



Knight Templar

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**Address changes or corrections and all
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**Cover photo of a Spanish
altar by Sir Knight Piotr
Kalinowski.**

**Grand Encampment web site: www.knightstemplar.org
www.knightstemplar.org/KnightTemplar/archive**

Grand Master's Message

Greetings Sir Knights! My Lady Lisa and I, along with the officers of the Grand Encampment and their ladies, wish each of you and your families a merry and joyous Christmas. Although we are fully aware that for many of you this Christmas will be much different from those of the recent past, we hope that you will be able to spend time with family and loved ones, reflecting upon the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We have completed the 2020 fall department conferences and annual conclaves. Even though we were unable to meet in person, through the use of modern videoconferencing technology, we were able to provide essential programs on membership, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, 68th Triennium projects, the Preserving Templary 2021 project, and the 68th Triennial Conclave. Deputy Grand Master Johnson was also able to give you a preview of what to expect in the upcoming 69th triennium.

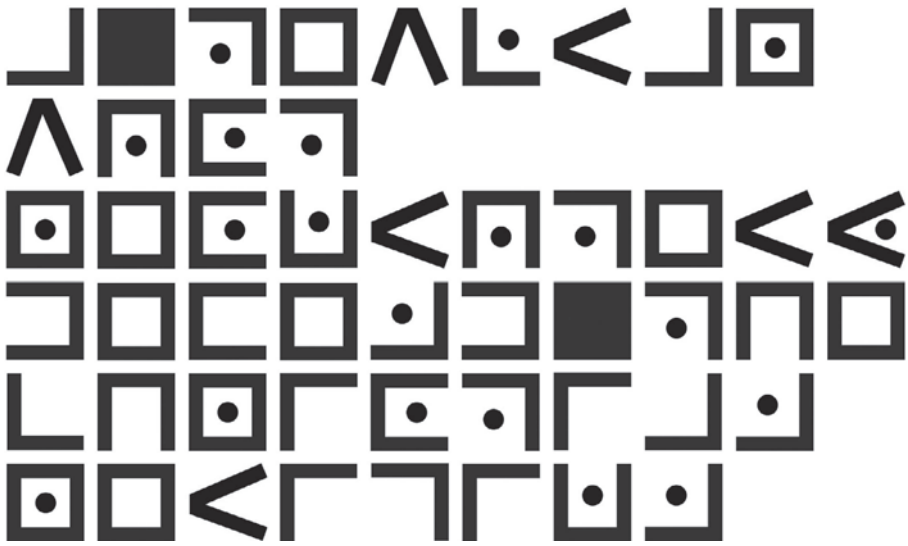
Another important initiative that we have undertaken is the Reopening Templary 2021 Project. Now is the time to plan for a return to normal or whatever the “new normal” will be. We need to prepare for and anticipate every contingency. This project explores how we might begin the process of holding conclaves and conferring the orders in a safe manner. This is a comprehensive plan that incorporates criteria governing virtual meetings, phased opening criteria, physical in-person conclaves, safety protocols, and optional short form ceremonies for the orders of Templary. There are still many trials ahead of us, but we will navigate them together.

One important facet of the Christmas season is philanthropy, including assisting those who, for whatever reason, have been visited by misfortune. In addition to helping those in your local communities, we would ask that you also remember the three great Templar philanthropies. Templary not only provides an opportunity for self-development, it is a tremendous force improving the human condition. We do this by educating and energizing ministers by sending them to the Holy Land, educating students, and preserving and restoring children's vision.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Jeffrey N. Nelson, GCT
Grand Master



IN MEMORIAM



Knight Jonathan P. Park
Vermont
Grand Commander 2016
Born: June 14, 1955
Died: July 23, 2020

Herbert Homer Hutchinson
New Hampshire
Grand Commander 1998
Born: May 21, 1937
Died: September 3, 2020

Roger Mason Pike
Vermont
Grand Commander 1991
Born: October 9, 1940
Died: October 7, 2020

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>.

Archived issues of the *Knight Templar* magazine can be accessed on the web at <http://www.knightstemplar.org/>. Then click on the button "Knight Templar" at the top of the page and select "Archives." The archives include an index.

Prelate's Apartment

by

Reverend Arthur F. Hebbeler, III,
right eminent grand prelate of the Grand Encampment

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

(John 1:14 English Standard Version)

When I was in seminary, the final examination for my first-year Greek class was to translate the first eighteen verses of the Gospel according to St. John. John begins as Genesis begins. "In the beginning..." This is the prescribed text in many churches for Christmas Day. The nativity story of Luke is Christmas Eve's message, but here we have a deep theological statement that is all too often overlooked. John, the Evangelist, brings us the good news of the Word being made flesh. God is now with us in a form and manner which we humans can actually comprehend—an infant, born of a woman. Innocent and pure, as all newborns are but with a huge difference. This is no ordinary baby but the Word made flesh.



It is God Himself in the form of a fragile baby and not a conquering King on a large white stallion wielding a mighty sword to slay all who reject Him. It is also that little baby boy, carried in the womb for nine months like every other human baby. Cared for and nurtured by a loving mother and human father—guardian seems so impersonal for Joseph. The Hebrew people had been waiting for the Chosen One, the מָשִׁיחַ (*mashiach/mah-shee-ahch*). There had been others identified as chosen ones of God—priests, David, prophets—in the Hebrew Scriptures, but the Chosen One was still to come.

Many of the Hebrew people were expecting that mighty King on horseback. Some, like John the Baptist, the several apostles, and the thousands who followed Jesus as disciples, came to understand that the King wasn't on a horse carrying a sword to slay the oppressors but was the teacher and preacher in their midst in the locked room after the resurrection. The Word made flesh was not coming to overthrow the Roman government but to overthrow sin, death, and the devil so that the chosen people of God might be saved from their sins and be reckoned as righteous before God in one, final sacrifice on Calvary and would come again in time to take all of the people into the throne room of the Father.

Until then, dear friends, let us bask in the glory of the new-born King, Emmanuel.

What Do the Brooklyn Bridge, Mount Rushmore, and George Washington Have In Common?

By
Sir Knight Sheldon Arpad

Edward Richardson Knowles was born in California on June 28, 1853, and passed to the celestial Lodge above in 1935. At the age of eighty-four, he was the last survivor of the core of engineers who designed and erected the famous Brooklyn Bridge over the East River in New York City. Remember the words, "design and construction," because they will be discussed later in this article. After graduating in civil engineering from Brooklyn Polytech in 1870, he worked as the assistant engineer in the old Brooklyn City Street Department. Later, he became associated with Roebling who was a civil engineer and worked together with Knowles in the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883. Knowles became interested in research work in electricity which began to take commercial form in the 1870's. He designed the first successful storage battery built in the United States. He also researched the design of electric search lights for the Navy of the United States exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. It was the most powerful search light up to that time.

His knowledge of electricity served the Scottish Rite when they acquired the building of the East Reform Church in 1887 and the remodeling for the use of the Aurora Grata bodies.

Brother Knowles was initiated, passed, and raised in Brooklyn Lodge 288 in 1889. Three years later he affiliated with St. John's Lodge 2 at Middletown, Connecticut, and five years after that, he became a member of Anglo-Saxon Lodge 137 of Brooklyn, New York, and became worshipful master of that Lodge in 1908. Also, he entered Aurora Grata Lodge in 1890. Nine years later he was elected sovereign prince of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem of the Scottish Rite from 1899 to 1902. At Boston in 1903, he received the 33rd degree.

John Gutzon Belamoth Borglum was born on March 25, 1867, and died on March 6, 1941. He was a famous American artist and sculptor. He was well known for his creation of Mount Rushmore National Memorial in Keystone, South Dakota, and he was also associated with other works of art, including a bust of Abraham Lincoln previously shown in the White House and later in the United States Capitol Crypt in Washington D.C. For the purpose of this article and by Masonic standards, he is famous for donating a unique gavel.

Borglum was reported to be an active member of the Freemasons, receiving his 3rd degree in Howard Lodge 35, New York City on June 10, 1904. He became worshipful master in 1910. He was appointed in 1915 as grand representative of the Grand Lodge of Denmark near the Grand Lodge of New York. He received his Scottish Rite degrees in New York City Consistory on October 25, 1907.

No greater gift can be given by an artist than a piece of his own creation. A

singular piece was gifted from Borglum to Howard Lodge 35, a gavel of unique form consisting of a bronze lion's paw inverted holding a piece of stone from Solomon's Temple. Between the paw and the handle are rubber rings to absorb a blow or battering.

According to my research, this unsigned gavel resides in a Masonic museum in New York. It also has not been copied as many others have.

It is my contention that Knowles was head of one of the Scottish Rite bodies in New York City when Borglum joined in Brooklyn. Borglum was famous at that time for his art as was Knowles for his work on the Brooklyn Bridge, and surely both would have been easily recognized by the other with regard to their respective careers. It is also my contention that the Lion's Paw gavel was a one of a kind commissioned piece, commemorating George Washington's birth. The original gavel was a palm gavel, and later a handle was added.

While engaged in the celebration of George Washington's birthday in 1932 and according to the research and my belief, Worshipful Brother Knowles solicited Worshipful Brother Borglum to execute a new gavel for his Lodge, commemorating not only Washington's birthday but also the anniversary of the Brooklyn Masonic Guild. This gavel reflected the image of the previously mentioned gavel, with the exception of the lion's paw, which is facing downward as a normal lion's paw would, as opposed to the previous work where the lion's paw is facing upward. Both have rubber gaskets, are produced in bronze, and are used as setting mauls.

There is little doubt, if any, that this gavel was made by Borglum for Knowles

to present to the Lodge for the George Washington's birthday commemoration. No other gavel has been produced with these unique characteristics of people, time, and place.



Sir Knight Sheldon Arpad is grand generalissimo of the Grand Commandery of Florida and a member of Ft. Myers Commandery 32.

Grand Encampment

Membership Awards

1235-1237 Brett Anthony Gordon
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Miami, FL
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The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

Wishes you a

Merry Christmas



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Cyrene 10

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David Buck Akers

Mohave County 13

Arkansas

Henry Mark Kalkbrenner

Damascus 8

California

Joseph K. Dongo

Sacramento 2

Andrew Burton Pippin

St. Omer 30

Colorado

James Warren Glasscock

J. E. Abbott 40

Connecticut

Daniel Michael Luft

St. Elmo 9

District Of Columbia

Bruce F. Gilbert

Washington 1

El Salvador

Jose Ramon Sanfeliu

El Salvador 1

Florida

John Irving Gray

Crestview 25

Georgia

James C Huffman, III

Ivanhoe 10

Hawaii

Aaronkai Patrick Daguio

Honolulu 1

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Berdette Orman Bryngelson

Oriental 21

Idaho

Clinton Arthur "Bud" Wethered

Idaho 1

Illinois

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St. Aldemar 47

Indiana

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Bedford 42

Kansas

Charles David Williams, III

DeMolay 4

Kentucky

Gregory Alan Raque

Louisville-DeMolay 12

Louisiana

Albert Gallatin Simms, Jr.

Ascension 6

Maine

Harold E. Birth, Jr.

St. Johns 3

Michigan

Owen Patrick McGuigan

Howell 28

Massachusetts & Rhode Island

George Albert Wiseman

Coeur De Lion 34

These Sir Knights have demonstrated meritorious service rendered to the order far beyond the call of duty and beyond the service usually expected of a Knight.

Minnesota

Todd Jovonovich

Damascus 1

Mississippi

Matthew Keith Ballard

Laurel 43

Missouri

Gregory James Walker

St. John's 20

Montana

Donald Stephen Cerovski

St. Johns 12

Nebraska

Michael Lagueux

Mt. Moriah 4

New Jersey

Frederick Eugene Morse

Helena 3

New Mexico

William Jack Pogue

Shiprock 15

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Dwight MacLauchlin Sigmon

Hickory 17

North Dakota

Martin R. Bless

Tancred 1

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James Langmead

Forest City 40

Robert Eugene Carson

Cincinnati 3

Oklahoma

Harvey Cross Johnson, Jr.

Muskogee 2

Pennsylvania

David Ellis Kearns

McKean 80

Seth Cody Anthony

Lancaster 13

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Jomel Dennis L. Maranan

Kalaw 8

Romania

Florin Boca

Iancu de Hunedoara 7

Tennessee

Roy Tillman Sutton, III

Carter 37

Gary Wayne Coates

Kingsport 33

Texas

Lewis Corry Buttram

Tancred 82

Virgil Samuel Allsbrooks

Tancred 82

Virginia

Stephen Lynn Young

Stevenson 8

Washington

Harold Brown Hobbs

Rainier 28

West Virginia

Tyler Martin Perry

Huntington 9

Leadership Notes

Accelerating Success

Success is guaranteed if you know where you are going, you maintain your focus on the goal, and you keep putting one foot in front of the other. Given enough time, you will surely get there.

Achievement of success applies to a group in the same way it applies to the individual. The difference is that, as an individual, you have direct control over your mindset and your actions. As for the group, you only have influence. Nonetheless, the principles are the same.

There are three elements that you and your organization can apply in your leadership practices that will accelerate your journey to success. These are “goals,” “purposes,” and “missions.”

A goal is an objective. It is something to be accomplished. It requires steps and is task oriented. A goal might be as simple as adding two new candidates this month or raising \$1000 for the building fund. The durability of a goal is the amount of time it takes to accomplish the goal.

A purpose is the “why” you are doing what you are doing. It should be inspirational or desirable so as to motivate action. A purpose for the goal of raising \$1000 for the building fund might be so the members are more inclined to attend the meetings. The durability of a purpose is only as long as it motivates you. There may even be multiple purposes to appeal to a group of people.

A mission is bigger than a purpose. A mission is the guidepost by which all other activities must be aligned. Sometimes it is helpful to think of this as a “mission-purpose,” as it provides long-term guidance and motivation for the organization. See the leadership article on purpose in the March 2020 issue of this magazine for more information.

Looking at this from a personal perspective, you can accelerate your journey to success by applying these elements to your planning.

First, define and know your mission. Turn it into a mission statement that is brief, and succinctly identifies the benefit provided and for whom it is provided.

Second, determine and write down your goals. Use a good goal writing process like SMART Goals (google it). Once written, put them in a place where you will see and read them each day.

Third, every single day, determine a purpose for doing those tasks related to your goal. The purpose may even be something not directly related to the goal. For example, my task today is to get five people to be a judge at the chili cook-off that will raise \$1000 for our building fund. The purpose for me doing that task might be, to generate positive attention of Lodge activities to local community leaders.

If you want to learn more about leadership principles, join the York Rite Leadership Training Program. Visit the website at YorkRiteLeadership.org for more information and to register for the program.

Yours in Knightly Service,
S. Lane Pierce, KYCH

Presenting the Grand Commanders of the Grand Commanderies of the Grand Encampment for the year 2020-2021



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William J. Burfitt, Sr.



Arizona
Russell R. Sayre



Arkansas
Ronald S. Tucker



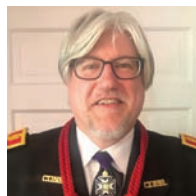
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California
Cirilo P. Marquez



Colorado
Jaymie Vaughn



Connecticut
James S. McNeely, IV



Deleware
Randall Mullen



District of Columbia
Kevin Matthews



Florida
Brett A. Gordon



Georgia
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knight templar



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Philippines
Rodell S.J. Reyes
december 2020



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A Message from the Chairman

A Season of Planned Giving

Christmas is a time of giving. This month, our focus is on a specific strategy of supporting the Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF), one you may not have considered.

Planned giving is a way for a donor to continue to support our Templar philanthropy beyond our lifetime through estate planning or a trust. It is not nearly as complicated as it may seem, and done correctly; you, your loved ones, and the KTEF can all benefit.

As much as the Foundation appreciates contributions today, we realize it may be more practical for those who want to make a sizeable gift to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation to protect their assets during their lifetime. After all, if 2020 has taught us anything, it is to anticipate the unexpected. That said, the CARES Act has expanded tax deductions for charitable giving right now, so this is a very good time to investigate those options as well.

The KTEF website includes an informative section on planned giving, written in easy-to-understand language. Go to www.ktef.plannedgiving.org and explore the plans that are best for you. Did you know that you can give a gift that will actually pay you income? You can also name the KTEF as a beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), or other qualified retirement plans. Additionally, it is very simple to designate the KTEF as a beneficiary in your will. There truly are options for everyone. We always recommend that you consult your tax advisor or financial or estate planner to help you decide the best strategy for you and your family.

Many choose to support the work of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation today and into the future. If the spirit of the season moves you to consider doing so, may you realize the peace and the feeling of contentment of one who knows that generosity yields an amazing crop!

May the blessing of Christmas be with you in all seasons as we share the joy of the birth of our Blessed Immanuel.

In His Service,
R. Thomas Starr, KCT
Chairman, 53rd Annual Voluntary Campaign



Disclaimer: The information available on the planned giving website is not offered as legal or tax advice.

NEW CONTRIBUTORS TO THE KTEF CLUBS

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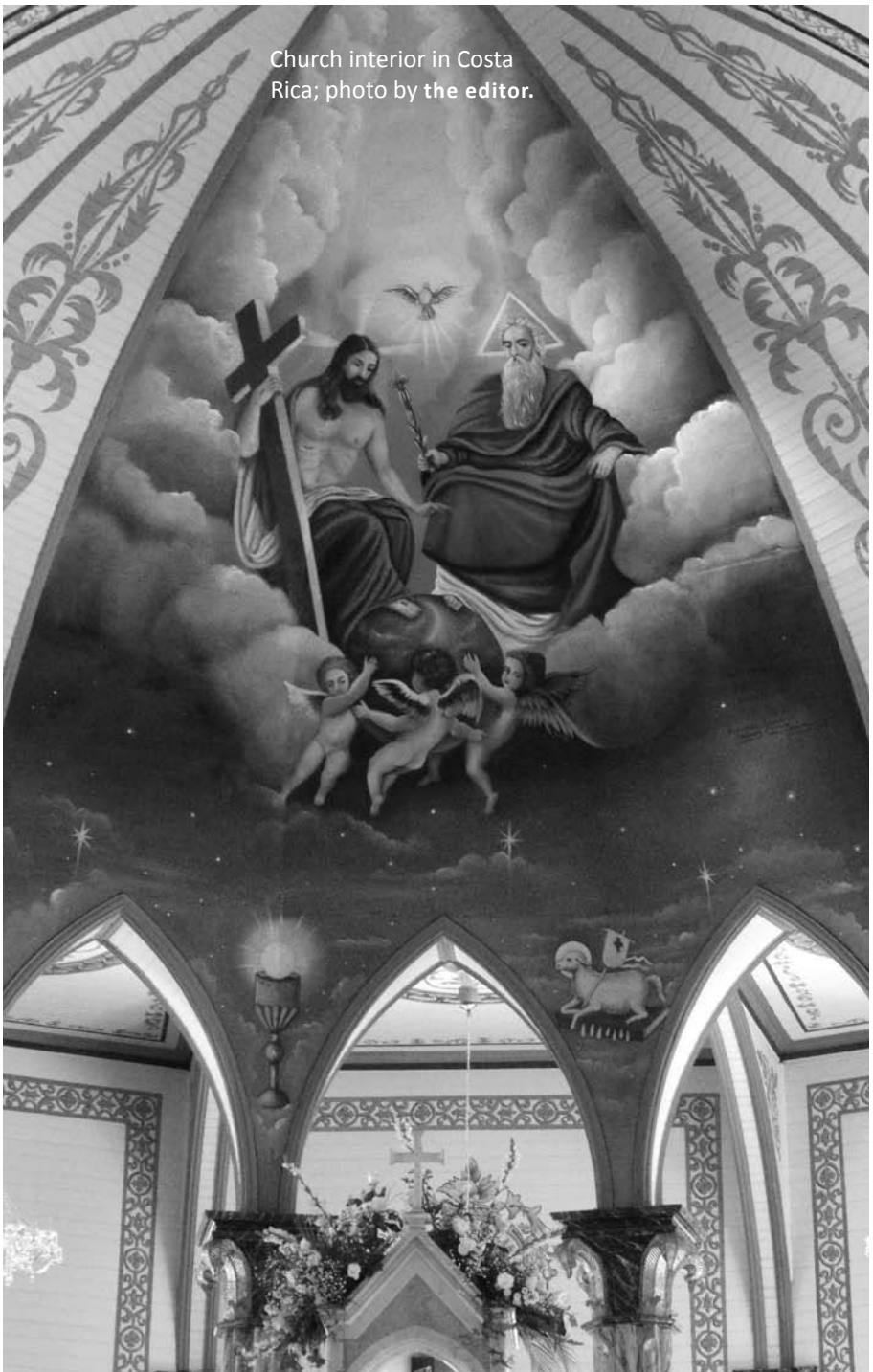
General Supplement

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.

Church interior in Spain; photo by Sir Knight Piotr Kalinowski.



Church interior in Costa Rica; photo by the editor.



Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

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.

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 required to make minimum distributions due to age 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. Please discuss with your tax professional whether this option could benefit you in your charitable and retirement planning.

Planned Giving – Create a Charitable Legacy

Your Foundation now has a full web site dedicated to Planned Giving which you can access from our web site, shown at the bottom of this page. So if you're thinking of ways to make a lasting legacy for yourself please check out the tab on the home page that says "Planned Giving". Leaving your mark on the future is so simple with a gift in your will. To leave a gift in your Will or Trust it is as easy as asking your attorney to include a sentence that says:

**I bequeath (lump sum) or (%) of my estate to:
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**Telephone: 214-888-0220
Fax: 214-888-0230
Email: manager@ktef.us**



www.ktef.org

Were Knights Templar Cleared By the Vatican ? Yes

By

Sir Knight James A. Marples, K.T.

Many people, including most Masons, are unaware of what I term “the newest historical discoveries” concerning Templar history. It is uncommon for an historical change to occur more than 700 years after a historic event, but in a pivotal case, it has. For centuries, it has been known that the last grand master of the ancient Knights Templar, Jacques De Molay, (or James B. de Molay) was put to death and the Order of the Temple disbanded (but not dissolved). Most people rely on encyclopedia accounts. He and other Templars were falsely accused of heresy. This was mostly due to a corrupt King Philip IV of France who took advantage of erroneous rumors to further his own gain. At that time, the popes of the Catholic Church were headquartered at Avignon, France. History books claim a conspiracy between the French king and that Pope Boniface VIII and Clement V were the culprits who arranged trumped-up charges and tortured many Templars into saying anything in vain attempts to save their lives. This is only partially true. The real discovery came in September of 2001 when Professor Barbara Frale, an ancient language handwriting expert, discovered a parchment which was mistakenly filed in the Vatican Secret Archives and had lain essentially forgotten for seven centuries which absolved Jacques de Molay and cleared the Templars of all major alleged wrongdoing.

My point here is that as Masons and

Templars, we owe it to ourselves as well as to the memory of Jacques de Molay to publicize this fact more. Furthermore, we need to reach out to the Vatican, hoping for improved relations. We must strive for clarity. Roman Catholicism is a religion. It must be courteously noted that it is clearly separate from Freemasonry which I call a “friendship society.” If those facts were presented, the positive implications are endlessly good and beneficial for all.

I am going to cite Dr. Frale’s work and those who reviewed it, since I believe this is one case where her work should be cited without muddy commentary but with straight facts:

So what is the *Chinon Parchment*? The parchment is dated August 17-20, 1308 at Chinon, France.

How did it develop? In late June and early July of 1308, a large group of previously arrested Knights Templar appeared before Pope Clement V and his commissioners in Poitiers. Five high-ranking members of the order, including its grand master, Jacques de Molay, were also supposed to be delivered to the Curia, but they were diverted to Chinon, less than sixty miles away from Poitiers. After the Knights Templar present in Poitier were questioned and confessed their sins (generally following the lines of their previous testimonies given to French inquisitors), they were granted plenary absolution by the pope on July 2, 1308. Clement V understood that his in-

quiry could not be complete without interrogating the leaders of the order who remained at Chinon. The pope arranged for three cardinals to visit Chinon as his plenipotentiaries. This allowed Clement V to finalize another stage of addressing the issue of the Knights Templar trials.

Raymbaud de Caron was the first to be interrogated on August 17, 1308.

"After this oath, by the authority of [the] lord pope specifically granted to us for that purpose, we extended to this humbly asking Brother Raymbaud, in a form accepted by the Church, the mercy of pardon from the verdict of excommunication that had been incurred by the aforementioned deeds, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him to the communion of the faithful and the sacraments of the Church."

(*Chinon Parchment* dated August 17–20, 1308)

According to the document, all interrogations of the accused, spanning August 17 to 20, 1308, were in the presence of the notaries public and the gathered witnesses.

The body of the text details the appearances of the accused, their swearings-in, the charges against them, and the modes of questioning to which they were subjected. In the interrogation of de Molay, when he was asked whether he had confessed to these things due to a request, reward, gratitude, favor, fear, hatred, persuasion by someone else, the use of force, or fear of impending torture, he replied that he had not. When he was asked whether he, after being apprehended, was submitted to any questioning or torture, he replied that he was not.

The text further details the denunciations, requests by the accused for absolution, and the granting of absolution by the agents of the pope. All this was always in the presence of witnesses. Part of the pardon given to Molay thus reads:

"After this, we concluded to extend the mercy of pardons for these acts to Brother Jacques de Molay, the grand master of the said order, who in the form and manner described above had denounced in our presence the described and any other heresy, and swore in person on the Lord's Holy Gospel, and humbly asked for the mercy of pardon from excommunication, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him to communion of the faithful and the sacraments of the Church."

(*Chinon Parchment* dated August 17–20, 1308)

Analysis of the *Chinon Parchment*, as well as other materials of the Templar trials, enabled Barbara Frale to theorize on some of the secret initiation practices of the Templars. While three of the accused admitted to having been asked by their receptors during their initiation to denounce the cross and spit upon the crucifix, their stories were inconsistent. Geoffrey de Gonnevillle, for example, stated that he had not succumbed under duress to denouncing and spitting on the cross; despite this, he was admitted to the order, implying that the denial of the cross may have been a test of some sort. The other accused men admitted to "denouncing in words only, not in spirit." Gordon Napier thinks that the practice of the denial of the cross was training for what the new

Knights might later face were they taken prisoner by Saracens.

In any case, whatever took place, it was revealed that the Knights Templar truly loved the Lord Jesus Christ. If they were guilty of anything, it was saying whatever came to mind to appease their torturous captors. The order was started in the year 1118 or 1119 (depending on which source you cite). For any person, place, or thing (especially a chivalric order) to have an unblemished record of helping pilgrims to the Holy Land and defending Christianity from outside aggression is truly remarkable. Granted, people can change, and there can be a "bad apple" in any group (even in today's modern world). The Templars were wrongly branded as heretics. It is sad that it took until the 21st Century to vindicate them. It is too late for the Vatican to apologize to Jacques de Molay, and they cannot bring him back to life. Yet, it is not too late to restore better relations between Freemasonry (as a fraternal society) and the Roman Catholic Church, if

people on both sides will just listen calmly and rationally.

We can all strive to make sure such a travesty never happens again.

The Implications of the *Chinon Parchment*

The most important implication of the *Chinon Parchment* is to dispel false rumors. Humanity, especially Christians, are taught to "love one another." I believe that it is high-time that everybody on all sides practiced just that!

A few years ago in Brazil, a Catholic priest celebrated a Mass dedicated to the "Day of the Freemason."

Below you see four Freemasons - from the left; an apprentice, two companions, and a master. In their center is a Catholic priest, Fr. Geraldo Magela Silva, parish priest of Our Lady of the Conception Church in the city of Bom Jardim (Nice Garden), in the State of Pernambuco, Northeast Brazil. The four Masons are in front of the altar and hold their



knight templar

symbols; a square, gavel, and compasses while their grand master addresses the congregation with a short speech. This photo was taken at a Mass Fr. Magela celebrated to commemorate the Day of the Freemason, on August 20, 2012.

Granted, many nations differ. That harmony exists in one place does not mean it is universal. Additionally, we must, as American Freemasons, distance ourselves from irregular or clandestine groups such as the infamous P2 group in Italy which in my opinion isn't Masonic in the least but a renegade group masquerading by manipulating the otherwise good name of Freemasonry. Our honorable Masonic groups should not be tarnished by spurious or renegade groups. In past centuries, slow communication and equally slow correction of incorrect rumors caused great harm, hurt feelings, and even levels of mistrust. I am hopeful that once true facts come out that regular Masons and regular Knights Templar are believers in God, try to live by high moral codes according to Holy Writ, and are charitable, that it will help build bridges of understanding.

If bad rumors aren't corrected soon, misconceptions will continue to fester worldwide. Incorrect information has led to hasty and misguided papal Bulls (misuses of doctrine). The *Chinon Parchment* is a contemporary document that shows that Jacques de Molay and his associates were honorable men. Furthermore, the *Chinon Parchment*, if it had been found earlier and not misplaced in the Vatican Archives, could have prevented a lot of heartache over the past 700 years. At least the *Chinon Parchment* shows that the Catholic pontiff absolved Jacques de Molay. I have to applaud any pope for showing forgiveness and essentially

acquitting de Molay of wrongdoing. We need to trumpet that to the world. Otherwise, the world believes that de Molay and the Templars were punished rightly when they were punished wrongly. It is vitally important to remember that de Molay was martyred on French turf by a corrupt French king. If the venue had been different, the consequences might have been different.

I am a member of several research Lodges, and I love history to the maximum. However, I think that we, as a fraternity, had better take pro-active steps to dispel past false rumors and focus on a brighter future. We must put our best foot forward. Sometimes facilitating a better future is equally or sometimes more important than plowing old ground that has been recorded with obsolete data.

My main theme is to keep abreast of new historical discoveries. This saga amounts to one of the biggest retractions in history, that Jacques de Molay and the other Templars were innocent.

When, I joined Mt. Olivet Commandery 12 in Wichita, Kansas, it was always instilled in me that the official name of the order was "The Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon" and that the Templars received papal sanction (blessing) by Pope Honorius II in the year A.D. 1128.

For any person, place, or thing (especially a Chivalric order) to be in full communion as well as amity, harmony, and unity from 1118 to the year 1308 when inquiries started or 1314 when de Molay was martyred, is a nearly two hundred year run of respect, faithfulness, diligence, dedication, and happiness. I suspect that the accusations were trumped-up charges against de Molay and the

Templars. Again, it is attributable to a corrupt king of France who wanted the Templars' land and possessions for his own treasury. The king was a power-hungry tyrant, who knew how to spread false rumors.

Granted, people can change, and organizations can change, yet when Professor Frale made this remarkable discovery of the *Chinon Parchment*, it should have been publicized often and prominently, and an apology should have been issued which was not relegated to the back pages of media reports. This was truly an occasion when books, documentaries, encyclopedias, and even fictional accounts should have been corrected and amended.

In the 1970's, representatives of Freemasonry (many of them Templars) met with representatives of the Vatican. This was during the tenure of Pope Paul VI who is credited with many of the reforms of "Vatican II."

Nobody should let false old wives tales persist. While novelists have thrived on the past old yarns, conspiracy-buffs and television shows have peddled tales of contention. Those types of salacious scenarios must stop, and we must all live our Christian faith and demonstrate it daily. If Canon law needs to distinguish between Catholic-friendly Lodges and the irregular types in Italy and elsewhere, let Canon law be modified. A bit of modification would go a long way toward clarification and spreading a happier atmosphere where it belongs.

The *Chinon Manuscript* was misplaced or misfiled for 700 years. As a Catholic I don't even believe that. I believe that the same old tactics used today to do cover-ups existed back then. I believe that the *Chinon Manuscript* was

knight templar

hidden in the Vatican Secret Archives to avoid embarrassment and to enable the Catholic Hierarchy from having to account for such an unspeakable travesty as being an accomplice to killing innocent men. Yet, as said before, I don't blame an ancient pope. I blame a corrupt ancient French king who was greedy and had a big ego. He didn't last long. Within months of de Molay's death, the French king was dead himself.

Back then, there were popes and even anti-popes (false contenders to the papal throne), so a person has to envision that very archaic world. Many popes simply wanted to hold onto their ecclesiastical posts. Some popes were intimidated by temporal kings, which wouldn't happen in today's world.

We, as modern Masonic Knights Templar who believe in defending the Christian religion must prove our words. In 1971, Bishop Daniel Pezeril, auxiliary bishop of Paris, accepted an invitation from the Grande Loge de France to lecture. This was the first official reception of a Catholic bishop since 1738. In America, in the 1970's, some Catholic bishops met with Masonic members and came close to reconciliation, and in 1981-1983 a document which is politely disputed to this day attempts to clarify the Masonic-Catholic issue. It only serves to muddy the water. Pope Benedict, when he was earlier a Cardinal, partly bought into the misconceptions.

To me, as a Catholic by faith and a Freemason by my friendship associations, reconciliation is a win-win proposition. I always tell people, whether they are Catholic or not or a Mason or not, that the late Saint John Paul II, when he was pope, had no qualms about Brother Danny Thomas

being a Freemason. The pope knew that Danny Thomas, founder of St Jude's Children's Hospital, was a Mason, Scottish Rite member, and Shriner who was awarded the papal honor of Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. The famous actors; John Wayne; Billy Florence (called "the Jack Benny" of his day); and the famous showman, Buffalo Bill Cody, were Masons as their fraternity and Catholics by their religious preference. They never lost sight of that fact. Many Catholics are Masons today, and they go about their lives normally without any conflict of conscience. There is no plotting against the Church. In fact, all of the Catholic men I have known who are also Freemasons are among the most dignified men I have ever met who honor Almighty God, and their heart is in the right place. They worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit just like everyone else.

To sum up, as my title of this article indicates, "Were the Knights Templar cleared by the Vatican?" The answer is an overwhelming, "Yes," and the *Chinon Parchment* must be placed front and center, now and always.

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 rosehillks@yahoo.com or 1300 Greenbriar Drive, Longview, TX 75604.

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.

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The editorial staff of the
Knight Templar Magazine
wish for you and your family
a blessed
Christmas season.



GRAND ENCAMPMENT EASTER OBSERVANCES FOR 2021

Sir Knight Jeffrey N. Nelson
Most Eminent Grand Master,
and the Grand Encampment officers cordially invite you
to attend one of our 2021 Easter services.

Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

91st Annual East Coast Easter Sunrise Service

George Washington Masonic National Memorial
Alexandria, Virginia

11th Annual Western States Easter Service

Denver Scottish Rite Consistory
Denver, Colorado

9th Annual Mid-America Easter Service

Liberty Memorial
Kansas City, Missouri

Full information and registration forms will be available on our
Website at: www.knightstemplar.org

Further information will be published in the January issue of the
Knight Templar magazine.

Focus on Chivalry

Last month we talked about fear, specifically the fear of death. There is another fear that will run and ruin our lives if we let it, the fear of what others think about us, what we say, and how we behave. A Knight behaves proactively rather than reactively. This means that he does not base his self esteem on the opinions of others, else he becomes their slave. Remember that when you try to please everyone, you please no one.

Sometimes we fear the opinions of others, even when it is blatantly obvious that they are wrong. This results in what is sometimes spoken of as “mob mentality” or “the tyranny of the mob.” I can’t help recall what my mother used to say to me, “Just because everyone else is jumping off a cliff, does it mean that you should join them?” Thank God for wise parents.

Of course, sometimes people get offended when we don’t buy into their stupidity. It is their right, I guess, to choose to be offended, but it is my right, I know, not to participate in or agree with their folly. I don’t waste much time any more trying to convince people that they are wrong. It’s really none of my business most of the time, and my father used to point out to me that there are a lot of things in this world that are none of my business and that I would do well to stay out of them.

If I worry that others might be offended if I don’t see things just the way that they do, then that leads to “political correctness” and ultimately to irrational behavior. In fact, doing so implies that we are constantly questioning our own judgment while assuming that the thoughts and beliefs of others are always true. Remember that we are accountable for our own actions, regardless of what others around us might be doing.

Others have the right to their beliefs, but I prefer to base my behavior on my values and my own common sense. I am most assuredly a Christian, but I am also a firm believer in *Karma*, the natural law of cause and effect. My actions, positive or negative, often affect others, maybe for generations to come. I am responsible for these actions; no one else is, no matter how passionately they may have tried to influence me either by persuasion or intimidation.

A chivalrous Christian Knight bases his behavior on the immutable laws of God and a reliance on his own common sense and not on the opinions of others.

The Editor



Knights



at the Bookshelf

By
Sir Knight W. Bruce Pruitt, PGC

Jesus On Trial by David Limbaugh; (A Lawyer Addresses the Truth of the Gospels)
Regnery Pub. Co. Washington, DC, c/r 2014, ISBN 978-1-62157-25-8; 331 pages.

The author of this book is a lawyer, a syndicated columnist, and the author of at least five other *New York Times* best sellers. After a normal church-going youth, along with his brother, Rush, he began to have serious doubts about the *Bible*. He could still believe that there was a God but worried about things like the pain and suffering allowed by Him. Furthermore, how could salvation be received by only believing in Jesus Christ? Through serious, open-minded study and partially from the help of people like Josh McDowell and Ravi Zacharias, David was able to write this intense review. It provides answers to such questions as: "What can you actually believe about the *Bible*?" "What is God like?" "How can Jesus be both God and Man?" "How can God be both three and one?" and "What are redemption, salvation, justification, and glorification?"

By taking a lawyer-like approach to these and other questions, the author provides one of the most readable, understandable, and comprehensible resources that I have ever found. In two chapters there are "ah-ha moments." In other words, facts that seem to grab one when they come to light. For example, Jesus is the only person in history who was both prophesied and expected. Jesus divided history into before and after. The author is willing to tackle apparent discrepancies in scripture and doctrine. There are four chapters dedicated to "The amazing *Bible*" – unity, prophecy, internal evidence, and external evidence. There is discussion of miracles and the resurrection of Christ. One of the most interesting parts of this book is the look at how science supports so much of scripture and Christian belief. Skeptics have believed that matter always existed, so man could have developed out of matter. However, scientific discoveries have proven that matter could not have always existed, so it must have a beginning. Hubble's discoveries have lead to the big bang theory. In it, matter, energy, space, and time are all contained in a single mathematical point of enormous density. This all indicates that the universe came into existence at some finite time in the past.

Finally, the author actually does openly discuss the difficult subject of pain and suffering. If suffering is bad, then there must exist an ultimate good, showing that

God does exist. God did not create evil; He created free will. Suffering could not be eliminated without eliminating free will. These simple examples indicate the forcefulness of David's arguments. This book is highly recommended to any person who has any kind of doubts the way Mr. Limbaugh initially did, or even if they are just interested in a further understanding of God, Christianity, and the *Bible*. It is as valuable as one semester in seminary!

Knight Templar Magazine Available on Your Smart Phone

The *Knight Templar* magazine is now available on your smart phone. Just download the application from either the Apple App Store at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/knight-templar-magazine/id1422046085?ls=1&mt=8> if you have an I-Phone or the Google Play Store at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.axiosdigital.KnightTemplar> if you have an Android based phone. Then each month, you will be automatically notified when the new issue of the magazine is available. One tap and you are reading the magazine!

If at some point in the future, you want to discontinue the delivery of your paper copy and save the Grand Encampment some printing and postage expense, the recorder of your local Commandery can have it stopped by updating the membership database.

Of course, the current issue of the magazine and all previous issues are still available on-line at <http://www.knightstemplar.org/KnightTemplar/>.

67th Triennial Conclave Proceedings

Attention Voting Delegates

The Proceedings from the 67th Triennial held in Indianapolis, Indiana in 2018 are at the printer and will be available for purchase:

SOFTBOUND Proceedings are \$20 (includes shipping and handling)

HARDBOUND Proceedings are \$30 (includes shipping and handling)

You must place your order no later than Friday, December 18, 2020, by mailing your check to the Grand Encampment office or calling the office with your credit card information. There will be no extra copies available.

A softbound copy of the Proceedings from the 67th Triennial will be mailed to all Grand Commanderies at NO CHARGE. You do not need to order a copy.

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Please call the Grand Encampment office with questions: (713) 349-8700
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Beauceant News

(Mrs. Joseph F.) Coetta Elizabeth Chalker
Supreme Worthy Recorder Emeritus
1926-2020

We want to pause and take a moment to pay tribute to our supreme worthy recorder emeritus who was called home to the Great Assembly on high on March 29, 2020, at the age of ninety-three.

Coetta Elizabeth Bream was born on October 29, 1926, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to Mervin U. and Elizabeth V. Bream. A lifelong learner, she graduated from Gettysburg High School and went on to earn a degree as a medical assistant from Trenton University and an advanced degree in Secondary Education. On June 18, 1949, she married Joseph F. Chalker. They met while he was stationed at Gettysburg College during World War II to attend Officer's Candidate School. They corresponded during the war as friends, the relationship deepened, and they were married.



For Coetta, the value she placed on family was only surpassed by the importance of her unwavering faith. She was a member of the Presbyterian Church. Coetta found her greatest joy in hosting family gatherings and meals together. Her special definition of family included many friends that Joseph and she made throughout the years and invited into their lives. She lived a full life of humble giving and ministry, living fully so she could give fully. She was an example of love for God and family, and of touching others through the several talents that she was blessed with. She served our Supreme Assembly for many years, giving unselfishly of her willingness to serve faithfully. Coetta Chalker served our Supreme Assembly as supreme worthy recorder from 1993-2006. The Supreme Assembly extends their deepest sympathies to her family and friends; she was a faithful, loyal, and loving sister who touched many lives during her journey!



We celebrated our beautiful order from September 21st through 25th, even though we could not traditionally be together. We showed our pride throughout this special week by wearing our beauceant cross, wearing red, practicing our beautiful ritual, wearing our uniform, going to lunch, reaching out to our sisters we haven't seen in a while, and toasting those sisters who created our order.



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Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



THE APARTMENTS OF THE GRAND PRELATE

and

THE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Year of Our Lord 2020 to all valiant and magnanimous Knights of the Temple, wheresoever dispersed
throughout Christendom ~ Salutations and Knightly Greetings:

A TOAST TO OUR MOST EMINENT GRAND MASTER
CHRISTMAS 2020

We propose this toast to you, Sir Knight Jeffrey N. Nelson, our Most Eminent Grand Master and to your beloved partner and helpmate, Lisa, at this most unusual and stressful Christmastide, applauding your dedicated leadership of our Order through the travails and perils of these most recent months.

During this Christmas season our festivities may be more circumscribed, and our hilarity modified, but our spiritual reflections are all the more heightened by the needs of neighbors, the cries of the stranger, the entreaties of the ill, and the loneliness of the lost. We think of the baby born in a manger, surrounded by ox and ass and ministered to by Mary, the mother who delivered him and Joseph who would raise him. We meditate upon their escape from Herod's men of might and upon their exile as strangers in a strange land, until the news of a death would be good news of a return. We think of their sustenance by the gifts of strangers from the East and of the angelic tales of heavenly songs reported by shepherds in rags redolent of field and flock. With these stories of Jesus' birth on our hearts, we, as Knights Templar, renew our vows to welcome the poor and weary pilgrim, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted.

Grand Master, we are aware that this; the ultimate year of your term, has been a year of trial and testing. Plans we made together have been set aside. We have been scattered and isolated in many of our jurisdictions and have yet no set time to join in glad reunion. Indeed, this very Christmas Libation Service will be virtual for many of us. We know that you, dear Sir Knight Jeffrey, had hopes and goals that you will not achieve. Yet by your leadership, our unity is maintained. By your example, our hearts are filled with resolve and hope that we will soon be able to enlist more fratres in our holy and charitable quest. By your words, we have been reassured and empowered to continue working for the ministries and charities of our order. By your patience, energy, wisdom, creativity, and love for all Masons, wheresoever dispersed, you have been an outstanding example of servant leadership.

To you, Grand Master, we raise our cups and unite our voices in fraternal love and admiration. We pledge to you and Lady Lisa our unwavering support for the remainder of your service as our earthly head and our friendship and honor for all the years that may follow. As you face the challenges and the perils of the months ahead, may you be led by the example of the Immaculate Jesus who died that we might live. We toast you and Lady Lisa and wish you a Merry Christmas and blessed, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

A toast to you, Most Eminent Grand Master!

In His Name,
The Reverend Sir Knight Kenneth D. Fuller, P.G.C., Chairman,
The Committee on Religious Activities
The Reverend Sir Knight Arthur F. Hebbeler, III, Grand Prelate
The Reverend Sir Knight Terry L. Hensley, P.G.C.
The Reverend Sir Knight Paul K. Reckamp, P.G.C.
The Reverend Sir Knight Paul D. Erickson, KCT
The Reverend Sir Knight E. Jeffrey Craig, KCT



GRAND MASTER'S RESPONSE

CHRISTMAS 2020

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

Knightly Greetings!

A most heartfelt thank you from Lady Lisa and me to the Right Eminent Grand Prelate and the members of the Committee on Religious Activities for their most gracious toast this Christmas Season in the year of our Lord 2020.

The toast offered notes the challenges faced by the officers as well as the Sir Knights of the Grand Encampment this past year. This has indeed been a most unusual year, a year filled with "trials and tests." However, along with challenges come opportunities and time for reflection and meditation upon the designs which He has laid down upon each of our trestleboards.

None of us knows what the future may hold, but the toast exhorts each of us to "renew our vows to welcome the poor and weary pilgrim, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted." Let us take up our swords and redouble our efforts to redress each of these scourges to the benefit of mankind.

The officers of the Grand Encampment and their ladies join with my Lady Lisa and me in wishing each of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a blessed and healthy New Year.

Courteously,

Jeffrey Norman Nelson, 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 2020.

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The **mission** of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, U.S.A. is to provide every Christian Freemason the opportunity to extend his Masonic journey through the chivalric experience.



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Templary continues to be the most prestigious Masonic organization. We are a group of men proud to wear the uniform of the cross who share a common faith, mind, and spirit. Through the practice of Christian virtues, we testify to the world that we are leaders in our community and fraternity. This demonstrates our commitment to uphold a standard of excellence within Freemasonry.