According to Carr, Pike told Mazzini that the Illuminati would instigate three world wars to bring about this ultimate aim, a fitting paranoia for the 1950s but one not mentioned at all in either of the earlier iterations of the lie.

Today in 2016, you can actually read the letter online! It is interesting to note terms such as "Nazi Party," not used until after Pike's death. Of course, Pike, as a grand wizard of the black arts, probably drew these words from some black obidian plate.

It is dumbfounding how some people grow delusions like rose gardens and defend them as if defending their life's work. In some cases, it actually is. The lie is powerful when the liar wants to believe it, but it is insurmountable when it defines the liar. If there is a luciferian conspiracy, I venture such zealous self-righteousness as comes from these conspiracists would serve it well.

I will leave you with the words of Leo Taxil himself, from an interview with *National Magazine* in 1906. In so doing we will come to realize that Taxil's not the one to blame, but alas, as is all too evident presently, a somnambulist public.

"The public made me what I am; the arch-liar of the period for when I first commenced to write against the Masons, my

object was amusement pure and simple. The crimes I laid at their door were so grotesque, so impossible, so widely exaggerated, I thought everybody would see the joke and give me credit for originating a new line of humor. But my readers wouldn't have it so; they accepted my fables as gospel truth, and the more I lied for the purpose of showing that I lied, the more convinced became they that I was a paragon of veracity.

Then it dawned upon me that there was lots of money in being a Munchausen of the right kind, and for twelve years I gave it to them hot and strong, but never too hot. When indicting such slush as the story of the devil snake who wrote prophecies on Diana [Vaughn]'s back with the end of his tail, I sometimes said to myself: 'Hold on, you are going too far,' but I didn't. My readers even took kindly to the yarn of the devil who, in order to marry a Mason, transformed himself into a crocodile, and despite the masquerade, played the piano wonderfully well.

One day when lecturing at Lille, I told my audience that I had just had an apparition of Nautilus, the most daring affront on human credulity I had so far risked, but my hearers never turned a hair. 'Hear ye, the doctor has seen Nautilius,' they said with admiring glances. Of course no one had a clear idea of who Nautilus was. I didn't myself, but they assumed



that he was a devil. Ah, the jolly evenings I spent with my fellow authors hatching out new plots, new unheard of perversions of truth and logic, each trying to outdo the other in organized mystification. I thought I would kill myself laughing at some of the things proposed, but everything went; there is no limit to human stupidity.”<sup>8</sup>

Sir Knight Ben Williams is past commander of Mintrose-Ouray Commandery 16 in Colorado and is currently serving as the very eminent deputy grand commander 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.

### Notes

1. *In eminenti apostolatus specula*, Clement XII, April 28, 1738
2. Ibid.
3. *Humanum Genus*, Pope Leo XIII, Rome, April 20, 1884.
4. Ibid.
5. See *Monty Python's Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, released May 23, 1975
6. *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia*, Henry Wilson Coil, Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., Inc., 1996, pg. 56
7. See *Le Palladisme* by *Domenica Margiotta*, 1895, pg. 186. Cited at <http://wideshut.co.uk/albert-pikes-3-world-wars-letter-hoax-wideshut-webcast/>. Accessed Sept. 11, 2016.
8. *National Magazine*, Vol. 24, May 1906, Pg. 160-161.





The Star of Bethlehem

# *“In the Footsteps of Jesus”*

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**Pilgrimage site, see Activities -**

**[www.knightstemplar.org](http://www.knightstemplar.org)**

# Western States Easter Observance

April 13-16, 2017  
Salt Lake City, Utah

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- Sunrise Service - Salt Lake City Masonic Temple Auditorium
  - Easter Brunch - Hotel RL – (9 am until 12 pm)

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# 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MID-AMERICA EASTER OBSERVANCE

The Grand Encampment will sponsor the  
**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Mid-America Easter Service**

*Hosted by the Grand Commanderies of  
Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, & Nebraska*

**Banquet, Saturday April 12, 2017  
Westin Crown Center at 7:00 P.M.**

**Sunday, April 13, 2017 at 8:00 A.M.  
Liberty Memorial**  
100 W 26th Street, Kansas City, Missouri

**Easter Buffet Brunch  
Westin Crown Center at 9:30 A.M.**

Host Hotel – Westin Crown Center  
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# Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



## MID AMERICA EASTER OBSERVANCE APRIL 15-16, 2017 INFORMATION & RESERVATION FORM

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Lady/Escort: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### RESERVATION DEADLINE April 7, 2017

No Refunds after April 10, 2017

Registration: Westin Crown Center Hotel Lobby, Kansas City, Mo.  
Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup> 2:00 to 4:30 P.M.  
Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> 10:00 A.M. - Noon & 1:00 - 4:30 P.M.  
\$ 30.00 / person Number Attending \_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_.00  
(Registration for gentlemen only, includes memento for member and for lady if attending)  
Saturday, April 15, 2017 Westin Crown Center Hotel, Kansas City, Mo.  
Social Hour: 6:00 P.M. Formal Banquet: 7:00 P. M. Liberty Room  
\$57.00 / person Number attending \_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_.00  
(Sir Knights in dress uniform, ladies, and guests in evening attire)  
Sunday, April 16, 2017 8:00 A. M. Sunrise Service Liberty Memorial, Kansas City, Mo.  
Easter Buffet Brunch 9:30 A.M. Westin Crown Center Hotel Benton's Prime  
\$35.00 / person Number attending \_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_.00

Money to accompany reservation

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_.00

Please make your own room reservations:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/GrandEncampmentEasterSunriseService>

Indicate any special Dietary needs \_\_\_\_\_

Men: Class A uniform for Banquet and Easter Service (Cap and Mantel optional)  
Ladies: Formal or evening attire for Banquet and comfortable for Easter Service

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30460 W 154<sup>th</sup> St  
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785-865-6737 [grand\\_sec\\_rec@ksyorkrite.net](mailto:grand_sec_rec@ksyorkrite.net)

# Wolfram's Search for the Holy Grail

## It's not a cup -- it's a stone!

by

Dr. Mark Dreisonstok

The picture accompanying this article is by the French artist Gustave Doré and is a detail to one of his illustrations to Michaud's *History of the Crusades*. While at first glance this image would seem to depict a victorious knight, charging with banner unfurled as he champions truth, honor, and faith, the reality behind the scene is quite different. We see here instead, a crusader attacking Constantinople in a power struggle between the Western and Eastern Church. This unromantic and frankly violent view of the Crusades is something which would have been understood by Wolfram von Eschenbach, the poet of the Middle High German Parzival. This heroic epic of the Middle Ages, written about 1210, is a rare voice of reason and religious tolerance in an era of zealotry and bloodshed.

Wolfram tells the familiar tale of the Knight Parzival (Sir Percival, in the English tradition) and his quest for the *san graal* or Holy Grail. In Wolfram's unusual version of the Holy Grail legend, every expectation we have of how the source material has been variously employed in our present culture is denied. There are no Masons or Knights Templar seeking and guarding secretly that which has been lost. There is no suggestion of a musical cacophony or the operatic strains Richard Wagner would later impart to his opera Parsifal. There is certainly no Indiana Jones recovering the Grail in his last crusade! Most surprisingly, there is no cup or chalice



used by Christ at the Last Supper, the very stuff of Arthurian legends concerning the Round Table at Camelot. In Wolfram's medieval poem Parzival, the Grail is simply a stone.

Parzival is the hero of the tale, a young man whose father (the knight Gahmuret) was killed in the Crusades – the bloody, centuries-old attempt by the Catholic Church to bring the Holy Land, then held by Muslims, under Christian control. Parzival's mother, fearing that he will want to become a knight like his father, shelters the youth and keeps him in ignorance in all things pertaining to knighthood and chivalry. When Parzival finally does become a

knight, as eventually our poem would dictate he must, his ignorance of all things chivalric causes him to make almost comic blunders. Most significantly, when Parzival is in the very presence of the Grail — when it is right before his eyes! — he fails to even recognize it or to realize what he is seeing.

As Parzival reaches the knightly ideal, when he at last becomes a knight not just in name but by following the Code of Honour expected of a knight, his adventures take him to the Crusades in the Holy Land. Here he encounters the Muslim Knight Feirefiz. Both knights engage in mortal combat, but their skills are closely matched, and each is impressed by the valor and honorable conduct of the other. Sinking down to the earth in exhaustion, both Knights; the Parzival, a Christian, and Feirefiz, a Muslim; begin to talk. As they converse, they realize that elements of their childhood are in common, and that both in fact share the same father! Parzival's father had married the Muslim queen Belacane during his travels in North Africa and the Middle East and fathered Feirefiz. Thus, the Christian and the Muslim in fact are brothers.

This development has a profound impact on the meaning of the Holy Grail, for the poet seems to suggest that, instead of killing and risking lives to find the sacred vessel, we should seek out the stone which will bring inner peace.

Yet which stone is meant exactly? Described by Wolfram as *lapis exilis*, this stone was used to construct portable altars which were popular during the Middle Ages and carried by Christian Crusaders. Like Parzival, the Holy Grail of the Crusaders, their very own altar, could be brought out in front of

them the whole time, but they could not see it. It is by coming to the altar of God, not by bloodshed on the battlefield where brother kills brother, that we may find and “become enamored of the Grail Stone and its overflowing happiness,” as Fr. G. Ronald Murphy, S.J., of Georgetown University writes in his study on the poem *Gemstone of Paradise* (a study to which I am much indebted throughout this article). Echoing the humanistic dimension of the poem in which the Christian Parzival and the Muslim Feirefiz realize they are brothers and in which the Holy Grail is a simple stone altar, I wish to end with a scripture found on the symbolic altar of Masonry as the Mason commits himself to the values of brotherhood, tolerance, and humanity:

“Behold, how good and pleasant  
it is for brethren to dwell  
together in unity!”  
(Psalm 133:1)

In keeping with our medieval theme, this verse in the Anglo-Saxon of the Middle Ages reads thus:

“Efne hu glædlic bið and god swylce,  
þætte broður on an begen hicgen,  
þær hig ænne sculan eard weardian.”

Dr. Mark Dreisonstok is a member of the Commandery in Virginia, the editor of the *Royal Arch of Washington*, D.C. (quarterly), and worshipful master of Arminius Lodge 25 in Washington, D.C. He can be contacted at dreisonm@georgetown.edu.

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# Knights



## at the Bookshelf

By  
Sir Knight Philip G. Buchholz, PGC

*The Badge of A Freemason; Masonic Aprons from the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library*, Aimee E. Newell, Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library, Lexington Massachusetts, 2015.

The author, Aimee E. Newell, is a museum curator with outstanding credentials. In this work she has assembled an interesting documentation of the Masonic apron collection at the Scottish Rite Museum and Library located in Lexington, Massachusetts. The photography is outstanding in this chronologically organized publication. Extensive research has been completed and documented on this collection, including some interpretation of the symbolism illustrated on many of the aprons and other Masonic artifacts in the collection. This book documents the trend and progress of individually produced special presentation and award aprons from the mid-seventeen hundreds to the mid-nineteen hundreds.

This is an outstanding publication for those interested in the examination of historical Masonic artifacts, especially Masonic aprons, in the United States. As when visiting a museum, this book takes time and revisiting to fully enjoy. This book, like a visit to a museum, must be experienced; simply reading is not sufficient.

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# Beauceant News

96th Annual Supreme Assembly  
Social Order of the Beauceant







# Beauceant News

96th Annual Supreme Assembly  
Social Order of the Beauceant



Knight Templar  
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Bellaire, TX 77401-2402

*“I will lift up mine eyes into  
the hills, from whence cometh  
my help.”*

*Psalms 121:1*

Photo of Arenal volcano in Costa Rica taken by the editor.

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